

Music Appreciation Class
Mr. Rosen
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Course Description

Why does music make us feel emotion? How can a simple sequence of sounds evoke joy, sadness, or nostalgia? *Music Appreciation* explores these questions by examining the profound relationship between music and the human mind. Using Daniel J. Levitin's bestseller, *This Is Your Brain on Music*, as our guide, we will journey through the science, psychology, and history of how we perceive, understand, and emotionally connect with music. This course is designed to develop critical listening skills, foster thoughtful discussion, and deepen students' appreciation for music of all genres and eras. Students will learn to articulate what they hear and understand why they like the music they like.

Primary Text

Levitin, Daniel J. *This Is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession*. Dutton, 2006.

Goals for Student Learning & Skills for Success

This course is designed to develop the following skills:

- Learning Skills: Students will actively listen to, analyze, and evaluate a wide variety of musical excerpts.
- Thinking Skills: Students will think critically and scientifically about music, applying concepts from neuroscience and psychology to understand their own auditory experiences.
- Communication Skills: Students will formulate and communicate their analyses and opinions on music through discussions, presentations, and written assignments.

- Interpersonal Skills: Students will work collaboratively in groups to analyze music and present findings to the class.
- Technology Skills: Students will utilize various audio/visual platforms and presentation software to explore and share musical examples.

Required Supplies

- A dedicated notebook or binder for notes, handouts, and listening journals.
- A pen/pencil.
- Headphones for in-class listening exercises (optional but recommended).
- The primary text, *This Is Your Brain on Music*.
- Consistent access to Google Classroom.

Course Outline

This outline follows the thematic progression of our primary text and includes key listening examples.

- Introduction: What is Music Appreciation?
- The Sound & Emotion of Music: Pitch, Timbre, Amplitude
- The Architecture of Music: Rhythm, Meter, Tempo
- The Grammar of Music: Melody, Harmony, Key
- Earworms and Memory: Why We Remember Music
- The Music of Language, The Language of Music
- The Science of Sound: How the Ear and Brain Hear Music
- Music and Emotion: What Makes a Song Sad or Happy?
- Anticipation & Expectation: Why We Love a Good Chorus
- The Musical Mind: Are We Hardwired for Music?
- Genre and Personal Identity: Why You Like the Music You Like
- The Musician's Brain: Expertise and Practice
- Music as a Technology: Evolution and the Recorded Era
- Final Project: Deconstructing a Song

Course Management (Expectations) and Policies (see appendix):

Behavioral Expectations:

1. Student Attendance is required. Absence procedures outlined in the ERA handbook will be followed in this class.

- a. Makeup work will follow the ERA handbook policy. Students are responsible to ask me what they missed!
2. **Respect** for yourself, others, and your teacher will be honored at all times in this classroom. No degree of hazing will be tolerated.
3. Academic honesty is imperative to this class. There is a ZERO tolerance policy for any form of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: Any copying or stealing of another person's work (including online sources) and claiming it as your own, or *giving* of your own work to another student. Always attribute the ideas of others to that person.
 - a. Any academic dishonesty will result in an automatic zero on that assignment (including but is not limited to: tests, papers, projects, daily assignments, etc.) and potentially further disciplinary actions.
 - b. ERA policies will apply in all cases of academic dishonesty.
4. Students cannot keep others from learning or the instructor from teaching.
5. Student electronic devices including cell phones, iPads, air pods, headphones, et cetera should be kept away, unless they are being used for an educational purpose that I have approved. See school policy.
6. Appropriate use of Chromebooks/laptops is allowed. See ERA policy.
7. Food or drink (with a secured lid) is only allowed into the classroom if approved by the teacher.
8. Students may not do outside coursework in the classroom.
9. Students are expected to use appropriate etiquette. Any assignments, actions, posts, presentations, or other behavior that distracts or disrupts the learning environment will be addressed. The 27J Schools disciplinary matrix will be followed for serious or repetitive disrespectful or irresponsible behavior.
10. Students must follow all rules set in place by Eagle Ridge Academy in the student handbook.

Classroom Procedures:

1. Students must be in their seats starting their warm-ups once the bell rings.
2. Students must have all materials with them when they come to class (be prepared).
3. Students must remain in their seats until they are dismissed.
4. Students must not leave the room unless they have followed the school-wide bathroom procedure.
5. Students must listen to and follow directions.
6. Students need to use Google Classroom regularly.

ERA Philosophy of Education:

Instruction at Eagle Ridge Academy follows best teaching practices as outlined in [Teach Like a Champion](#) by Doug Lemov. Eagle Ridge Academy prepares students to become postsecondary and workforce ready through rigorous instruction, and all instruction is rooted in our [mission, vision, and core values](#). Eagle Ridge Academy is dedicated to developing active citizens with the skills to effectively participate in the 21st century workforce and utilizes the [CDE Essential Skills](#) to prepare them for success in their professional lives. Students will be asked to demonstrate mastery of entrepreneurial, personal, civic/interpersonal, and professional skills essential to postsecondary and workforce readiness. Each subject area is aligned to CDE

content area standards and provides resources and supports to help students achieve their academic and career goals.

ERA Grading Policy

Grading & Evaluation (from the ERA Parent/Student Handbook)

The grading scale is as follows:

- A (90-100) Exceptional Achievement
- B (80-89) Above Average Achievement
- C (70-79) Average Achievement
- D (60-69) Below Average Achievement
- F (Below 60) Unsatisfactory Achievement

The gradebook weighted categories are as follows:

Grade Category	Percentage of Final Grade
Essential Skills	10%
Formative	35%
Summative	40%
Final Exam / Final Project	15%

Tutoring & Expectations:

Tutoring is available for my class from 7:30 am - 7:55 am and 4:05 pm - 4:30 pm, barring any emergencies or pre-planned meetings. It is always best to set up an appointment with me in order to ensure I am available. Sign up to schedule tutoring [here](#).

A Student's progress may be monitored on a daily basis by accessing Infinite Campus. Parents can obtain information and passwords for their students by contacting the school office staff at 303-655-0773. If computer access is unavailable, parents may visit the school and access information through computers provided for parent usage

Course Schedule, Assessments, and Feedback:

This schedule is approximate and will likely change based on student need, potential snow days, etc. but can be used as a guide. Students should expect to have classwork/homework each class period



[Scope Sequence Music Appreciation v2.docx](#).

ERA Scope & Sequence

Music Appreciation

Fine Arts / Elective

Emphasis: Music Theory, Composition, Keyboard, and Music in the Media

Overview Semester 1:

Unit Name:	Approximate number of weeks: (This should add up to about 22 weeks)
1 - Elements of Music and Foundations of Music Theory	3
2 - Rhythm, Meter, and Rhythmic Composition	3
3 - Melody, Harmony, and Tonal Theory	3
4 - Introduction to Piano: Hands-On Keyboard Instruction	3
5 - Instrument History Research Project	3
6 - Music Through History: Style Periods and Listening	3
7 - FINAL PROJECT: Music in the Media	4

Absences and Make-up Work

If you have an excused absence, it is your responsibility to ask for missed work. According to the handbook, you are allowed time to complete this work. If you are absent on the day that a previously-announced test or project is due, know that you are expected to take the test or turn in the project on the day you return.

Cell Phones & Other Personal Electronic Devices (from ERA Parent/Student Handbook)

We believe students should be fully engaged in their learning. For this reason, cell phones and other electronic devices must not be visible, and must be turned off or muted during instructional time and before entering offices, instructional spaces, or academic areas. ERA provides the technology at school that students will need to be successful in their academic endeavors during class time.

In addition, students in possession of a cell phone or other electronic devices during school hours and/or school activities must comply with the school's Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures, Acceptable Use Policy, District & School Policies, and the Student Code of Conduct, including the expectation to follow staff directives. If the administration believes a student's possession or use of a cell phone or other electronic devices may involve a violation of the law, the administration may also refer the matter to law enforcement.

Students may use:

- School devices as instructed by teachers and staff during instructional time
- Personal laptops, chromebooks, or tablets / eReaders as instructed by teachers and staff during instructional time
- Cell phones and other personal electronic devices before or after school, during their lunch period, and during passing periods, as long as they do not create a distraction or a disruption or cause the student to be tardy for the next period.

Students may not use:

- Personal electronic devices during class periods (including bathroom breaks). This includes, but is not limited to:
 - cell phones, mp3 players, earbuds/headphones, video gaming consoles, etc.
- Use of personal electronic devices in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including to bully or to post derogatory statements about students, teachers, or staff via text message or social media.

Cell phones that ring or vibrate excessively, or in any other way disrupt the educational process of a class, are grounds for confiscation of the device by school staff. ERA is not responsible for lost or stolen student property, including cell phones and electronic devices. Students who

possess cell phones or other electronic devices at school are responsible for the security of the device(s) at all times.

1st Offense - Warning given one on one to student by the teacher.

2nd Offense - Teacher takes cell phone until the end of the class, reduces grade in Essential Skills category , and calls home to parents/guardians and documents the incident in IC Response to intervention log.

3rd Offense - Teacher takes cell phone and brings it to the office (not with a TA/Alternate student). Student can pick up at the end of the day. Teacher reduces grade in the Essential Skills category and calls home and documents in the IC Response to Intervention Log.

4th Offense - Teacher takes cell phone and brings it to the office (not with a TA or alternate student). Student can pick up at the end of the day, but further disciplinary action will be taken, such as Friday School, ISS, OSS etc. and the Dean will document and contact home. Teacher reduces the grade in the Essential Skills category.

5th Offense - The student will be placed on a behavior plan and the student will be required to drop their phone off in the front office at the start of the day and pick up their phone at the conclusion of school. Teachers reduce grade in the Essential Skills category.

Additional Policies

For more information, please see the [Student/Parent Handbook](#) or utilize the quick links below:

[Excused Absences](#)

[Pre-arranged Absence](#)

[Unexcused Absences](#)

[Tardiness](#)

[Student Honor Code](#)

[Plagiarism, AI Usage, and Cheating Policy](#)

[Cell Phones & Other Personal Electronic Devices](#)

Acknowledgment of Receipt

I have reviewed and understand the course syllabus for Music Appreciation Class 2026-2027

Student Name (Printed): _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Question or Comments?
