

**La Cañada High School**  
***Vocal Ensemble P***

**I. Course Title – Vocal Ensemble**

**II. Grade Level(s) – 9-12th**

**III. Length/Credit – Full Year/ 10**

**IV. Preparations – Basic musicianship skills expected. Audition and teacher approval.**

**V. Course Description**

This course focuses on the beginning, developing singer and involves beginning content and instruction. Using a wide variety of skill appropriate challenging choral literature, this course is designed to introduce any student to the fundamentals of singing and music. Students will learn techniques to improve their individual voice, and demonstrate their knowledge of music theory, music reading, familiarity with music periods, composers and styles, concepts of interpretation, and overall performance skills learned throughout the class. A minimum of two public performances each semester provides for centered direction, creative expression, positive reinforcement and comparative evaluation.

The nature of the course further serves to underscore and enhance the values of "group effort" and "teamwork". Completion of the course meets the LCHS Fine Arts requirement for high school graduation.

Students who are enrolled in this course for multiple years will learn the various concepts and techniques below at different levels. For each year, the student is in the ensemble they will graduate to a higher level of understanding based upon the different levels of academic rigor. Students will be able to remember, understand, and apply concepts, skills and information presented in this course during rehearsals, performances, and other class sessions. In addition to students being able to remember, understand and apply, the concepts and skills into their musical practice, students will be able to analyze the concepts, skills, and information. When analyzing, the students will be able to break down the essential components of each concept and skill for a deeper knowledge of the subject matter.

**VI. Standards/ESLRs Addressed**

**1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION**

Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to Music

Students read, notate, listen to, analyze, and describe music and other aural information, using the terminology of music.

**Read and Notate Music**

- 1.1 Read an instrumental or vocal score of up to four staves and explain how the elements of music are used.

- 1.2 Transcribe simple songs when presented aurally into melodic and rhythmic notation (level of difficulty: 1 on a scale of 1-6).
- 1.3 Sight-read music accurately and expressively (level of difficulty: 3 on a scale of 1-6).

### **Listen to, Analyze, and Describe Music**

- 1.4 Analyze and describe the use of musical elements and expressive devices (e.g., articulation, dynamic markings) in aural examples in a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres, styles, and cultures.
- 1.5 Identify and explain a variety of compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity, variety, tension, and release in aural examples.
- 1.6 Analyze the use of form in a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres, styles, and cultures.

## **2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

### **Creating, Performing, and Participating in Music**

Students apply vocal and instrumental musical skills in performing a varied repertoire of music. They compose and arrange music and improvise melodies, variations, and accompaniments, using digital/electronic technology when appropriate.

### **Apply Vocal and Instrumental Skills**

- 2.1 Sing a repertoire of vocal literature representing various genres, styles, and cultures with expression, technical accuracy, tone quality, vowel shape, and articulation written and memorized, by oneself and in ensembles (level of difficulty: 4 on a scale of 1-6).
- 2.2 Sing music written in three or four parts with and without accompaniment.
- 2.3 Sing in small ensembles, with one performer for each part.
- 2.4 Perform on an instrument a repertoire of instrumental literature representing various genres, styles, and cultures with expression, technical accuracy, tone quality, and articulation, by oneself and in ensembles (level of difficulty: 4 on a scale of 1-6).
- 2.5 Perform on an instrument in small ensembles, with one performer for each part.

### **Compose, Arrange, and Improvise**

- 2.6 Compose music, using musical elements for expressive effect.
- 2.7 Compose and arrange music for voices or various acoustic or digital/electronic instruments, using appropriate ranges for traditional sources of sound.
- 2.8 Arrange pieces for voices and instruments other than those for which the pieces were originally written.
- 2.9 Improvise harmonizing parts, using an appropriate style.
- 2.10 Improvise original melodies over given chord progressions.

## **3.0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT**

### **Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of Music**

Students analyze the role of music in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting cultural diversity as it relates to music, musicians, and composers.

### **Role of Music**

- 3.1 Identify the sources of musical genres of the United States, trace the evolution of those genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them.
- 3.2 Explain the various roles that musicians perform, identify representative individuals who have functioned in each role, and explain their activities and achievements.

### **Diversity of Music**

- 3.3 Describe the differences between styles in traditional folk genres within the United States.
- 3.4 Perform music from various cultures and time periods.
- 3.5 Classify, by genre or style and historical period or culture, unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music and explain the reasoning for the classification.

## **4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING**

Responding to, Analyzing, and Making Judgments About Works of Music

Students critically assess and derive meaning from works of music and the performance of musicians according to the elements of music, aesthetic qualities, and human responses.

### **Analyze and Critically Assess**

- 4.1 Develop specific criteria for making informed critical evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations and apply those criteria in personal participation in music.
- 4.2 Evaluate a performance, composition, arrangement, or improvisation by comparing each with an exemplary model.

### **Derive Meaning**

- 4.3 Explain how people in a particular culture use and respond to specific musical works from that culture.
- 4.4 Describe the means used to create images or evoke feelings and emotions in musical works from various cultures.

## **5.0 CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS**

Connecting and Applying What Is Learned in Music to Learning in Other Art Forms and Subject Areas and to Careers

Students apply what they learn in music across subject areas. They develop competencies and creative skills in problem solving, communication, and management of time and resources that contribute to lifelong learning and career skills. They also learn about careers in and related to music.

## **Connections and Applications**

- 5.1 Explain how elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles are used in similar and distinctive ways in the various arts.
- 5.2 Analyze the role and function of music in radio, television, and advertising.

## **Careers and Career-Related Skills**

- 5.3 Research musical careers in radio, television, and advertising.

## **VII. Brief Course Outline**

### **1. Music Theory Unit**

Students will have working knowledge of Music Theory. This will be directly applied to their repertoire that they sing in each of the Concert Units.

**Key Assignment** – The students will complete different assessments throughout the learning process. However, the key assignment will be the real-world application to their rehearsal process for their repertoire that they sing in each of their Concert Units.

**Standards Met from List Above** – 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.11

### **2. Fall Concert Unit**

Students will be learning repertoire--around five songs-- that will be appropriate for the level of skill demonstrated by the ensemble. These pieces, or songs, will vary in cultural backgrounds and languages. While learning this music, the students will work to perfect standard choral techniques, such as blend, vowel unification, and proper vocal production. Furthermore, they will continue to create good rehearsal habits when it comes to appropriate recognition of markings in one's score, music notation, and will continue to learn how to properly mark up one's score during a rehearsal. In addition, students will dissect the story of each of their songs and will draw on contextual analysis and further inquiry/research.

**Key Assignment** – The students will perform these songs in a professional manner that articulates the story and demonstrates mastery of standard choral techniques, such as blend, vowel unification, and proper vocal production. Once the performance is concluded they will dive deeper into one of their performed pieces and will further dissect the piece by writing a paper about the composer, cultural background, story of the piece and performance experience when performing that piece of music.

**Standards Met from List Above** – 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2

### **3. Winter Concert Unit**

Students will be learning repertoire--around five songs-- that will revolve around winter and its many holidays celebrated; these pieces will be appropriate for the level of skill demonstrated by the ensemble. These pieces, or songs, will vary in cultural

backgrounds and languages. While learning this music the students will work to perfect standard choral techniques, such as blend, vowel unification, and proper vocal production. Furthermore, they will continue to create good rehearsal habits when it comes to appropriate recognition of markings in one's score, music notation, and will continue to learn how to properly mark up one's score during a rehearsal. In addition, students will dissect the story of each of their songs and will draw on contextual analysis and further inquiry/research.

**Key Assignment** – The students will perform these songs in a professional manner that articulates the story and demonstrates mastery of standard choral techniques, such as blend, vowel unification, and proper vocal production. Student will perform these pieces many times throughout the winter season and thus, instead of a paper, the students will be discussing, in group settings, the progress every time a performance concludes. In addition, cultural and song background will be discussed intensely during this time.

**Standards Met from List Above** – 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2

#### 4. Spring Concert Unit

Students will be learning repertoire--around five songs-- that will be appropriate for the level of skill demonstrated by the ensemble. These pieces, or songs, will vary in cultural backgrounds and languages. While learning this music the students will work to perfect standard choral techniques, such as blend, vowel unification, and proper vocal production. Furthermore, they will continue to create good rehearsal habits when it comes to appropriate recognition of markings in one's score, music notation, and will continue to learn how to properly mark up one's score during a rehearsal. In addition, students will dissect the story of each of their songs and will draw on contextual analysis and further inquiry/research.

**Key Assignment** – The students will perform these songs in a professional manner that articulates the story and demonstrates mastery of standard choral techniques, such as blend, vowel unification, and proper vocal production. Once the performance is concluded, they will dive deeper into one of their performed pieces and will further dissect the piece by writing a paper about the composer, cultural background, story of the piece and performance experience when performing that piece of music.

**Standards Met from List Above** – 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2

#### 5. Pops Concert Unit

Students will be learning repertoire--about five songs-- that will revolve around a specific industry musical genre; these pieces will be appropriate for the level of skill demonstrated by the ensemble. While learning this music the students will work to perfect standard choral techniques, such as blend, vowel unification, and proper vocal production; these are intended to be scaled appropriately for the specific musical genre being performed. Furthermore, they will continue to create good rehearsal habits when it comes to appropriate recognition of markings in one's score, music notation, and will

continue to learn how to properly mark up one's score during a rehearsal. In addition, students will learn how to perform with a live pit band or orchestra, similar to how many singers perform in the music industry. This is an essential skill that will be very practical for the students to master for real-life application.

**Key Assignment** – The students will perform these songs in a professional manner that articulates the story and demonstrates mastery of standard choral techniques, such as blend, vowel unification, and proper vocal production. Student will perform these pieces in a manner that is different than other concerts; they will be working with a very different accompaniment. Students will demonstrate their ability to work with variable accompaniment in the form of a full pit band.

**Standards Met from List Above** – 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3

#### **VIII. Methods of Assessment**

Individual Performance  
Attendance to the Major Concerts  
Occasional Knowledge Assessment Written or Oral

#### **IX. Materials/Textbook(s)**

None other than sheet musics selected by the Instructor

#### **X. Seeking “a-f” Approval – Yes / Visual Performing Arts (F)**

#### **XI. Seeking AP Class Approval – No.**