Social and Spiritual Development Strand

Unit 1: Expressive Arts

Module 1.3 Music

Music Guide

Additional Support Material
Acknowledgements

Materials written and compiled by Sue Lauer.

Layout and diagrams supported by Nick Lauer.

Date: 4 April 2002
Unit outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expressive Arts</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Icons

- 📚 Read or research
- 📝 Write or summarise
- ⬍ Activity or discussion
Table of contents

1. Solfa symbols
2. Advanced singing techniques
3. Notation
4. Scale
5. The Guitar
6. Keyboards
7. Some Musical terms explained
8. Integrated lesson – BINGO
9. Integrated lesson – LA CUCARACHA
Advanced singing techniques

- **Good posture and breathing, alertness and control**: The body should be upright but not stiff. Breathing should be controlled and should use the full lungs and not be shallow upper chest breathing. Singers should listen carefully to the sounds they are producing to make sure they fit with the rest of the group.

- **Diction and tone colour**: Singers should practise the vowel and consonant sounds so they can be heard distinctly, and a variety of different tonal colours so they can change their voice to suit the cultural background of the song.

- **Accurate intervals and rhythm**: Each song has its own rhythm, melody and harmony which must be learnt. Listen carefully to tapes of a variety of songs to pick up the little differences that occur from one culture or style to another.

- **Expressive singing tone**: Singers should be able to vary their voices from loud to soft and from slow to fast while still keeping the meaning clear. The way the words are sung should express the emotions or feelings of the song.

- **Tempo and style**: These elements of music should suit the meaning of the song and the cultural context.

- **Phrasing**: Singers should learn to breath at the beginning and end of each phrase. Phrases should be taught separately so the meaning of each phrase is clear.

- **Harmonic balance and voice blending**: Singers should make sure that they don't sing too loudly or too softly when they are singing harmony parts. They should listen to hear if their voices are blending with the other harmony parts in a balanced way.
**Musical Tone and Notation**

Most Western music is based on major and minor scales—traditional patterns of pitches that sound pleasing to the ear. Composers write down these pitches using notation—a code of signs and symbols that enables a musician to interpret and play a musical composition.

- A key is a set of related notes. The key signature shows which key the music is in.
- The tempo marking tells the musician how fast the music should go. Allegro means fast.
- When more than two notes are played together, the tones produced are called a chord.
- A natural sign cancels the preceding sharp or flat on that particular note.
- A piece of music is divided into measures called bars, each with the same number of beats. The bar line shows where the measure ends.
- Rests show the musician where, and for how long, to be silent.
- Dynamic markings tell the player how loud or soft to play the music. mf stands for mezzo-forte, or moderately loud.
- The stem and colouring of a note indicates its length. These are quavers.
- The time signature shows the number of beats in a measure and which type of note gets one beat.
- This sign, meaning crotchet, indicates that the music becomes gradually louder.

**Scale**

Pitches are named from low to high using seven letters: A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. This series of letters is repeated as the notes continue to ascend in pitch.

- Pitches lying in between stave’s lines and spaces are shown using sharp (#) and flat (b) signs.
- One octave (eight notes) of the scale of C major

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**Additional Support Material**
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