

PENNSYLVANIA  
MUSIC  
EDUCATORS  
CURRICULUM  
MODEL FOR  
MUSIC  
K - 12

Pennsylvania Music Educators Association  
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## **PREFACE**

In October, 1999, a committee met in Bedford, Pennsylvania to update the existing PMEA Curriculum Model for Music to reflect a standards-based guide. The first document included relevant excerpts from the then 1991 Pennsylvania Department of Education Mandated Revision of Chapter 5.

This revised standards-based document is intended to serve as a model for local districts to use in developing their own curricula. It should not be adopted verbatim since local situations and needs should be reflected. It is hoped, however, that this document will be of help to those music educators charged with curriculum writing throughout the state.

In an effort to illustrate the correlation between the PA model curriculum and the National Standards for Arts Education (Music) an outline of the National Content Standards is included in this document on page 4. Educators are encouraged to refer to the National Achievement Standards (assessment criteria) when developing local curricula.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## NATIONAL STANDARDS IN THE ARTS

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### Pre-K Standards

#### 1. Singing and playing instruments:

- a. Children use their voices expressively as they speak, chant, and sing.
- b. Children sing a variety of simple songs in various keys, meters, and genres, alone and with a group, becoming increasingly accurate in rhythm and pitch.
- c. Children experiment with a variety of instruments and other sound sources.
- d. Children play simple melodies and accompaniments on instruments.

#### 2. Creating music:

- a. Children improvise songs to accompany their play activities.
- b. Children improvise instrumental accompaniments to songs, recorded selections, stories, and poems.
- c. Children create short pieces of music, using voices, instruments, and other sound sources.
- d. Children invent and use original graphic or symbolic systems to represent vocal and instrumental sounds and musical ideas.

#### 3. Responding to music:

- a. Children identify the sources of a wide variety of sounds.
- b. Children respond through movement to music of various tempos, meters, dynamics, modes, genres, and styles to express what they hear and feel in works of music.
- c. Children participate freely in music activities.

#### 4. Understanding music:

- a. Children use their own vocabulary and standard music vocabulary to describe voices, instruments, music notation, and music of various genres, styles, and periods from diverse cultures.
- b. Children sing, play instruments, move, or verbalize to demonstrate awareness of the elements of music and changes in their usage.
- c. Children demonstrate an awareness of music as a part of daily life.

## Grades K - 4

### **1. Content Standard:** *Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music:*

- a. Students sing independently, on pitch and in rhythm, with appropriate timbre, diction, and posture, and maintain a steady tempo.
- b. Students sing expressively, with appropriate dynamics, phrasing, and interpretation.
- c. Students sing from memory a varied repertoire of songs representing genres and styles from diverse cultures.
- d. Students sing ostinatos, partner songs, and rounds.
- e. Students sing in groups, blending vocal timbres, matching dynamic levels, and responding to the cues of a conductor.

### **2. Content Standard:** *Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music:*

- a. Students perform on pitch, in rhythm, with appropriate dynamics and timbre, and maintain a steady tempo.
- b. Students perform easy rhythmic, melodic, and chordal patterns accurately and independently on rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic classroom instruments.
- c. Students perform expressively a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres and styles.
- d. Students echo short rhythms and melodic patterns.
- e. Students perform in groups, blending instrumental timbres, matching dynamic levels, and responding to the cues of a conductor.
- f. Students perform independent instrumental parts while other students sing or play contrasting parts.

### **3. Content Standard:** *Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments:*

- a. Students improvise “answers” in the same style to given rhythmic and melodic phrases.
- b. Students improvise simple rhythmic and melodic ostinato accompaniments.
- c. Students improvise simple rhythmic variations and simple melodic embellishments on familiar melodies.
- d. Students improvise short songs and instrumental pieces, using a variety of sound sources in their improvisations, including traditional sounds, nontraditional sounds available in the classroom, body sounds, and sounds produced by electronic means.

### **4. Content Standard:** *Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines:*

- a. Students create and arrange music to accompany readings or dramatizations.
- b. Students create and arrange short songs and instrumental pieces within specified guidelines.
- c. Students use a variety of sound sources when composing.

**5. Content Standard:** *Reading and notating music:*

- a. Students read whole, half, dotted half, quarter, and eighth notes in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8 meter signatures.
- b. Students use a system (i.e. syllables, numbers, or letters) to read simple pitch notation in the treble clef in major keys.
- c. Students identify symbols and traditional terms referring to dynamics, tempo, and articulation and interpret them correctly when performing.
- d. Students use standard symbols to notate meter, rhythm, pitch, and dynamics in simple patterns presented by the teacher.

**6. Content Standard:** *Listening to, analyzing, and describing music:*

- a. Students identify simple music forms when presented aurally.
- b. Students demonstrate perceptual skills by moving, by answering questions about, and by describing aural examples of music of various styles representing diverse cultures.
- c. Students use appropriate terminology in explaining music, music notation, music instruments and voices, and music performances.
- d. Students identify the sounds of a variety of instruments, including many orchestra and band instruments and instruments from various cultures, as well as children's voices and male and female adult voices.
- e. Students respond through purposeful movement to selected prominent music characteristics or to specific music events while listening to music.

**7. Content Standard:** *Evaluating music and music performances.*

- a. Students devise criteria for evaluating performances and compositions.
- b. Students explain, using appropriate music terminology, their personal preferences for specific musical works and styles.

**8. Content Standard:** *Understanding relationships between music, the other arts and disciplines outside the arts*

- a. Students identify similarities and differences in the meanings of common terms used in the various arts.
- b. Students identify ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with those of music.

**9. Content Standard:** *Understanding music in relation to history and culture:*

- a. Students identify, by genre or style, aural examples of music from various historical periods and cultures.
- b. Students describe in simple terms how elements of music are used in music examples from various cultures of the world.
- c. Students identify various uses of music in their daily experiences and describe characteristics that make certain music suitable for each use.
- d. Students identify and describe roles of musicians in various settings and cultures.
- e. Students demonstrate audience behavior appropriate for the context and style of music performed.

## Grades 5 - 8

### **1. Content Standard:** *Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music:*

- a. Students sing accurately and with good breath control throughout their singing ranges, alone and in small and large ensembles.
- b. Students sing, with expression and technical accuracy, a repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 2, on a scale of 1 to 6, including some songs performed from memory.
- c. Students sing music representing diverse genres and cultures, with expression appropriate for the work being performed.
- d. Students sing music written in two and three parts.
- e. Students who participate in a choral ensemble sing with expression and technical accuracy a varied repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 3, on a scale of 1 to 6, including some songs performed from memory.

### **2. Content Standard:** *Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music:*

- a. Students perform on at least one instrument accurately and independently, alone and in small and large ensembles, with good posture, good playing position, and good breath, bow, or stick control.
- b. Students perform with expression and technical accuracy on at least one string, wind, percussion, or classroom instrument a repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 2, on a scale of 1 to 6.
- c. Students perform music representing diverse genres and cultures, with expression appropriate for the work being performed.
- d. Students play by ear simple melodies on a melodic instrument and simple accompaniments on a harmonic instrument.
- e. Students who participate in an instrumental ensemble or class perform with expression and technical accuracy a varied repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 3, on a scale of 1 to 6, including some solos performed from memory.

### **3. Content Standard:** *Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments:*

- a. Students improvise simple harmonic accompaniments.
- b. Students improvise melodic embellishments and simple rhythmic and melodic variations on given pentatonic melodies and melodies in major keys.
- c. Students improvise short melodies, unaccompanied and over given rhythmic accompaniments, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality.

### **4. Content Standard:** *Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines:*

- a. Students compose short pieces within specified guidelines, demonstrating how the elements of music are used to achieve unity and variety, tension and release, and balance.
- b. Students arrange simple pieces for voices or instruments other than those for which the pieces were written.
- c. Students use a variety of traditional and nontraditional sound sources and electronic media when composing and arranging.

**5. Content Standard:** *Reading and notating music:*

- a. Students read whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, and dotted notes and rests in 2/4, 3/4, 6/8, 3/8 and alla breve meter signatures.
- b. Students read at sight simple melodies in both the treble and bass clefs.
- c. Students identify and define standard notation symbols for pitch, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, articulation, and expression.
- d. Students use standard notation to record their musical ideas and the musical ideas of others.
- e. Students who participate in a choral or instrumental ensemble or class sight read, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of 2, on a scale of 1 to 6.

**6. Content Standard:** *Listening to, analyzing, and describing music:*

- a. Students describe specific music events in a given aural example, using appropriate terminology.
- b. Students analyze the uses of elements of music in aural examples representing diverse genres and cultures.
- c. Students demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of meter, rhythm, tonality, intervals, chords, and harmonic progressions in their analyses of music.

**7. Content Standard:** *Evaluating music and music performances:*

- a. Students develop criteria for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of music performances and compositions and apply the criteria in their personal listening and performing.
- b. Students evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their own and others' performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations by applying specific criteria appropriate for the style of the music and offer constructive suggestions for improvement.

**8. Content Standard:** *Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts:*

- a. Students compare in two or more arts how the characteristic materials of each art can be used to transform similar events, scenes, emotions, or ideas into works of art.
- b. Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with those of music.

**9. Content Standard:** *Understanding music in relation to history and culture:*

- a. Students describe distinguishing characteristics of representative music genres and styles from a variety of cultures.
- b. Students classify by genre and style (and, if applicable, by historical periods, composer and title) a varied body of exemplary (that is, high-quality and characteristic) musical works and explain the characteristics that cause each work to be considered exemplary.
- c. Students compare, in several cultures of the world, functions music serves, roles of musicians, and conditions under which music is typically performed.



## Grades 9 - 12

### 1. Content Standard: *Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music:*

#### **Proficient:**

- a. Students sing with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 4, on a scale of 1 to 6, including some songs performed from memory.
- b. Students sing music written in four parts, with and without accompaniment.
- c. Students demonstrate well-developed ensemble skills.

#### **Advanced:**

- d. Students sing with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 5, on a scale of 1 to 6.
- e. Students sing music written in more than four parts.
- f. Students sing in small ensembles with one student on a part.

### 2. Content Standard: *Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music:*

#### **Proficient:**

- a. Students perform with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 4, on a scale of 1 to 6.
- b. Students perform an appropriate part in an ensemble, demonstrating well-developed ensemble skills.
- c. Students perform in small ensembles with one student on a part.

#### **Advanced:**

- d. Students perform with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 5, on a scale of 1 to 6.

### 3. Content Standard: *Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments:*

#### **Proficient:**

- a. Students improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts.
- b. Students improvise rhythmic and melodic variations on given pentatonic melodies and melodies in major and minor keys.
- c. Students improvise original melodies over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality.

#### **Advanced:**

- d. Students improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts in a variety of styles.
- e. Students improvise original melodies in a variety of styles, over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality.

### 4. Content Standard: *Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines:*

#### **Proficient:**

- a. Students compose music in several distinct styles, demonstrating creativity in using the elements of music for expressive effect.
- b. Students arrange pieces for voices or instruments other than those for which the pieces were written in ways that preserve or enhance the expressive effect of the music.

- c. Students compose and arrange music for voices and various acoustic and electronic instruments, demonstrating knowledge of the ranges and traditional usages of the sound sources.

**Advanced:**

d. Students compose music, demonstrating imagination and technical skill in applying the principles of composition.

**5. Content Standard:** *Reading and notating music:*

**Proficient:**

a. Students demonstrate the ability to read an instrumental or vocal score of up to four staves by describing how the elements of music are used.

b. Students who participate in a choral or instrumental ensemble or class sight read, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of 3, on a scale of 1 to 6.

**Advanced:**

c. Students demonstrate the ability to read a full instrumental or vocal score by describing how the elements of music are used and explaining all transpositions and clefs.

d. Students interpret nonstandard notation symbols used by some twentieth century composers.

e. Students who participate in a choral or instrumental ensemble or class sight read, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of 4, on a scale of 1 to 6.

**6. Content Standard:** *Listening to, analyzing, and describing music:*

**Proficient:**

a. Students analyze aural examples of a varied repertoire of music, representing diverse genres and cultures, by describing the uses of elements of music and expressive devices.

b. Students demonstrate extensive knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music.

c. Students identify and explain compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity and variety and tension and release in a musical work and give examples of other works that make similar uses of these devices and techniques.

**Advanced:**

d. Students demonstrate the ability to perceive and remember music events by describing in detail significant events occurring in a given aural example.

e. Students compare ways in which musical materials are used in a given example relative to ways in which they are used in other works of the same genre or style.

f. Students analyze and describe uses of the elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive.

**7. Content Standard:** *Evaluating music and music performances:*

**Proficient:**

a. Students evolve specific criteria for making informed, critical evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations and apply the criteria in their personal participation in music.

b. Students evaluate a performance, composition, arrangement, or improvisation by comparing it to similar or exemplary models.

**Advanced:**

c. Students evaluate a given musical work in terms of its aesthetic qualities and explain the musical means it uses to evoke feelings and emotions.

**8. Content Standard:** *Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts:*

**Proficient:**

- a. Students explain how elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles are used in similar and distinctive ways in the various arts and cite examples.
- b. Students compare characteristics of two or more arts within a particular historical period or style and cite examples from various cultures.
- c. Students explain ways in which the principles and subject matter of various disciplines outside the arts are interrelated with those of music.

**Advanced:**

- d. Students compare the uses of characteristic elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles among the arts in different historical periods and different cultures.
- e. Students explain how the roles of creators, performers, and others involved in the production and presentation of the arts are similar to and different from one another in the various arts.

**9. Content Standard:** *Understanding music in relation to history and culture:*

**Proficient:**

- a. Students classify by genre or style and by historical period or culture unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music and explain the reasoning behind their classifications.
- b. Students identify sources of American music genres, trace the evolution of those genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them.
- c. Students identify various roles that musicians perform, cite representative individuals who have functioned in each role, and describe their activities and achievements.

**Advanced:**

- d. Students identify and explain the stylistic features of a given musical work that serve to define its aesthetic tradition and its historical or cultural context.
- e. Students identify and describe music genres or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions, identify the cultural source of each influence, and trace the historical conditions that produced the synthesis of influences.

## PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING STANDARDS-BASED CURRICULA

Following is an outline of the seven-step process employed by the committee in writing this curriculum guide. The same procedure is applicable to all curricular development. The development of a cogent philosophy of music education was the first priority since an individual or departmental philosophy guides all other curricular and instructional decisions. Strands of curricular content, existing across all settings and grade levels, were identified also. The selected strands were: performing, listening/responding, and creating. Local districts may choose not to use strands or identify others depending up their philosophy and the needs of their students.

- Step #1:** Develop a philosophy stating the purpose of your program.
- Step #2:** Assign national standards to the identified strands in each setting:
- Strands: performing, listening/responding, creating
  - Instructional Settings: general music, choral, and instrumental
- Step #3:** Design assessment tasks for each strand in relation to National Standards
- Step #4:** Configure a Curriculum Map by setting and grade level. Course goals, in an appropriate scope and sequence should be identified and incorporated into the map.
- Step #5:** Create a Planned Instruction document for each course. Each document should include:
- curricular goals and content objectives related to those identified during curricular mapping.
  - a list of materials.
  - a chronological sequence of instruction.
  - an assessment plan with benchmarking to determine achievement of the stated goals.
  - a list of instructional adaptations for either enrichment or remediation.
- Step #6:** Implement the Planned Instruction. Individual teachers will select activities, materials, and assessment tasks based on the Planned Instruction guidelines.
- Step #7:** Evaluate the effectiveness of the program.
- Measure student progress toward achievement of the standards.
  - Revise the curriculum based on the results of student measurements.

## DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

- 1. Adaptations:** Changes to curriculum or instruction designed to accommodate either extensions or remediation.
- 2. Extension:** Activities beyond the written curriculum designed for the gifted and talented.
- 3. Journal:** Collections of students' written responses to musical experiences. These reflections may include narratives, self assessments, or peer evaluations that document growth over time.
- 4. "Meaning" in music:** Personal outcomes of music experiences. These outcomes may be either intrinsic (derived from the music itself) or extrinsic (derived from extra-musical associations).
- 5. Music Entity:** Aural identification of music elements (i.e. rhythm pattern, a genre, a historical style period, a crescendo).
- 6. Portfolio:** A repository of student work that may contain a collection of primary source material (i.e. audio/video tapes, original compositions or arrangements, journal entries, etc.) documenting growth over time.
- 7. Remediation:** Activities beyond the written curriculum designed for students with special needs.
- 8. Setting:** An instructional area (i.e. general music, choral, or instrumental).
- 9. Strand:** A cohesive element found throughout a curriculum. It is present in all settings and at all grade levels.

## **DEVELOPING A PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC EDUCATION**

A philosophy is a statement of beliefs describing the reasons for and the nature of music education. According to Reimer (1989), a philosophy serves to guide the efforts of an entire group and ensures that “. . . individuals who comprise the group have come to an understanding of the nature and the value of their individual endeavors” (p. 4). Most importantly, however, is the fact that everything music educators do as part of their job is a reflection of their beliefs about music. “Music teachers who have forged a philosophy based on a probing analysis of the nature of music can act with confidence, knowing that whatever they choose to do will be in consonance with the values of the art they represent” (Reimer, 1989, p. 7).

A comprehensive philosophy of music education should address five questions:

1. What is music?
2. Why is music a necessary, integral part of education?
3. To whom should it be taught?
3. By whom should it be taught?
5. What are the implications of the philosophy for instruction?

### **Reference**

Reimer, B. (1989). A Philosophy of Music Education. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

## MODEL PHILOSOPHY

The Pennsylvania Music Educators Association's commitment to music education is grounded in the recognition of the importance and value of music for the individual, the community and the world. Music is the aural art form which satisfies the human need to respond to life experiences. This is evidenced by the pervasiveness of music throughout history in all cultures. Research confirms that all persons have innate potential in music. Music instruction must be included in the school curriculum so all students are able to realize this potential and more fully participate in the human experience. Therefore, each school curriculum must:

- Offer a planned sequential music curriculum, K-12, taught by certified music educators;
- Provide experiences for all students in general music, choral and instrumental settings;
- Provide, in all settings, a variety of music experiences which include performing, listening/responding, and creating;
- Provide multicultural and historical perspectives of music which reflect a wide diversity of peoples, styles, and times;
- Provide modes for assessing students' development in music appropriate to the aural nature of the art.

## GENERAL MUSIC

Benchmarks (novice, intermediate and advanced) are included for each of the following Content Standards.

### **PERFORMING STANDARDS**

**CONTENT STANDARD:** All students sing independently and with others in relation to various personal and/or community experiences.

**ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS:**

**NOVICE:** All students demonstrate use of the singing voice by performing alone and with others.

**PROFICIENT:** All students sing in tune alone and with others.

**ADVANCED:** All students sing in harmony.

*National Standards: 1, 5, 9*

*PA State Standards: 9.1, 9.2*

**CONTENT STANDARD:** All students interpret expressive aspects of music through kinesthetic response.

**ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS:**

**NOVICE:** All students respond kinesthetically to pulse and rhythmic patterns in music.

**PROFICIENT:** All students respond kinesthetically to additional music entities.\*

**ADVANCED:** All students respond kinesthetically to combinations of music entities.

*National Standards: 6, 8*

*PA State Standards: 9.2, 9.3, 9.4*

\* Refer to Page 13

### **LISTENING/RESPONDING STANDARDS**

**CONTENT STANDARD:** All students respond aesthetically to music.

**ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS:**

**NOVICE:** All students identify music entities by performing (singing, playing instruments and moving) and comparing.

**PROFICIENT:** All students identify music entities by comparing and describing.

**ADVANCED:** All students identify music entities by describing and analyzing.

*National Standards: 1, 2, 6, 9*

*PA State Standards: 9.1*



## **CREATING STANDARDS**

CONTENT STANDARD: All students improvise and compose music.

### ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS:

NOVICE: All students explore choices when making music.

PROFICIENT: All students select music entities to make music.

ADVANCED: All students manipulate music entities to compose original music.

*National Standards: 3, 4, 5*

## **CHORAL/INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC**

### **PERFORMING STANDARDS**

CONTENT STANDARD: All students independently choose and prepare unfamiliar music and perform it artistically.

### ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS:

NOVICE: All students demonstrate basic skills in their performance medium.

PROFICIENT: All students combine music skills and competencies in their performance medium, alone and within an ensemble(s).

ADVANCED: All students perform independently and within an ensemble(s) using various textures and styles.

*National Standards: 1, 2, 5*

*PA State Standards: 9.1*

### **LISTENING/RESPONDING STANDARDS**

CONTENT STANDARD: All students justify personal ideas and responses about the intrinsic aesthetic qualities of music.

### ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS:

NOVICE: All students identify, describe, and apply different music entities within performances.

PROFICIENT: All students compare and analyze music entities within performances.

ADVANCED: All students critically assess music performances which reflect a wide diversity of peoples, styles, and times.

*National Standards: 7, 8, 9*

*PA State Standards: 9.2, 9.3, 9.4*

## **CREATING STANDARDS**

CONTENT STANDARD: All students express original music ideas by performing.

ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS:

NOVICE: All students explore choices by performing.

PROFICIENT: All students select music entities to perform.

ADVANCED: All students manipulate music entities to realize original music ideas by performing.

*National Standards: 1, 2, 3, 5*

*PA State Standards: 9.1*

## **ASSESSMENT**

Design the appropriate assessments for each strand\* that are direct and involve a variety of methods which acknowledge the existence of multiple intelligences and learning styles.

MENC publications, which can be found at [www.menc.org/alpha.html](http://www.menc.org/alpha.html), are a valuable resource for curriculum and assessment development.

In addition to traditional means of evaluation, the following are recommended especially for use in portfolios. These tools may be used by the teacher for student assessment or by the student for self-assessment.

### **PERFORMANCE - SINGING**

Audio tapes of students' singing favorite songs spanning their educational years  
Checklist or database documenting student's performance and work over time

### **PERFORMANCE - KINESTHETIC**

Video tape of kinesthetic response to music over a period of time  
Videotape of student's conducting experiences

### **LISTENING/RESPONDING**

Recital of original composition with students' program notes  
Videotape of kinesthetic response to music over a period of time  
Comparison of selected musical examples

### **CREATING**

Recital of original composition with students' program notes  
Student portfolio of original compositions  
Checklist or database documenting student's performance and work over time  
Documentation of student's improvisatory experiences