

Canterbury Public Schools
Music Grade 7 and 8 Musical Theater

Subject	Music
Grade Level	7/8
Unit Title	Musical Theatre
Unit Goals	-interact with musical theatre in order understand musical themes and motifs -relate musical themes and motifs with language arts
Pacing (# of weeks)	8 Weeks (1 Class per Week)
Standards	Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and explain appropriateness to the context, citing evidence from the elements of music Describe a personal interpretation of how creators' and performers' application of the elements of music and expressive qualities, within genres and cultural and historical context, convey expressive intent.
Content/Conceptual Knowledge (know)	How musical themes and motifs create musical theatre How to apply and establish criteria to evaluate musical works and performances The elements of music
Skills (be able to do)	Identify musical themes and motifs Explain the elements of music and how creators and performers apply them
Essential Questions	How does musical theatre employ the elements of music? How does interpretation inform performance? How do you create musical theatre?
Enduring Understandings	There are a lot of moving parts in musical theatre, all working together to create a final product. Personal interpretations of music or character direct the way we perform.
Vocabulary	Theme, motif, role, character, plot, musical idea, composition, melody
Common Learning Experiences broken down by standard addressed in the unit	Evaluating a work of musical theatre, applying and establishing criteria to do so. Listen to same musical work performed by different actors, and then describe how they would approach that role
Assessments	Roleplay using rubric for roleplaying Participation Written work
Resources	Scripts

	Videos Full-Length musicals
Student Resources	Scripts Videos Full-Length musicals
Teacher Resources	Scripts Videos Full-Length musicals
Strategies	Modeling Show videos Highlight goal of lesson in video shown
Behaviors that will lead to success	Perseverance Confidence in performance Roleplay a character

Certainly! Below is a syllabus for a **Musical Theater Unit** for 7th and 8th graders that aligns with the standards you've provided. The unit will incorporate an exploration of musical works and performances, allowing students to evaluate them, analyze how elements of music and expressive qualities contribute to a performance, and develop their personal interpretations of these elements.

Musical Theater Unit Syllabus (7th and 8th Grade)

Course Overview: This unit will introduce students to the world of musical theater, focusing on evaluating and interpreting music and performance. Students will explore how the elements of music (such as melody, harmony, rhythm, and dynamics) and expressive qualities (such as timbre, texture, and tempo) help convey the meaning and emotion in musical theater performances. By the end of the unit, students will be able to analyze performances, articulate their interpretations, and demonstrate an understanding of how music supports storytelling in a theater context.

Unit Objectives:

- Evaluate musical works and performances by applying established criteria.
- Identify and explain how the elements of music and expressive qualities shape the expressive intent of musical theater pieces.
- Develop personal interpretations of musical theater works by considering the historical, cultural, and contextual influences.

- Understand and explain the relationship between music, lyrics, and performance in conveying meaning in musical theater.
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Unit Timeline: 6 Weeks

Week 1: Introduction to Musical Theater

Topics:

- Overview of musical theater: What is musical theater? How does it differ from other types of performance arts?
- Elements of musical theater: Music, lyrics, choreography, and staging.
- Key genres in musical theater (e.g., classical, contemporary, Broadway).

Activities:

- Watch excerpts from famous musicals (e.g., *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Hamilton*, *Les Misérables*).
- Discuss how music complements the narrative in musical theater.

Objective:

- Introduce students to musical theater and begin to identify how music and performance contribute to storytelling.
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Week 2: Analyzing the Elements of Music in Musical Theater

Topics:

- Elements of music in musical theater: Melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics, and timbre.
- How the elements of music enhance the emotional tone and meaning of songs in a musical.

Activities:

- Listen to several songs from different musicals and identify elements of music (e.g., dynamics, rhythm).
- Group discussion: How do these elements help convey emotion and meaning?

- Work on a group assignment where students choose a song from a musical and break down the elements of music (e.g., "Memory" from *Cats*, "Do You Hear the People Sing?" from *Les Misérables*).

Objective:

- Develop the ability to identify and evaluate the musical elements in a song and explain their role in expressing the musical's themes.
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Week 3: Expressive Qualities in Musical Theater

Topics:

- Introduction to expressive qualities in performance: Tempo, dynamics, articulation, and phrasing.
- How performers use expressive qualities to convey emotion, meaning, and character in musical theater.

Activities:

- Watch clips from different musical theater performances and analyze how performers use expressive qualities (e.g., how tempo changes impact the mood of a scene).
- Group discussion: How do performers' interpretations of songs influence the meaning of the musical?

Objective:

- Understand the role of expressive qualities in musical theater performances and how they contribute to conveying the expressive intent.
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Week 4: Contextualizing Music in Musical Theater

Topics:

- How cultural and historical contexts influence the music and performance in musical theater.
- Examples of musicals with strong historical or cultural context (e.g., *Hamilton*, *The Wiz*, *West Side Story*).

Activities:

- Students research a musical theater piece and present on its cultural or historical context, focusing on how this context influences the music and performance.
- Watch a musical number and discuss how the music reflects its cultural/historical context.

Objective:

- Understand how the cultural and historical context shapes the music, lyrics, and performances in a musical.
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Week 5: Personal Interpretation of Musical Theater Performances

Topics:

- How to describe and explain a personal interpretation of a musical theater work.
- Developing an understanding of how music and performance convey the creators' and performers' intentions.

Activities:

- Listen to a musical theater song (e.g., "Defying Gravity" from *Wicked*), and students write a brief reflection on their interpretation of the song, considering elements like music, lyrics, and expressive qualities.
- Class discussion: Share and compare interpretations of the same musical piece.

Objective:

- Develop skills in analyzing and interpreting a musical theater piece based on personal perception and the application of musical and expressive elements.
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Week 6: Evaluation and Performance of Musical Theater

Topics:

- Criteria for evaluating a musical theater performance: Vocal performance, acting, emotional connection, music, and choreography.
- How to articulate the appropriateness of a performance in terms of musical elements, historical/cultural context, and expressive intent.

Activities:

- Students select a short scene or song from a musical and prepare a brief performance or presentation.
- Performances are evaluated using the criteria discussed throughout the unit.
- Group evaluation: In small groups, students evaluate a musical number, citing evidence from the elements of music and the performance.

Objective:

- Apply knowledge of musical elements and expressive qualities to evaluate and explain the effectiveness of a musical theater performance.
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Assessment:

- **Ongoing Class Participation (20%):** Engagement in discussions, activities, and group work throughout the unit.
 - **Written Reflections (30%):** Personal interpretations of musical theater songs or performances.
 - **Group Project (30%):** Research and presentation on a musical theater piece, analyzing its cultural, historical, and musical context.
 - **Final Performance/Presentation (20%):** Evaluation of students' ability to perform, analyze, and discuss a musical theater piece, citing evidence from the elements of music and expressive qualities.
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Resources Needed:

- Access to video clips from musicals (e.g., *Hamilton*, *Les Misérables*, *Wicked*, *The Lion King*).
 - Musical theater songs from various genres.
 - Computers/tablets for research and presentations.
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This syllabus integrates the standards into a comprehensive unit, encouraging both analytical and creative thinking about musical theater. It challenges students to evaluate, interpret, and perform, all while honing their understanding of how music and performance are intertwined in telling a story.