

# WHAT'S THE PLAN?

## Demystifying Curriculum and Lesson Planning

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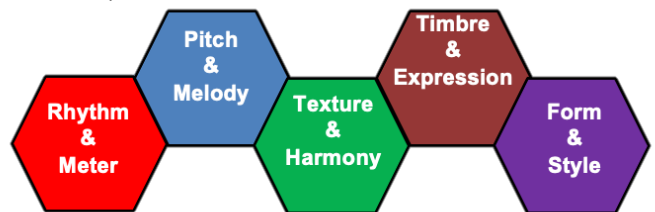
When it comes to curriculum and lesson planning, have you ever:

- Become frustrated in the past?
- Continue to be frustrated?
- Often feel overwhelmed by it all?
- Overlooked teaching some essential skills or concepts?
- Ran out of time at the end of the year?

The good news is that: (1) you're not alone, and (2) there ARE sensible and manageable solutions for organizing six (or more) years of concepts and skills into the school year.

Let's go back and dust off a few important ideas from our undergraduate coursework.

- **Bloom's Taxonomy** (original created by Benjamin Bloom in 1956, revised in 2001)
  - Categorizes and delineates various levels of cognitive demand.
  - Provides a framework for diversifying learning activities.
  - Separates lower-level thinking from higher-level thinking.
    - Lower-level thinking: remember, understand, apply.
    - Higher-level thinking: analyze, evaluate, create.
  - See next page for application to music instruction.
- The Elements of Music
  - Organizes the basic fundamentals of music that may be taught.
  - May differ according to teacher or theorist, but they are something like:
    - **Rhythm and meter** – any concepts relating to rhythmic values, notations, or grouping of accented and unaccented beats.
    - **Pitch and melody** – any concepts relating to melodic contour, individual pitches, melodic motives, scales, and key signatures.
    - **Harmony and texture** – any concepts relating to the vertical organization of music including the number of parts or voices and harmonization.
    - **Timbre and expression** – unique sounds of instruments or voices and any manner of making music more expressive through accents, dynamics, or tempo changes.
    - **Form and style** – any concepts relating to the horizontal organization of music including same or different phrases, form, and genre of music (lullaby, march, etc.)

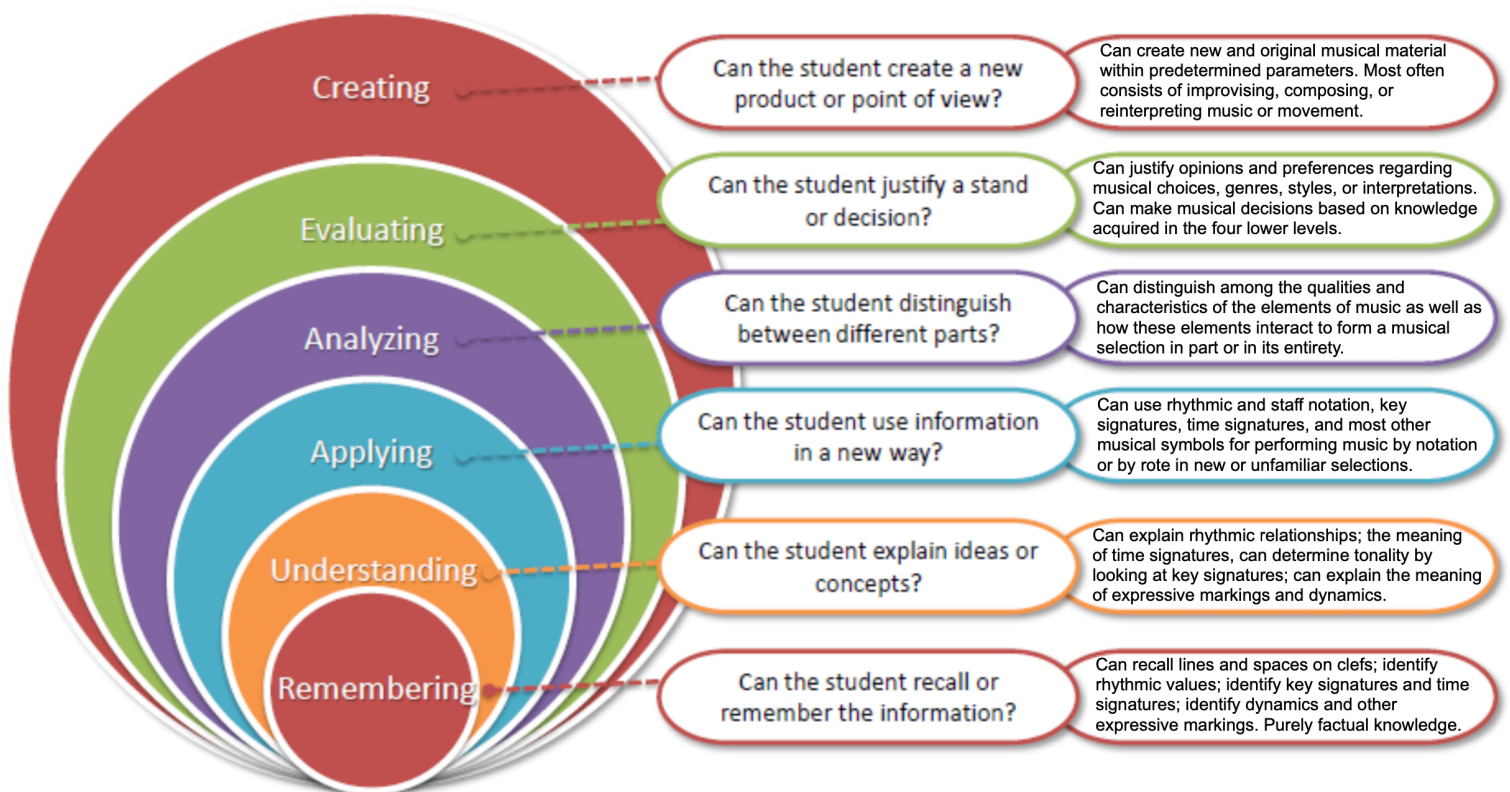


- Bruner's Spiral Curriculum
  - Introduced by Jerome Bruner in 1960.
  - Describes a method of curriculum delivery that revisits topics and skills again and again but with increasing complexity and sophistication.
  - Imagine an individual spiral for EACH element of music that lasts across one grade level and across multiple grade levels.



# Bloom's Taxonomy (Revised)

Adapted for music education by Michael Chandler, PhD  
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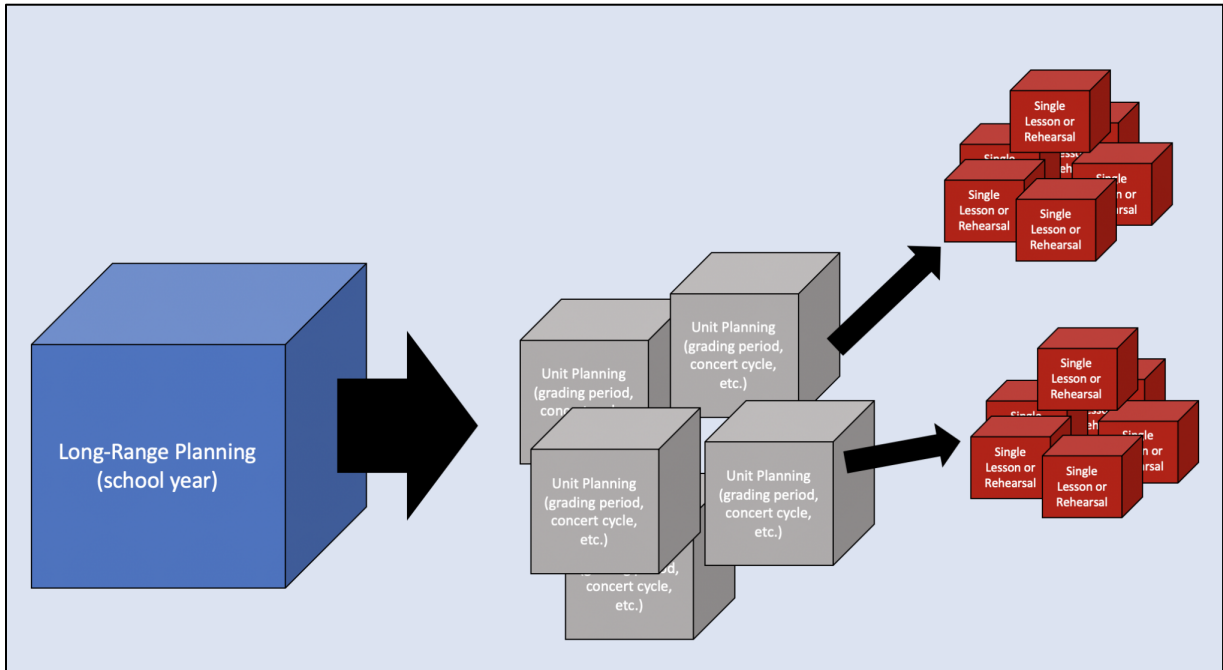
How do we demonstrate accountability to ourselves, our administrators, our colleagues, and our students?

- We use district-provided curricular materials such as a district scope and sequence.
- We use standards-based instruction.
  - Standards exist at the national level (National Core Arts Standards, or NCAS)
    - Four artistic processes:
      - Perform: singing, playing instruments, moving, and using notation.
      - Create: improvising, composing, and arranging.
      - Respond: listening, analyzing, and evaluating music
      - Connect: how music relates to culture and history
    - Standards exist at the state level (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, or TEKS)
      - Four domains:
        - Foundations/Music Literacy: reading, writing, reproducing, or creating music.
        - Creative Expression: applying music literacy and critical thinking to music making.
        - Historical and Cultural Relevance: using a variety of music periods, genres, and styles to connect it with history, culture, and the world.
        - Critical Evaluation and Response: analyzing, evaluating, or responding to music.
      - Use standards to justify or “back up” individual lesson objectives.
  - Create a “placemat view” of your relevant standards for each grade level. This helps you see all the standards in one simple, overarching view.

Tennessee K–5 General Music Standards: Kindergarten					
Domain: PERFORM			Domain: CREATE		
P1: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for performance.	P2: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for performance.	P3: Convey and express meaning through the presentation of expressive work.	Cr1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.	Cr2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.	Cr3: Refine and complete artistic work.
K.GM.P1.A: With guidance, explore and experience music concepts such as pitch, rhythms, vocal timbres, movement, musical contrasts, textures, sequence, and ways to define music.	K.GM.P2.A: With guidance, apply feedback to refine performances.	K.GM.P3.A: With guidance, sing, alone and with others, with expression.	K.GM.Cr1.A: With guidance, explore and experience music concepts such as pitch, short rhythms, different vocal timbres, movement, musical contrasts, textures, sequence, and ways to define music.	K.GM.Cr2.A: With guidance, using ideas from songs, poems, or stories for performance, demonstrate, choose, and justify favorite musical ideas.	K.GM.Cr3.A: With guidance, using teacher-given vocabulary, apply feedback to refine personal musical ideas.
K.GM.P1.B: With guidance, using voices, instruments, or movement, explore and demonstrate awareness of music contrasts in a variety of music selected for performance.		K.GM.P3.B: With guidance, using body percussion and/or instruments, perform, alone, and with others, with expression.			
K.GM.P1.C: With guidance, using voices, instruments, or movement, demonstrate awareness of expressive qualities (such as voice quality, dynamics, or tempo).	K.GM.P2.B: With guidance, use suggested strategies in rehearsal to improve the expressive qualities of music (such as voice quality, dynamics, or tempo).	K.GM.P3.C: Perform appropriately for the audience; demonstrate appropriate posture, and evaluate performance etiquette.	K.GM.Cr1.B: With guidance, using voices, body percussion, instruments, and movement, improvise musical ideas (rhythmically and non-rhythmically) to accompany songs, poems, stories, or listening examples.	K.GM.Cr2.B: With guidance, using digital media or pictures to notate a short musical idea, organize personal musical ideas using iconic notation and/or recording technology.	K.GM.Cr3.B: With guidance, using created vocal, instrumental, or movement pieces, demonstrate a final version of personal musical ideas.
K.GM.P3.D: Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior, and evaluate student behavior during a performance.					
Domain: RESPOND			Domain: CONNECT		
R1: Perceive and analyze artistic work.	R2: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.	R3: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.	Cn1: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to artistic endeavors.	Cn2: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context.	
K.GM.R1.A: With guidance, list personal interests and experiences explaining musical preference.	K.GM.R2.A: With guidance, demonstrate awareness of music concepts (such as same/different sections of music, musical sounds, or simple musical characteristics in a listening selection).	K.GM.R3.A: With guidance, apply personal preferences in the evaluation of music, and discuss a musical performance.	K.GM.Cn1.A: Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music (such as expressing personal preferences in music or how music is used in daily life).	K.GM.Cn2.A: Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and/or daily life (such as exploring the connection between poems and songs through rhyme).	







Hoffer (2017) introduced a three-level concept to illustrate the different kinds of planning during a school year.

- Long-range planning: year-long plan that organizes concepts and skills for each grade level according to the elements of music.
- Unit planning: concepts and skills from the year-long plan are divided into smaller modules or grading periods representing a group of class sessions.
- Lesson planning: process of organizing the learning activities in which a particular class will engage during one learning session.



1. Long-Range Planning: here is an example of long-range planning for kindergarten general music. Note the headings along the top that label each column according to the elements of music or a particular area of skills.

**Kindergarten Music Curriculum**  
Michael Chandler, Austin Peay State University

Rhythm & Meter	Pitch & Melody	Texture & Harmony	Timbre & Expression	Form & Style	Instrument Skills	Movement Skills
Steady beat Beat or no beat Label rhythm as <i>how the words go</i> Rhythm or beat Read and write the beat and short rhythmic patterns using graphic and iconic notation     PRWI* 4-beat rhythmic patterns with one, two, or no sounds per beat	Vocal exploration Pitch exploration Low or high sounds Sounds moving upward or downward Melodic contour Read and write melodic contour using graphic notation   Pitch matching Sing diatonic songs Improvise vocally through simple singing conversations	Steady beat or rhythm in unison Rhythm and steady beat combined (two-part) Unison singing	Identify and use four voices: speak, sing, whisper, and call Inner hearing (audiation) Identify untuned percussion instruments by sight and sound Identify piano, guitar, recorder, and 'ukulele by sight and sound Identify other select instruments of the orchestra by sight and sound Fast or slow Loud or quiet	Identify short musical patterns as the same or different both aurally and visually using graphic and iconic notation Identify lullabies and marches	Perform untuned percussion instruments on the beat or on the rhythm of the words alone or with others Perform untuned percussion instruments on the rhythm of the words while accompanied by the beat alone or with others Perform untuned percussion instruments on word cues with songs, poems, or stories Explore and improvise freely on Orff instruments	Place: self-space, general space Direction: forward, backward, sideways Speed: fast, slow Rhythm: steady beat Body parts: head, shoulders, arms, hands, hips, legs, feet Locomotor: walk, run, jog, hop, tip-toe, jump, gallop, skip Nonlocomotor: turn, bend, stretch, twist, rise, melt Formations: circles, lines, free space Play simple singing games

\*PRWI: perform, read, write, and improvise

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2. Unit Planning: once the scope and sequence is set, take all the concepts or skills from ONE column, and distribute them across the school year according to the duration of each grading period or “unit.” This may be six weeks or nine weeks. During the first unit of grades 1–5/6, include mostly concepts or skills from the prior year. This helps students progress together whenever new students move to the school at the beginning of the year. Here is an example of unit planning.

<b>Kindergarten Music: Nine-Week Modules</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>First Nine Weeks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce steady beat</li> <li>• Introduce music with steady beat or no steady beat</li> <li>• Perform steady beat with rhythmic speech and songs</li> <li>• Introduce vocal exploration</li> <li>• Introduce pitch exploration</li> <li>• Introduce four voice types: speak, sing, whisper, call</li> <li>• Sing diatonic songs</li> <li>• Introduce sounds as high or low</li> <li>• Introduce sounds that move up, down, or stay the same</li> <li>• Introduce unpitched percussion instruments as used</li> <li>• Play unpitched percussion instruments on the beat</li> <li>• Introduce the piano</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Second Nine Weeks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review steady beat and beat vs. no beat</li> <li>• Perform steady beat with rhythmic speech and songs</li> <li>• Read and perform the steady beat with iconic notation</li> <li>• Practice pitch matching</li> <li>• Introduce healthy singing with head voice</li> <li>• Sing diatonic songs</li> <li>• Introduce fast and slow</li> <li>• Introduce loud and quiet</li> <li>• Play unpitched percussion instruments on word cues with songs, poems, or stories</li> <li>• Introduce new unpitched percussion instruments as used</li> <li>• Introduce the guitar</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Third Nine Weeks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform steady beat with rhythmic speech and songs</li> <li>• Introduce sounds as long and short</li> <li>• Introduce rhythm as <i>the way the words go</i></li> <li>• Practice beat vs. rhythm</li> <li>• Read and perform the beat and rhythms with one or two sounds per beat using iconic notation</li> <li>• Play unpitched percussion instruments on the beat, on the rhythm of the words, and on word cues with songs, poems, or stories</li> <li>• Improvise and compose simple rhythmic patterns</li> <li>• Review high vs. low and up vs. down</li> <li>• Practice pitch matching</li> <li>• Sing diatonic songs</li> <li>• Introduce the violin</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fourth Nine Weeks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and perform the beat and rhythms with one, two, or no sounds per beat using iconic notation</li> <li>• Practice pitch matching</li> <li>• Sing diatonic songs</li> <li>• Play unpitched percussion instruments on the beat, on the rhythm of the words, and on word cues with songs, poems, or stories</li> <li>• Explore and improvise freely on Orff instruments</li> <li>• Improvise and compose simple rhythmic and melodic patterns</li> <li>• Review fast vs. slow and loud vs. quiet</li> <li>• Same and different patterns</li> <li>• Introduce the flute</li> <li>• Introduce other orchestral instruments as encountered</li> </ul>

3. Lesson Planning: each individual lesson or class session should be planned much like a secondary rehearsal. You should have warm-up and gathering activities followed by two or three main activities that will comprise the lesson. You may have an individual learning objective for each of the main activities.
1. Greet the class and engage them in warm-up activities to activate the body, voice, and mind.
    - Vocal and pitch exploration; sirens and roller coasters.
    - Simple 4-beat melodic patterns to echo, sing from hand signs, or improvise.
    - Simple rhythmic patterns with body percussion in echo or canon.
    - Five to seven minutes only.
  2. First lesson activity that will have its own learning objective and corresponding standard.
    - Learning a new song or instrumental melody
    - Learning a new dance or a portion of a new dance.
    - 11–12 minutes.
  3. Second lesson activity that will have its own learning objective and corresponding standard.
    - Should contrast the prior activity and might involve a different portion of the music room.
    - Should represent a contrasting level of cognitive demand or engagement from the prior activity.
    - 12–14 minutes.
  4. Third activity (if there is time) that may or may not have its own objective and standard.
    - Should conclude the class session.

- Might be an informal (or even formal) assessment or perhaps introducing a new listening selection.
- Should leave the class feeling accomplished and rewarded.
- Three to five minutes.

As a new teacher in the late 90s, I learned this wise advice from Dr. Danna Rothlisberger, who was the fine arts director in Lewisville ISD where I was teaching at the time...

*The children should sing every time they come to our class.*

This can include any variety and quantity of songs, or it could be just a greeting song to start the lesson. It might be just a few echo patterns to check pitch matching or to learn an instrumental motive, but however much or little, the children should sing in every lesson.

### “Shopping” for Materials

While singing is an essential part of every lesson, we should provide a variety of engaging experiences for our students (think of ***sing, say, dance, and play***). This means we are responsible for selecting quality materials from a variety of genres that are vetted as appropriate for classroom use while also being appropriate for the age/grade level of our students. Imagine taking a trip to the music room supermarket to shop for materials.

Select materials for 9-week modules (units):

- Speech pieces, poems, rhymes
- Songs
- Canons and rounds
- Instrumental pieces (Orff volumes, etc.)
- Untuned percussion
- Creative movement
- Folk dance
- Recorder and/or ‘ukulele
- Listening selections



Years ago, I learned a great tip from Chris Judah-Lauder for how to organize your music materials and activity repertoire.

- Create an individual binder (2- or 3-inch rings) for each grade level you teach. Include in that binder:
  1. One divider for each unit or 9-week grading period.
  2. A copy of the year-long scope and sequence and a copy of the unit chart.
  3. Copies of repertoire (songs, speech pieces, folk dances, poems, rounds/canons, etc.) organized into their appropriate unit.
  4. Any specific assessments for each unit.
  5. As you attend workshops, make copies of individual activities, label them according to the grade level and unit, and place the copies in the appropriate binder and divider.

Thank you for coming to today’s session. You can contact me at [chandlermd@apsu.edu](mailto:chandlermd@apsu.edu).