

Glossary

Nevada Academic Content Standards for Music

Term	Definition
AB	Musical form consisting of two sections, A and B, which contrasts with each other (binary form)
ABA	Musical form consisting of three sections, A, B, A; two are the same
Analog Tools	Category of musical instruments and tools that are non-digital (e.g., do not transfer sound in or convert sound into binary code), such as acoustic instruments, microphones, monitors, and speakers
Analyze	Examine in detail the structure and context of the music
Arrangement	Setting or adaptation of an existing musical composition
Arranger	Person who creates alternative settings or adaptations of existing music
Articulation	Characteristic way in which musical tones are connected, separated, or accented; types of articulation include legato (smooth, connected tones) and staccato (short, detached tones)
Artistic literacy	Knowledge and understanding required to participate authentically in the Arts
Atonality	Music in which no tonic or key center is apparent
Audiate	Hear and comprehend sounds in one's head (inner hearing), even when no sound is present
Audience etiquette	Social behavior observed by those attending musical performances and which can vary depending upon the type of music performed
Beat	Underlying steady pulse present in most music
Benchmark	Pre-established definition of an achievement level, designed to help measure student progress toward a goal or standard, expressed either in writing or as an example of cored student work (aka, anchor set)
Binary form	See AB
Body percussion	Use of the human body as an instrument to create percussive/rhythmic sounds such as a stomping, patsching (patting thighs), clapping, clicking,

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	snapping
Bordun	Accompaniment created by sounding two tones, five notes apart, continuously throughout a composition; can be performed in varying ways, such as simultaneously or alternating
Chant	Most commonly, the rhythmic, or poems without a sung melody; a type of singing, with a simple, unaccompanied melody line and free rhythm
Chart	Jazz or popular music score, often abbreviated, with a melody (including key and time signature) and a set of chord changes
Chord progression	Series of chords sounding in succession; certain progressions are typical in particular styles/genres of music
Collaboratively-developed criteria	Qualities or traits for assessing achievement levels that have been through a process of collective decision-making
Complex formal structure	Musical form in which rhythmic, melodic, harmonic, and/or other musical materials undergo significant expansion and development, and may be more distantly related across sections while remaining coherent in some way, such as sonata or other novel design with three or more sections
Composer	One who creates compositions
Composition	Original piece of music that can be repeated, typically developed over time, and preserved either in notation or in a sound recording
Compositional device	Tools used by a composer or arranger to create or organize a composition or arrangement, such as tonality, sequence, repetition, instrumentation, orchestration, harmonic/melodic structure, style, and form
Compositional procedures	Techniques that a composer initiates and continues in pieces to develop musical ideas, such as fragmentation, imitation, sequencing, variation, aggregate completion, registral saturation, contour inversion of gestures, and rhythmic phrasing
Compositional techniques	Approaches a composer uses to manipulate and refine the elements to convey meaning and intent in a composition, such as tension-release, augmentation-diminution, sound-silence, motion-stasis, in addition to compositional devices
Concepts, music	Understandings of generalized ideas about music that are formed after learners make connections

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	and determine relationships among ideas
Connection	Relationship among artistic ideas, personal meaning, and/or external context
Context	Environment that surrounds music, influences understanding, provides meaning, and connects to an event or occurrence
Context, cultural	Values, beliefs, and traditions of a group of people that influence musical meaning and inform culturally authentic musical practice
Context, historical	Conditions of the time and place in which music was created or performed that provide meaning and influence the musical experience
Context, personal	Surrounding something or someone's creation or intended audience that reflects and influences how people use and interpret the musical experience
Craftsmanship	Degree of skill and ability exhibited by a creator or performer to manipulate the elements of music in a composition or performance
Create	Conceive and develop new artistic ideas, such as an improvisation, composition, or arrangement, into a work
Creative intent	Shaping of the elements of music to express and convey emotions, thoughts, and ideas
Creator	One who originates a music composition, arrangement, or improvisation
Criteria	Guidelines used to judge the quality of a student's performance (See Rubric)
Cultural context	Value, beliefs, and traditions of a group of people that influence musical meaning and inform culturally authentic musical practice
Culturally authentic performance	Presentation that reflects practices and interpretation representative of the style and tradition of a culture
Culture	Values and beliefs of a particular group of people, from a specific place or time, expressed through characteristics such as tradition, social structure, religion, art, and food
Cyclical structure	Musical form characterized by the return or "cycling around" of significantly recognizable themes, motive, and/or patterns across movements
Demonstrate	Show musical understanding through observable behavior such as moving, chanting, singing, or playing instruments

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Diatonic	Seven-tone scale consisting of five whole steps and two half steps
Digital environment	Simulated place made or created through the use of one or more computers, sensors, or equipment
Digital notation	A visual image of musical sound created by using computer software applications, intended either as a record of sound heard or imagined, or as a set of visual instructions for performers
Digital resources	Anything published in a format capable of being read by a computer, a web-enabled device, a digital tablet, or a smartphone
Digital systems	Platforms that allow interaction and the conversion between and through the audio and digital domains
Digital tools	Category of musical instruments and tools that manipulate sound using binary code, such as electronic keyboards, digital audio interfaces, MIDI, and computer software
Dynamics	Level or range of loudness of a sound or sounds
Elements of music	Basic characteristics of sound (pitch, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, timbre, texture, form, and style/articulation) that are manipulated to create music
Ensemble	Group of individuals organized to perform artistic work: traditional, large groups such as bands, orchestras, and choirs; chamber, smaller groups such as duets, trios, and quartets; emerging, such as guitar, iPad, mariachi, steel drum or pan, and Taiko drumming
Essential question	Question that is central to the core of a discipline – in this case, music – and promotes investigation to uncover corresponding enduring understanding(s)
Established criteria	Traits or dimensions for making quality judgments in music of a particular style, genre, cultural context, or historical period that have gained general acceptance and application over time
Expanded form	Basic form (such as AB, ABA, rondo or theme and variation) expanded by the addition of an introduction, transition, and/or coda
Expressive aspects	Characteristics that convey feeling in the presentation of musical ideas
Expressive intent	The emotions, thoughts, and ideas that a performer or composer seeks to convey by manipulating the elements of music
Expressive qualities	Qualities such as dynamics, tempo, articulation

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	which – when combined with other elements of music—give a composition of its musical identity
Form	Element of music describing the overall organization of a piece of music, such as AB, ABA, rondo, theme and variations, and strophic form
Formal design	Large-scale framework for a piece of music in which the constituent parts cohere into a meaningful whole; encompasses both structural and tonal aspect of the piece
Fret	Thin strip of material placed across the fingerboard of some stringed instruments, such as guitar, banjo, and mandolin; the fingers press the strings against the frets to determine pitch
Function	Use for which music is created, performed, or experienced, such as dance, social, recreation, music therapy, video games, and advertising
Fundamentals of music theory	Basic elements of music, their subsets, and how they interact: rhythm and meter; pitch and clefs; intervals; scales, keys and key signatures; triad and seventh chords
Fusion	Type of music created by combining contrasting styles into a new style
Genre	Category of music characterized by a distinctive styles, form, and/or content, such as jazz, march, and country
Harmonic sequences	Series of two or more chords commonly used to support melody(ies)
Harmonizing instruments	Musical instruments, such as guitars, ukuleles, and keyboards, capable of producing harmonies as well as melodies, often used to provide chordal accompaniments for melodies and songs
Harmonization	Process of applying stylistically appropriate harmony, such as chords, countermelodies, and ostinato, to melodic material
Harmony	Chordal structure of a music composition in which the simultaneous sounding of pitches produces chords and their successive use produces chord progressions
Heterophonic	Musical texture in which slightly different versions of the same melody sound simultaneously
Historical context	Conditions of the time and place in which music was created or performed and that provide meaning and influence the musical experience
Homophonic	Musical texture in which all parts move in the same rhythm but use different pitches, as in

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	hymns; also, a melody supported by chords
Iconic notation	Representation of sound and its treatment using lines, drawings, pictures
Improvisation	Music created and performed spontaneously or “in-the-moment,” often within a framework determined by the musical style
Improviser	One who creates music spontaneously or “in-the-moment”
Intent	Meaning or feeling of the music planned and conveyed by a creator or performer
Interpret	Determine and demonstrate music’s expressive intent and meaning when responding and performing
Interpretation	Intent and meaning that a performer realizes in studying and performing a piece of music
Intervals	Distance between two tones, named by counting all pitch names involved; harmonic interval occurs when two pitches are sounded simultaneously, and melodic interval when two pitches are sounded successively
Intonation	Singing or playing the correct pitch in tune
Key signature	Set of sharps or flats at the beginning of the staff, following the clef sign, that indicates the primary pitch set or scale used in the music and provide clues to the resting tone and mode
Lead-sheet notation	System symbol used to identify chords in jazz, popular, and folk music; uppercase letters are written above the staff, specifying which chords should be used and when they should be played
Lyrics	Words of a song
Major scale	Scale in which the ascending pattern of whole and half steps is whole, whole, half, whole, whole, half
Melodic contour	Shape of a melody created by the way its pitches repeat and move up and down in steps and skips
Melodic passage	Short section or series of notes within a larger work that constitutes a single coherent melodic idea
Melody	Linear succession of sounds (pitches) and silences moving through time; the horizontal structure of music
Meter	Grouping of beats and divisions of beats in music, often in sets of twos (duple meter) or threes (triple meter)
Minor scale	Scale in which one characteristic feature is a half-step between the second and third tones; the

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	three forms of the minor scale are natural, harmonic, and melodic
Modal	Music based on a mode other than major or minor
Modes	Seven-tone scales that include five whole steps and two half steps; the seven possible modes – Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolia, and Locrian – were used in the Medieval and Renaissance periods and served as the basis from which major (Ionian) and minor (Aeolian) scales emerged
Model cornerstone assessment	Suggested assessment process, embedded within a unit of study, that includes a series of focused tasks to measure student achievement within multiple process components
Moderately complex formal structure	Musical form with three or more sections (such as rounded binary , rondo, or other novel design), in which section closure is somewhat nuanced or ambiguous, and the rhythmic, melodic, harmonic, and/or other musical materials across sections may be more distantly related while remaining coherent in some way
Mood	Over-all feeling that a section or piece of music conveys
Monophonic	Musical texture consisting of a single, unaccompanied melodic line
Motif/motive	Brief rhythmic/melodic figure or pattern that recurs throughout a composition as a unifying element
Movement	Act of moving in nonlocomotor (such as clapping and finger snapping) an locomotor (such as walking and running) patterns to represent and interpret musical sounds
Music literacy	Knowledge and understanding required to participate authentically in the discipline of music by independently carrying out the artistic processes of creating, performing, and responding
Music theory	Study of how music is composed and performed; analysis of the elements of music and the framework for understanding musical
Music vocabulary	Domain-specific words traditionally used in performing, studying, or describing music (See Academic Vocabulary)
Musical criteria	Traits relevant to assessing music attributes of a work or performance
Musical idea	Idea expressed in music, which can range in length

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	from the smallest meaningful level (motive or short pattern) through a phrase, a section, or an entire piece
Musical range	Span between the highest and lowest pitches of a melody, instrument or voice
Musical work	Piece of music preserved as a notated copy or sound recording or passed through oral tradition
Non-pitched instruments	Instruments, such as woodblocks, whistles, electronic sounds, that do not have definite pitches or tones
Notation	Visual representation of musical sounds
One-part formal structure	Continuous form, with or without an interruption, in which a singular instance of formal closure is achieved only at or near the end of the piece; also known as through-composed
Pentatonic scale	Five-tone scale often identified with the pattern of the black keys of a keyboard, although other five-tone arrangements are possible
Perform	Process of realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation
Performing, performance	Experience of engaging in the act of presenting music in a classroom or private or public venue
Performance decorum	Aspects of contextually appropriate propriety and proper behavior, conduct, and appearance for a musical performance, such as stage presence, etiquette, and appropriate attire
Performance practice	Performance and presentation of a work that reflects established norms for the style and social, cultural, and historical contexts of that work
Performance technique	Personal technical skills developed and used by a performer
Personal context	Unique experiences and relationships that surround a single person and are influenced by personal life, family habits, interest, and preferences
Personally-developed criteria	Qualities or traits for assessing achievement level developed by students individually
Phrase	Musical segment with a clear beginning and ending, comparable to a simple sentence or clause in written text
Phrasing	Performance of a musical phrase that uses expressive qualities such as dynamics, tempo, articulation, and timbre to convey a thought, mood, or feeling
Piece	General, non-technical term referring to a

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	composition or musical work
Pitch	Identification of a tone or note with respect to highness or lowness (e.g., frequency)
Plan	Select and develop musical ideas for creating a musical work
Polyphonic	Musical texture in which two or more melodies sound simultaneously
Polytonal	Music in which two or more tonalities (keys) sound simultaneously
Present	Share artistic work (e.g., a composition) with others
Program	Presentation of a sequence of musical works that can be performed by individual musicians or groups in a concert, recital, or other setting
Purpose	Reason for which music is created, such as, ceremonial, recreational/social, commercial, or generalized artistic expression
Refine	Make changes in musical works or performances to more effectively realize intent through technical quality or expression
Repertoire	Body or set of musical works that can be performed
Respond	Understand and evaluate how the arts convey meaning
Rhythm	Duration or length of sound and silences that occur in music; organization of sounds and silences in time
Rhythmic passage	Short section or series of notes within a larger work that constitutes a single coherent rhythmic idea
Rhythmic patten	Grouping, generally brief, of long and short sounds and silences
Rondo	Musical form consisting of three or more contrasting sections in which one section recurs, such as ABACA
Rubric	Established, ordered set of criteria for judging student performance; includes descriptors of student work at various levels of achievement
Scale	Pattern of pitches arranged in ascending or descending order and identified by their specific arrangement of whole and half steps
Score	Written notation of an entire music composition
Section	One of a number of distinct segments that together comprise a composition; a section consists of several phrases

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Select	Choose music for performing, rehearsing, or responding based on interest, knowledge, ability, and context
Sensitivity	Skill of a creator, performer, or listener in responding to and conveying the nuances of sound or expression
Set	Sequence of songs or pieces performed together by a singer, band, or disc jockey and constituting or forming part of a live show or recording
Setting	Specified or implied instrumentation, voicing, or orchestration of a musical work
Setting of the text	Musical treatment of text as presented in the music
Share	Present artistic work to others
Sight-reading	First attempt to perform a notated musical work
Simple formal structure	Musical form with a small number of distinct or clearly delineated sections, (such as simple binary, ternary, or other novel design), using closely related rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic materials across the sections
Social context	Environment surrounding something or someone's creation or intended audience that reflects and influences how people use and interpret the musical experience
Sonic events	Individual sounds (or sound masses) and silences whose succession forms patterns and contrasting units that are perceived as musical
Sonic experience	Perception and understanding of the sounds and silences of a musical work and their inter-relationship
State presence	Performer's ability to convey music content to a live audience through traits such as personal knowledge of the repertoire, exhibited confidence, decorum, eye contact, and facial expression
Staging	Environmental considerations, such as lighting, sound, seating arrangement, and visual enhancements, that contribute to the impact of a musical performance
Standard notation	System for visually representing musical sound that is in widespread use; such systems include traditional music staff notation, tablature notation (primarily for fretted stringed instruments), and lead-sheet notation
Storyline	Extra-musical narrative that inspires or explains the structure of a piece of music

Term	Definition
Strophic form	Vocal music in which the music repeats with a new set of text each time
Stylistic expression	Interpretation of expressive qualities in a manner that is authentic and appropriate to the genre, historical period, and cultural context of origin
Tablature	System of graphic standard notation, commonly used for fretted stringed instruments, in which a diagram visually represents both the fret board and finger placement on the fret board
Teacher-provided criteria	Qualities or traits for assessing achievement levels that are provided to students by the teacher
Technical aspects	Characteristics enabling the accurate representation/presentation of musical ideas
Technical challenges	Requirements of a particular piece of music that stretch or exceed a performer's current level of proficiency in technical areas such as timbre, intonation, diction, range, or speed of execution
Technical accuracy, technical skill	Ability to perform with appropriate timbre, intonation, and diction as well as to play or sing the correct pitches and rhythms at a tempo appropriate to the musical work
Tempo	Rate or speed of the beat in a musical work or performance
Tension/release	Musical device (musical stress, instability, or intensity, followed by musical relaxation, stability, or resolution) used to create a flow of feeling
Ternary form	See ABA
Texture	Manner in which the harmonic (vertical) and melodic (horizontal) elements are combined to create layers of sound
Theme variations	Musical form in which a melody is presented and then followed by two or more sections presenting variations of that melody
Timbre	Tone color or tone quality that distinguishes one sound source, instrument, or voice from another
Tonal pattern	Grouping, generally brief, of tones or pitches
Tonality	Tonic or key tone around which a piece of music is centered
Transfer	Use music knowledge and skills appropriately in a new context
Unity	Presences of structural coherence with a work, generally achieved through the repetition of various elements of music (see Variety)
Variety	Presence of structural contrast within a work for the purpose of creating and sustaining interest,

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	generally achieved through utilizing variations in the treatment of the elements of music (See Unity)
Venue	Physical setting in which a musical event takes place
Vocables	Audible sounds and/or nonsense syllables used by vocalists to convey musical ideas or intent
Vocalizations	Vocal exercises that include no text and are sung to one or more vowels