



Valencia High School

Valencia High School Choir - Syllabus

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Welcome to Choir at Valencia High School! In this class you will learn how to read music, sight read, create music spontaneously, analyze music, sing in 3-8 parts simultaneously and above all, how to sing correctly no matter what style you pursue. Above all, you will learn how to work as a team and make lasting friendships. This class syllabus contains some of the information necessary for you to have the best possible learning experience in Choir. You and your parents need to carefully read the following policies, **sign the signature sheet** and return the attached form.

Course Introduction

Vocal Jazz is the most advanced of the choral ensembles here at Valencia High School. It performs challenging literature and jazz pieces from all of the various musical eras written for small vocal ensembles. The class concentrates on vocal improvisation (scatting), performing with a combo, and learning the basics that are essential to all musicians. Concentration will also be on solo singing, singing in a small group, and emphasis on part balance. Vocal Jazz will perform in school performances, and in extra-curricular activities. Although the Vocal Jazz group is not a “core academic class”, it is considered a fine arts elective.

Women’s Advanced Chamber is an experienced, advanced choral ensemble at Valencia High School. This group will sing all genres of music (Jazz, Classical, Pop, etc.) Concentration will also be on solo singing, sight singing, singing in a small group, and emphasis on part balance. Although the Women’s Advanced Chamber group is not a “core academic class”, it is considered a fine arts elective.

Concert Choir is one of the most advanced ensembles consisting of auditioned vocalists at Valencia High School. It performs choral literature from all of the various musical eras. Styles performed include classical, jazz, folk, pop, and rock. Music from these styles will be sung in as many as five languages. Concert choir is considered a fine arts elective.

Mixed Choir is an auditioned choral ensemble for the underclassmen and for those students who wish to improve their vocal skills. The class focuses on the instruction of basic vocal, sight-reading, and music theory skills. Repertoire from many choral styles is learned and performed. Chorus is considered a fine arts elective.

Men’s Choir, Barbershop, and Small Vocal Ensembles are auditioned extra-curricular groups for students who wish to perform outside of school and around the community. These ensembles accept paid gigs.

Grading Policy

Rehearsal/Participation: Grades in this area are dependent on punctuality, preparation, active participation, effort, and continued improvement. Quizzes and testing will also be included in this area. 40% of grade.

Performance: Each performance is a test of the student’s acquired knowledge in the choral area. Therefore a missed performance is equivalent to achieving a zero on a major test. Active participation, punctuality, effort, and quality are also determiners of the performance/test grade. 45% of the grade.

Theory/Musicianship/Final Exam: At the end of the term, the students will be evaluated on specific repertoire, theory books and sight-singing exercises individually or in a performance. A written exam might also be included. 15% of grade.

Student Responsibilities

All of the student responsibilities are listed and explained in the Choral Music Contract. This is to be read and signed by the student and his/her parents. Students may be dropped from the class or be barred from performance if one or more of these expectations are not met.

Textbooks and Other Materials

A. Textbook

Jensen Sight Singing Curriculum

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION – California State Standards

Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to Music Students read, notate, listen to, analyze, and describe music and other aural information, using the terminology of music



Read and Notate Music

- 1.1 Read an instrumental or vocal score of up to four staves and explain how the elements of music are used.
- 1.2 Transcribe simple songs when presented aurally into melodic and rhythmic notation (level of difficulty: 1 on a scale of 1-6).
- 1.3 Sight-read music accurately and expressively (level of difficulty: 3 on a scale of 1-6).

Listen to, Analyze, and Describe Music

- 1.4 Analyze and describe the use of musical elements and expressive devices (e.g., articulation, dynamic markings) in aural examples in a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres, styles, and cultures.
- 1.5 Identify and explain a variety of compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity, variety, tension, and release in aural examples.
- 1.6 Analyze the use of form in a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres, styles, and cultures.

B. Music Folder

A three-ringed BLACK 1/3 inch binder is the folder we use in class.. Notebooks need to be with you everyday and will be periodically checked. Please separate into five sections. This notebook will be checked on **Monday August 25th for a grade.**

1. **Listening Logs** – students are required to keep a weekly listening log which will be checked periodically for in class listening journal warm-ups
2. **Theory Assignments**
3. **Music**
4. **Tests/Quizzes**
5. **Fundraising Log**

Notebooks should be brought to class everyday. There will be notebook checks/quizzes throughout the semester.

Organization is the key to success in this class!

C. Supplies

Pencils. You must always have a pencil in hand for marking.

Extra Credit

Students are encouraged to participate in other extra curricular performing activities that have to do with music as long as they do not coincide with PERFORMANCE DATES. Some wonderful examples of extra-curricular performing is with the **Santa Clarita Master Chorale**, the **Canyon Theatre Guild**, a dance company that performs frequently, or any music related performing venue. Music growth is well rounded in design and extremely important to the growth of an individual overall.

Performances (with name in program) or 5 viewed performances (2 page essay written with ticket stub) are equivalent to a “+” boost in the grade.

“A” changes to “A+.” “B+” changes to “A-,” etc.

WARDROBE/MUSIC/THEORY

1. TUXEDO/CONCERT DRESS: \$50 - \$120. Fundraising opportunities will be available to help defray the cost of the uniform. See Mrs. Tavares-Mocha for borrowed / used dresses.

2. OTHER CONCERT ATTIRE: The student may be asked to supply a costume for the variety concerts or Jazz/Pop at a minimal cost (for example, the upcoming Fall Concert.)

3. CHOIR T-SHIRT - \$20 – Uniform T-Shirt for informal performances, trips, and rally days. See Mrs. Tavares-Mocha for borrowed t-shirts.

4. MUSIC: It is the responsibility of each student to maintain his/her music properly. Original Lost or damaged music will be billed at actual replacement cost.

5. CHOIR COMPETITIONS/TRANSPORTATION – Fundraising opportunities will be available to help defray, if any bussing contributions. See Mrs. Tavares-Mocha

6. THEORY - \$10 ONE MINUTE THEORY BY HOLLY SHAW-SLABBINCK - A collection of one-minute self-explanatory lessons that introduce the music signs, symbols, markings, and terms encountered in choral singing. Beginning to Advanced and the student's book to keep.

Students may fundraise or contribute by writing a check to VHS Choirs for \$30 for the choir t-shirt and theory book. Need help fundraising? Email lborchart@ca.rr.com

Classroom Management

- Courtesy and respect among students and teacher is required.
- Take care of school equipment and facilities. Never touch equipment without previous permission.
- Be in your seat, ready to work when the tardy bell rings. The school's tardy policy will be enforced.
- Any form of copying or cheating will result in a grade of zero for the assignment or test AND parent notification.
- Absolutely NO food, drink (except bottled water) or gum is allowed in the classroom.
- Any student causing a **hazardous environment**, especially during class, will be dismissed from the class. Your safety and the safety of those around you are of primary importance!
- Follow all school-wide rules.

Communication and Teacher Conference Period

If you and or your parents would like to be placed on my mailing list you must 1) sign up in class on the first day, 2) send me an email at cmocha@hartdistrict.org from the email account that you would like to receive the lesson plans, and 3) include my email address in your email account address book so that my email is not blocked by your server.

You can reach me for questions or assistance during 7th period (2:00-3:00) or after school. Feel free to call me at 294-1188 ext. 526 or send me an email at cmocha@hartdistrict.org if you have any questions. I am looking forward to making music together with you this year!

Attendance

As per the school attendance policy, any student who is absent 15 days per semester will receive a failing grade. Any school-related absence, including choir activities and field trips, will be excluded in the 15-day count.

Repeated tardies will result in lowering of choral grade.

Missed Choral Graded Performances require absences to be reported within two weeks of the beginning of the Semester. A student who does not participate in a concert or dress rehearsal without approval will receive a one letter grade drop from their present standing.