

High School Music Repertoire Project

The Purpose of this assignment is to help you select music to share with your students,

Assignment:

Find 20 musical selections that you would consider sharing with your students. Consider the following criteria:¹

1. Musical examples must be appropriate for the age and interests of the learners. Carefully review the appropriateness of the lyrics for all vocal selections. Consider length and challenges the piece might offer to the students.

2. Musical examples must include a variety of genres. If the goal of music learning in high schools is to help students gain musical knowledge that will allow them to become musically independent and continue to participate in musical activities throughout their lives, then music should be selected from a wide variety of genres. A genre is a classification of a kind of music. Genre not only identifies timbral qualities but also the function of the music within the culture. Some genres you are familiar with would be: lullabies, children's songs, marches, polkas, love songs, hymns, string quartets, choral, and band music. Consider music from small and large ensembles as well as vocal and instrumental music, and consider music from many different cultures.

3. Musical examples must reflect all musical styles. Although "style" is often interpreted differently by different people, for our purposes we will use the term "style" to refer to music that has become associated with a certain time and place. Therefore we may refer to the style of Beethoven (1770-1827), the style of Elvis Presley (ca. 1965), Classical European Music 1750-1800 or The "Golden Age" of South Indian Classical Music (1750-1850). Consider three broad categories that help us to choose music from a diversity of styles:

- "Folk" and traditional music is representative of the many cultures that make up our world. "This Old Man" would be an example of American folk music.
- "Art" music, including music of the master composers from all cultures and all style periods, from the earliest known to the music of today.
- "Contemporary" music, such as jazz, rock, musical comedy, reggae, new age, rap, and country.

4. Music examples must be "music of value." Ultimately, the test for inclusion of any musical example must be based in its power to help individuals find music to be a source of beauty and joy, to provide the freedom to participate in the special kind of immediate, personal expression that no other form of communication can emulate. It would be wonderful if there were some hard and fast rules as to what makes one piece of music more meaningful than another. Sadly, there are none. However, some guidelines may be used to help you make choices. The first is, "Does the music stand the tests of time?" We are not only talking about great musical works that have remained in a culture's repertoire for centuries. We are also talking about current time. How

many times can you listen to a particular selection without becoming bored? “Great” music is meaningful enough that we can listen to it many times and each time find something new that attracts our interest.

A second question that may be asked is related to the first. “Does the music possess a balance between repetition and contrast?” Songs that are highly repetitive, with the same melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic ideas repeated over and over with little variation soon lose their meaning. Conversely, if there is no repetition, if each phrase of the song introduces completely new ideas, there is nothing to “hang on to,” and the music seems to become gibberish. It is important, of course, to recognize that musical examples drawn from an unfamiliar style might seem boring or meaningless, simply because we are not accustomed to the musical organization used. In this case, it would be wrong to reject the music as having no value without immersing oneself in the music and other customs of that culture long enough to be able to make informed choices as to its musical value.

From your repertoire list, you will choose works to complete the Teacher Work Sample and Teaching Episode assignment. I suggest you try to answer the questions posed by the Facets Model as you develop your list, for it is in your best interest to have a pool of quality musical works to choose from. Please send me a copy of this assignment as an attachment on or before the date specified in the syllabus. Write “HS Music Repertoire” in the subject line of your email.

Evaluation Criteria:

1. Your list should include the title of the selection, the name of the composer(s) (if known) or genre, and the publisher (if it is a piece to be performed) (10 points)
2. Your list should include 10 recordings, include the title of CD and length of piece in minutes and seconds (Pass or Fail)
3. Your list should include 10 selections that high school students could perform (Pass or Fail)
4. Write a statement about why you are interested in each selection and/or why you would like to share it with your students (20 points)
5. Write two paragraphs (one for the recordings and one for the performance pieces) that thoroughly describe your attempts to meet the four criteria above: (a) appropriateness; (b) composer and/or genre; (c) style; (d) value (20 points)

¹ These criteria were adapted from *Musical Growth in the Elementary School* (6th edition), by Bergethon, Boardman, and Montgomery. Harcourt Brace, 1997