

Music Bridges

Teacher's Guide



Minnesota
Music
Teachers
Association



Welcome to Music Bridges!

Music Bridges is an MMTA program that caters to the individual. The student creates a program, with their teacher's guidance, in which he or she can incorporate other interests and arts into a musical experience. Everything bridges back to music; but more importantly, everything bridges back to the individual, and is therefore very relevant to that individual's human experience.

Every element of a student's program is tailored to his or her interests and abilities. Therefore, Music Bridges has no repertoire lists or levels of achievement. A student with learning disabilities can be as successful as a highly gifted student since the teacher helps them choose repertoire and projects that fit their particular abilities.

Music Bridges challenges students to be individual thinkers. In contrast to the structures established in other educational programs, Music Bridges allows the student the freedom to explore options that interest them.

Some programs are more unified than others. For example, one student may choose to create a program that focuses on the person and the music of Beethoven. She may choose to perform two compositions by Beethoven for her required pieces, and for her three options, she may choose to do yet another piece by Beethoven, write a report on the composer, and make a painting inspired by one of Beethoven's symphonies. This is just one example of a unified program, but the options are rife.

The programs do not have to be unified in order to be successful. A student may perform two very contrasting pieces for his required repertoire, and for his three options he could create a composition, sing a solo and perform a dance. All of these items are related to music, but very distinct from one another. Most importantly, they are one individual student's unique self-expression.

In contrast to many other MMTA programs, the student may invite family members and friends along for his or her judged performance. In this way, the Music Bridges experience is not only a judged forum, but also a gift to the audience.

Music Bridges allows interaction between the student and the judge. The student should be prepared to answer questions regarding his or her program and be able to articulate how each element bridges back to music.

This booklet contains the mission statement of Music Bridges as well as more details on requirements, options and awards involved in this wonderful program. At the end of the booklet are sample programs of what students in the past have done, as well as an art worksheet that may serve the teacher as a guideline for students who want to incorporate visual art into their Music Bridges program.

Read thoroughly and enjoy brainstorming with your students. If you have any questions contact the Music Bridges program director listed in the MMTA Handbook; or your local Music Bridges Site Administrator, also listed in the Handbook.

Mission Statement

Music Bridges provides a critiqued forum where students can present a unique performance that matches high achievement tailored to each student's individual abilities and interests. This forum is one in which students can explore and experience all areas of music and relationships between music and the other arts.

Procedures

- ◆ Programs are defined by length. Teachers should time the actual playing and presenting time, including any costume or staging changes, and add 8-10 minutes for judge's questions and interactions. The chart below is a general guide:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Short | Maximum student presentation time is 12 min. for a 20 min. program |
| Medium | Maximum student presentation time is 20 min. for a 30 min. program |
| Long | Maximum student presentation time is 30 mi. for a 40 min. program |

- There is no age limit or theory requirement.
- One acoustic piano will be available unless notified otherwise.
- Memorization is optional for all pieces. If possible, a second copy of the music should be provided for the judge with measures numbered. The judge will speak with the student at the event, asking questions and discussing projects.
- Audience members are welcome to observe the student performance.
- All parts of the program need to be related to music in some way. Presentations from other areas of the arts are encouraged, but the student must articulate how their project relates to music.
- The five events of the program may be related to each other to form a common theme to the program. Unifying the program with a common theme is not a requirement, however. Each event can stand as its own distinct performance opportunity.
- Students are encouraged to present their work in a professional manner.
 - For artwork, this means matting paintings and drawings.
 - For dancers and actors, this means wearing appropriate costumes.
 - For written work this means neat handwriting or a typed format with work in a binder or folder.
 - Be creative and have fun!

Program

Students must select **Five Events:**

◆ **2 Required Pieces**

Two pieces chosen from the standard teaching repertoire for the student's primary instrument. Acceptable repertoire includes - but is not limited to - MMTA syllabi and MMTA Contest Materials Lists.

◆ **3 Options**

Choose three options from the following list. An option may be chosen more than once in a single program.

A. Repertoire: Perform an additional solo of student's choosing.

B. Creative:

⓪ **Original composition: written, any instrument.**

Student must either perform the work or submit an audio recording with the score. Electronic Media are acceptable. The student must bring a copy of their score to show the judge.

⓪ **Arrangement of a composition: written, any instrument.**

Student must either perform the work or submit an audio recording with the score. Electronic Media are acceptable. The student must bring a copy of their score to show the judge.

• For Original Compositions or Arrangements:

- Entries may be composed for any medium.
- Entries may be more than one movement; but the performance must fit within the allotted judging time.
- Entries that have been entered once may not be reentered in subsequent years.
- The piece may be any style: Classical, Popular, Jazz, Folk or other.
- A pencil copy is permissible for elementary and junior high students. Ink is required for senior high students. Computer-generated scores are permissible for any age.
- Measures must be numbered.

⓪ **Improvisation:** Student will provide a brief written outline of the harmonic pattern used in their improvisation performed for the judge.

• Examples:

- Binary form in G Major.
- Ternary form in C Major with B section in relative minor.
- Rondo form in C Major.
- Two variations on Greensleeves in the key of a minor.
- Twelve-bar blues in F Major with varied repetitions.
- Question-and-Answer phrases on I and V⁷ Chords in C Major.

⓪ **Create and play** (or record with friends) background music to accompany a story or video.

⓪ **Create and record** an artistic video accompanied by appropriate music selections or original compositions. Include a title and credits.

⓪ **Create a program of music for a wedding**, including pieces for Prelude, Processional, Candle-lighting, Special Music, Recessional and Postlude. Chose one of the pieces to play for the judge. (This may be a collaborative effort with other instrumentalists or singers.)

C. Skills and Musicianship

⓪ **Perform a technical skills routine** to be developed by the student and teacher. Provide the judge with a written outline of the routine. (Example: Major scales, two octaves, hands together, keys of C,G,D,A,E)

⓪ **Transpose any piece** to two keys, selected by the student. Transposed selection may be a piano solo and/or a song accompaniment.

- ④ **Play a song** using a lead sheet. (Melody and chords will be given; student adds accompaniment.)
- ④ **Play three lines from a score**, either vocal or instrumental. (Student provides the score; maximum of five pages for performance.)
- ④ **Conduct a piece.** Bring an audio recording and two copies of a work to be conducted. (One copy for student, one copy for judge.) Be aware of time limitations when selecting works to conduct.
- ④ **Formal/harmonic analysis of a composition**, written or oral. Student is to present the score of the work analyzed. Written analysis must be in the student's own handwriting.

D. *Other Artistic Interests*

- ④ **Perform:** One piece on a second instrument, or a vocal solo. Student is required to provide their own accompanist. (May be student's teacher.)
- ④ **Collaboration:** Play or sing in an ensemble (2 or more students). Other than the student, ensemble members need not be studying with an MMTA teacher. Teachers and parents may be ensemble members.
- ④ **Dance:** Create a movement sequence to one of the performed pieces, or another composition. Student is asked to provide an oral or written preface or description.
- ④ **Visual Art:**
 - Create an original piece of art that is inspired by one of your Music Bridges pieces, or another composition. Bring an audio recording of the piece of music (if student is not performing it) to play excerpts for the judge. Describe orally or in written form how the art work relates to the music.
 - Choose a piece of art by another artist to relate to a piece of music. Describe, orally or in written form, relationships between the artwork and the music. Bring an audio recording of the music (if student is not performing it) to play excerpts for the judge.

E. *Written or Spoken Words*

- ④ **Write a report or create a scrapbook** on a musical topic. List resources used for your project.
 - Examples:
 - A composer
 - A musical period
 - An instrument
- ④ **Prepare oral or written Program Notes** for one of the performed pieces. Include five facts about the music, composer, historical significance, performance style, personal reactions, etc.
- ④ **Attend three concerts** (present printed copies of the programs to the judge, if possible); **and/or listen to six classical recordings.** Present an oral or written review of each performance, commenting on musical facts, historical significance, performance style, personal reactions, etc. (One live concert = two recordings.)
- ④ **Write an original story or poem** inspired by one of the performed pieces or another composition. (If another composition is used, student is asked to bring an audio recording of the work.)
- ④ **Write lyrics** for one of the performed pieces.
- ④ **Present a dramatic reading** which relates to one of the performed pieces.
- ④ **Create and perform a short drama** about one of the performed pieces, or a one-person theatrical sketch of a composer.
- ④ **Research ethnic or folk music** from a specific country and give an oral presentation which includes music recordings. (Student may choose to find and play one of the pieces themselves.)
- ④ **Create and submit an option not listed here.**

Worksheet

Planning Artwork to Accompany a Musical Composition

Describe the musical elements of the piece:

How will you show this in your artwork?

Choose the specific elements that are exemplified in the artwork

| | |
|--|--|
| General <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is this piece about?• What does the title mean? | |
| Form <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the form of the piece? | |
| Tempo <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the piece fast, slow, medium? | |
| Melody <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does it move by small steps or big leaps?• Is it up high or down low? | |
| Harmony <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is it major or minor?• Is the harmony dissonant?• Do you hear any surprises in the harmony? | |
| Texture <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the texture thick or thin?• Is there an ostinato? | |
| Rhythms <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are the rhythms even or jagged (dotted rhythms or syncopation)?• What is the meter? | |
| Articulation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the piece legato, staccato, detached (portato), accented? | |
| Dynamics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is it forte? piano? mf? mp? pp? ff?• How do the dynamics change? | |
| Pedal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the piece use pedal?• Does the pedal create blurry sounds or legato ones? | |

Worksheet

Music Bridges Concert Review

Date of Performance: _____

Place of Performance: _____

Name of performer or ensemble: _____

Describe the concert. What instruments were played? What style of music did you hear? What pieces did you hear?

What did you like about the concert?

What did you dislike about the concert?

Would you recommend this concert to other people?

Worksheet

Listening Review for Music Bridges

Name of Piece: _____

Composer: _____

When was it written? _____

What musical time period is it from? (*Circle one*)

baroque

classical

romantic

impressionistic

contemporary

What instruments do you hear?

Describe the piece. Include information about tempo, dynamics, harmony, melody, rhythm, form, mood, etc.

What do you like about the piece? What do you dislike about the piece?

Worksheet

Report on a Composer (oral or written)

When did _____ live? What other famous people lived then? What was life like for people then? Did they drive cars? Did they have electricity?

Where was this composer born?

Where did this composer live? What language do they speak here?

What kind of musical training did this composer have? With whom did he/she study? What instruments did he/she play?

What kind of music did this composer write? For what instruments?

(Composer Report, continued)

What are considered some of his/her most famous pieces?

Listen to some of this composer's famous pieces. Which one is your favorite? Why?

What other interesting things have you learned about this composer?

Program Examples

❖ A nine year old student who struggles with reading

1. "Floating Clouds" by Ferrell – solo sheet
2. "Knights at the Ball" by Sam Holland from *Music Tree 2A*
3. Crayon drawing of "Floating Clouds"
4. Original story about "Knights at the Ball"
5. Technical Skills: One-octave scales, HT, and I-V7-I chords, HT: Major keys of C,G,D,A,E

❖ A twelfth grade student who loves theater

1. Sonata in C major, K. 330, 3rd movement by Mozart
2. Sonata in D major – Presto by Paradisi
3. Vocal solo – "On My Own" from *Les Miserables* by Claude-Michel Schonberg
4. Dance to Mozart K. 330, 3rd movement
5. One person theatrical sketch on the life of Clara Schumann, written by the student

❖ A first grade student with multiple talents

1. "Lady Bug Lullaby" by Mier
2. "Crazy Cars" by Gutierrez
3. Vocal solo "Scales and Arpeggios" from the *Aristocats*
4. Watercolor painting inspired by "Lady Bug Lullaby"
5. Dance to "Once Upon a Dream" from *Sleeping Beauty* by Tchaikovsky

❖ A ninth grade vocal student

1. "Caro mio ben" by Giordani
2. "Nel cor piu non mi sento" by Paisiello
3. "Here Comes the Sun" by the Beatles, played on guitar and sung
4. "Comic Duet for Two Cats" by Rossini, sung with a friend from the same vocal studio
5. Original artwork depicting "Jupiter" from *The Planets* by Holst

❖ An eleventh grader

1. "Le Petit Negre" by Debussy
2. "Midsummer's Nocturne" by Copland
3. Compared "Midsummer's Nocturne" by Copland to Van Gogh's "Starry Night"
4. Attended three concerts and wrote reviews of them
5. Program Notes on "Le Petit Negre," written and presented orally before the performance

❖ A ninth grader who took Piano Exam 7 in the fall and needed a challenge for the spring

1. "Danza de la moza donosa" by Ginastera (Piano exam Level 9)
2. "Für Elise" by Beethoven (Piano Exam Level 7)
3. "Cascade" by Joplin, arr. Matz – 4 hand piano duet
4. Violin Solo – Vivaldi concerto
5. Accompanied another student's vocal solo

❖ An eighth grader who is playing at a Piano Exam Level 2

1. "Baroque Swirls" by Mier
2. "Hummingbird" by Jennifer Linn
3. Watercolor painting inspired by "Hummingbird"
4. Scrapbook on the life and work of Beethoven
5. Conducted the exposition of the first movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 6