



**Ephrata High School**  
Course Syllabus



Music Theory I  
Course #5645

### *I. Course Description*

Music Theory I is designed to teach the basic building blocks of theory to music students with limited or no experience in music theory. This course will teach and strengthen both aural and written skills involving intervals, scales and triads. Composition, part writing, and analysis will also be taught. Completion of this course will provide a basic music theory background, which may enhance a student's overall performance skills. Students may be asked to purchase a workbook. This course is a prerequisite for higher-level theory classes.

### *II. Materials & Equipment*

Students will be responsible for completing regular assignments in the provided workbook, *Alfred's Essentials of Music Theory, Complete* as assigned. Supplemental worksheets, staff paper, and graphic organizers such as a keyboard diagram and the Circle of Fifths will also be utilized. Additional practice with intervals, scales and triads will be made available to students through theory internet sites (accessed through home and school computers) as well as music software programs *Alfred's Essentials of Music Theory*, *Auralia*, and *FINALE* available during class. Use of a keyboard at home is strongly recommended and encouraged.

### *III. Course Goals & Objectives*

1. To develop a basic working knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of both the written and aural aspects of music at a beginning to intermediate level. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Notation, developing written skills
  - Analysis
  - Melodic/Rhythmic Dictation, developing aural skills
  - Sight singing, use of solfeggio
  - Keyboard competency, beginner level
  - Composing, arranging, orchestrating melodies with and without simple harmonies
  - Understanding intervals, major and minor scales, key signatures, and triads
2. To become familiar with style traits, classic literature, and composers of the Western historical eras
  - Understanding form
  - Tonality
  - Compositional techniques
3. To increase a student's overall understanding of music terminology, how music "works", and to heighten the student's overall performance level.

#### *IV. Course Topics (Summary Outline) in order presented*

What skills are needed for a musician to understand music theory at a basic level?  
How will these individual skills combine to create a better performer?

1. Notation, symbols, note identification, Italian terms
2. Solfeggio
3. Rhythm dictations, note divisions, beat groupings
4. Meter, simple and compound
5. Composing melodies alone and with accompaniment
6. Keyboard patterns: half steps, whole steps, enharmonics
7. Tetrachords, major scales, chromatic scale
8. Key signatures, Circle of Fifths, order of flats and sharps
9. Intervals: Perfect, Major, minor, diminished, augmented, enharmonic
10. Triads: qualities, functions; inversions (figured bass), analysis
11. Transposing melodies using solfege
12. Harmonizing melodies using primary triads (major and minor)
13. Dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chords
14. Chord progressions using I, IV, V
15. Minor scales: natural, harmonic, melodic
16. Modes relating to major/minor
17. Using/identifying basic non-harmonic tones
18. Blues scale; 12-bar blues progression
19. Understanding basic forms of music: phrase, motive, ternary, binary, rondo
20. Introduction to basic 4-part writing skills
21. Describing both written and aural music using a full music vocabulary

#### *V. Assignments & Grading*

Grades will be determined by student participation in the following activities (but not limited to):

- Completion of assigned pages in workbook and supplemental
- Completion of homework practice and review as needed
- Participation in class discussions/circle activities/sight singing and solfege
- Quizzes/Tests
- Composition of melodies with or without accompaniment
- Ear-training activities
- Demonstration of Rhythmic and melodic dictation skills
- Knowledge of keyboard/basic keyboard skills
- Enrichment/reinforcement of skills involving computer software programs