

Music At Our House

The Ultimate Music Resource for Homeschoolers

Music at Our House

Music History & Appreciation

Elementary School Course

Grades 4-6, Ages 9-11
(younger ages by permission of Mr. Powell)

November 5, 2010

Prepared by Mr. Johnson

Introduction

This syllabus presents the general objectives, and an overview of the content, for the Music at Our House Course for Elementary School Students.

The Elementary Course teaches the styles of simple music from various parts of the West in historical order. The goal is for the student to gain a clear conception of the character of each kind of music, and a familiarity with what the music meant to the people who made it.

It is important to understand the history of music in the context of wider historical events and trends. Therefore every effort will be made to connect the musical studies to the developments and historical figures the students are learning about in their other history courses.

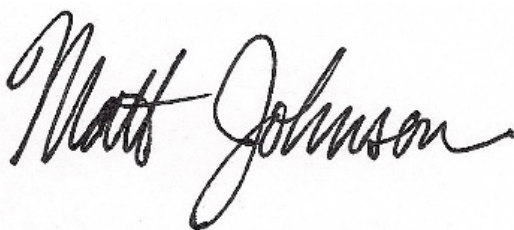
The outline below gives an indication of the topics to be covered. The precise content and progression will be determined by what is suited to and interesting to the class. Therefore some deviation from this initial plan will be appropriate and necessary. Some topics will require further elaboration, while others may have to be trimmed or even eliminated to allow for more important things.

The Elementary School Music Course is designed to lay the groundwork for the student to later gain a fuller, more detailed understanding of the history of music. It teaches simpler music and basic concepts which prepare the student to understand and appreciate the more sophisticated serious art music covered in the Junior High/High School level.

The elementary level focuses primarily on folk music and popular music from various times and places, and on the associated stories. It teaches concepts of music and its emotional meaning on this simple level. At the Junior High/High School level, then, the student is fully prepared to delve into the masterpieces by the great composers such as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms.

I look forward to exploring the substance of the West's music over time with you and your child--to learning a lot and enjoying the passions and sentiments mankind has expressed in this form of art.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M".

Matt Johnson

Course Outline

Weeks 1-5

Songs of Ancient Greece

Stories of Ancient Greek Music:

- Orpheus & Eurydice
- Apollo & the Muses
- Jason & the Sirens
- Dionysus & the Bacchantes
- Pythagoras & the Blacksmith

Weeks 6-8

Songs of the Dark Ages: Gregorian Chant

Solfege

- “Do-Re-Mi” from “The Sound of Music”
- Guido of Arezzo invents solfege

Songs of the Renaissance

- Troubadours

Weeks 9-12

Songs of Mozart

Little opera: Bastien and Bastienne

Song-play: The Magic Flute

Opera: Gounod’s *Faust*

Week 13

Songs of the era of Romanticism

- Brahms’ Lullaby

Weeks 14-16

Gypsy Music

- Dances

Arabian Music

Folk Songs of Eastern Europe

Week 17

Different types of scales

- Pentatonic
- Major
- Minor
- Exotic scales

Weeks 18-19

March Time

- History of the March
- John Philip Sousa

Waltz Time

- History of the Waltz
- Johann Strauss, the “Waltz King”

Week 20

Slave Spirituals in America

Ragtime: Scott Joplin

Course Resources:

Naxos Library of Recorded Music -- online database of audio recordings

Dancing with the Muses: A Historical Approach to Basic Concepts of Music

by M. Zachary Johnson (to be available in print and e-book formats)

Various other internet resources

Teacher **M. Zachary Johnson** is a composer and writer on music who has taught music theory and music skills to elementary, junior high and high school students in the Preparatory Division of the Mannes College of Music in New York for many years. His new book “Dancing with the Muses: A Historical Approach to Basic Concepts of Music,” an outgrowth of his teaching, uses stories from history to bring the elementary concepts of music to life. www.MZacharyJohnson.com