

## LESSON PLANNING GUIDE

**Lesson Plan:** Dotted Rhythms & Accidentals

**Date:**

**Estimated Time of Lesson Plan:** (67 mins)

**Grade/Subject:** Band

**Standards, Learning Objectives, and Assessment:**

Standard: <b>PERFORM: HS.P1.A</b> – Demonstrate technical accuracy and expressive qualities in performance	Objective 1: TSW... TSW accurately count and perform dotted rhythms in Mars by Gustav Holst.	Assessment: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Formative <input type="checkbox"/> Summative Teacher observation during rhythm drills and sectional work; students clap and perform dotted rhythms in isolation and within the piece; teacher checks for accuracy during full ensemble performance of measures with dotted rhythms.
	“I Can...” I can count and play dotted rhythms correctly in Mars.	
Standard: <b>PERFORM: HS.P2.A</b> – Analyze and demonstrate how musical elements (rhythm, pitch, articulation, dynamics) contribute to performance	Objective 2: TSW identify and correctly perform accidentals within their parts.	Assessment: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Formative <input type="checkbox"/> Summative Teacher circulates during sectional work to check student identification of accidentals in their music; students mark accidentals with pencil; teacher listens for correct pitch accuracy during performance.
	“I Can...” I can find and play the sharps, flats, and naturals in my music correctly.	
Standard: <b>PERFORM: HS.P3.A</b> – Demonstrate understanding of expressive intent through performance	Objective 3: TSW recognize and perform minor tonalities and intervals with accuracy.	Assessment: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Formative <input type="checkbox"/> Summative Teacher assessment during tuning exercises and performance of minor scale passages; students demonstrate understanding of minor tonality through accurate pitch and intonation in ensemble context.
	“I Can...” I can recognize when the music is in a minor key and play the correct notes with good intonation.	
Standard: <b>PERFORM: HS.P2.A</b> – Analyze and demonstrate how musical elements (rhythm, pitch, articulation, dynamics) contribute to performance	Objective 4: TSW demonstrate improved intonation and phrasing within ensemble context.	Assessment: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Formative <input type="checkbox"/> Summative Teacher listens during tuning and chorale-style playing; students adjust pitch using listening skills (not just visual tuner); teacher provides immediate feedback on blend and intonation during full ensemble performance.
	“I Can...” I can listen to others and adjust my pitch to play in tune with the ensemble.	
Standard: <b>RESPONDING: HS.R2.A</b> – Evaluate performances using appropriate musical vocabulary  <b>PERFORM:</b> <b>HS.P2.A</b> – Analyze and demonstrate how musical elements (rhythm, pitch, articulation, dynamics) contribute to performance	Objective 5: TSW apply correct articulation styles (accent, staccato, legato, slur) as indicated in Mars.	Assessment: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Formative <input type="checkbox"/> Summative Teacher observation during warm-up articulation exercises and performance of Mars; students demonstrate understanding by performing contrasting articulation styles; teacher provides feedback on clarity and consistency of articulation.
	“I Can...” I can play different articulations (accents, staccato, legato, slurs) correctly and make them sound different from each other.	

<b>Academic Vocabulary.</b> <i>Identify and define the important academic vocabulary that students need to understand in the lesson.</i>	
<p><i>Language Function:</i> Students will <b>demonstrate, identify, perform,</b> and <b>refine</b> musical techniques by applying music reading skills, responding to conductor cues, and adjusting their playing based on aural feedback from the ensemble.</p>	<p><i>Planned Supports</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual examples of rhythms written on board</li> <li>• Teacher modeling of articulation styles</li> <li>• Sectional work for targeted instruction</li> <li>• Use of tuner/tuning app for visual pitch reference</li> <li>• Practice journals for student reflection and goal-setting</li> <li>• Immediate verbal feedback during rehearsal</li> </ul>
<p><i>Vocabulary:</i> Dotted rhythm Accidental Minor tonality Intonation Interval Articulation Accent Staccato Legato Slur Phrasing Blend Ensemble Measure</p>	<p><i>Planned Supports:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher uses vocabulary consistently during instruction</li> <li>• Students use vocabulary in practice journal reflections</li> <li>• Visual rhythm examples on board</li> <li>• Teacher modeling with instrument</li> <li>• Immediate application during performance</li> </ul>

### Prior Knowledge & Prerequisite Skills

#### What students already know:

- Basic instrumental technique (posture, embouchure, breathing, tone production)
- How to read music notation including rhythms, pitches, dynamics, and articulations
- Understanding of major and minor tonalities
- Experience with various articulation styles
- How to use a tuner for pitch reference
- Ensemble skills (watching conductor, listening across sections, balance and blend)
- Previous experience with concert band repertoire
- Familiarity with rehearsal procedures and expectations

#### Skills required for success:

- Ability to count and subdivide complex rhythms (dotted rhythms)
- Ability to identify and perform accidentals
- Pitch accuracy and intonation adjustment by ear
- Technical facility on instrument to execute varied articulations
- Ensemble awareness and listening skills
- Ability to apply feedback and self-correct
- Music literacy (reading and interpreting notation)

#### Measures of readiness:

- Students have been working on Mars in previous rehearsals
- Warm-up exercises target specific technical demands of the piece
- Teacher observation during previous rehearsals informs lesson focus
- Students demonstrate varying levels of proficiency with rhythms and articulations

#### Connecting to prior knowledge:

- Warm-up directly connects to technical demands of Mars (articulation patterns, tone quality)
- Review of dotted rhythms builds on previous rhythm work
- Minor tonality work connects to previous scale and interval study
- Articulation exercises reinforce concepts from earlier in the year

#### Guiding Questions:

1. How do compositional devices like dotted rhythms, accidentals, and articulation markings affect the way we perform Mars?
2. What strategies can we use to improve our intonation and blend as an ensemble?

3. **How does the minor tonality of Mars affect the mood and character of the piece?**
4. **What is the difference between practicing a difficult passage alone versus performing it with the ensemble?**
5. **How can we use our ears (not just our eyes on the tuner) to play in tune?**

**Set:**

**Activity:** "Mars: The Bringer of War" Context and Listening (3 minutes)

- **Introduce piece**
- **Brief listening excerpt (30-45 seconds)**
- **Discussion of piece—noting rhythm, articulations, character, mood, tonality of piece**
- **Connect to objectives and "I Can" statements**

**Instruction:**

#### **1. Set-Up (5 minutes)**

Students assemble instruments

- Students enter, retrieve instruments, and set up at their seats
- Attendance taken
- Materials check: music, pencil, practice journal

#### **2. Tuning (5 minutes)**

**Teacher leads full ensemble tuning:**

- Concert Bb and F
- "Adjust using your ears, not just the tuner. Listen to the ensemble sound."
- Teacher checks individual intonation
- Sectional adjustments as needed

**Direct Instruction (30 minutes)**

#### **4. Rhythm Drill - Dotted Rhythms (9 minutes)**

**Teacher uses visual on board to present dotted rhythm pattern**

Guided practice:

- "Now clap with me" - Teacher and students clap together (2 repetitions)
- Apply this to measure 12 in Mars
- Students identify dotted rhythms in their parts
- Teacher: points out each group's rhythms
- Full ensemble plays section 29 to 34
  - Teacher gives individual practice time (1 minute)
  - Full ensemble plays section

#### **5. Accidentals Focus (5 minutes)**

**Teacher facilitates discussion regarding accidentals**

**Teacher directs students to go through the music section and identify all accidentals and find out any unknown fingerings:**

- A student share ask about the sound of C# (C-sharp)

Teacher plays correct on keyboard

Student repeats with correct sound

#### **6. Sectional practice (5 minutes):**

- Each section practices measures 29-34
- Teacher goes around helping students
- Provides immediate feedback and correction

#### **7. Full Ensemble Rehearsal of Mars (15 minutes)**

**(measures 29-34):**

**Teacher conducts:**

- Students perform without stopping
- Teacher takes notes on trouble spots

**Teacher provides feedback**

#### **8. Targeted rehearsal:**

**Measure 24 (accidentals):**

- Woodwinds play alone
- Brass play alone
- Full ensemble together
- Teacher corrects pitch errors immediately

**Measure 32 & 33 (dotted rhythms):**

- Isolate the measure
- Clap the rhythm
- Play slowly, gradually increase tempo
- Play at performance tempo

**Measure 35 (articulation):**

- Teacher models the articulation
- "I want to hear crisp staccato with clear separation between notes"
- Students play the passage
- Teacher provides feedback: "Better! Now add the accents for even more intensity"
- Students play again with accents
- **Formative Assessment:** Teacher evaluates articulation clarity

**9. Final run-through, section 29-50:**

- Students perform measures 29-34 with improvements
- Teacher provides feedback

**Closure (2 mins):**

**Review of objectives:**

**Teacher asks:** "Let's review what we worked on Today. Fist to five."

**For each objective:**

1. "Counting and performing dotted rhythms"
2. "Identifying and playing accidentals correctly"
3. "Performing minor tonalities with good intonation"
4. "Playing in tune with the ensemble"
5. "Executing different articulations clearly"

**Teacher notes which objectives need more work in next rehearsal**

**Reflection (3 mins):**

**How did you think like a musician Today in this lesson?**

**Teacher asks:** "Musicians don't just play notes - they problem-solve, listen critically, and work together to create something beautiful. How did you think like a musician Today?"

**Assignment:**

**Independent reinforcement of lesson objectives beyond class time**

**Home Practice Assignment:**

**Students will practice the following:**

1. **Dotted rhythms:** Section 65-77
2. **Accidentals:** Review measures 29-35, circling all accidentals and practicing slowly to ensure correct pitch
3. **Minor scale:** Practice C minor scale (concert pitch) for intonation and familiarity with minor tonality
4. **Articulation:** Practice measures 35-40 focusing on crisp staccato and clear accents
5. **Sectional passage:** Continue working on measures 29-35 that were rehearsed in sectionals

**Practice journal entry:**

- Document what you practiced
- Note what improved
- Identify what still needs work
- Set goals for next rehearsal

**Cross-curriculum Connections & Disciplinary Literacy:**

**Shared Grade-Level Outcomes:**

**ELA Standards:**

- **Writing:** Students write reflections in practice journals using musical vocabulary
- **Speaking & Listening:** Students communicate in sectionals using academic language

- **Vocabulary:** Discipline-specific terminology used in context

#### **Math Standards:**

- **Fractions & Ratios:** Understanding note values and rhythmic relationships (dotted notes add 1/2 value)
- **Counting & Subdivision:** Counting beats and subdivisions in complex rhythms
- **Patterns:** Recognizing rhythmic and melodic patterns

#### **History/Social Studies:**

- **Historical Context:** Gustav Holst and early 20th century music
- **Cultural Context:** Roman mythology (Mars as god of war)
- **World War I era:** The Planets composed during WWI

#### **Science:**

- **Physics of Sound:** Understanding pitch, frequency, and acoustics
- **Breath Control:** Understanding respiratory system and breath support

### **Differentiated Instruction & Targeted Supports (ELL/SPED)**

#### **Differentiation by Readiness:**

##### **Advanced/Proficient Students:**

- Leadership roles in sectionals
- Work ahead on measures 65-77
- Focus on advanced musical expression and phrasing
- Mentor struggling students during sectional work
- Challenge: Analyze the compositional structure of Mars

##### **On-Level Students:**

- Standard lesson activities
- Peer partnerships for support during sectional work
- Focus on technical accuracy and basic expression

##### **Struggling/Below-Level Students:**

- Focus on measures 1-40 only
- Simplified rhythm patterns if needed
- Extra sectional time with teacher
- Buddy system with stronger player
- Practice with recording for tempo support
- Modified practice assignments (fewer measures)
- Visual aids (rhythm charts, fingering charts)

### **Materials, Resources, and Technology**

#### **Student Needs:**

- Individual instruments (maintained and in working order)
- Sheet music: Mars from The Planets by Gustav Holst, arr. Jay Bocook
- Individual parts with measure numbers
- Music stands
- Pencils for marking music
- Practice journals
- Water bottles

#### **Teacher Needs:**

- Conductor's score for Mars
- Baton
- Podium
- Whiteboard/markers for rhythm examples
- Piano or keyboard (for demonstrating minor scale)
- Teacher observation checklist
- Student practice journals (for review)
- Recording device (optional - to record rehearsal for student listening)

#### **Technology:**

- **Tuner or tuning app:** For individual and ensemble tuning
- **Metronome:** For rhythm work and tempo consistency
- **Audio playback system:** To play professional recording of Mars
- **Optional: Projector/screen:** To display rhythm examples or notation