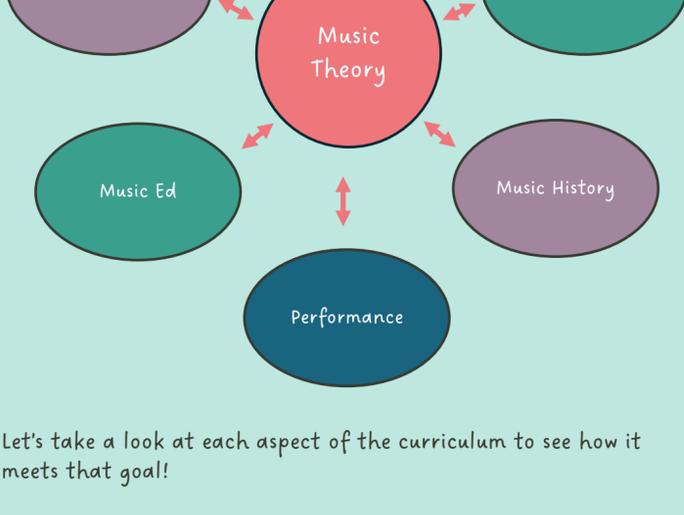


Ball State University Music Theory Curriculum Assessment

Dan Smith | EDU 522 | Week 4

Music Theory 1-3 are classes that every music student takes to develop a strong foundation of music fundamentals to prepare for their degrees.



Let's take a look at each aspect of the curriculum to see how it meets that goal!

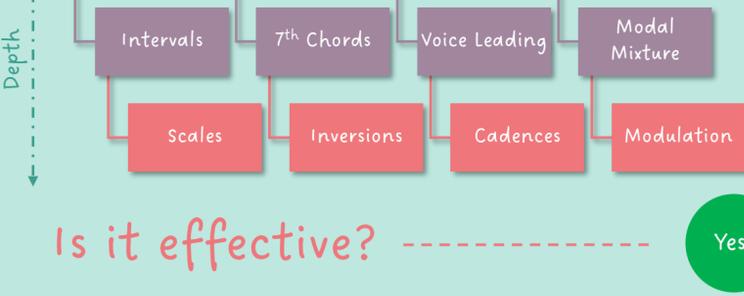


Scope & Sequence

Does the curriculum cover enough material in enough depth in the right order?

Scope is the breadth and depth of the topics covered

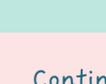
Sequence is the order in which topics are taught



Is it effective? -----

Yes!

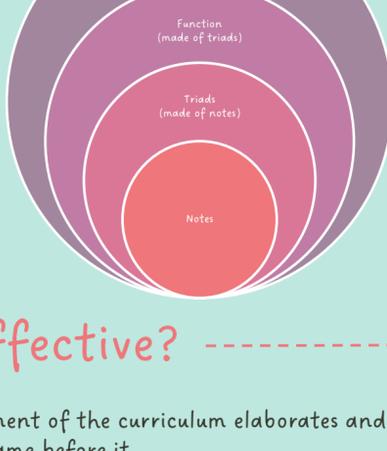
These topics lay a strong foundation for more advanced, specialized concepts.



Continuity

Is the curriculum coherent and cumulative?

Continuity is ensuring that the curriculum builds on itself and reinforces important concepts



Is it effective? -----

Yes!

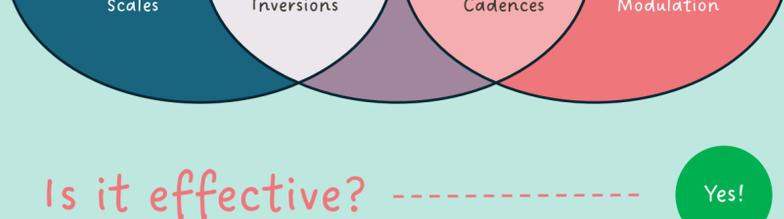
Each component of the curriculum elaborates and expands on the topic that came before it.



Articulation

Does the transition between classes make sense?

Articulation is alignment of objectives across classes or units, and the logic of the transition between them



Is it effective? -----

Yes!

Each class overlaps on some key topics, meaning the earlier class can introduce the basics of those topics, and the later class can pick up with more advanced concepts.



Integration

Does the curriculum have real-world applications?

Integration is the connections between the material to other related disciplines

Activity and Assignment Types



Chord ID'ing



4-part writing



Roman Numeral Analysis

Is it effective? -----

No!

Our music theory curriculum is largely abstract and self-contained. It has very few examples of real music, let alone interdisciplinary topics of other music subjects.

How do we fix it?

Incorporate music examples from a variety of styles throughout the curriculum. Encourage students to analyze music from their ensembles or other classes.



Balance

Is there a variety of content and assessments?

Balance is having a broad range of activities and assessments that can meet the needs of a diverse group of learners

Activities

- Reading
- Lectures
- Practice worksheets

Assessments

- Roman Numeral Analysis
- Part-writing
- Chord/Interval ID'ing

Is it effective? -----

No!

The material we use to teach is repetitive and largely based on direct instruction, and our assessments are very narrow in scope.

How do we fix it?

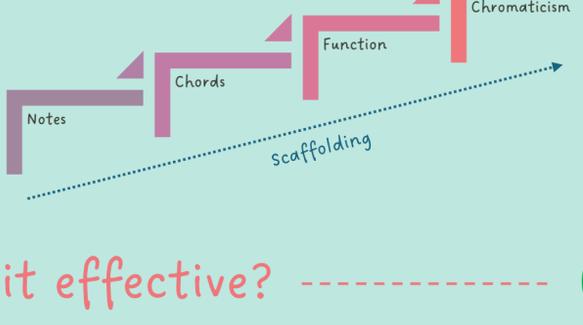
Develop activities and assessments that require critical thinking and unique applications of concepts. For example, reharmonizing a melody or fixing a flawed voice leading example.



Learning Theory

Is the curriculum built using evidence-based practice?

Learning theory within the curriculum means consciously applying best practices in teaching to the lessons we design.



Is it effective? -----

Yes!

Our curriculum is built on concepts of scaffolding and constructivism. (This means that we break down complex tasks (harmony, function, etc.) into smaller tasks (notes, chords, etc.) that gradually get more complex over time.) However, some of the fixes we discussed earlier could still improve this area!

Thank you!

Bates, B. (2023). *Learning theories simplified: ...And how to apply them to teaching* (3rd ed.). Sage.
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