VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Engaging ELs in Music

## *Make* learning visible

* Establish content and connected language targets to support students in comparing musical works, describing music, explaining their personal responses towards music, evaluating musical performances, etc.
* Draw attention to patterns and relationships in musical works
* Refer to student-generated word walls to support language development and understanding of music concepts
* Complement written word walls and anchor charts with visuals and graphics

## Support the language of music

All students can learn! High expectations, asset-based thinking, and growth mindsets are key to student success!

* Provide multiple opportunities for students to communicate about their and peers’ music performances and preferences
* Explicitly teach the language of music beyond a focus on vocabulary to support conceptual understanding and for students to communicate like musicians
* Provide sentence starters to support Music Standards of Learning (SOL) and communicate their vision for creating and performing music, e.g.,
	+ Evaluate works by self and others:
	My/Your/the performance of this music can be improved by \_\_\_\_\_.
	When (singing/playing), I/you/the musician can improve technique by \_\_\_\_\_.
	+ Compare and contrast aspects of musical works:
	These two pieces of music are (similar/different) because \_\_\_\_\_.
	The element that makes this style of music (unique/different) is \_\_\_\_.
	+ Articulate personal response to music:
	This music made me feel \_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
	I think this music is about \_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
	+ Understand historical and cultural influences:
	\_\_\_\_ was a popular form of music during (time period) because \_\_\_\_.
	\_\_\_\_ music was impacted/influenced by \_\_\_\_.
	+ Inquire about music:
	I wonder why the composer chose \_\_\_\_?
	Which current technologies would be best for \_\_\_\_?

## Connect learning to students’ backgrounds and skills

* Make connections between music as a mode of expression and different styles of music within students’ lives
* Highlight contributions and innovations from a variety of cultures
* Facilitate opportunities for music choices and responses to be explained in student’s home language
* Model respectful analysis of a variety of perspectives

## Use cooperative learning structures and strategies

* Structure opportunities for students to collaborate and communicate ideas when rehearsing for musical performances
* Use flexible and fluid grouping of students during discussions and rehearsals, where possible
* Ask students to “Notice” and “Wonder/Inquire” about musical works together
* Teach “talk moves” so students can engage in academic conversations about music, e.g., I would like to build on your idea. I have a different idea to share. Can you please clarify what you just said?

## Reduce cognitive load and allow processing time

* Break tasks and prompts into smaller sections and organize texts using bullet points versus complex paragraphs
* Read tasks and texts out loud
* Use simple sentences and include only details needed to complete the task
* Show and explain model and sample music that meets composition or performance expectations
* Provide adequate thinking and processing time, and flexible time frames for completing reading and writing tasks

*High expectations, asset-based thinking, and a growth mindset are key to student success!*

*Virginia Department of Education 2020*