

P.K. Yonge Elementary Music Classes – Grade Information
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A Note About Grades and Report Cards

Hello P.K. Elementary Music Parents. This information is intended to give you more information about the grading process and the grade posted on the report cards for elementary music. The Elementary Music Curriculum is based on state standards and grade level expectations (GLE's), for example, playing, clapping walking to a steady beat (1st grade/ Kindergarten GLE), or perform a syncopated rhythm on a rhythmic instrument (4th, 5th grade GLE). There are virtually no written assignments or homework that figure in elementary music grades. As many of you know I teach within a philosophy called Orff Schulwerk, which is a dynamic, active approach to music education. We learn music through doing activities, not reading or filling out worksheets. The activities performed in class are directly related to the standards and the GLE's. The activities within any given lesson are expressly designed to meet the GLE's for that class or specific unit. For instance all classes are approaching the end of our unit on rhythm, most of the standards and GLE's we have covered since the beginning of the school year have been based on rhythm.

Assessments are based on the activities in class. Students have many opportunities to perform the activities before an assessment is observed in class. When an assessment is recorded it is done so with the following marks:

Plus sign + if the student has mastered the standard, the student can teach or help teach the standard to another student (teaching is mastery learning)

Check Plus /+ If the student is close to mastering the standard

Check / if the student can function with the standard with some mistakes

Check minus /- if the student can function with the standard with more than a few mistakes

Minus - if the student can not display the standard to any degree of functionality

There are no points or grades based on a 100%, that simply does not work for music and movement and creativity. Therefore the marks for each assessment make up a composite grade that is reflected with a number for the report card. The report card system as it stands now is based on a 100% recording system, the assessment marks from music class must be translated into some kind of number for it to be accepted on the report card. In the future, this may change so that the music marks currently in use may be reflected accurately in the software we have available.

This system of assessment is adapted from Dr. Timothy Brophy's book on assessment : Assessing the Developing Child Musician: A Guide for General Music Teachers Timothy S. Brophy.

Dr. Brophy is the chair and leader of Institutional Assessment for the whole University of Florida.

<http://www.giamusic.com/products/P-7170.cfm>

General music teachers have long struggled with the issue of how to accurately and objectively assess the progress of their students. With this practical and much-needed book, Timothy S. Brophy, Ph.D., a rising leader in the music education field, tackles the issue head-on, giving practical insights and providing

excellent practical suggestions and samples. *Assessing the Developing Child Musician* leads the general music specialist through every step necessary to develop their own personal style of assessing students while working within the guidelines of local district standards and curriculum, state and national standards, varying educational philosophies, and the school's adopted music series. From the foundations of assessment through development considerations, to assessing each child as a performing, creating, and critically thinking/responding musician, Brophy brings clear, in-depth explanations to the task, followed by easily referenced Chapter Summaries, Questions for Clarification, Questions for Discussion, Assessment Practice, as well as suggestions on developing scoring guides and assessment tasks. Music portfolios and profiles are also given ample attention, with real student samples included at the end of the book. By looking at the state of general music education today, asking the right questions, and delivering practical suggestions, Dr. Brophy has written an indispensable resource guide for all teachers in the field of general music education.