

Madison Public Schools

7th and 8th Grade Chorus Curriculum

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Course Overview

Description

The Madison Junior School 7th and 8th Grade Chorus curriculum is designed to build upon the skills learned at the elementary and 6th grade level. The intent of the program is to introduce and expose students to all aspects of vocal music, providing a forum in which they will learn to participate in, observe, critique, and appreciate the different styles of vocal music. The Madison Junior School Chorus is designed to allow each student to progress as a musician and achieve musical independence. Students build upon previously learned musical concepts and knowledge regarding note reading, pitch, melody and rhythm, and other aspects of vocal music performance.

It is the common goal of each music director in the Madison School District to help develop life long learners who will have a love and appreciation for music. Careful lesson and rehearsal planning, meaningful daily or weekly rehearsals and a multitude of performance opportunities on campus give students an array of experiences that will allow them to be productive members of society and supporters of the arts.

Goals

This course aims to develop the 7th and 8th grade chorus student in the following ways:

- To provide students with the skills necessary to achieve an efficient and healthy vocal tone
- To provide students with the skills necessary to read, understand, critique, rehearse, and perform the many styles and genres of vocal music of different cultures as well as their own
- To ensure that students enjoy and appreciate singing in a group with their peers and bringing this musical experience into the lives of audience members
- To provide students with the musical experience necessary in becoming an active participant in and a patron of vocal music and fine arts
- Develop aural skills necessary for singing in a group and performing repertoire with accurate intonation
- Develop both internal and external rhythmic skills in order to perform in a choral setting
- Increase literacy in the areas of note reading, musical terms and symbols in order to interpret and perform a variety of repertoire by sight and with practice
- Develop ability to perform in an ensemble, understand and follow conducting gestures and demonstrate flexibility with regards to tempo, and balance
- Develop a basic level of expression and musicality during performance
- Increase historical awareness and cultural contexts of varied choral repertoire
- Develop analytical skills for evaluating individual and group performances of varied repertoire

Materials

Core: There is no textbook used in this course, rather the teacher and students will utilize a wide variety of music literature available in the choral library at MJS.

Supplemental: YouTube videos, various online resources

Resources

[Suggested Resources and Activities](#)

Benchmark Assessments

Benchmark assessments are given at the conclusion of each unit and focus on the main ideas and anchor standards of the course.

Modifications and Adaptations for Special Needs Learners

(Gifted and Talented Students, English Language Learners, Students with Special Needs, At-Risk Students, and Students with 504 Plans)

Unit 1 Overview

Unit Title: Developing the Physical Skill Set of the Choral Student

Unit Summary:

The art of singing requires a specific physical skill which needs to be developed, reinforced, and practiced in order for the student to be successful. In this unit, students will identify the components of a comprehensive warm up routine. Students will also become familiar with the choral folders, risers and all classroom procedures. Students will work on many vocal warm ups and begin to understand what is required to be a successful choir.

Suggested Pacing: Ongoing

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- Why is it important to create an organized learning environment?
- How does creating and performing music differ from listening to music?
- How can music evoke emotion?
- What are the elements of a comprehensive choral vocal warm-up?

Unit Enduring Understanding

- Performing carefully supervised warm-up exercises on a daily basis is essential for acquisition of proper vocal technique.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessments: Frequent informal assessment and feedback are provided on a daily basis by the teacher.

Summative Assessment: Students will be assessed via individual and concert performance evaluations and will be scored using a rubric.

Objectives (Students will be able to...)	Essential Content/Skills	Suggested Assessments	Standards	Pacing
Understand and execute the procedures of the chorus class ie. Folders, choral music, rules of the auditorium, etc.	Learn organizational skills, classroom expectations, collaboration on rules and regulations	Teacher will hear each student and decide their particular voice parts by using a rubric.	1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.	Ongoing
Demonstrate the key elements found in a comprehensive vocal warm up.	Content/Skills: The singer must constantly strive to develop: breath control, resonance, good posture, range, flexibility, articulation, raised soft palate and lowered larynx while singing.	Students will complete a comprehensive vocal warm-up everyday. Teacher will facilitate guided practice through each skill. (warm ups will be more complex in 8th grade- 1 to 2 octaves)	1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre. (8th grade students may feel more comfortable singing alone in front of the class) 1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.	Ongoing
Understand individual goals the student has as a singer.	Content/Skills: Students will identify what voice part they are most comfortable singing and what specific deficits they have in their vocal technique.	Singers will vocalize a minimum of one octave daily. Through consistent and closely monitored vocalizations, students can identify their voice as soprano, alto, tenor/ bass. Student and teacher will demonstrate different vocal timbre and tone quality. As the year progresses, students will note the change and development of their voice. (warm ups will be more complex in 8th grade- 1-2 octaves)	1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre. (8th grade students may feel more comfortable singing alone in front of the class) 1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff. 1.3.8.B.4 Improvise music in a selected genre or style, using the elements of music that are consistent with basic playing and/or singing techniques in that genre or style. 9.2.8.B.3 Evaluate communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that can be developed through school, home, work, and extracurricular activities for use in a career	Ongoing

Continue progress toward the completion of their concert	<p>Content: Concert music</p> <p>Skills: Self Reflection Critique Music technology Vocal Performance Memorize and perform in a group setting as well as a final concert</p>	<p>Monthly progress checklist and reflection.</p> <p>Participation grades</p> <p>(7th and 8th graders will reflect as a group and individually)</p>	<p>1.3.8.B.1 Perform instrumental or vocal compositions using complex standard and non-standard Western, non Western, and avant-garde notation.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre. (8th grade students may feel more comfortable singing alone in front of the class)</p> <p>1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.4 Improvise music in a selected genre or style, using the elements of music that are consistent with basic playing and/or singing techniques in that genre or style.</p> <p>1.4.8.A.7 Analyze the form, function, craftsmanship, and originality of representative works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.</p> <p>1.4.8.B.1 Evaluate the effectiveness of a work of art by differentiating between the artist's technical proficiency and the work's content or form.</p> <p>1.4.8.B.2 Differentiate among basic formal structures and technical proficiency of artists in works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art</p> <p>8.1.8.E.1 Effectively use a variety of search tools and filters in professional public databases to find information to solve a real world problem.</p> <p>CRP6. Demonstrate creativity and innovation.</p>	Ongoing
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Unit 2 Overview				
Unit Title: Developing Musicianship and Vocal Technique in the Choral Student				
Unit Summary: In this unit, students will be able to identify and demonstrate appropriate posture, breathing technique, and diction. Students will demonstrate correct tone production and provide self-analysis of individual vocal goals.				
Suggested Pacing: Ongoing				
Learning Targets				
Unit Essential Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does proper breathing influence the sustaining of a phrase? In what ways does posture enable effective performance? What is the correct position of the tongue for singing? The larynx? The soft palate? The rib cage? How can the understanding of human anatomy as it pertains to vocal pedagogy improve the quality of one's singing? 				
Unit Enduring Understandings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My voice is an instrument. Proper vocal technique is the foundation of good singing. Excellent vocal technique is essential to communicate the text to the audience. 				
Evidence of Learning				
<p>Formative Assessments: Frequent informal assessment and feedback are provided on a daily basis by the teacher.</p> <p>Summative Assessment: Students will be assessed via individual performance evaluations and will be scored using a rubric.</p> <p>Alternative Assessment: Students may make a recording of themselves singing the concert pieces and submit via Google classroom</p>				

Objectives (Students will be able to...)	Essential Content/Skills	Suggested Assessments	Standards	Pacing
Display proper posture	Standing posture: feet will be slightly apart, hands will be at sides, chest will be high; head will be evenly and naturally aligned.	Measurement of individual progress by noting involvement in the practice of the exercises	1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.	Ongoing

	Sitting posture: sit away from chair back, feet will be flat on the floor, back will be straight, head will be evenly and naturally aligned and chest will be high.	(Depending on the level of the group, more or less technique will be used)		
Develop diaphragmatic techniques for the complete cycle of breathing.	<p>The student's automatic response, when cued to sing, is to execute proper breath control.</p> <p>Students will breathe out on "s" or "sh" for specified amounts of counts.</p> <p>Students will learn about breathing anatomy.</p>	<p>Measurement of individual progress by noting involvement in the practice of the exercises</p> <p>(Depending on the level of the group, more or less technique will be used)</p>	1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.	Ongoing
Demonstrate proper vocal tone quality.	<p>The student will develop the ability to shape vowel sounds supported by the breath, to position and direct vocal tone.</p> <p>The student will learn to fuse head voice/falsetto and chest voice in order to pass between them.</p>	<p>Singers will compare, through vocal warm ups, the differences in sound when singing with round open vowels, and singing in closed position with lowered palate.</p> <p>(Depending on the level of the group, more or less technique will be used)</p>	<p>1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.4 Improvise music in a selected genre or style, using the elements of music that are consistent with basic playing and/or singing techniques in that genre or style.</p> <p>CRP4. Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.</p>	Ongoing
Continue progress toward the completion of their concert	<p>Content: Concert music</p> <p>Skills: Self Reflection Critique Music technology Vocal Performance Memorize and perform in a group</p>	<p>Monthly progress checklist and reflection.</p> <p>(7th and 8th graders will reflect as a group and individually)</p>	<p>1.3.8.B.1 Perform instrumental or vocal compositions using complex standard and non-standard Western, non Western, and avant-garde notation.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned</p>	Ongoing

	<p>setting as well as a final concert</p>		<p>with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.4 Improvise music in a selected genre or style, using the elements of music that are consistent with basic playing and/or singing techniques in that genre or style.</p> <p>1.4.8.A.7 Analyze the form, function, craftsmanship, and originality of representative works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.</p> <p>1.4.8.B.1 Evaluate the effectiveness of a work of art by differentiating between the artist's technical proficiency and the work's content or form.</p> <p>1.4.8.B.2 Differentiate among basic formal structures and technical proficiency of artists in works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art</p> <p>8.1.8.E.1 Effectively use a variety of search tools and filters in professional public databases to find information to solve a real world problem.</p> <p>CRP6. Demonstrate creativity and innovation.</p> <p>CRP9. Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.</p>	
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Unit 3 Overview	
Unit Title: Developing the Artistic Skill Set in the Choral Student through Music Literacy and Sight Singing	
Unit Summary: <p>At the conclusion of this unit, students will be able to define basic symbols used in a musical score, identify music symbols in a musical score and increase fluency of acquiring new material. The students will be able to translate music terms from Italian and Latin into English. They will identify pattern, key signature changes, themes and motives through score analysis. Students will read and perform with reasonable accuracy the correct rhythms of assigned vocal exercises with their knowledge of Solfeggio. In conclusion, they will accurately perform a musical score observing all symbols.</p>	
Unit Pacing: Ongoing	
Learning Targets	
Unit Essential Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can our understanding of the elements of music make us stronger singers, performers, listeners and communicators? • How can our understanding of the elements of music increase our appreciation and comprehension for diverse societal, cultural and political entities? • Why is it important to read and write the language of music? • How can proficiency in sight-singing enable us to master advanced choral repertoire from diverse cultural sources? • How is music a form of communication? 	
Unit Enduring Understandings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving literacy and fluency in music significantly enhances the singers' performance and appreciation of sophisticated music. • Achieving proficiency and fluency in reading advanced notation significantly enhances the singer's performance and appreciation of sophisticated music from varying styles and traditions. 	
Evidence of Learning	
<p>Formative Assessments: Frequent informal assessment and feedback are provided on a daily basis by the teacher.</p> <p>Summative Assessment: Students will be assessed via individual and concert performance evaluations and will be scored using a rubric.</p>	

Objectives (Students will be able to...)	Essential Content/Skills	Suggested Assessments	Standards	Pacing
Know the names of the notes in the treble and bass clef.	<p>Content/Skills: Students will be able to identify all the notes on the staff.</p> <p>Students can create their own acronyms to remember the lines and spaces.</p>	<p>Survey of prior knowledge</p> <p>Students will be tested on material during choral lessons.</p> <p>(8th grade will be tested in this area in front of the class)</p>	<p>1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.</p> <p>8.1.8.E.1 Effectively use a variety of search tools and filters in professional public databases to find information to solve a real world problem.</p>	Ongoing
Identify and correctly perform basic rhythm patterns with accuracy.	<p>Content/Skills: Identify the note and rest values of the following: sixteenth, eighth, quarter, half dotted, half and whole.</p>	<p>Students will label and draw the values of each of the notes.</p> <p>Students will clap and perform basic rhythmic patterns.</p> <p>(8th grade will be tested in this area in front of the class)</p>	<p>1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.4 Improvise music in a selected genre or style, using the elements of music that are consistent with basic playing and/or singing techniques in that genre or style.</p>	Ongoing
Identify and correctly perform according to the directions given by the composers (dynamics and symbols).	<p>Content/ Skills: The translations to the most commonly used Italian musical terms (p, m, f) and symbols (fermata, staccato, repeat sign, coda, etc).</p> <p>Students will define the terms and then demonstrate mastery through music performance</p>	<p>Survey of prior knowledge</p> <p>Rehearsal observation and written exams to measure understanding of notational remarks in choral music</p> <p>Written evaluation to measure understanding of directions and symbols in Italian and Latin</p> <p>(Both grades will be tested, however, the 7th grade test may serve as a placement in the class.)</p>	<p>1.3.8.B.1 Perform instrumental or vocal compositions using complex standard and non-standard Western, non-Western, and avant-garde notation.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.4 Improvise music in a selected genre or style, using the elements of music that are consistent with basic playing and/or singing techniques in that genre or style.</p> <p>NJSLSA.R7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.</p>	Ongoing

Sight-sing a four measure melody within the diatonic scale with reasonable accuracy.	<p>Content: The eight pitches found in the diatonic scale (Solfeggio) Do-Re-Mi-Fa-Sol-La-Ti-Do</p> <p>Skills: Students will work chronologically through the diatonic scale.</p>	<p>Performance in small group exercises from given sight reading excerpts, demonstrating an understanding of Solfeggio</p> <p>(8th graders may be asked to sing more than 4 measures)</p>	<p>1.3.8.B.1 Perform instrumental or vocal compositions using complex standard and non-standard Western, non-Western, and avant-garde notation.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre. (8th graders may be asked to sing 4-8 measures depending on the class and individual abilities)</p> <p>1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.4 Improvise music in a selected genre or style, using the elements of music that are consistent with basic playing and/or singing techniques in that genre or style.</p>	Ongoing
Graduate from singing stepwise intervals to intervals with leaps.	<p>Content/Skills: Students integrate solfeggio and/or numbers, and learn intervals Ex. "Here Comes the Bride" is Perfect 4th</p>	<p>Students will each have an oral performance test of intervals in their lesson period.</p> <p>(7th graders- 5 intervals 8th graders- 10 intervals)</p>	<p>1.3.8.B.1 Perform instrumental or vocal compositions using complex standard and non-standard Western, non-Western, and avant-garde notation.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.</p>	Ongoing
Continue progress toward the completion of their concert	<p>Skills: Critique Self Reflection Music technology Vocal Performance</p>	<p>Monthly progress checklist and reflection.</p> <p>Participation Grades</p> <p>(7th and 8th graders will reflect as a group and individually)</p>	<p>1.3.8.B.1 Perform instrumental or vocal compositions using complex standard and non-standard Western, non-Western, and avant-garde notation.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.4 Improvise music in a selected genre or style, using the elements of music that are consistent with basic playing and/or singing techniques in that genre or style.</p>	Ongoing

			<p>9.2.8.B.3 Evaluate communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that can be developed through school, home, work, and extracurricular activities for use in a career</p> <p>CRP11. Use technology to enhance productivity.</p>	
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Unit 4 Overview				
Unit Title: Repertoire and Choral Technique				
<p>Unit Summary:</p> <p>At the conclusion of this unit, students will have performed music from a variety of cultures, languages and societies paying respect to accuracy of language pronunciation and specific performance customs. They will display synthesis of all technical elements of music in addition to appropriate conduct, focus and effort during performance. Students will express verbally or in written form an emotional connection to specific pieces, particular phrases, text or measures using appropriate music terminology. Students will also have the opportunity to critique and analyze their performance and discuss how successful the choir was at integrating all the elements necessary to create a high quality performance.</p>				
Unit Pacing: Ongoing				
Learning Targets				
<p>Unit Essential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does studying the music of other cultures help us better understand the world around us? • How can a varied program including secular, sacred, folk, spiritual, popular, Broadway, multicultural and world music create a comprehensive choral experience for the listener and the audience? • How do blend, balance and intonation impact the choir's overall sound? • How does my individual participation benefit the whole ensemble? • How does the conductor's gesture influence individual and ensemble performance? 				
<p>Unit Enduring Understandings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The variation of textures and voicing can influence the complexity of choral music. • The tonality of a piece influences its mood and style. • Performance is crucial for the growth of vocal musicians. • The study, analysis and resulting performance of choral literature (secular, sacred, folk, spiritual, popular, Broadway, multicultural and world music) contributes not only to a comprehensive music education, but also to the appreciation and respect of other world cultures and societies. 				
Evidence of Learning				

Formative Assessments: Frequent informal assessment and feedback are provided on a daily basis by the teacher.

Summative Assessment: Evaluation of public performances and rehearsals via teacher rubric

Alternative Assessment: Students will write a 2 page research paper on a composer of one of the concert pieces

Objectives (Students will be able to...)	Essential Content/Skills	Suggested Assessments	Standards	Pacing
Change their technique for different genres of music.	Content/ Skills: Students will identify the difference between pop, jazz, musical theatre and other cultural genres.	Singers will compare, through various repertoire, the differences in sound when singing with round open vowels, and singing in closed position with lowered palate. Students will identify the physiological change while producing different styles of singing. (I may ask the 8th graders to perform these vowel sounds in front of the class)	1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.	Ongoing
Perform repertoire from a number of holiday traditions and cultures explored, including repertoire from other languages and countries.	Content/Skills: What can we learn about other cultures and customs through their music and language? How does the performance of both sacred and secular music contribute to our appreciation of music? Students will research the custom, tradition and background of the culture of each piece of music to be performed.	Responses to discussion questions, commenting on group sound and progress Measurement of individual progress by noting involvement in rehearsal (7th and 8th graders may be asked to sing certain measures alone as a vocal example to the class)	1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre. NJSLSA.R7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.	Ongoing

Understand the role their individual voice plays in the choir and how personal vocal technique contributes or detracts from the group effort.	<p>Content: Introduce split vocal part repertoire - emphasis on maintaining individual part within a choral group while establishing balance and blend.</p> <p>Demonstrate appropriate singing posture, breath support and diction of lyrics.</p> <p>Skills: Students will begin acquiring the notes, rhythms and text for each piece to be performed in the concert. Teacher will provide consistent vocal technique suggestions to aid in balance, blend and unity of sound.</p>	<p>Responses to discussion questions, commenting on group sound and progress</p> <p>Measurement of individual progress by noting involvement in rehearsal</p> <p>(8th graders will be asked to reflect as a group and on paper)</p>	1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.	Ongoing
Understand how individual participation benefits the whole ensemble.	<p>Content/Skills: Students will perform all learned repertoire in public Winter and Spring Concerts in addition to the District Choral Concert or Madison Musicpalooza concert. Students will demonstrate synthesis of all elements learned so far this year (Vocal Technique, Sight-Singing, Musicianship and Performance Practice).</p>	<p>Regularity of attendance at class rehearsals performances</p> <p>Evaluation of attitude and behavior in rehearsals and performances</p> <p>Evaluation by public of performances, audio and video recordings of performances</p> <p>(7th and 8th grade will be asked to reflect on their concert performance)</p>	1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.	Ongoing
Continue progress toward the completion of their concert	<p>Skills: Critique Self Reflection Music technology Vocal Performance</p>	<p>Monthly progress checklist and reflection.</p> <p>Participation Grades</p> <p>(7th and 8th graders will reflect as a group and individually)</p>	<p>1.3.8.B.1 Perform instrumental or vocal compositions using complex standard and non-standard Western, non-Western, and avant-garde notation.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.2 Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities</p>	Ongoing

			<p>appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.3 Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.</p> <p>1.3.8.B.4 Improvise music in a selected genre or style, using the elements of music that are consistent with basic playing and/or singing techniques in that genre or style.</p> <p>8.1.8.E.1 Effectively use a variety of search tools and filters in professional public databases to find information to solve a real world problem.</p> <p>CRP10. Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.</p>	
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