

Circle of Fifths Lesson Outline

Standard: MU:Pr4.2.E.II a. Analyze how musical elements, simple compositional devices (i.e., tonality, repetition, and sequencing) and context of musical works inform performances.

Objective: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to determine what major key a song could be written in by looking at the key signature of their band pieces and comparing it to the circle of fifths.

Attention Getter: How do the scales that we practice help us when we play music?

Explanation:

- A quick review->Time Signature, Clef, Key Signature
 - The sharps and flats of the key signature help us determine what key the song is in. It is helpful to know what key we are in so that we know where “home base” is. By knowing where home base is we can still run all over, but when we return back home, we are “safe” and all the tension is resolved. The circle of fifths can help us learn the key signatures.
- Some of our key are
- Circle of Fifths: This is called the circle of fifths because when you go around the circle it goes up by an interval of a perfect 5th. Which means it goes up 5 notes: C, D, E, F, G. Each letter represents a key or a home base. It shows the sharps or flats that would be present if we played a song in that key. If we played a song with the Bb as the home based we would have to play two flats. This might look scary and confusing but let’s try to compare it to our scale sheets that we use everyday.

Examples

- Pull out your scale sheets->Find the D Major Scale->How many sharps/flats are in the scale? Answer=Two Sharps. Look at the D Key signature=Two Sharps. D is our home base, we start and end their. While in the key of D Major we have two sharps. Let’s look at another scale.
- Let us look at this song that we are working on. Some of your parts for this song might be in a different key because your instruments are made to play in a different key. Clarinets how many sharps/flats are in the key signature? What key could this part be in? Trombones how many sharps/flats are in your key signature? What key could this part be in? Just because the key signature looks like it might be a certain key doesn’t necessarily mean it is. Remember how we can have accidentals. We have also talked about how sometimes music changes in the middle to make interesting chords to create different moods. We also have minor keys just like we have minor scales. We will worry about that another day and focus on the major scales and major key signatures.

Practice: Formative Assessment

- Find out the possible major key of the pieces you have with a partner of the same instrument.

- Scale and Key signature matching with a partner.

Feedback

- If they are doing well introduce this.
- But what if you don't have the circle of fifths?
 - Sharps: Go a half step up from the last sharp added
 - Flats: Second to last flat=Key Signature