

Arirang, Korean Traditional Folk Song

Developed by Julia Macedo

Grade: High School (mixed choir SATB)

Central Focus: Arirang, Korean traditional folk song (arr. Hyon- Won Woo)

Concept: Harmony and Blending, Cultural Connection and Expression

<p><u>NJSLS Standards for Music:</u> 1.3C.12.prof.Pr4a 1.3C.12.prof.Pr5a</p>	<p><u>Learning Objective(s):</u> Students will learn about history behind and perform Korean Folk song “Arirang” and what the song means to Korean peoples.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teach students the cultural significance and musical structure of <i>Arirang</i>.• Work on vocal techniques, dynamics, and blending for SATB (4 voices) choir.• Prepare for an eventual performance by learning the arrangement with a focus on emotion and phrasing.	<p><u>College and Career Ready Practices:</u> CCR Practice 2: Building Strong Content Knowledge CCR Practice 9: Responding to Cultural and Artistic Perspectives</p>
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Planning the Lesson (information to support the lesson and allow adequate planning)

Teacher Resources (internet sites, technology/visuals, recordings, music)

- History and cultural context of *Arirang*: [Korea.net – The Official Website of the Republic of Korea](http://korea.net)
- Sample recordings of traditional Arirang performance: Traditional: [YouTube Traditional Arirang](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00hXOBRTv0Q9vgMnc0qtSpF)
- Arirang Sheet music
https://www.jwpepper.com/Arirang/10873353.item?srsIid=AfmBOoqXQQPLg_pTKOHdoKOTxmWdQhNT_00hXOBRTv0Q9vgMnc0qtSpF

Academic Vocabulary:

- Folk Song*: A traditional song that originates from a particular culture and is passed down orally.
- SATB*: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass—voice parts in choral music.
- Harmony*: The combination of different musical notes played or sung simultaneously to produce a pleasing sound.
- Dynamics*: The volume of the music, such as *piano* (soft) and *forte* (loud).
- Blending*: The process of matching tone and volume between choir sections to create a unified sound.

- F. *Crescendo*: Gradual increase in loudness.
- G. *Intonation*: The accuracy of pitch in singing or playing

Language Function:

- H. Describe: Students will describe the cultural significance of *Arirang*.
- I. Analyze: Analyze how the dynamics and phrasing impact the emotional delivery of the song.
- J. Compare: Compare traditional and modern performances of *Arirang* to identify differences in style and interpretation.

Materials (e.g. books, recordings, technology, instruments, etc.): Sheet music, Piano

Principles from educational theory and/or research: *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)*: Scaffolding instruction by teaching easier parts first (melody) and then progressing to more complex tasks (harmony and dynamics) aligns with Vygotsky's ZPD theory. *Constructivist Learning*: This lesson is designed to let students actively construct knowledge through engagement with cultural context and performance-based learning (Piaget, 1969).

Student prior knowledge needed: *Basic Choral Experience*: Students should have previous exposure to singing in harmony and working in a choral setting. *Basic Music Theory*: Understanding of musical dynamics (piano, forte, crescendos) and ability to read basic SATB choral sheet music. *Cultural Openness*: Prior discussions on world music or multicultural music contexts will help students appreciate *Arirang's* significance.

Instruction: Teaching the Lesson (the actual process of instructing the class/students)

1. **Engage:** Warm-up (5 minutes)
 - Vocal Exercises: Start with basic breathing and posture exercises, focusing on proper breath support
 - Interval and Scale Drills: Practice scales in the keys related to *Arirang* (C Major/A minor)
 - Focus on Diction: Since the song is in Korean (Hangul), include diction exercises for clarity and vowel matching (Informal Assessment)
2. **Procedure:** (40 Minutes)
 - Cultural Background: Provide a brief history of *Arirang* and its significance as a song that represents themes of love, separation and resilience.
 - Lyric Introduction: Display the Korean lyrics and their English translation. Pronounce key phrases and have students repeat after you. (IA)
 - Listening Activity: Play a recording of a traditional *Arirang* performance. Ask students to note any unique aspects of the rhythm, phrasing or vocal tone compared to Western Choral music.
 - Sopranos learn Melody: teach the soprano part first, focusing on the flowing nature of the melody and its folk song quality. Have the entire choir sing the melody to internalize it. (IA)

- Teach by sections: divide choir into SATB sections. Work with each section individually to teach their parts, ensuring proper tuning and rhythm accuracy.
- Sectional Rehearsal: After each section has learned their part, have the sing in pairs (Sopranos and Altos, Tenors and Basses). Focus on tuning and balance between sections. (IA)
- Blending Exercise: Once all sections are confident, bring the full choir together. Sing through the piece focusing on achieving a balanced blend, ensuring no one section dominates.
- Intonation Check: Work on tricky harmonic spots, emphasizing the importance of accurate tuning in the rich harmonies.
- Dynamic Markings: Go over the dynamic markings in the score (e.g., crescendos, decrescendos). Practice sections where dynamics change and emphasize building intensity at key moments.
- Expressing Emotion: Discuss the meaning of the lyrics and how to express the melancholy and hope present in the song. Encourage students to connect emotionally with the music as they sing.
- Articulation Practice: Work on soft entrances and clean cutoffs to ensure precision and control.
- First Run: Have the choir sing through the entire arrangement from beginning to end. Focus on continuity, phrasing, and overall musicality. (Summative Assessment)
- Spot check: If time allows, revisit any sections that need further refining. Address any issues with timing, harmonization or dynamics.

3. **Embedded Assessment:**

Informal Assessments are conducted throughout the lesson during warm-ups, section rehearsals, harmonization, and dynamic exercises. These assess students' understanding of musical elements (melody, harmony, dynamics) and provide immediate feedback for correction.

The **Summative Assessment** takes place during the final run-through of the piece, evaluating the ensemble's overall performance, including technical accuracy, blending, and expressiveness (**Rubric Attached**)

4. **Closure:**

Reflection:

- Ask the students to reflect on what they learned during the lesson. Prompt them with questions such as:
 - "What did you find challenging about singing in harmony today?"
 - "How did understanding the cultural background of *Arirang* help you interpret the song emotionally?"

Reinforce Key Concepts:

- Summarize the main points of the lesson, including the importance of cultural context in music, blending harmonies, and using dynamics to convey emotion.

- Remind students of the specific spots in the music where they need to focus on improvement (e.g., tuning, transitions, dynamics).

Preview Next Steps:

- Let students know that in the next class, they will continue refining their performance of *Arirang*, focusing on deeper emotional expression and performance readiness.
- Encourage them to practice their parts at home and listen to the reference recording to improve their familiarity with the dynamics and phrasing.

Exit Question:

- As they leave, ask each student to think of one element they will focus on improving next time (e.g., blending, breath support, or dynamic contrast).

Differentiated instruction (*How will you differentiate content, procedures, and assessments for special needs students?*)

Content:

- Provide simplified sheet music with fewer notes or color-coded parts.
- Offer phonetic versions of the Korean lyrics for easier pronunciation and slower tempo recordings for practice.

Procedures:

- Use flexible grouping, pairing strong singers with those needing support.
- Adjust pacing by breaking complex sections into smaller parts and providing repeated practice.
- Utilize technology, such as music-learning apps or pre-recorded vocal tracks for independent practice.

Assessments:

- Offer alternative assessments (e.g., recordings or small group performances).
- Provide scaffolded feedback, focusing on small, achievable improvements, and celebrate progress to build confidence.

Assessment Rubric for Arirang Performance

Criteria	4 - Advanced	3 - Proficient	2 - Basic	1 - Emerging
Pitch Accuracy	Consistently sings all notes in tune with excellent pitch accuracy.	Mostly sings in tune; occasional pitch errors.	Some pitch issues; frequent pitch errors that affect harmony.	Struggles to sing in tune; requires significant improvement.
Rhythm & Timing	Maintains steady rhythm and precise timing throughout.	Mostly accurate rhythm; minor timing issues.	Some rhythm inconsistencies; often off-beat.	Frequent timing issues; unable to maintain rhythm.
Dynamics & Expression	Demonstrates a full range of dynamics; expresses emotion effectively.	Uses dynamics as marked; shows some expressive phrasing.	Limited dynamic contrast; minimal expression shown.	Little to no dynamic variation; lacks emotional expression.
Blend & Balance	Blends excellently within section and with other sections.	Blends well most of the time; minor balance issues.	Occasional difficulty blending; some overpowering/underpowering.	Does not blend well; significantly overpowers or is inaudible.
Pronunciation & Diction	Pronounces Korean lyrics clearly and accurately.	Pronunciation mostly correct; minor diction issues.	Some pronunciation errors; lyrics are sometimes unclear.	Struggles with pronunciation; lyrics are difficult to understand.
Effort & Participation	Fully engaged, demonstrates consistent effort, and contributes positively to group.	Engaged and participates actively; consistent effort.	Participates but lacks consistent effort or focus.	Minimal participation or effort; shows disengagement.

Scoring:

- **24-22 points:** Outstanding performance, fully ready for public performance.
- **21-16 points:** Good performance with some areas for improvement.
- **15-10 points:** Basic understanding, but needs additional practice and support.
- **9-6 points:** Needs significant improvement in multiple areas.

English Translation of Arirang:

Refrain:

Arirang, Arirang, Arariyo,
Crossing over Arirang Pass
Dear who abandoned me here
Will not walk even ten before his feet hurt.

Just as there are many stars in the clear sky,
There are also many dreams in our heart.

There, over there that mountain is Baekdu Mountain,
Where, even in the middle of winter days, flowers bloom.

Verses:

If you leave and forsake me, my own,
Ere three miles you go, lame you'll have grown.

Wondrous time, happy time – let us delay;
Till night is over, go not away.

Arirang Mount is my Tear-Falling Hill
So seek my love, I cannot stay still.

The brightest of stars stud the sky so blue;
Deep in my bosom burns bitterest rue.

Man's heart is like water streaming downhill;
Woman's heart is well water – so deep and still.

Young men's love is like pinecones seeming sound,
But when the wind blows, they fall to the ground.

Birds in the morning sing simply to eat;
Birds in the evening sing for love sweet.

When man has attained to the age of a score,
The mind of a woman should be his love.

The trees and the flowers will bloom for aye,
But the glories of youth will soon fade away.