



# **Preliminary Study on the Evaluation Methodologies of Junior High School Music Academic Performance**

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## **Author's contribution**

*The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The junior high school music academic entrance examination holds significant importance in the context of the new curriculum reform, serving as a pivotal instrument for implementing the "General Plan for Deepening the Reform of Educational Evaluation in the New Era" and the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education in the New Era," issued by the General Office of the State Council. As frontline educators, it is imperative to adeptly navigate the impending junior high school art subject entrance examination by acquiring evaluation knowledge and mastering scientifically sound assessment methods. Recognizing this urgency, the author secured approval for the "Thirteenth Five-Year Plan" project in Shaanxi Province in 2018, titled "Research on the Unified Music Examination Methods for Junior High School Graduation in Shaanxi Province." This research primarily delves into the grading criteria outlined in the "Music Curriculum Standards" for compulsory education, exploring the knowledge points, question types, weights, and evaluation methods. The findings represent a culmination of in-depth practical exploration, offering valuable insights for educators and stakeholders. These operational research results are shared here for reference purposes only.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The "Music Curriculum Standards" for compulsory education promulgated by the State in 2011 stipulates that the evaluation of music curriculum should include three aspects: evaluation of students' learning, evaluation of teaching, evaluation of curriculum management and evaluation of curriculum development. In October 2020, the General Office of the State Council issued the "Overall Plan for Deepening the Reform of Education Evaluation in the New Era" and the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education in the New Era". The two documents clearly stated Improve and promote the reform of aesthetic education evaluation, and explore ways to include art subjects in the pilot reform of high school entrance examination, and include in the high school entrance examination and admission scoring subjects. During this period, various regions in my country, such as Jiangsu, Shandong, Beijing, Anhui, Yunnan and other places, successively carried out art high school entrance examinations and junior high school art academic proficiency tests. As a front-line teacher, how to deal with the upcoming junior high school art subject entrance examination, understanding assessment knowledge and mastering scientific and effective assessment methods is urgent. Therefore, in 2018, the author applied for and established the project of Shaanxi Province's "Thirteenth Five-Year Plan", "Research on the Unified Examination Methods for Junior High School Graduation Music in Shaanxi Province", Mainly focusing on the junior high school grading requirements of the nine-year compulsory period "Music Curriculum Standards"-Inspection Knowledge Points- We have conducted in-depth practice and exploration on issues such as proposal types and weight evaluation methods, and initially formed some operational research results to share with everyone, for reference only.

## 2. STUDY THE "MUSIC CURRICULUM STANDARDS" AND CLARIFY THE PROPOSITION PRINCIPLES

The "Music Curriculum Standards" are the basis for the compilation of teaching materials, the evaluation of teaching, and the proposal examination, and the basis for national management and evaluation. Study the "Music Curriculum Standards" of compulsory education,

and sort out the music subject learning content requirements for nine grades according to four content areas, namely, feeling and appreciation, expression, creation, music and related culture, in order to clarify the learning content of different grades. Evaluation standards should be consistent with academic evaluation and curriculum standards. The compulsory education "Music Curriculum Standards" junior high school music [1-4] academic proficiency test focuses on testing students' core competence in music disciplines [5-9], examining basic knowledge of music, mastery of basic skills and ability to use knowledge and skills to solve problems, and examining students' in-depth learning process and exploratory learning with methods and effects of cultivating creative ability. To this end, it is necessary to clarify the evaluation principles of music course examinations for the academic level assessment of junior high school graduates. The first is the scientific principle. The requirements are in line with the curriculum standards, and we strive to ensure that the test questions are well designed and curated. The evaluation goals are consistent, reflect the value of the subject, avoid scientific errors, closely follow the teaching materials, and connect with reality. They have both breadth and depth, and can truthfully reflect students' mastery of knowledge, and better evaluate the teaching effect of the course. This requires us to study the curriculum standards, subject knowledge and examination principles well, strive to enhance the basicity, flexibility and openness of the test questions, and improve the proposition skills. Master proposition techniques. Second is the principle of accuracy. Focusing on the three-dimensional goals of the music curriculum standards, we should try our best to ensure that the test question design is consistent with the evaluation goals, so that the answer process of the test questions reflects the students' knowledge and skills, thinking processes and methods, emotional attitudes and values. This three-dimensional goal of the course: accurate learning Grasp the difficulty level and weight, and avoid digressing from the topic. Again, the principle of innovation. The design of test questions highlights new situations, new materials, and new designs, pays more attention to testing students' ability to comprehensively use knowledge to analyze and solve problems, and strives to connect students' life experience and social reality. Of course, we cannot blindly pursue novelty, seek novelty without being strict,

and avoid sidetracking and weird questions. Finally, there is the principle of fairness. It means that test question materials and answer requirements should be made fair to all candidates, efforts should be made to consider the differences between urban and rural students, questions that require special background knowledge and special answer methods should be avoided, a question bank should be established, and computer marking should be implemented to improve objectivity and ensure credibility and authenticity.

### 3. SORT OUT THE FREQUENCY AND LOCATION OF KNOWLEDGE POINTS, AND SCIENTIFICALLY DESIGN PROPOSITION CONTENT

The knowledge points of each grade in junior high school include relatively independent minimum units of knowledge, theories, principles, ideas, etc. Teachers need to clearly understand the coverage and distribution of knowledge points, as well as the frequency and location of occurrence, identify the grade and work in which the knowledge points first appear, and scientifically design proposition content. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to sort out and summarize the main knowledge points in the entire set of textbooks (nine grades). It is the main basis for student learning and teacher teaching. It is also an important basis for evaluating student learning performance [10-15] and teacher teaching quality. The same knowledge points appear repeatedly at different stages, so the teaching must have a gradient, the cognition must be deeper, and the musical performance must be more mature. By understanding the distribution of knowledge points, we need to understand students' learning experience, from focusing on subject logic to focusing on life logic, and recognizing students' learning logic. After preparing lessons, teachers can easily find multiple knowledge points of a work. For example, a work's lyrics and music information, performance or singing form, genre,

work style, singing speed, melody rhythm, intensity of change and other characteristics. However, the location and frequency of each knowledge point's first appearance may not be very clear. Sorting out knowledge points is to find the location and frequency of a certain knowledge point appearing in the entire set of textbooks, such as folk songs, operas, etc. Music teachers clearly understand the location and frequency of the first appearance of a knowledge point to understand students' learning experience and learning trajectory. Based on and make good use of this information for teaching and evaluation. Teachers who teach each grade must clearly understand what are the main knowledge points to be taught and solved in this school year (semester)? What is the connection between the knowledge covered in this academic year (semester) and the previous and next semesters? How to conduct propositions and assessments?

### 4. COMBINED WITH DAILY TEACHING, CONDUCT TIMELY ASSESSMENT WORK

Music teachers should integrate propositional testing into their daily teaching. The types of propositions should be diversified and classified from a macro perspective. Propositions can be divided into two main categories, namely subjective questions and objective questions. Subjective questions allow candidates to answer the questions themselves to express their understanding of the test questions. Subjective questions are also called open-ended questions. This type of test questions has unique functions in testing candidates' verbal expression ability, innovative thinking ability, music reading ability, moral analysis ability, etc. However, the scoring is easily affected by the subjective factors of the examiner. The types of questions include: listening and identification questions, creative writing questions, music reading questions, short answer questions, essay questions, comprehensive questions, etc. In general, try not to memorize questions. Examples are as follows:

**Table 1. Memory proposition**

<b>Multiple choices</b>	1. Which of the following does folk music include? ( ) (9 on 4) A. Jingyun Dagu B. Suzhou Tanci C. Sichuan Qingyin D. Henan Zhuizi [Reference answer: ABCD]
	2. Which of the following works were composed by the German composer Beethoven? ( ) (9 on 5) A. Third (Eroic) Symphony B. Fifth (Destiny) Symphony C. Sixth (Pastoral) Symphony D. Ninth (Choral) Symphony

	[Reference answer: ABCD]
	3. Dance drama is a comprehensive performance art that uses dance as the main means of expression, integrating ( ), ( ), ( ) and other art forms to express specific characters and dramatic plots. ( ) (9 under 4) A.Music B.Sports C.Art D.Drama
	[Reference answer: ACD]】
	1. The work "Fifth (Destiny) Symphony" was created by the composer Dvořák. ( ) (9 on 4)
	[Reference answer: x]
	2. The song "Defend the Yellow River" comes from the "Long March Suite". ( ) (9 under 5)
<b>True or False</b>	[Reference answer: x]
	Example 2: Judgment question:
	3. The performance form of "Carmen Overture" is a Chinese national orchestra ensemble. ( ) (9 on 2)
	[Reference answer: x]

Presentation is the key to achieving propositional goals. Pay attention to the presentation of the topic, and make it clear to speak and listen clearly. The presentation should reflect the beauty of artistic aesthetics as much as possible, and should be different from the presentation method of cultural subjects. The academic proficiency test in the music subject has just begun, and it should dispel students' fear. The purpose of assessment is not to stump students. Students are an important carrier of aesthetic education. The process of propositions is the manifestation of students' learning trajectory and is an exciting process. Through assessment, more students can know their abilities, gain successful experience, and continue music learning. For example: To examine the timbre of the bamboo flute in the modern electroacoustic music "Nightingale", if the original question is expressed in the table, students will have fear. This expression is relatively blunt and is not conducive to students finding answers through recall and analysis. The expression in revision 1 is: A certain guiding role helps students compare and analyze to find answers. Revision 2 removes the reminder of "winding" instruments, but highlights the timbre of the nightingale's call, focusing attention on the knowledge point of timbre, making the proposition more scientific. Forming a mature, excellent proposition that embodies the thinking process requires repeated revisions. The proposer must have a sense of responsibility, take each proposition seriously, and include the repeatedly revised excellent test questions in the test question bank. The continuous accumulation represents educational wisdom. typical test questions.

From a pedagogical perspective, proposing from multiple angles is the optimal approach for

framing propositions. To thoroughly examine a work, various question types should be designed, incorporating propositions from multiple perspectives that align with the focal points of instruction. The following three propositions focus on various aspects of 'Singing the Beautiful Hometown,' including genre, symbols, melodic structure, and other knowledge points. These propositions encompass both single-choice and multiple-choice question types, covering the content objectives of both Domain One and Domain Two. In everyday teaching, formulating propositions from multiple angles for a work lays a solid foundation for subjective questions, such as literary analysis. The process of proposition aligns closely with instructional design; understanding the rationale behind each proposition is essential. By considering grade-level objectives, the positioning and frequency of knowledge points, and clearly stating the reasons for each proposition, marking the source, examination points, difficulty coefficients, and other information, strive to ensure that the analysis of each question is as comprehensive and accurate as possible.

## 5. PROPERLY MIX THE TEST PAPERS TO MAKE ASSESSMENT THE NORM

In accordance with the requirements of the compulsory education 'Music Curriculum Standards,' test composition should take into account six dimensions of target requirements, namely recall, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and creation. Different dimensions should have different point values. Formulate a two-way detailed outline, emphasizing the scientific distribution of the content scope of the test paper, with a





reasonable proportion of difficulty. The music proficiency examination is a new attempt for both teachers and students. Initially, test composition can be simple, but regular testing should be conducted. Questions after class, a set of questions for a unit, and a set of questions for mid-term and final exams should gradually cultivate the habit of assessment for both teachers and students, making assessment a regular practice and truly achieving integration of goals, teaching, and evaluation. A good test composer should frequently ask themselves: Is the content of the test learned? Did attention focus on the essential knowledge points during learning? Is the method of analyzing knowledge points appropriate? Did it emphasize the process of learning thinking? Did it follow the logical sequence of students receiving knowledge? As long as the proposition conforms to the requirements of the educational stage and grade, the knowledge points and assessment content fall within the testing scope, the expression is clear, the weight is reasonable, and the items are comprehensive.

For example, the weight standard for the test paper: 40% for the domain of perception and appreciation (listening discrimination), relatively easier; 40% for the domain of performance (singing, playing, reading music, post-listening analysis, etc.), relatively more difficult; 10-15% for the domain of creation (e.g., writing the next 4 measures after 4 measures) as challenging problems; and 5-10% for the domain of cultural knowledge (1 or 2 questions), which are

considered easy questions. Among them, 40% are relatively easy, 40% are relatively difficult, around 10% are easy, and around 10% are difficult. The weight standard for the performance domain is: 40% for teachers, 40% for students, and 20% for self-evaluation. Requirements for formative assessment in the teaching process: teacher evaluation, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, teacher-student joint evaluation, and peer-to-peer evaluation. 4. Comprehensive evaluation weight standard: 50% or 60% for written tests, 40% or 30% for performances, and 10% for daily assessments.


In addition, when composing a set of questions, attention should be paid to the reasonable structure of the test paper, generally progressing from easy to difficult. The questions on the test paper should not provide mutual 'hints' between days, for instance, the conditions of the first question may have some prompting effect on solving the second or another question. Also, pay attention to the aesthetics of the test paper, such as the arrangement of images, the insertion of Tables 2 and 3, etc. The wording of the test questions should be standardized, accurate, and concise, and punctuation should be correct and clear. The test questions should include reference answers, and the answers should be accurate, comprehensive, concise, and standardized, with specified point distribution for major and minor questions, grading criteria, and scoring points.

**Table 2. Revision of proposition statement: Multiple choice questions**

<b>Original title</b>	Listen to the music clip and choose the Chinese musical instruments that appear in the band in this piece. A. Guzheng B. Bamboo flute C. Erhu D. Yangqin
<b>Notes on the original title</b>	[Reference answer] B [Reason for the title] "Nightingale" is a modern electroacoustic music piece with Chinese classical charm. It is a work specially created by the Greek composer Yanni for Chinese audiences. The mode is pentatonic. The timbre of the bamboo flute in the work highlights the theme. In the practice and creation of after-school exercises, you are required to listen to the work and write about this characteristic musical instrument.
<b>Revision 1</b>	"Nightingale" is a modern electroacoustic music work created by the Greek composer Yanni specifically for Chinese audiences. The song used to depict the nightingale is a wind instrument that is widely circulated in my country. Please listen to the excerpts of the work and choose this instrument. ( ) A. Guzheng  B. Pipa  C. Bamboo  flute D. Erhu 
<b>Revision Note 1</b>	[Reference Answer]: C [Difficulty Level]: 1 [Test Point]: Timbre of Musical Instruments

	[Content Area]: Domain One: Appreciation and Sensitivity [Source of the Work]: Unit One, "Nightingale," Grade Nine, People's Music Edition
<b>Revision 2</b>	"Nightingale" is a modern electroacoustic piece full of Chinese classical music flavor created by the Greek composer Yanni specifically for Chinese audiences. One of the Chinese musical instruments ( ) is similar in tone to the nightingale's song. A. Guzheng B. Bamboo flute C. Erhu D. Pipa
<b>Revision Note 2</b>	[Reference Answer]: B [Difficulty Level]: 1 [Test Point]: Timbre of Musical Instruments [Content Area]: Domain One: Appreciation and Sensitivity [Source of the Work]: Grade Nine, First Unit

**Table 3. Proposition ideas: Multi-angle propositions**

<b>Angle 1</b>	Listen to the music clip. The genre of this piece is a Miao folk song popular in southeastern Guizhou, my country. What is its name? ( ) (9 on 5) A. Fei Ge B. Jiu Ge C. Da Ge D. Muqam
<b>Single choice</b>	[Reference answer] A
<b>Example question notes 1</b>	Fei Ge is a Miao folk song popular in southeastern Guizhou. Portamento is commonly used in music. Please choose the correct upward portamento mark for the music clip below. ( ) A. → B. ← C. ↓ D. ↗
<b>Angle 2</b>	[Reference Answer] D [Difficulty Level] 1 [Exam Focus] Upward Glide Mark [Content Area] Domain Two: Performance [Source] Unit Three of Grade Nine in Renyin Edition, "Singing the Beautiful Hometown"
<b>Single choice</b>	"Singing the Beautiful Hometown" is a Miao flying song. Among the following options, the ones that match the description of this work are ( ) A. The melody is mainly composed of three tones: "5, 3, 1" B. The endings of sentences are all extended sounds C. The sound  is the most distinctive color sound in the Miao flying songs. D. Sentence proportion and rhythm arrangement are asymmetrical
<b>Example question notes 2</b>	[Reference Answer] ABCD [Exam Focus] Musical Elements, Musical Symbols, Creative Characteristics [Difficulty Level] 3 [Source] Selected from Renyin Edition (2013), Grade Nine, Unit Three

## 6. SCIENTIFICALLY ANALYZE ASSESSMENT INFORMATION AND GUIDE DAILY TEACHING WORK

The guiding role of assessment in teaching is particularly prominent, and effectively utilizing feedback information is of significant importance for adjusting and improving music education. It is essential to analyze the performance of each

student, identify the reasons for gains and losses, understand the patterns of students' academic growth, promote strengths, and correct weaknesses. Scientifically formulating corresponding strategies is crucial. May every music teacher, guided by a responsible attitude towards the students, carefully create an environment suitable for their growth and learning, and cultivate confidence in music

learning. Front-line teachers should seize this favorable opportunity, enhance their sense of mission and responsibility, and acquire knowledge and skills related to assessment. This knowledge and skills should be effectively applied to daily teaching, promptly addressing deficiencies in teaching, scientifically implementing assessment systems, optimizing teaching effectiveness, and promoting professional growth.

## 7. CONCLUSION

It is concluded that a culmination of in-depth practical exploration, offering valuable insights for educators and stakeholders. These operational research results are shared here for reference purposes only.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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