

Scope & Sequence

Young Composers — Ages 6 to 9

A week-by-week map of the Young Composers course — the concepts taught, the order they are taught in, and what the student composes — an introductory year of music theory and composition.

Subject Fine Arts — Music (Elementary)

Ages 6–9 · one school year

Structure 30 weeks · 5 days/week · 29 lessons + recital

Provider Gradus · gradusmusic.com

1 How the Course Is Organized

Young Composers is a single-year course of **30 weeks**, with **five short lessons each week**. A typical day runs **ten to fifteen minutes**: the student is introduced to one new concept, hears it, sings or plays it, and composes a short example of their own. The course is strictly sequential — each lesson assumes the one before it. Lessons are self-paced and narrated, so the parent does not need to read music to facilitate them.

The 29 numbered lessons run one per week across weeks 1–29; week 30 is a year-end recital. Each week follows the same five-day structure:

- **The Lesson** — introduces the new concept
- **Listen & Recognize** — ear training on the concept
- **Sing & Draw** — sing it, notate it, write a short example
- **Play & Review** — guided practice and review
- **Explore & Complete** — free composition, then completion

Every week ends in original work by the student. Young Composers is a course the student *does*, not one they watch.

Skill strands developed continuously

Six strands run through the year, each deepening as the student advances:

- **Aural skills** — pitch, interval, mode, and dynamic recognition
- **Singing** — matching and reproducing pitch
- **Composition** — an original example every week
- **Keyboard & rhythm** — locating pitches; clapping and playing rhythms
- **Notation** — the staff, note names, basic rhythmic notation
- **Expression** — dynamics and musical character

2 The Seven Stages

Stage	Title	Steps	Focus
I	First Sounds	1–6	The first pitches, the major and minor third, the pentatonic scale, and steady beat and rhythm
II	The Full Scale	7–9	Tendency tones, the leading tone, and a first complete melody on the major scale
III	Two Voices	10–14	Two-voice counterpoint – consonance and dissonance, passing and neighbor tones, suspensions
IV	The World of Music	15–18	The instrument families, the triad, musical form, and dynamics
V	Building Chords	19–22	The primary triads (I, IV, V), the authentic cadence, and composing over a progression
VI	Different Homes	23–25	Key, the key signature, and transposition
VII	Voices That Echo	26–29	Imitation, the round and canon, and the principle behind the fugue

One lesson per week, weeks 1–29. Week 30 is a year-end recital: the student plans, composes, revises, and performs an original piece.

THE COURSE

The Twenty-Nine Lessons — *one concept and one original piece each week*

By the end of the year the student can recognize and sing the core intervals and the major/minor distinction, read simple notation, clap and play rhythms, write a melody with a clear contour and cadence, add a second voice, harmonize a melody with the primary chords, and has composed many short pieces – concluding with a recital piece of their own.

Step	Lesson	What the student does
1	The First Sound	Introduces the first pitches and the perfect fifth (C and G); the student identifies the interval by ear and composes a short two-note figure
2	The Third Note	Adds the major third to form the major triad; the student sings the triad, locates it on a keyboard, and writes a three-note motive
3	The Minor Color	Introduces the minor third and the major/minor distinction; the student writes one phrase in major and one in minor and compares them
4	The Ancient Scale	Introduces the pentatonic scale; the student improvises and notates a short melody within it
5	The Heartbeat	Introduces pulse and steady beat; the student claps and notates a simple rhythm
6	Build a Rhythm	Combines note values into an original rhythm; the student notates, claps, and plays it back
7	The Pull Downward	Introduces tendency tones through the 4–3 (Fa–Mi) resolution; the student writes a melody that leans and resolves
8	The Leading Tone	Introduces the leading tone (Ti–Do) and the half-step pull to the tonic — the strongest resolution in tonal music
9	Your First Melody	Uses the complete major scale to write a first full melody with a clear contour and a cadence on the tonic
10	Friends and Arguments	Introduces consonance and dissonance in two-voice writing (first-species counterpoint); the student adds a consonant second voice to a given melody
11	Walking Together	Introduces passing tones (second species — two notes against one); the student fills the spaces between consonances
12	Dancing Together	Introduces neighbor tones (third-species motion); the student decorates the second voice with stepwise neighbors

Step	Lesson	What the student does
13	Hold and Let Go	Introduces the suspension (fourth species): preparing, sustaining, and resolving a dissonance downward by step
14	The Whole Story	Combines the techniques into free (fifth-species) counterpoint; the student writes an independent second voice
15	Meet the Orchestra	Introduces the four instrument families, their registers and timbres; the student sorts and identifies instruments by sound
16	Three Notes Together	Introduces the triad; the student builds chords and hears how harmony supports a melody
17	Musical Form	Introduces musical form (e.g., AABA); the student maps the form of a familiar piece and outlines an original
18	Loud and Soft	Introduces dynamics and the crescendo/decrescendo; the student applies dynamic shaping to a short piece
19	The Three Best Friends	Introduces the primary triads — I, IV, and V — and their role in harmonizing a melody
20	The Magic Move	Introduces the V–I (dominant–tonic) authentic cadence; the student ends a phrase with it
21	Walking Through the Three Friends	Introduces the chord progression; the student plays and hears I–IV–V–I carry a phrase
22	Build Your Own Chord Song	The student composes a short song over an original I–IV–V progression — melody above, chords below
23	Moving the Pattern	Introduces the concept of key: the same scale pattern begun on a different pitch
24	The Key Signature	Introduces the key signature and how sharps or flats identify the key
25	Same Song, Different Home	Introduces transposition; the student moves a melody to a new key and recognizes it as the same piece
26	The Echo Game	Introduces imitation: one voice states an idea, a second restates it after a delay
27	The Round	Introduces the round and canon, in which a single melody overlaps with itself
28	Make a Round	The student composes a melody that works as a round and layers it against itself
29	The Theme that Follows Itself	Introduces the principle behind the fugue: a complete piece built from one imitated subject

Step	Lesson	What the student does
30	Year-End Recital (Week 30)	The student reviews the year, then plans, composes, revises, and performs an original recital piece

Provider: Gradus – School of Music Composition · gradusmusic.com · maestro@gradusmusic.com. This Young Composers scope & sequence documents an elementary music course (ages 6–9) suitable for portfolio and home-education record-keeping; it accompanies the Gradus syllabus and a complete sample lesson, available on request. Lessons and listening examples are representative of the course and may be refined as the program is updated.