

Scales and Key Signatures Process Journal

Music Explorations • Grade 8 • Unit 09 • 2026–27

First meeting Thu Jan 07 2027 • Last meeting Fri Jan 15 2027

Name	Class / period

Show musical thinking through labeled diagrams, grids, notation, and short explanations. This journal supports orchestra, band, and choir; everyone can use the supplied class examples.

Use paper and pencil, or type in the answer cells in Google Docs. For staff sketches, use a printed page or a clearly labeled pitch and duration grid approved by your teacher. You may turn paper evidence in directly; a photo is optional. No instruments, Noteflight, recording, or home equipment are required.

Show your learning with actual musical evidence

First attempt	Correction / revision	Next action

Use a note, bar, diagram, or marked excerpt; add a short explanation.

My unit product

A whole/half-step map, major-scale diagrams in C G and F, and an explanation of key signature versus accidental.

Keep your first attempt. Make corrections in another color, or label them “before” and “after.” Quiet voice/tapping can help; silent tracing is also available. Listening lessons use teacher demonstrations or class audio.

Core first, then extend

Grade 8: attempt the core with fewer labels, explain your choices, then use the extension when ready. Your experience, not grade alone, determines the next challenge.

Lesson 1 Map whole and half steps

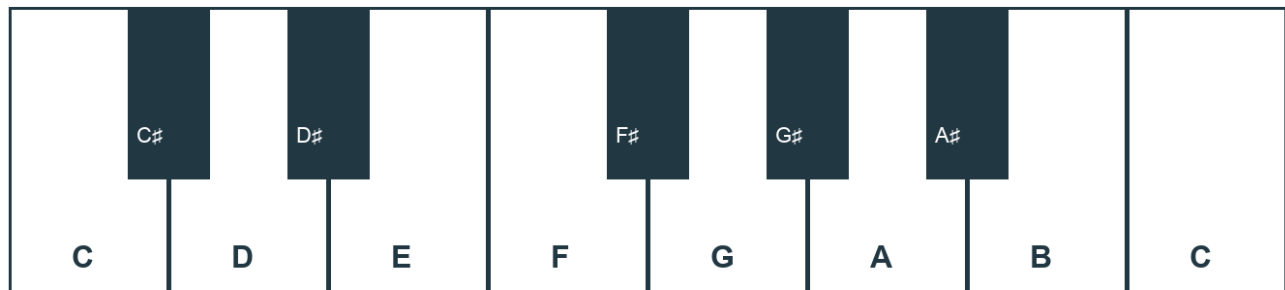
Thu Jan 07 2027 • 45 minutes

Do Now Name the treble spaces or bass spaces from bottom to top.

My first answer or sketch

Model to notice In the twelve-pitch system used here, a half step moves to the adjacent piano key including black keys; a whole step is two half steps. E–F and B–C are natural half steps. No keyboard instrument is required: use the diagram.

Pitch step map • adjacent keys = half step



Natural half steps: E–F and B–C. Mark other steps with arrows.

Try it Mark every half step from C to the next C on a keyboard picture. Draw whole-step arrows C–D, D–E, F–G, G–A, A–B. Label E–F and B–C.

Position or degree	My pitch / step / label	My correction
1–5		
6–9		

Before I leave Explain why E–F is a half step even though both keys are white.

My checkpoint response

Extension when ready: Create a new example using this lesson's skill and explain one musical choice.

Lesson 2 Use sharps flats and naturals

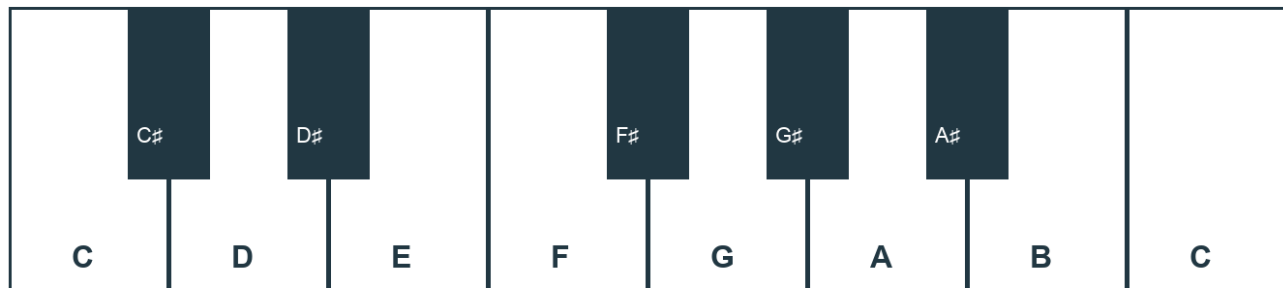
Mon Jan 11 2027 • 45 minutes

Do Now Is C–D a whole step or half step? Show it on the diagram.

My first answer or sketch

Model to notice A sharp raises a pitch by a half step; a flat lowers it by a half step; a natural cancels an alteration. In common modern notation an accidental applies to that pitch in the same octave within the measure. A tie across a bar preserves the tied pitch.

Pitch step map • adjacent keys = half step



Natural half steps: E–F and B–C. Mark other steps with arrows.

Try it Find C sharp/D flat and F sharp/G flat on the diagram. Annotate a measure containing F sharp, F, and F natural in one octave. Show which F remains sharp and where it returns to natural.

Position or degree	My pitch / step / label	My correction
1–5		
6–9		

Before I leave What does a natural sign do?

My checkpoint response

Extension when ready: Explain enharmonic spelling using C sharp and D flat; notation can serve different harmonic purposes.

Lesson 3 Build major scales

Wed Jan 13 2027 • 45 minutes

Do Now Find both natural half-step pairs among letter names.

My first answer or sketch

Model to notice The major-scale pattern is whole whole half whole whole whole half. Use each letter once before repeating the tonic. C major is C D E F G A B C. Scale degrees number these pitches 1 through 8.

Scale ladder • label pitches, degrees, tonic, and step pattern

Tonic							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Tonic							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Try it Build C major on the keyboard map and staff. Start on G and apply the pattern to discover F sharp. Label G A B C D E F sharp G, degrees, and half steps.

Position or degree	My pitch / step / label	My correction
1–5		
6–9		

Before I leave Why does G major need F sharp?

My checkpoint response

Extension when ready: Create a new example using this lesson's skill and explain one musical choice.

Lesson 4 Read simple key signatures

Fri Jan 15 2027 • 45 minutes

Do Now Which alteration made the G major scale fit its pattern?

My first answer or sketch

Model to notice A key signature places recurring sharps/flats after the clef. G major has F sharp; F major has B flat. Build F G A B flat C D E F from the major pattern. One signature can represent relative major/minor, so the signature alone does not prove the tonal center.

Scale ladder • label pitches, degrees, tonic, and step pattern

Tonic							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Tonic							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Try it Compare C, G, and F major using three scale ladders. Circle altered pitches and annotate a class excerpt with one sharp or flat in its signature. State the likely major key and what other evidence you would need.

Position or degree	My pitch / step / label	My correction
1–5		
6–9		

Before I leave Submit your maps and explain signature versus accidental.

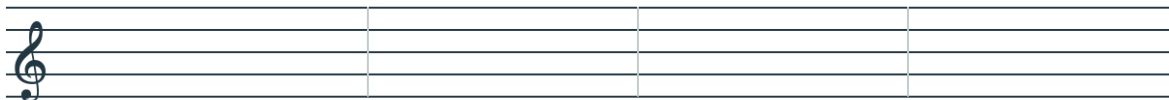
My checkpoint response

Extension when ready: Compare a written clarinet part with concert pitch only with a supplied transposition chart; transposition fluency is enrichment.

Music Sketch Workspace

Draw in your chosen clef, or use the labeled pitch / duration cells below. Add meter, bar totals, and expression. Use additional paper when your musical idea needs it.

Treble clef

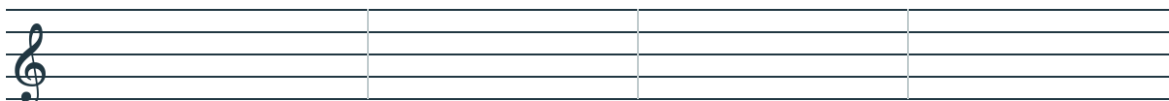


Bass clef

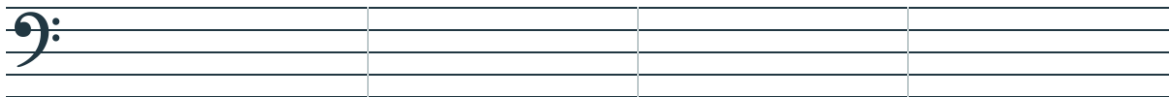


Write pitch names / rhythms below, or draw your notes on a printed copy.

Treble clef



Bass clef



Write pitch names / rhythms below, or draw your notes on a printed copy.

Bar	Pitches and durations	Expression / words
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

Review My Learning

Show your learning with actual musical evidence

First attempt	Correction / revision	Next action
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Use a note, bar, diagram, or marked excerpt; add a short explanation.

My evidence	What changed	Why it is clearer or more accurate
Reading / pitch		
Rhythm / counting		
Listening / expression / creation		

My ensemble connection

Orchestra band choir or the class example	One specific skill I can transfer

My next practice action

Skill	Two minute action	How I will check it

Submission check: labeled visual practice; the unit product; specific corrections/revisions; one transfer connection. The baseline is ungraded. Use the same Google Classroom assignment and retain earlier work.