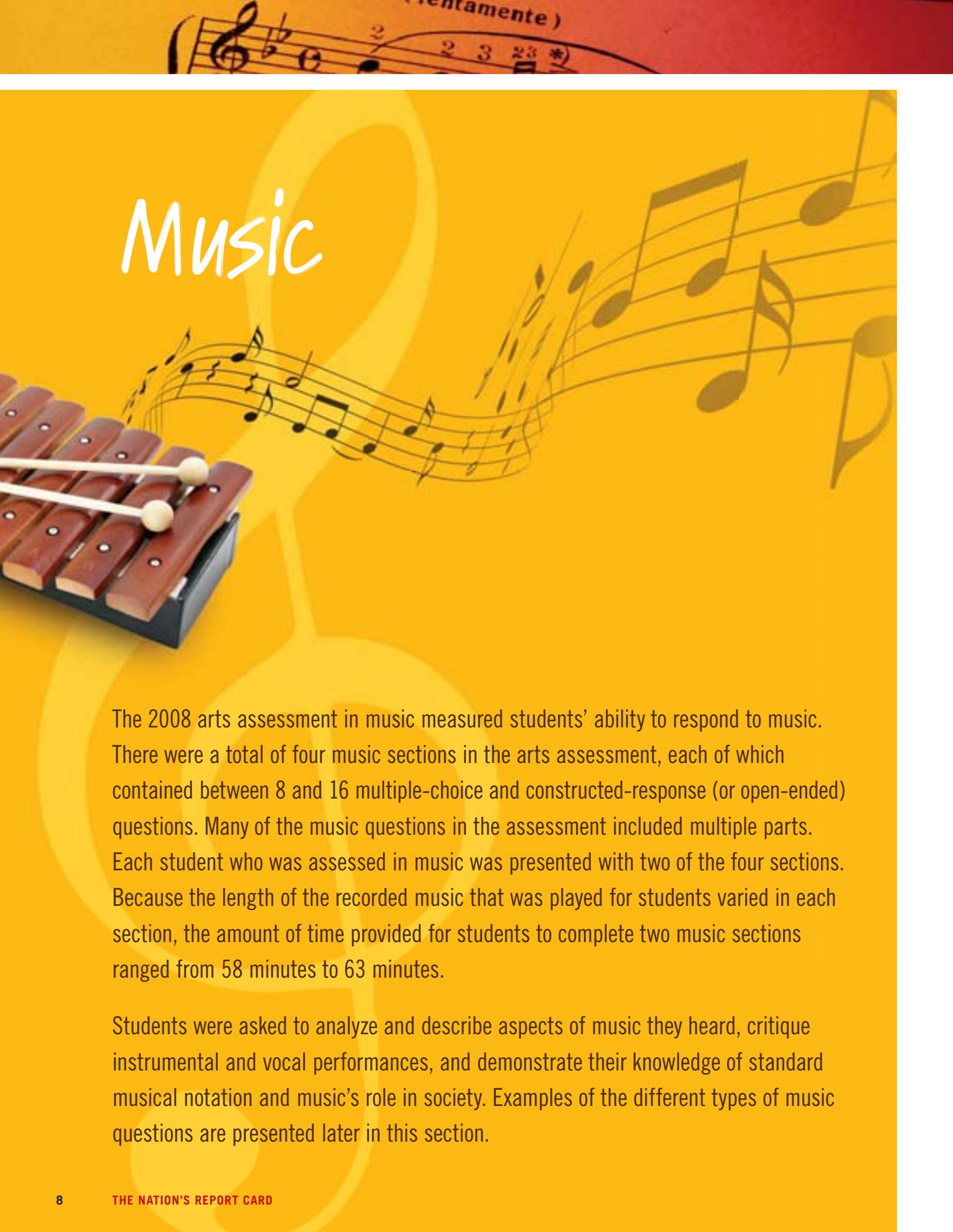


# Music



The background of the page is a vibrant yellow with faint, stylized musical notes and a xylophone. In the top left corner, there is a snippet of a musical score on a red background, showing a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and some notes with fingerings like '2', '3', and '23\*'. The word 'Andante' is partially visible. The word 'Music' is written in a large, white, cursive font in the upper left quadrant. In the lower left, a portion of a xylophone with wooden bars and mallets is visible. The overall theme is music and arts education.

# Music

The 2008 arts assessment in music measured students' ability to respond to music. There were a total of four music sections in the arts assessment, each of which contained between 8 and 16 multiple-choice and constructed-response (or open-ended) questions. Many of the music questions in the assessment included multiple parts. Each student who was assessed in music was presented with two of the four sections. Because the length of the recorded music that was played for students varied in each section, the amount of time provided for students to complete two music sections ranged from 58 minutes to 63 minutes.

Students were asked to analyze and describe aspects of music they heard, critique instrumental and vocal performances, and demonstrate their knowledge of standard musical notation and music's role in society. Examples of the different types of music questions are presented later in this section.

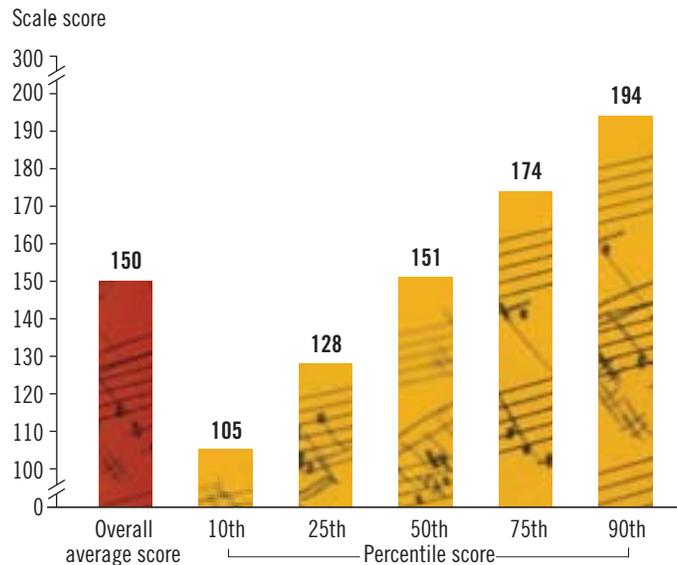
## Eighty-nine-point score gap between lowest- and highest-performing students in music

While the overall average responding score in music was set at 150 in 2008, students at grade 8 exhibited a wide range of responding scores (figure 1). For example, scores ranged from 105 for lower-performing students at the 10th percentile to 194 for higher-performing students at the 90th percentile. Students at the 50th percentile had a score of 151.

### Creating Music

A constructed-response question that asked students to write two measures of rhythmic music notation was included in one of the four music sections. Due to budget constraints, this was the only question in the assessment that asked students to create music; therefore, an average creating task score for music could not be reported. However, results for this question and other released questions from the 2008 arts assessment are available at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls/>.

Figure 1. Average responding scale score and percentile scores in NAEP music at grade 8: 2008



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2008 Arts Assessment.



## Racial/ethnic, gender, and socioeconomic gaps in music scores

In addition to the overall average responding score in music, results are also available based on student characteristics such as race/ethnicity, gender, and eligibility for the National School Lunch Program.

In general, the same patterns in score gaps seen in other NAEP subjects were also evident in the results for music (figure 2). The percentages of students in each student group can be found in appendix table A-5.

### Race/Ethnicity

In 2008, average responding scores in music for White and Asian/Pacific Islander students were 29 to 32 points higher than the scores for Black and Hispanic students. There were no significant differences between the average responding scores of White and Asian/Pacific Islander students or between the scores of Black and Hispanic students.

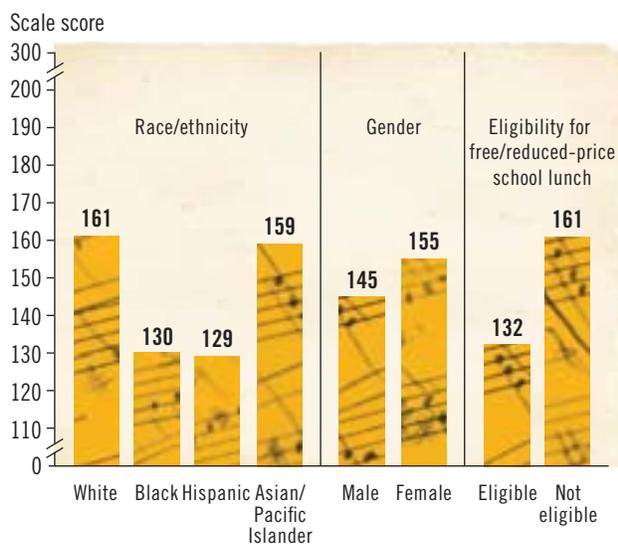
### Gender

On average, female students had a higher responding score in music than their male counterparts. There was a 10-point gap between the two groups in 2008.

### Eligibility for Free/Reduced-Price School Lunch

NAEP uses students' eligibility for the National School Lunch Program as an indicator of poverty. Students from lower-income families are typically eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch (see the Technical Notes at the end of this report for eligibility criteria), while students from higher-income families typically are not. On average, the responding score for students who were eligible was 28 points<sup>2</sup> lower than the score for students who were not eligible.

Figure 2. Average responding scale score in NAEP music at grade 8, by selected student characteristics: 2008



NOTE: Black includes African American, Hispanic includes Latino, and Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin. Sample sizes were insufficient to permit reliable estimates for students whose race/ethnicity was American Indian/Alaska Native or unclassified. For the eligibility for free/reduced-price school lunch category, results are not shown for students whose eligibility status was not available.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2008 Arts Assessment.

<sup>2</sup> The score-point difference is based on the difference between the unrounded scores as opposed to the rounded scores shown in the figure.

## Music scores vary by type and location of schools

Results by selected school characteristics also show differences in average responding scores for music (figure 3). It is important to note that there may be many reasons students performed differently, on average,

based on the type of school or its location. Differences in access to arts instruction and quality curricula, socioeconomic status, and other factors not measured in NAEP may influence student achievement in the arts.

### Type of School

Public school students made up 93 percent of eighth-graders in the nation in 2008, while the other 7 percent of students attended private schools. The average responding score in music for eighth-graders in public schools was 14 points lower than the score for students in private schools.

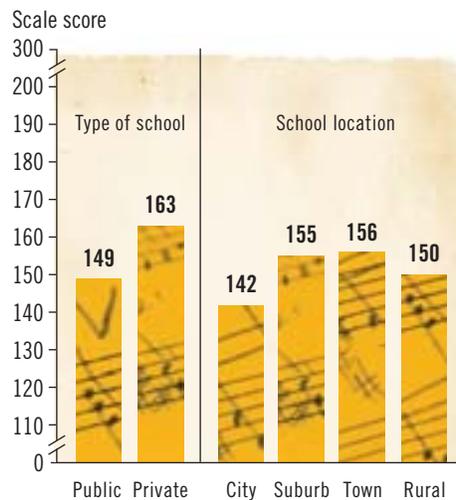
### School Location

Results are available for four school location categories: city, suburb, town, and rural. Descriptions of how these school location categories are defined are included in the Technical Notes section of this report.

In 2008, eighth-graders who attended city schools had a lower average responding score in music than students who attended suburban, town, and rural schools. There were no significant differences in the average scores among students in suburban, town, and rural school locations.



Figure 3. Average responding scale score in NAEP music at grade 8, by selected school characteristics: 2008



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2008 Arts Assessment.

## Context for Arts Education in Music

Information collected from school and student questionnaires helps to provide the context in which arts learning takes place. For the music portion of the assessment, school administrators provided information

on the availability and nature of music education in their schools. Students provided information on their participation in music activities.

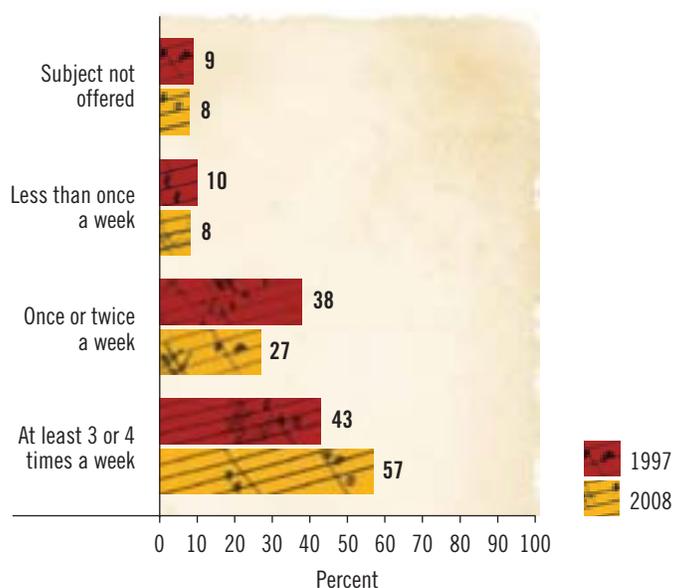
### Frequency of music instruction remains steady

School administrators were asked how often eighth-graders attending their schools might receive instruction in music. Fifty-seven percent of eighth-graders attended schools where students could have received music instruction at least three or four times a week in 2008 (figure 4). This was higher than the percentages of students attending schools where music was offered less frequently or not at all.

Although the data are not shown here, access to music instruction, as reported by school administrators, did not differ significantly by race/ethnicity, gender, or eligibility for free/reduced-price school lunch. For example, the percentage of Black students attending schools where music was offered at least 3 or 4 times a week was not significantly different from the percentage of White students.

The same question was asked of school administrators in 1997, making it possible to look for changes in the instruction patterns over time. The apparent increase between 1997 and 2008 in the percentage of students attending schools where music was available at least three or four times a week was not statistically significant, nor were there any significant changes in the percentages of students attending schools where music was offered once or twice a week, less than once a week, or not at all.

Figure 4. Percentage of students at grade 8, by school-reported frequency with which instruction in music is available: 1997 and 2008



NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 and 2008 Arts Assessments.

**71** percent of eighth-graders attended schools where administrators reported that their state or district had a curriculum in music in 2008.

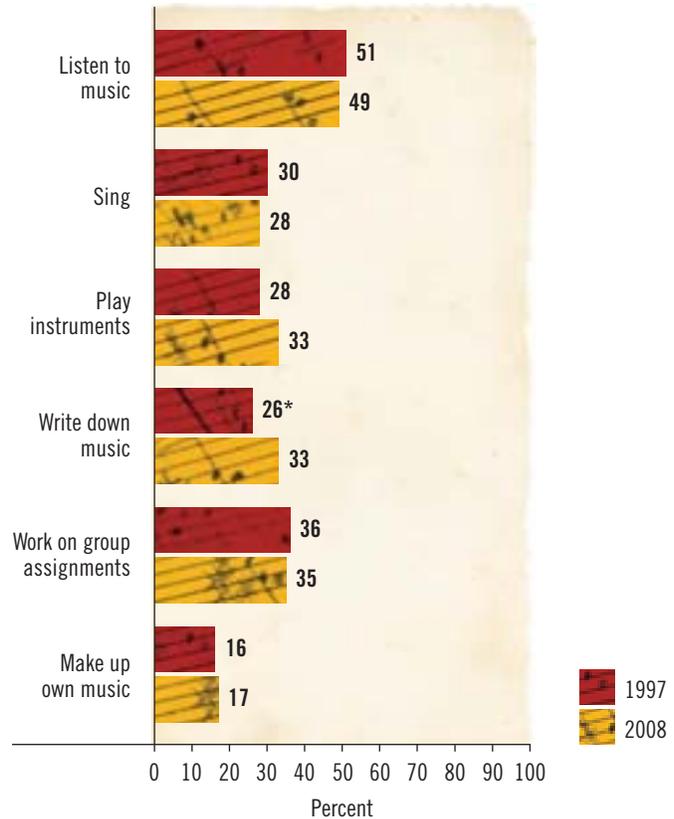
**77** percent of students attended schools where music was taught by a full-time specialist.

## More students writing down music in music class

Students responded to a series of questions about how often they did certain activities in music class. For each activity listed in figure 5, students indicated if they were asked by their teacher to do it almost every day, once or twice a week, once or twice a month, or never or hardly ever. Students were also given the option of indicating that they did not have music in school. The results summarized here show the combined percentages for all eighth-grade students who reported that they did various music-related activities at least once a month.

For the most part, students were as likely to be asked by their teachers to engage in these musical activities in 2008 as in 1997. There were no significant changes in the percentages of students who reported that teachers played music for them to listen to, or asked them to sing, play an instrument, work on group assignments, or make up their own music. Only the percentage of students who reported being asked to write down music showed a statistically significant increase from 26 percent in 1997 to 33 percent in 2008.

Figure 5. Percentage of students at grade 8, by student-reported in-school activities their teachers ask them to do in music class at least once a month: 1997 and 2008

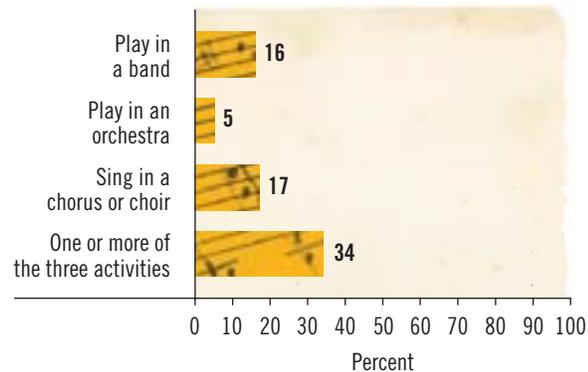


\* Significantly different ( $p < .05$ ) from 2008.

## About one-third of students participate in musical performance activities at school

Students were also asked several questions about their participation in musical performance activities at school. These included whether or not they played in a band, played in an orchestra, or sang in a chorus or choir. Overall, 34 percent of eighth-graders reported participating in one or more of these musical activities at school in 2008 (figure 6). Although questions about participation in these musical activities were also asked in 1997, changes in the format of the questions prohibit comparing results from the two years.

Figure 6. Percentage of students at grade 8, by student-reported participation in musical activities in school: 2008



NOTE: Students were permitted to select more than one musical activity. The percentage for the category "One or more of the three activities" was derived from students' responses to each of the other three categories and was not a separate option by itself.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 and 2008 Arts Assessments.

# What Eighth-Graders Know and Can Do in Music

The item map below is useful for understanding students' performance at different points on the responding scale. The scale scores on the left represent the average scores for students who were likely to get the questions correct or partially correct. Scores for the 25th and 75th percentiles are also noted. The descriptions of selected assessment questions are listed on the right.

For example, the map shows that higher-performing eighth-graders in the upper range of the scale with an average score of 265 were likely to be able to identify one element of jazz present in "Rhapsody

in Blue." Middle-performing students with an average score of 163 were likely to be able to describe one feature of a song that identifies it as a spiritual.

Constructed-response questions for which students could earn partial credit may appear on the map multiple times, once for each level of credit. For example, a question asking students to provide the name of a piano dynamic marking and to explain its meaning appears at the score of 192 for responses receiving full credit and at 183 for responses receiving partial credit.

## Grade 8 NAEP Music Responding Item Map

Scale score	Question description
300	
275	Identify piece of music as coming from twentieth century and provide limited justification why
265	Identify one element of jazz present in "Rhapsody in Blue"
239	Describe an emotion or mood created by a composition and describe two ways in which emotion or mood was created
237	Provide a partial identification and description of the errors in pitch in an instrumental solo
230	Describe a similarity and a difference between two written vocal parts
228	<i>Identify the solo instrument beginning "Rhapsody in Blue" (page 17)</i>
225	Provide a comparison between the tone color of two different singers
195	<i>Select a line drawing reflective of the texture of an example of music (page 15)</i>
195	<i>Identify the term for a fermata symbol</i>
192	Identify the name of a piano dynamic marking and explain its meaning (page 16)
183	Either identify the name of a piano dynamic marking or explain its meaning (page 16)
182	Provide a limited explanation of why spirituals were important in people's lives
176	<i>Identify a correct time signature for a piece of music</i>
<b>174</b>	<b>75th percentile</b>
172	Identify region of origin of African musical excerpt and provide a description of a characteristic related to its style (page 18)
167	<i>Identify a bass clef symbol</i>
166	<i>Identify the type of instrumental ensemble performing an excerpt</i>
163	Describe one feature of a song that identifies it as a spiritual
151	Identify the length of the introduction of "Shalom My Friends"
136	<i>Identify directional contour of part of melodic phrase</i>
<b>128</b>	<b>25th percentile</b>
124	Identify region of origin of African musical excerpt and provide partial explanation of its style characteristics (page 18)
84	Describe an emotion or mood created by a composition
49	Identify region of origin of African musical excerpt (page 18)
0	

NOTE: Regular type denotes a constructed-response question. *Italic* type denotes a multiple-choice question. The position of a question on the scale represents the average scale score attained by students who had a 65 percent probability of obtaining credit at a specific level of a constructed-response question, or a 74 percent probability of correctly answering a four-option multiple-choice question. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2008 Arts Assessment.

## SAMPLE QUESTION: Identifying the Texture of a Musical Example

The sample question below asked students to identify the texture of a musical example that was played. (The term “texture” was defined for the students as the blend of various musical sounds and the ways in which the lines of music in a piece are related.)

The music played for this question came from the beginning of “Contrapunctus 4” from *The Art of the Fugue* by J.S. Bach. In the recording, the fugue was played by a brass quartet. The fugue begins with one instrument entering and playing the subject (the initial melody) of the fugue, followed by the other members of the quartet, each playing the melody. The audio for this question is available in the NAEP Questions Tool at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls/>.

Each of the four diagrams below illustrates an example of a texture that could occur in a piece of music. In 2008, fifty-two percent of eighth-graders selected the correct answer (choice A), which shows the general pattern of musical lines that occurred in the music that was played. This was not found to be significantly different from the 52 percent who answered correctly in 1997. The other three choices are incorrect because they show patterns of musical lines that did not match the music that was played. Choice B shows a group of three voices in alternation with a solo line, choice C shows an alternation of two lines with no accompanying lines or voices, and choice D shows a solo line with a block chord accompaniment.

Percentage of students in each response category at grade 8: 2008

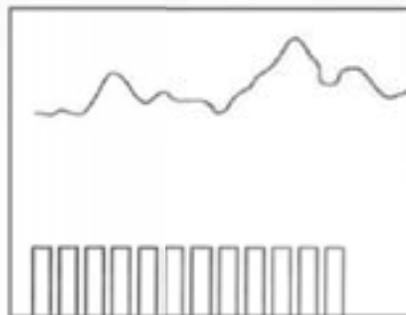
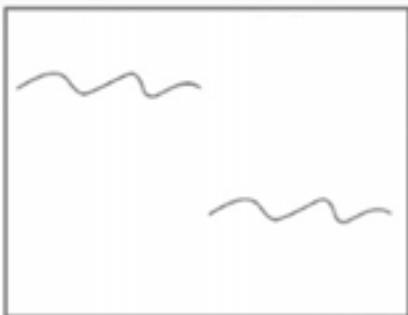
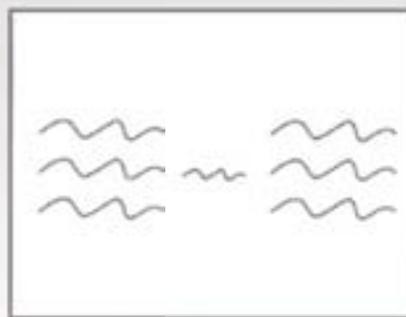
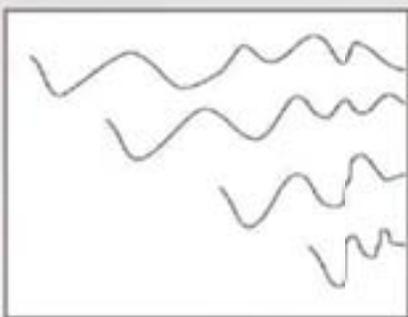
Choice A	Choice B	Choice C	Choice D	Omitted
52	18	5	25	#

# Rounds to zero.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2008 Arts Assessment.

Which diagram best illustrates the texture of the music?

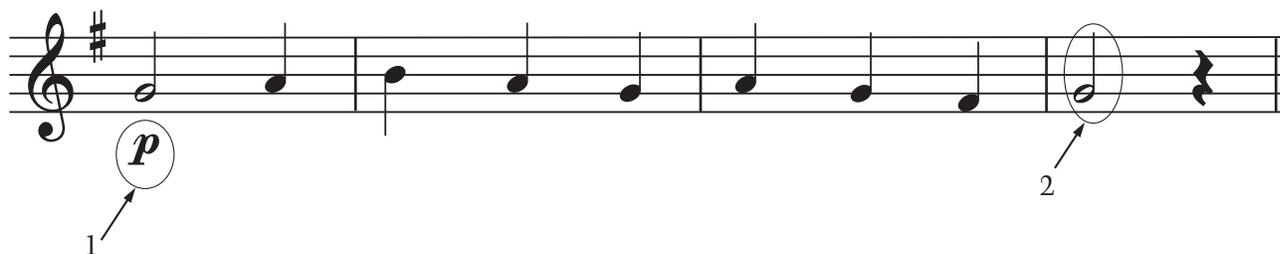


## SAMPLE QUESTION: Reading Musical Notation

This two-part sample question was taken from a set of questions that asked students to demonstrate knowledge of standard musical notation. In the question below, students were asked to provide the name and meaning of the symbol indicated in circle 1 in the music shown here. No recorded music was played for this question. The question that pertains to the symbol indicated in circle 2 is not

shown here but is available in the NAEP Questions Tool at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls/>.

Student responses for this two-part question were rated using three scoring levels: Adequate, Limited, and Inadequate. Examples of Adequate and Limited responses are shown here. Inadequate responses failed to provide correct information for either part of the question.



This sample response was rated “**Adequate**” because it provided the symbol’s meaning (that the music should be performed softly) and the symbol’s correct name (*piano*). Twenty percent of eighth-graders received a rating of “Adequate” on this question.

What does the symbol in circle 1 tell the performer to do?

Play or sing the music softly.

What is the musical (Italian) name for the symbol in circle 1?

Piano

This sample response was rated “**Limited**” because it provided the symbol’s meaning but not its correct name. (*Pianissimo* refers to the symbol *pp*, which indicates that music should be performed very softly.) Nine percent of students’ responses to this question were rated “Limited.”

What does the symbol in circle 1 tell the performer to do?

Play soft

What is the musical (Italian) name for the symbol in circle 1?

Pianissimo

Percentage of students in each response category at grade 8: 2008

Adequate	Limited	Inadequate	Omitted
20	9	62	#

# Rounds to zero.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because the percentage of responses rated as “Off-task” is not shown. Off-task responses are those that do not provide any information related to the assessment task.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2008 Arts Assessment.

## SAMPLE QUESTION: Identifying the Sound of an Instrument

The sample question below asked students to identify the sound of an instrument. The music played for this question comes from the opening of “Rhapsody in Blue” by American composer George Gershwin. The audio is available in the NAEP Questions Tool at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls/>.

At the beginning of the piece, a solo is played on

- A a flute
- B an oboe
- C a saxophone
- D a clarinet

In 2008, fifty percent of eighth-graders correctly identified the clarinet as the instrument on which the solo was played (choice D). This was not found to be significantly different from the 52 percent who answered correctly in 1997. Choices A, B, and C are also woodwind instruments like the clarinet but were not the instrument on which the solo at the beginning of the piece was played.

Percentage of students in each response category at grade 8: 2008

Choice A	Choice B	Choice C	Choice D	Omitted
12	15	22	50	#

# Rounds to zero.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2008 Arts Assessment.



## SAMPLE QUESTION: Identifying Origin of a Musical Style

The two-part sample question below asked students to identify music from a particular culture and to describe the features that help to characterize its style. The music played for this question came from an African song entitled “Drodope.” The audio is available in the NAEP Questions Tool at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls/>.

Student responses for this two-part question were rated using four scoring levels: Developed, Adequate, Limited, and Inadequate. Examples of Developed and Adequate responses are shown here. Responses rated as Limited only provided a correct response to the first part of the question. Responses rated as Inadequate failed to provide a correct response for either part of the question.

This sample response was rated **“Developed”** because it both indicated the correct region of origin of the music and cited the “call and response” feature of the music that is common among many types of African songs. Mentioning the use of specific percussion instruments such as drums also contributed to this response receiving a rating of “Developed.” Fifty-two percent of eighth-graders received a rating of “Developed” on this question.

From where does the music come?

- A North America
- B South America
- C Asia
- Africa

Other than the language used in the song, describe one feature of the music that helps to identify it as coming from the part of the world you selected. Be specific in your description.

The drums, also the call and response

This sample response was rated **“Adequate.”** Although it indicated the correct region of origin of the music, the description of a feature of the music was vague. Twenty-four percent of students’ responses to this question were rated “Adequate.”

From where does the music come?

- A North America
- B South America
- C Asia
- Africa

Other than the language used in the song, describe one feature of the music that helps to identify it as coming from the part of the world you selected. Be specific in your description.

The music features instruments that are traditional to that part of the world.

Percentage of students in each response category at grade 8: 2008

Developed	Adequate	Limited	Inadequate	Omitted
52	24	19	5	#

# Rounds to zero.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because the percentage of responses rated as “Off-task” is not shown. Off-task responses are those that do not provide any information related to the assessment task.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2008 Arts Assessment.