

## My Philosophy of Music Education

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When I think about my philosophy of music education, I think most clearly about how the students I teach will grow up to be the leaders and consumers of tomorrow. These young people will be driving innovation, preserving the pieces of the past they deem important, and passing on their knowledge. It is my job to instill my students with the motivation, passion, and appreciation for life, and I choose to do so through the medium that inspires me every day, music. Music follows us everywhere we go, and is a tool to help students of all ages learn about the values and history of their culture, socialize through collaboration, and communicate through emotion.

Children are instilled with a love for music from the very earliest stages. The rhythms of a mother's heartbeat, the simple songs sung to teach the order of the months or the ABC's, and other such examples provide children with rhythmic and social ways to remember basic fundamentals of language and society. Educators can utilize a child's innate desire to sing, dance, or beat rhythms to mold them into talented performers who understand and appreciate the use of music as a cultural device and thrilling experience.

Once children understand the preconceptions of music, they can work together to make an incredible product. Many ensemble classes take their allotted time to strictly rehearse music for an upcoming performance. However, without a solid base with which to collaborate, students are missing out on opportunities to expand their critical thinking skills. Teaching topics such as balance encourages students to listen to the greater sound around them, understand their role, and execute accurately, all skills which can apply to countless different group based work, even outside the domain of music.

When defending music education, many advocates use music as a support structure for other curricular subjects, such as using music to define the culture of those who came before us in history, or point to contemporary pieces that use scientific and mathematical principles as a framework upon which the composition is based. Benefits of musical knowledge can even help in fields such as marketing, where knowing what music will evoke certain reactions from consumer bases can lead to better sales. The psychological effects of music not only provide children with cultural foundations, and businesses with advertising strategies, but allow for people to communicate in realms beyond the spoken word.

The aesthetic enjoyment of music is perhaps my ultimate reason for pursuing music, and sharing this enjoyment with the children who will someday inherit the Earth, combined with the background required to fully appreciate it, is my ultimate goal. The well-rounded music education that begins in the early years of schooling culminates in the high school musician who can appreciate the various different forms music takes, and the meaning it gives to different cultures. This is where subjects such as world music, rock and roll, and classical music combine to enlighten learners of the full power music has as a cultural phenomenon. Music moves people, and whether it is based on the work's specific cultural significance, relatable and emotional lyrics, or technical and aesthetic prowess, all music has this quality to drive people. Unlocking this potential in my students through instruction in music appreciation as a cultural tool is my philosophy as a music educator.