

Integrating the Art of Sound



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The arts and creative expression can bring together diverse cultures, from nations to classrooms; and as tools for engagement, they bring cognition and literacy off the page. Sound and vibration are languages that serve to unite us despite our differences, and help to transform abstract concepts into concrete, experiential reality. Multi-sensory engagement through the use of auditory, visual, and tactile elements is a powerful tool for building community and making every student's learning visible in ways that reveal qualitative impact and outcomes that often slip through cracks in the quantitative data from standardized tests.

I am so grateful to share, as a community arts education partner, with the School District of Indian River County and "Team TLA" in the Moonshot Movement for all students. As teachers from diverse classroom settings, Bridget and I have both experienced the power of integrating music, visual art, and the pedagogy of play to deliver information and help make interdisciplinary connections for students from preschool to high school.

~Shanti Sanchez, VBMA

To develop our session, Shanti Sanchez and I researched articles that show how integrating sound and music in the classroom can promote student engagement and support academic standards across core subjects. One very useful article from John Hopkins School of Education was published by Chris Brewer in 1995. We have condensed the content to provide an overview but you can read the article in its entirety at www.education.jhu.edu. Also, you may want to read about the Pedagogy of Play (POP) as archived on the Harvard's Project Zero website: www.pz.harvard.edu. Enjoy!

~Bridget Lyons, TLA

Music helps us learn because it will—

- establish a positive learning state
- create a desired atmosphere
- build a sense of anticipation
- energize learning activities
- change brain wave states
- focus concentration
- increase attention
- improve memory
- facilitate a multisensory learning experience
- release tension
- enhance imagination

- align groups
- develop rapport
- provide inspiration and motivation
- add an element of fun, and
- accentuate theme-oriented units

WHAT ARE SPECIFIC WAYS MUSIC CAN BE USED IN THE CLASSROOM?

Here are three areas of teaching where integrating music can be highly effective. For each intent, there is a rich repertoire of classroom techniques that can be used simply and easily by anyone—a brief example is given in each. These techniques work for people of all ages and from many societies. The very young, teens and adults will experience an increase in their effectiveness and joy of learning from these uses of music.

- **LEARNING INFORMATION**
 - **Active Learning Experiences**
 - **Focus and Alpha State Learning**
 - **Memorization**

- **ATTENTION, ATTITUDE AND ATMOSPHERE**
 - **Welcoming and Attention**
 - **Community Builders**

- **PERSONAL EXPRESSION**
 - **Creativity and Reflection**
 - **Personal Expression through the Musical Intelligence**

THE MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

In 1983 Howard Gardner, psychology professor at Harvard University, presented his Multiple Intelligence theory based upon many years of research. Promoting the concept that intelligence is not one entity but that there are many different forms of intelligence, Gardner has awakened a revolution in learning. Multiple Intelligence teaching methods recognize eight (though there may be more) forms of intelligence: visual-spatial, linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, musical, and most recently naturalist. Multiple Intelligence teachers strive to broaden students familiarity and skill levels in each area.

The Multiple Intelligence teaching model emphasizes education for understanding rather than rote memory or the mimicking of skills. Practical hands-on skill development is coupled with factual knowledge and the ability to apply skills and information in real-life situations and make meaningful contributions to society.

Development of the musical intelligence can be greatly aided by the use of music throughout the curriculum. In addition to learning about musical elements and how to create music, the musical intelligence involves developing an ability to respond to musical sound and the ability to use music effectively in one's life. As a musician who has taught general music in public and private schools I can speak to the value of having students hear music throughout the school day as a means of increasing musical intelligence. The more students listen and respond to a variety of music, the more they will know about music on a personal, real-experience level, the deeper will be their understanding of why people throughout time and around the world create music, the greater will be their ability to use music productively in their lives, and the more eager they will be to develop their musical skills because they will understand, appreciate and enjoy music more!

As a music teacher, I can say that the methods for using music in the classroom not only enhance the learning process but also contribute to the development of the musical intelligence.

ACCELERATED LEARNING

In the 1960's, Dr. Georgi Lozanov and Evelyn Gateva researched ways to increase memory abilities through including the use of music in the classroom. Their successes caught the attention of the world. Improved teaching techniques developed from their creative experiments and today we have a solid format for effective multisensory and whole brain learning called Accelerated Learning. This article does not describe the full philosophy or method designed by Lozanov, but draws upon the knowledge of music in Lozanov's method to share successful ways of using music for learning.

The use of background music during lectures, vocabulary decoding, or group readings is a cornerstone of Accelerated Learning techniques. Two methods for using music, designed to create very different but equally effective learning environments, were developed through Lozanov's methods. They are called concerts. The Active Concert activates the learning process mentally, physically and/or emotionally while the Passive Concert is geared to place the student in a relaxed alpha brain wave state and stabilize the student's mental, physical and emotional rhythms to increase information absorption. Both teaching methods result in high memory retention. Used together the two concerts provide a powerful learning experience.

Another component of Accelerated Learning techniques is the recognition that the learning setting and student comfort level with learning is of great importance to student success. Lozanov's methods included using music as students enter the classroom, leave the classroom and during break times to help establish a positive learning atmosphere.