

Music is one of the only things that can connect people all over the world. Some say music is a universal language but it really is more of a universal connection. Music is different all over the world so it cannot be a universal language but every culture in the world has some form of music integrated into the culture. Music is an important part of culture that should be maintained. Most cultures over the world use music everyday to help complete simple daily tasks and our American culture uses music in almost every dignified ceremony. Studying the music of their own culture and other cultures will prepare children for a life in a diverse society. Our American society is made up of many different worldly and domestic cultures and through the study of music students can understand how to accept other cultures in their communities. An education in music should prepare children for their adult lives. All education, including music, should give students the tools to think critically and make educated choices for their own lives. The ability to question leaders and know what is best for their lives are two tools that children should gain from a public education.

Children will learn not only about many different kinds of music but they learn how to use the knowledge about music history, musical forms, and the structure of music in their future lives. Appreciation for the arts is something that is important in order to be a complete member of our growing society. Children will learn to appreciate all different forms of music by singing, playing, listening, analyzing, and studying music from many cultures and many historical periods.

The curriculum in a music class should be based on the Comprehensive Musicianship through Performance idea. The CMP method uses musical content to enhance the musical performance. Simply playing music on their respective instruments does not provide students with a wide base of music knowledge. In a CMP based rehearsal the students will learn about the extra-music characteristics that form the pieces they perform. Composer biographies, structure of the music, history, and music vocabulary must be infused in each rehearsal. Improvisation and composing are also a large part of the well-rounded education in music and can be used in creative

ways to enhance musical performance. The CMP curriculum model also ensures that when it is effectively integrated into rehearsals many of the national and state standards will be addressed in each rehearsal. The CMP Model also allows modifications for special learners to be made seamlessly in the rehearsal setting and CMP is sensitive to the fact that children learn many different ways. CMP is the most practical and effective model for the curriculum of the rehearsal classroom because it diversifies the curriculum and seamlessly includes many if not all of the standards for music education in rehearsals. (Standards 1, 3, 7)

In the elementary general music classroom the eclectic approach provides the most well rounded music education. (Standards 1, 4) This approach is the combination of three of the more famous methods of general music: Kodaly, which is based on syllables and singing; Orff, which is based on playing instruments; and Dalcroze, which is based on movement. The eclectic approach combines the best qualities of the other three major approaches into one comprehensive curriculum. Most music education textbooks (Basal text series) are based on the eclectic approach. Singing music, using hand signs and solfege, rhythmic syllables, performing on classroom instruments, improvising, movement, and dance are all topics that are covered in the eclectic approach to general music education. The best music education classes, instrumental or general, teach that music is a multifaceted art form with many levels and is open to many interpretations.

Music in a general class or performing ensemble allows students to learn in a way that is different from the “core” classes. Music requires one hundred percent creativity and allows students to learn completely through active participation. Music ensembles teach students how to interact with others more effectively than other core academic class. In order for a music ensemble to perform, every performer must be engaged and adding their performance to the group. This can be translated into the students’ life outside of school. In order to be an active member of society, a person must be actively involved in society. Every member of society contributes to their

community. A child who learns that their work will be added to the overall work of the ensemble will better understand how to live in a society that requires them to work towards a collective end. By gaining this understanding in “teamwork” children will understand how to live in their society and will be a successful member of society. While emotional expression is limited in other academic classes, it is encouraged in music classes. The freedom of expression that music provides can lead to happiness overall. When students have an outlet for their emotions they will have more control over their emotions and know better how to express them. Because students involved in music understand the importance of emotional control in music performances they can better understand the need for emotional control in their lives outside of school. Music also requires students to have ownership of their own work. A band, for example, cannot perform to the best of its ability if the student musicians do not take ownership and are not responsible for their individual parts of the music. Music is unique because students are not only responsible for their individual work and progress but they are all responsible for the work and progress of the collective ensemble.