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Music 145 Intro. to Music Ed.
Philosophy of Music Education

Music is all around us. From the rustling of the leaves to the pounding of construction it makes itself known in a variety of forms. Because it can be found anywhere, it is natural to have it be a part of our everyday lives. This regular occurrence of music is an instant comfort to us because we all value the reassurance of repetition in our lives. Thus we are able to express ourselves in ways otherwise impossible because music can never leave us. This is why, when listening to a person perform a musical piece, we instantly feel that magical pull in our hearts. This feeling of great emotion allows us to recognize the connections we create when listening to a song. Not only can we be gratified with listening to a song but we can delve deeper into the meaning of the music.

While the importance of music will vary from person to person, there is one aspect of music that everyone can agree is essential to the human race: the emotional pull. This aspect of music is what binds everyone together. It allows us to relate with the performer and the other people listening. Consequently, music inspires and evokes emotions in a healthy way. Upon listening to a song, the music can touch our emotional being in ways that are often times difficult to express. For example, some songs remind us about a beloved family member and every time the music plays we instantly think about them and what they are doing at that moment. Some songs create special memories such as the first song you danced to with your loved one. Music is constantly bringing back memories or creating new ones. If it weren't for these songs, how much would we truly remember? Would we be able to make the connections we associate with when music is involved? These memories are a needed aspect of our lives. Thus, music truly is

the ultimate guide in discovering the true identity of ourselves. It allows us to replay through our memories and think deeply about the actions we have made in our lives.

Through the importance of music, it is essential that music be taught in schools. Whether we are seeking ways to strengthen a child's mind or simply allow them to express themselves, music makes a difference. We need to realize the importance of a well-rounded and balanced student. The more variety a student has in their life, the more they use various thinking strategies. Instead of constantly teaching the main subject classes over and over again, use a variety of classes – including music –to educate the whole child. Everyone knows that music is beautiful. And beauty helps your peace of mind. From improved brainpower and grades to better physical wellness music also reduces levels of anxiety, depression, and loneliness. But more importantly, music allows us to express ourselves. Students who aren't outgoing will benefit from music by allowing their voice to be heard. They are able to convey their feelings into their music and create a beautiful masterpiece. The more comfortable the student becomes in placing their feelings into their music, the more comfortable they will be with opening up to others.

Music is ultimately taught with the intention of performing as much as it is to understand and deepen a person's musical knowledge. Because of this, a variety of music should be introduced and taught in schools. Everybody has their preference as to what type of music they enjoy listening to but how else can we discover whether we like another type or not if we aren't immersed in it? If we only performed one particular style our entire lives, we wouldn't be able to grow musically; we would simply be using the same techniques, never learning other styles we could incorporate. Providing different styles of music will allow the students to discover for themselves what type they like and how to use a variety of musical aspects and techniques.

Because music is already a part of our everyday lives, there should be no limit as to which students can and can't take music as a class. Every student deserves to experience the magical thrill and emotional pull that music provides. It is not our responsibility as educators to take away an opportunity for educational, spiritual, and social growth from a student. They should be given the chance to figure out what music means to them and how to incorporate it into their everyday lives.

While there shouldn't be a limit on which students can or can't take music as a class, there are certain requirements for a teacher to teach music. For one, a music teacher needs to have had a variety of personal experience. Naturally, a music teacher should have played an instrument or sung. However, a music teacher should also be open and honest with their students. For example, many students find it difficult to perform in front of others. Everyone can relate to this. As a teacher, he/she should explain their own experiences to let the students know that they are not alone; particularly any negative experiences that may have occurred. These experiences further reflect the person and teacher one has become. If anything, a person can learn more from these experiences than any other. If the students hear a personal story from their teacher, they will be able to relate to it and overcome their initial fear. Honesty is the key to teaching.

The number one quality that all music teachers should possess is the passion and enthusiasm to teach. These are the people who know more than anything that music is the center of their lives. When a teacher shows passion for what they do, they are automatically a better teacher. This passion and enthusiasm drives them forward with the ambition of touching their students through music. If a teacher were bland and unenthusiastic it would be hard to engage

the students in the lesson each day. Students can tell when a teacher is truly happy to be teaching. It's in the attitude portrayed, the lesson, and the overall atmosphere.

Music speaks to everyone and touches each of us in its own, special way. To abandon music would be like abandoning a part of ourselves. Music is essential to our lives. It provides fulfillment to our days and brings about special memories. Thus, music should remain strong and forever present in our educational system. Students need to learn and understand themselves and everything around us; music provides that opportunity. As quoted in the movie *August Rush*, "Music is God's little reminder that there's something else besides us in this universe; harmonic connection between all living beings, everywhere, even the stars."