

Philosophy of Music Education
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March 28, 2007

The concept that music is solely a human capability is often overlooked. There are many things that separate us from animals and “less developed” creatures. However, music is one distinct characteristic that only the human species possesses. Music is important and can have an effect on everyone. Music is important to people who need a way to express themselves and as well as seek relief. Additionally, to those who are passionate, who are in love or have ever been. Music is universally important to people all over the world, in every country and every state of mind.

Multicultural issues are in the foreground of music education. There are many living cultures in America today. Much of music is influenced by the cultures from which they originate, so we have an opportunity, as educators, to introduce and familiarize our students with different cultures as well as learn new music. Music is a great tool for doing such multicultural educational activities. By singing, dancing to and/or playing traditional songs from other cultures, it can help us to better understand their beliefs, concepts and cultural priorities. While understanding their culture, it can also help us to understand the concept of meter, rhythm and different harmonies utilized from different areas of the world. This, in turn makes us all more respectful, well-rounded individuals. In order to indulge every person’s abilities for musical enlightenment, it is important to provide everyone with an opportunity for musical growth.

Inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education classroom has become a greater concern for all educators within the last few years. Public law 94-142 ensures that all students are provided with a free, appropriate public education in a classroom that is deemed the least restrictive learning environment. The task at hand is to provide the aforementioned by means that does not disrupt the learning processes of disabled and non-disabled students alike. In order to do this, educators must be able to adapt their curriculum based on the specific disability. By understanding how different kinds of disabilities affect a student and their learning process, we can better understand how to appeal to their academic selves.

By attending IEP meetings, it allows the educator to express their abilities as well as limitations. Making educators aware of each student's personal needs, strengths and weaknesses will improve a student's opportunity for academic/musical growth. As educators, it is important to equip each student with the skills and knowledge they seek.

In order to confirm that each student is progressing, it is essential to administer some sort of an assessment. Assessments provide us with a better picture of how much the students are ready to learn and how much knowledge has been retained. In order to obtain an accurate assessment of student knowledge, it is helpful to prepare the students for what tasks they will be asked to complete and how they should go about completing them. As Victoria Smith points out in her article "Want the right answers? Ask the right questions!", half the success of the assessment is based on developing a comprehensible, clear assessment. She says "I provide a clear description of the task and give students sufficient direction to complete it."

Additionally, choosing the most appropriate assessment is important in order to get the most appropriate and accurate results. Briana Foley raises the issue in her article “Performance Assessment: Applications for General Music”, when she states “The method must align with what is being assessed. In other words, choose the right tool for the job.” Furthermore, she states “Music educators must accept the challenge to teach and assess all aspects of standard-based curriculum. Only then will students be able to aim at clear targets, enabling them to hit the mark of the highest student achievement.” To aid learning for all students, many techniques and tools can be utilized.

New designs and developments have allowed curriculum to be adapted to permit the academic growth of every student. One of the most recent developments is the advancement of technology. Technology can now allow the deaf to hear, blind to see and the mute to communicate. New instrumental designs have allowed students whom do not yet read music to create music together by offering different pitch possibilities; through adding or subtracting attachments. With developments from hearing aids that help to appreciate music, to learning software that help to understand theory, technological advancements have helped make general music classes more readily available to every student.

Every student who wishes to learn should receive the opportunity to do so. By making the proper adjustments and applying techniques, resources and knowledge, we can provide students with a more educationally fulfilling experience. If support, knowledge and sensitivity are not available, it should be sought after in order to provide the most uninhibited educational experience for every student, disabled or non. Every student should be permitted to develop this uniquely human characteristic.