

# Pump Up, or Down, the Volume!

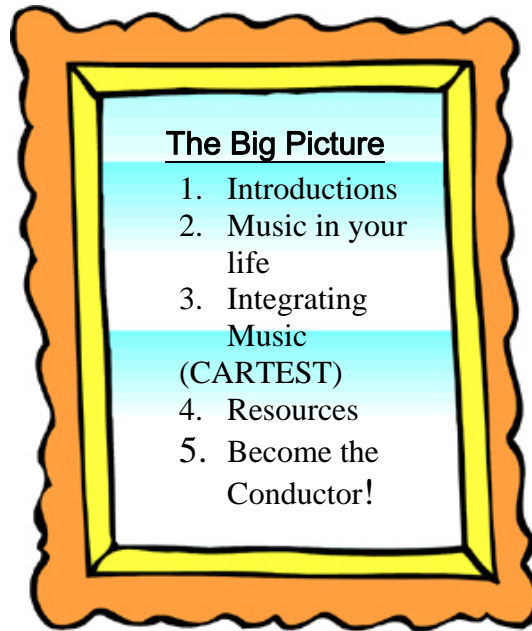



## Using Music to Enhance Your Teaching



By Eric Chandler, M. Ed. Reading, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher

“When we use music with the intention of supporting the learning process, it becomes a *soundtrack* to learning that enhances the experience.”

-Chris Boyd Brewer in *Soundtracks for Learning*



	<i>Notes</i>
<p><b>Music In Your Life: The Restaurant Analogy</b></p> <p>How many times throughout your day do you hear music? Do you use it intentionally? Where do you hear it? On your clock radio? On television? In the car? At a restaurant? In a shopping mall or in the grocery store? Why do you think those in control of these places use music? Do they know something we don't? Do you turn it off when you enter your classroom? If so, why? Consider the restaurant analogy.</p> <p> <b>Notes for Thought:</b> Think about how music has a positive effect on your life, and then think about how it could have the same effects on your students.</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ways to Implement Music: (CARTEST)</b></p> <p>When thinking of why one might take a quiet, music and soundless classroom and add music, remember <b>CARTEST</b>. No, it has nothing to do with test driving a vehicle, although I do invite you to test drive some tunes when you return to your classroom or resource room!</p> <p>You can use music to: <b>C</b>alm, for <b>A</b>tmosphere, to <b>R</b>efocus, for <b>T</b>ransition, to <b>E</b>nergize, to <b>S</b>timulate and most importantly to <b>T</b>each!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Notes</i></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Use Music to CALM!</b></p>  <p>A normal heartbeat is 60-80 beats per minute. Research shows that listening to calming classical music like Baroque or solo instrumental music can have a calming effect. Learners who are relaxed enter a receptive state and can learn and retain more information. Baroque in particular creates a relaxed yet alert state.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Notes</i></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Atmosphere is Everything!</b></p>  <p>Classroom environment, rapport, comfort, these are all essential in preparing a young child's brain to receive information and learn at an optimal rate. If a child <b>WANTS</b> to come to your room and feels comfortable being there, they will learn more and improve at a faster rate than normal. Music can have this effect on any child or adult. When it becomes part of your <b>ROUTINE</b> it will not over stimulate or cause behavior problems. Lively music played as students enter the room makes them feel more at ease, and when it is part of your day, can have a lasting positive effect.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Notes</i></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Music to Refocus</b></p> <p>The average person has an attention span in minutes equal to their age up to age 20. A 7 year old who has been sitting and focusing on one task for more than this time may need to release excess energy and refocus on the task. Music can provide an avenue for this to happen. The next time you see your class or group losing interest or you notice their minds wandering off, play a song that allows them to get up, move, change their learning “state” and then refocus. Play a minute of “The Macarena”, the “Hokey Pokey” or “The Cha-Cha Slide”. A minute or two spent doing this can have a positive effect that makes that time well spent!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Notes</i></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transition with Music!</b></p>  <p>Music makes transitions easier! Transition time is when we tend to “lose” students and when many behavior problems occur. Music bridges the gaps that occur during the day, creating a seamless flow of learning. If you are using stations and need to switch, let music cue the students to do this. If you need to change the arrangement of the room, teach students to do this when a certain song is played. Don’t flick the lights, clap, yell, shout “1-2-3, eyes on me”...let music do this for you!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Notes</i></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Energize with Music!</b></p>  <p>Get students excited to “perform”! Start the class or lesson out with a lively song, or a song to review a concept you have been working on. Music makes a perfect segue into any lesson you are about to teach. Whether it be a reading strategy you are using or counting money, music can get a student excited to learn about that concept. Again, when this is part of your routine, it is expected and does not cause behavior issues.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Notes</i></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

## The Stimulating Effect of Music



Ever heard of the “Mozart Effect”? Yes, maybe playing Mozart to your unborn child through the belly is a bit much, but playing Mozart (selected pieces) to your class or small group in the background can actually help them retain more information. Dr. Frances H. Rauscher from the University of California at Irvine found that playing Mozarts piano music stimulated the neural pathways important to cognition. Try it and see if your struggling students perform better!



**Notes for Thought:** Any music used during direct instruction or during individual practice should not be distracting. It should become part of the background and should only be heard when it is very quiet. We use music to enhance learning, not detract from it.

*Notes*

## Music to Teach By!



Now we come to my favorite part! Using music to actually teach the content! Do you remember “School House Rock”? Did one of your teachers teach you a rhyme, poem, or jingle to help you retain information? Can you remember a commercial or part of a song that your remember no matter how old you get? **(867-5309!)** Music can be one of the best devices to help a child remember what you have taught them long after you are no longer instructing them.

There are many resources out there already produced to assist with this process, so don't feel like you have to suddenly become Sheryl Crow or James Taylor to teach using music. Music is one of Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, and sometimes when information is presented in a musical way, the child's brain more readily accepts it. If you are musically inclined, take an existing song and change the lyrics to fit what you are teaching. It can be a song as simple as “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” or “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”. Teach it to your students and get them to sing along with you! If you don't sing, come up with a rap or chant and clap along as you say it!

*Notes*

Come up with movements to go along with what you are teaching. Remember that repetition is key...hearing a song one time might not be enough. Just like a “one hit wonder” that is played on the radio too many times, playing a song multiple times over a period of time can make sure that the children NEVER forget it! (even if it drives them crazy and they can’t get it out of their heads)



Interested? Want to learn more? I invite you to check out these resources and begin integrating music!

#### Books:

- Soundtracks for Learning: Using Music in the Classroom by Chris Boyd Brewer
- Quantum Teaching: Orchestrating Student Success by Bobbie DePorter, Mark Reardon and Sarah Singer-Nourie
- The Mozart Effect: Tapping the Power of Music to Heal the Body, Strengthen the Mind and Unlock the Creative Spirit by Don Cambell

#### Music:

- Television’s Greatest Hits Series
- Contemporary Jazz
- Mozart for the Mind
- Jock Jams
- Instrumental Music in different genres
- The Best of Baroque and Baroque Favorites
- Sun Splashin’ Series
- Movie Soundtracks (I like Yoda’s Theme☺)

#### Links:

- [www.chandlerschalkboard.com](http://www.chandlerschalkboard.com) (my wife’s sort books and link to my music)
- [www.iacmusic.com](http://www.iacmusic.com) (type mister c in the search box)
- [www.songsforteaching.com](http://www.songsforteaching.com) (hundreds of titles – great site!)
- [www.gardenofpraise.com](http://www.gardenofpraise.com) (religious content, many great spelling and grammar songs)
- My email: [3chandlers@comcast.net](mailto:3chandlers@comcast.net) Contact me with any questions!