

THE EXTRA-MUSICAL ADVANTAGES OF A MUSICAL EDUCATION

READING, LANGUAGE, AND MUSIC PROGRAMS

All of the studies support the existence of a connection between music study and reading. In most of the studies the students were instructed specifically in the skill of reading music notation, this in turn seemingly caused an increase in language reading skills. This finding held true with students in the early stages of reading development as well as with junior high school students. A result of many years of music study appears to be increased reading ability among college age students. Further, it appears that the best gains are made when the music instruction is provided by a music specialist.

DOES MUSIC INSTRUCTION AID LANGUAGE SKILLS?

It appears from studies that there is a connection between the development of musical and language skills. Students who studied music were shown to have both better discrimination skills for perceiving language as well as better articulation skills for speaking language. It would seem, therefore, that music instruction can be used as a "pre-language" program or as a simultaneous language enhancement activity. In either case, it appears that regular music instruction in the early and middle grades may have a positive transfer effect to the development of language skills.

DOES MUSIC INSTRUCTION AID FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS?

It appears that a student's ability to discriminate different pitches has a positive effect on the learning of a foreign language. Further, a developed tonal memory, singing skills, and instrumental music instruction all appear to relate positively to a student's ability to succeed in learning a second language.

The development of pitch discrimination, tonal memory, and singing skills are common objectives and outcomes of elementary general music instruction. It appears that these fundamental music skills, once developed, also transfer to the learning of a foreign language. It further appears that learning to play a musical instrument will also increase the probability of success in learning a second language.

DOES MUSIC INSTRUCTION AID MATHEMATICS SKILLS?

Studies provide convincing support for the assertion that musical skill and mathematical skills are closely related. It seems clear that students who do well in math also do well in music.

DOES MUSIC INSTRUCTION AID OVERALL ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT?

Studies show that there is in fact a connection between academics and music. Although it cannot be said that music instruction will definitely increase

mathematical skills, or overall GPA, it certainly can be argued that music instruction is an important aspect of a well rounded education.

PSYCHOLOGICAL & PSYCHOSOCIAL EFFECTS OF MUSIC

There appears to be a relationship between creativity and music. Students who participate in music classes or pursue music as a profession may have higher creativity scores as a result of that experience. Therefore it could be concluded that music can enhance creativity.

EFFECTS OF MUSIC PARTICIPATION ON DROPOUT REDUCTION

Through music participation, at-risk students and students traditionally not considered to be at-risk tend to increase their self-awareness and develop pride and satisfaction in themselves and in their schools, classrooms, and teachers. Increased positive interactions with peers and adults, both in school settings and non-school settings and improved social adjustment skills have been reported due to music participation. Music teachers become role-models for students (Mr. Holland's Opus), music classrooms become settings in which individual creativity, trust, and interaction can be cultivated and grown, and music participation becomes the emotional outlet needed to reduce or prevent student drop-out.

SELF-ESTEEM/SELF-CONCEPT AND MUSIC PARTICIPATION

Whether the musical activity involved performance in an instrumental group or choir, whether students were singing or moving to music, whether the students were from high or low socioeconomic background, there appeared to be a very strong degree of association between participation in music programs and activities and increases in student self-esteem/self-image.

PSYCHOSOCIAL OUTCOMES AND MUSIC PARTICIPATION

Studies show that music and music programs and activities can provide for emotional and social outlets for many people as well as stimulate and promote trust and cooperativeness. The implication from these studies is that music can provide a variety of psychosocial benefits to many individuals.

FACT: High school students who participate in either music appreciation or music performance classes receive higher verbal and math SAT scores than the national average of students who take no music coursework. Students who participated in musical arts courses for four or more years in high school had verbal mean scores 32 to 35 points and math scores consistently 14 to 23 points higher than students who had not participated in any arts programs. The more years of music study the higher the gains.

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