

Inspiring a Love of Music

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The Midwest Clinic
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I. The quest to determine what strategies are being used to inspire a love for music and music-making in band and orchestra rehearsal rooms

II. The eleven questions

1. Describe what music means to you
2. What should the making of music do for young students?
3. Describe the musical experience you provided for your students in teaching.
4. What strategies do you employ to help students understand and feel/experience the “expressive power of music?”
5. Since “listening” is such a critical element in the discovery and making of music, do you have specific strategies you use to develop this important skill with students?
6. How do you select music to use in your teaching? Do you employ a criterion? If so, what are the priority factors in your evaluation and selection?
7. Name ten musical compositions you have used to create meaningful expressive music-making experiences for your students.
8. Are students offered opportunities to comment on the music selected for study, rehearsal, or performance?
9. Are students given the opportunity to comment and offer suggestions for how the music is interpreted? Provide examples.
10. What other opportunities for creativity do you provide for your students within the music-making process?
11. How do you evaluate the comprehensive musical development of your students?

III. The responses of 20 master music educators

Sarah Ball	Ed Lisk
Scott Casagrande	Steve Massey
Lafe Cook	Beth Reed
Chuck Cushinery	Jeff Scott
Roy Holder	Andy Sealy
Mike Howard	Christopher Selby
Chadwick Kamei	Kim Shuttlesworth
Alex Kaminsky	Susan Waters
Diane Koutsoulis	Alfred Watkins
Scott Laird	Darcy Vogt Williams

Frank Battisti, Conductor Emeritus, New England Conservatory of Music
How MUSIC affects young people

James Stephenson, composer
Expressing what can't be expressed through words or notation ...

Roy Holder, Director Emeritus, Lake Braddock Schools, Virginia
The selection of quality music

Beth Reed, Executive Director of the National Strings Project
The expressive power of music

Andy Sealy, Director of Bands, Hebron High School, Texas
The importance of singing, chamber ensembles, and solo repertoire

Jeff Scott, Director of Bands, Cario Middle School, South Carolina
Directing students to know what to listen for in music

Scott Rush, Director Emeritus, Wando High School, South Carolina
The collaborative process

Frank Battisti
Final thoughts

How MUSIC affects young people

Music is the “Art of Sound.” When sound is embellished by human feelings and ideas, it is transformed into music. Every sound/note produced in making music should be motivated by a desire to express a thought or a feeling. Expressive and insightful music making provokes rich spiritual, emotional, and intellectual responses in the heart and minds of performers and listeners.

Expressing what can't be expressed through words or notation

Transforming “notes” into expressive music – When a conductor looks at a score or when a player looks at a part, the performer is facing a composer’s symbolic notation of a piece. This notation is incapable of expressing the composer’s original authentic musical conception. Only through the use of imagination can the conductor/player discover and create a performance they believe expresses what the composer intended.

The selection of quality music

Composer-conductor Pierre Boulez stated that he had no interest in music that did not provoke questions—he was interested only in music that challenged and demanded something of the performer and listener. The potential for students to develop high musical taste, values, and appreciation is much greater if they perform and consume music of artistic merit. (We are what we eat— we are what we consume).

The expressive power of music

We use words such as *artistry, nuance, interpretation, style, beauty, shape, emotion, and mood* to describe expressive qualities within music. The goal of musical performance should be realizing the expressive intent of what’s “*inside the notes*”—not just *sounding* them perfectly! Insightful and expressive music-making stimulates experiences that affect both the heart and mind.

The importance of singing, chamber ensembles, and solo repertoire

As music educators, we are charged with teaching music—teaching music as an Art. Band, orchestra, chamber ensembles, jazz ensemble, choir, etc., are the mediums through which we can teach the Art of Music. However, they are not the subject—***MUSIC IS THE SUBJECT!***

Directing students to know what to listen for in music

Music is a listening art. It allows one to discover and explore new ways of expression and communication. Responding to what one hears and reacting to it creates a musical story that touches the human spirit and makes the music “come to life.”

The collaborative process

The conductor and players “commingle” their ideas and feelings about the music they recreate and play in the collaborative musical experience. This requires everyone to function in various “roles” in the formation of an interpretation/performance that represents what they believe the composer wanted and is embodied in the piece’s notation.

Abilities needed to collaborate in music making for both conductor and players:

1. Knowledge about the composer and the work to be rehearsed and performed
2. Jointly formed interpretation of the piece
3. Ability to constantly listen to each other in rehearsals and at performances
4. Ability to watch and direct eyes towards the conductor or the player who is “leading” the music making at the time
5. Ability to adapt to changing roles either as a leading or supportive voice

Collaboration is intuitive—the longer musicians perform together, the more innate the responses become. Because music can be created and re-created with different interpretations and meaning, establishing a rehearsal environment of collaboration means some musical exploration is required. Students should be free to discover music in every phrase, realizing that the notation is nothing more than ink on a page. They also should be encouraged to use descriptive words and phrases to express musical intent. The collaborative refinement of musical ideas yields epiphany moments of clarity and unity.