

Running Heading: THE STUDY OF MUSIC

The Study of Music: A Valuable Part of School Education

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### Abstract

Music has been a part of human experience since the existence of man. It has been studied throughout the ages by philosophers and students, laymen and courtesans. When America was settled, it became a part of a student's education, eventually becoming a part of the curriculum of public schools. In the twentieth century, the study of music experienced a decline in the public educational systems.

The study of music is beneficial for all students. It provides students with an opportunity to excel in school work, the benefit of learning in a constructive and positive atmosphere, and the opportunity to learn about different subjects and different cultures of the world. The study of music is an important part of every student's life and should, therefore, be included in the American school system as a required academic subject in order that each student may be provided with an opportunity to develop creatively, mentally, and socially.

## The Study of Music: A Valuable Part of School Education

The study of music has been a part of human experience since the beginning of mankind. In primitive societies, before written documents, music was used to impart cultural traditions, rituals, and history. During the Classical era, a time of philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato, a musical education was considered as important as one's education in philosophy and logic. In the Medieval period, the study of music was considered an integral part of the life of Christian believers and was most commonly used during the Church's mass rituals. The leaders of the Church believed that using music during mass would involve the common man in the Latin ceremony. During the Renaissance, the study of music became a fashionable past time for courts and schools. Music was used not only for the church, but for enjoyment. Mankind prized the beauty of music, not just the functionality of music.

The love of music, for both pleasure and functionality, was carried across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas, continuing in the education of the children of the colonists. In the past century, many symposiums and conferences have taken place regarding the importance of music education. As a result of these symposiums and conferences and the attention that they brought to music education, laws have been passed regarding the importance of music education in school systems. Today, as advancements in technology draw societies closer, and the competition in education between societies advances, American schools are concerned with test score results and how these scores reflect on the schools. Unfortunately, these standardized tests only test core subjects such as math and science, therefore leaving administrators without a reason

to include music education as a core subject. Thus, the value of a musical education has waned in most American school systems.

However, through various studies and research, it has been proven that music should hold a greater value in a student's education. Music provides children with the opportunity to develop creatively, mentally, and socially. Not only does music provide students with a creative outlet absent from most other subjects, but the study of music has been shown to have correlations with brain development and better test scores in other subject areas. The study of music provides every student with an interesting way to learn about other subjects and the cultures of the past and present that surround them. The study of music should, therefore, be an important component of every child's education in order that each child may be provided with the opportunity to develop creatively, mentally, and socially.

#### The Function of Music

According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, music is:

the art and science of combining vocal or instrumental sounds or tones in varying melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre, esp. so as to form structurally complete and emotionally expressive compositions...the sounds or tones so arranged or the arrangement of these...any rhythmic sequence of pleasing sounds, as of birds, water, etc. (Music, 1997, p. 894)

Rudolph E Radocy and J. David Boyles, authors of *Psychological Foundation of Musical Behavior*, define music as:

sounds [that] are (a) created or combined by a human being, (b) recognized as music by some group of people, and (c) serves some function which music has

come to serve for humanity. Ultimately musical sounds are those sounds that people are willing to accept as such. (1997, p. 21)

So, music is an art and a science, sounds and tones, and serves some type of function for humanity. During the twentieth century, three philosophers emerged with their own definitions of music and its functions: Alan P. Merriam, Max Kaplan, and E. Thayer Gaston. Merriam believed that music was cultural anthropological, Kaplan believed that music was sociological, and Gaston believed that music was psychological.

Merriam defined music as cultural anthropological and believed that if one knows the functions of music, then one can deduce what the functions of a culture's music was according to the culture from which it came. Those functions include:

- (a) emotional expression, (b) aesthetic enjoyment, (c) entertainment, (d) communication, (e) symbolic representation, (f) physical response, (g) enforcing conformity to social norms, (h) validation of social institutions and religious rituals, (i) contributions to the continuity and stability of culture, and (j) contributions to the integration of society. (Radocy & Boyle, 1997, p. 10)

Merriam believed that each of these functions could be determined from the music of the culture. He recognized that the way in which people use music can be very different, depending on their culture and background, but he maintained that music still serves the same functions.

Kaplan is a sociologist and musician. He believes that music is for the purpose of society and for the interaction of different societies as they learn and communicate with each other, similar to Merriam's belief that music was used in a culture for various functions. His functions of music as a social vehicle are:

(a) a form of knowledge, (b) collective possession, (c) personal experience, (d) therapy, (e) moral and symbolic force, (f) incidental commodity, (g) symbolic indicator of change, and (h) a link between the past, present, and scenarios of the future. (Radocy & Boyle, 1997, p. 13-14)

Gaston, however, focused on music as being for the individual, not society, unlike Merriam and Kaplan. His “considerations” of music included:

(a) the need for aesthetic expression and experience, (b) the influence of the cultural matrix on the mode of expression, (c) the integral relationship between music and religion, (d) music as communication, (e) music as structured reality, (f) music’s relationship to the tender emotions, (g) music as a source of gratification, and (h) music’s potency in a group. (Radocy & Boyle, 1997, p. 15)

Gaston believed that each of these considerations began at the individual level and branched out to the society around the individual, while Kaplan and Merriam believed the music began on the societal level and reached into each individual.

However, each philosopher agrees that music does affect the society and culture in which it is being used. They also agree that it is a part of every society and the natural function of every human being. Rudolf Radocy and J. David Boyle (1997) provide their own definition of music:

music is human behavior that occurs within a cultural context. Through an enculturation process, each social order develops its institutions and artifacts for perpetuation of itself, and music’s existence is one of the few things common to all cultures. (p. 25)

Therefore, the function and creation of music is, by default, human nature, and is a result of surrounding cultures. The function of music is to reflect the culture from which it came and to create a form of communication not only between cultures, but between and for individuals.

### A Brief History of Early Music Education

Music has been a part of human society from the beginning of time:

No human society has been found which has not practiced the art of music and music education. Indeed, in primitive societies music fulfills a basic function as an accessible agent of tribal tradition, aesthetic meaning, and personal expression in which all participate. (Leonhard and House, 1972, p. 46)

Evidence from archeological research and documents shows that music was a part of the most primitive societies: “The earliest evidence of music-making lies in surviving instruments and representations” (Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, 2006, p. 5). Music was used in ancient societies for work, play, and ceremonial rituals. In such primitive societies, music was used chiefly to teach the youth of the tribe the ceremony traditions and rituals in order that they may carry the tradition on to their children (Leonhard and House, 1972).

One society that focused on music and music education was the Classical Greek society. The Greeks believed that the inventors of music were the gods of their mythology and therefore, believed that it was important for them to pursue and study music, in order to become more “god-like” (Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, 2006, p. 14). By the time of the Greeks, “it [music] had plainly developed into a high art for accompanying poetry and dancing and was a special accomplishment of the priestly

class” (Leonhard and House, 1972, p. 47). In Greek education, the “original structure...was built on music and gymnastics...Music was for the soul, while gymnastics were prescribed for the body” (Leonhard and House, 1972, p. 48). Aristotle when discussing music as a part of education, stated,

about music...it is not easy to say precisely what potency it possesses...does it serve for education or amusement or entertainment?...there is a form of education in which boys should be trained not because it is useful or necessary but as being liberal and noble...the point is proved by music. (Leonhard and House, 1972, p. 48)

Not only did Aristotle support music as a part of education, but great philosophers of the fourth century B.C. respected and valued music as a part of education. Both Aristoxenus and Pythagoras wrote theories about music, influencing the study of music.

The study of music became separated from poetry with the rise of the Roman Empire. Virtuosity as a musician became the goal of studying music. Simple melodies disappeared and larger ensembles with complex instrumentation became fashionable. Musical mathematics was studied for its own sake in the secondary schools (Leonhard and House, 1972). In Rome, music education became an “intellectual discipline.” The philosophers of the Classical and Roman era considered the study of music to be an important part of a student’s education. Over time, “a curriculum gradually evolved, based on writings by Plato and Aristotle, in which music was bracketed with arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy” (Leonhard and House, 1972, p. 49). These works consider the study of music to be a part of the quadrivium, or the “upper level” of the “seven liberal arts” (Leonhard and House, 1972, p. 49).



By the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church had risen to power. With its rise to power, the Catholic Church took over formal education, including the study of music (Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, 2006). As a result, most music that was studied during the Middle Ages was music written specifically for the Church.

One great philosopher and theorist emerged during the Middle Ages. In the sixth century, Boethius, “the most revered authority on music in the Middle Ages,” wrote a work called *De institutione musica*, or “The Fundamentals of Music” (Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, 2006, p. 41). Boethius compiled his work from several resources. He considered music as “a science of numbers, and numerical ratios and proportions [that] determine intervals, consonances, scales, and tuning” (Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, 2006, p. 41). Boethius’s work, along with ancient manuscripts that were collected during the Middle Ages, was used as the music curriculum in cathedral and monastery schools during the Middle Ages (Leonhard and House, 1972).

By the time of the Renaissance, a different philosophy of life had emerged called humanism. This philosophy no longer focused on God as the center of life, but man as the center of life. With this new view of man, the view of music shifted as well. Music became “prized for its intrinsic beauty and worth and for being naturally expressive of religious feelings” (Leonhard and House, 1972, p. 51). With this new view of music, the study of music became popular in both the court schools and common schools, with the focus no longer on creating music for the church, but creating music that expressed human emotions and thoughts. As music continued to develop through the Renaissance, music education continued to advance in Europe and, with the discovery of the Americas, across the Atlantic (Leonhard and House, 1972, p. 52).

### A Brief History of Music Education in America

As America was settled by the colonists, they brought their cultural traditions of music across the Atlantic. Music was transmitted to younger generations through traditions such as church singing and singing schools. Although public schools were established fairly early in American history, music as a part of education was not established until the early 1800s. On August 28, 1838, music was established as a part of public education curriculum (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 4). Lowell Mason, an American educator and philosopher, was the main catalyst for the inclusion of the study of music in schools. As a philosopher, Mason established his own philosophy of music, which, summarized, was as follows<sup>1</sup>: 1. the purpose of the study of music was to develop “musically intelligent adults.” 2. Music being used to study in the schools should be quality music. 3. “The process used in teaching is of greater importance and more lasting value than the product of that teaching.” 4. Music education must begin with children, not young adults. 5. The study of music develops all of the senses and contributes to the “total development of the human being,” this belief harkening back to the ancient Greek belief that studying music contributed to the development of the soul. 6. “To achieve in music, work is necessary.” 7. “Practical experience must come before theory; and theory must grow out of that practical experience.” 8. Most people are able to read and understand music, and this should be a goal (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 7).

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix for full text.

Many of Mason's ideas stemmed from past philosophies of music, many coming from the Greek philosophies. His belief that music was to create intelligent adults derived from the Greek philosophy that music was for nurturing the soul. His belief that music should begin with young children also stemmed from Greek philosophy. Some of his philosophies of music would later be reflected in twentieth century research on the study of music in public education.

Mason's philosophy of a music education influenced the role of music in the public school systems of America. Along with his collaborators at the Boston Academy of Music, several practices for the study of music were established. They were as follows:

vocal music as the basis for all music education; a recognition of the limitations of the child voice; the principle of experience before abstraction; a sequential approach to elementary note reading; the use of tonic *solfa* for melodic reading; an approach to rhythm reading based on patterns rather than on simple note durations; the use of beating time and of body movement for teaching rhythm.

(Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 9)

Based on these ideas, the instruction of music spread throughout the country, first being introduced in the upper grades and then in the primary grades (Leonhard and House, 1972). By 1900, many of the schools of America had established music as a regular academic subject (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001). With the acceptance of music as an academic subject and as America became more familiar with the varieties of music available, Americans began to enjoy public concerts and the artists from Europe who toured and performed in America. As these foreign musicians came to

America, some chose to settle in America, creating a need for orchestras and bands in which to perform (Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, 2006). As orchestras and bands were formed, a demand for American-born musicians grew to continue the traditions of European music in America, thus creating a need for the schools to educate and produce able musicians who could perform alongside the foreign musicians (Leonhard and House, 1972). Therefore, the study of music as a part of education continued in American public schools as the demand for musicians increased.

Music education continued to be a part of American academics through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, as America approached the twenty-first century, developments in technology created stronger communication connections between societies. With these stronger connections, competition in core subjects of education with other societies developed. As a result, the study of music declined in public education. As the study of music in education declined, music educators and musicians around the country began to express concern.

In September of 1959, a conference called the Woods Hole Conference was held in Massachusetts. Although this conference did not directly address the study of music in schools, but rather addressed the declining emphasis of the study of science in schools, it did influence the study of music. This conference brought many nationwide curriculum studies and became the inspiration for many changes in music education, such as the Young Composer's Project and the Yale Seminar (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001).

As a result of the Woods Hole Conference, the Young Composers Project was begun in schools. In this project, composers entered the schools and became music

teachers. The success from this project led to the establishment in 1962 of the Contemporary Music Project for Creativity in Music Education, which “helped to broaden the scope of music education by encouraging teachers to utilize a synthesis of performance, analysis, and composition in all instructional activities in music...[it] also encouraged teachers to use music from all periods and from all cultures both in performing groups and in general music classes,” (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 61).

In June of 1963, another important seminar took place at Yale University, called the Yale Seminar. This seminar focused on problems in contemporary music education and established two areas that needed work: 1. music materials, and 2. music performance. During the seminar, six criticisms of the music materials being used in schools were established. Summarized, they were<sup>2</sup>: 1. The music materials used in the schools were “of appalling quality.” 2. “It is constricted in scope,” meaning that even works considered “classic” were not included in the educational materials. 3. The music materials being used in the schools did not interest the students, but, instead, stunted their learning due to disinterest. 4. Authentic works were distorted by arrangements, poor editions, and “tasteless parodies” so that the students were not learning the original, quality music. 5. The works being chosen for the classroom were limited by the skills of the teacher and were not chosen to improve listening or sight reading skills. Students were not being exposed to true accompaniment, and were learning to rely on “sing-along” accompaniment. 6. In vocal music, “more attention [was] often paid to the subject matter of the text, both in choice and arrangement of material, than to the place of a song

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix for full text.

as music in the educational scheme” (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 13-14).

In response to the problem in music performance in schools, the Yale Seminar determined that while the performance standards in music programs were high, “music programs in the schools often concentrated on performance drill and neglected activities which promote musical understanding and musical growth” (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 14). In response, the seminar proposed ten recommendations for the schools to use to improve music education.<sup>3</sup> Some of the highlights of these recommendations included the goal of a music curriculum should be focused on the “development of musicality” in several areas, such as performance, creativity, and listening. This recommendation reflected Lowell Mason’s belief that the study of music should produce “musically intelligent adults” (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 7). They also recommended that school music repertoire should include the best of Western and non-Western music from all periods and that the music curriculum should include a guided music listening for kindergarten to senior high. They also suggested that professional musicians should be encouraged to enter the schools to develop the musicality of the students and that the school music program should use the music resources available in the community. Also, music educators should take advantage of technology in the classroom, establishing a national media system. (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001).

However, because not many professional music educators took part in the Yale Seminar, it took a longer amount of time for the recommendations to be implemented in the American school systems. One result that was implemented early after the seminar in

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix for full text.

response to the Yale Seminar's declaration that the music being used in the school was of "appalling quality," was the establishment of the Juilliard Repertory Project, which was begun by the Juilliard School of Music. This project collected a "repertory of authentic and meaningful music materials to be used in school music programs. The purpose of the Juilliard Repertory Project was to research and compile the highest quality music for students at all levels of instruction" (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 15).

In 1965, the Manhattanville Music Curriculum Program was begun: "The objectives of the program were to develop a music curriculum and related materials for a sequential music program for primary grades through high school" (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 16). The program produced a "comprehensive curriculum in music for Grades 3 through 12" (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 16). This program encouraged the experiment of environmental and musical sounds so that the students would discover the nature of sound, and thus how sound functions in music, and the function of music itself (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001).

In 1967, the Tanglewood Symposium took place. A joint effort of the Music Educators National Conference, the Berkshire Music Center, the Theodore Presser Foundation, and the School of Fine and Applied Arts of Boston University, this symposium focused on "Music in American Society." Eight declarations for improvements in music education were made during the symposium, many of which related to the same recommendations made during the Yale Seminar.<sup>4</sup> New suggestions included:

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix for full text.

music serves best when its integrity as an art is maintained...schools and colleges should provide adequate time for music programs ranging from preschool to adult or continuing educations...instruction in the arts should be a general and important part of education in the senior high school...greater emphasis should be placed on helping the individual student to fulfill his needs, goals, and potentials...and programs of teacher education must be expanded and improved to provide music teachers who are specially equipped to teach high school courses in the history and literature of music, courses in the humanities and related arts, as well as teachers equipped to work with the very young, with adults, with the disadvantaged, and with the emotionally disturbed (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 17)

Some of the recommendations from the Tanglewood Symposium were similar to recommendations made during the Yale Seminar. These included the recommendation: music of all periods, styles, forms, and cultures belongs to the curriculum. The musical repertory should be expanded to involve music of our time in its rich variety, including currently popular teenage music and avant-garde music, American folk music, and the music of other cultures (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 17)

This recommendation was similar to the recommendation made by the Yale Seminar that school music repertoire should include the best of Western and non-Western music from all periods and that the music curriculum should include a guided music listening for kindergarten to senior high.



The Tanglewood Symposium suggested that “the music education profession must contribute its skills, proficiencies, and insights toward assisting in the solution of urgent social problems such as those in the inner city or other areas with culturally deprived individuals” (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 17). This idea is similar to the recommendation made by the Yale Seminar that professional musicians should be encouraged to enter the schools to develop the musicality of the students and that the school music program should use the music resources available in the community, therefore creating a “mentor” program with the community and the professional musicians to positively influence the students.

The Tanglewood Symposium also made the suggestion that “developments in educational technology, educational television, programmed instruction, and computer-assisted instruction should be applied to music study and research” (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 17). This suggestion was similar to one made in the Yale Seminar that music educators should take advantage of technology in the classroom, establishing a national media system.

In an effort to meet the recommendations of the 1967 Tanglewood Symposium, the Goals and Objectives (GO) Project was begun in 1969 by the Music Educators National Conference (MENC). This project established several committees to evaluate and improve current music educational programs. Some of the areas that were focused on in the committees included musical behaviors, inner city music education, logistics, learning processes, music enrichment for national life, and music of non-Western cultures. By 1970, the goals and objectives of the GO Project were officially adopted by MENC. These same goals and objectives became the “precursors of music education

reform, resulting in the development of the National Standards for Music adopted by MENC in 1994” (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 18). These National Standards for Music later became part of *The National Standards for Arts Education*. These standards detail what American youth should “know and be able to accomplish in music, dance, theater, and the visual arts” (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 18). The GO project led to the development in 1994 of the National Standards for Music. “The standards developed with the underlying belief that all students deserve access to the rich education and understanding that the arts provide” (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 23).

#### The Decline of Music Education

In the past twentieth century and in the present century, the study of music has seen a decline in public school systems:

One quarter (25 percent) of all principals reported decreased instructional time for the arts, with only 8 percent reporting an increase in this area. One third (33 percent) of all principals anticipate further decreases in arts instructional time, while just 7 percent anticipate increases. (Zastrow, 2004, p. 1)

This lack of instructional time is due to a decreased value of music education in some administrators eyes. There are several reasons for the lost value of music education. One reason is the development of the use of standardized testing to compare and contrast academic progress. Because it is difficult to perform standardized tests on the subject of music to produce comparable scores, the value of the study of music has lessened in public school systems.

Another reason is that music programs, rather than bringing in revenue for the school systems, typically absorb funds from the school systems. Music programs have declined in schools due to the high cost of music programs that rarely show any visible results of academic progress. Choral and band programs require enough money for quality instruments, music, and equipment (music stands, chairs, etc). So, administrators are faced with the choice to fund academic programs that will provide visual results (standardized test scores) of academic improvement or fund a subject that is virtually impossible to perform standardized tests upon and will inevitably drain money from the school budget.

As conferences and symposiums have taken place across the country, discussing the value of a music education, the focus of educators and government officials have returned to the study of music, questioning whether or not a music education is important and beneficial to students and how it may be reinforced within the public school systems. Governor Mike Huckabee, of Arkansas, stated:

Arts education is critical to the development of skills necessary to the future of America. It is time for a creativity revolution in America's schools; arts education must be revived and strengthened for the good of our students and our country. (Huckabee, 2006, p. 1)

In order for the study of music to be considered an important part of a student's education, it must be functional and beneficial for the students and the school. The earliest music used by man was for its functionality within a society. The Greeks believed that the study of music was important to a student's education because it helped to "build citizens of character, stamina, and grace" (Leonhard and House, 1972, p. 48).

Renaissance philosophers believed music to be an outlets of emotional expression, and America's educational forefathers believed that the study of music was important for developing "musically intelligent adults" (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 7). Today, the study of music must become functional and useful to a student's education and to American society:

Indeed most music is performed for the express purpose of achieving aims wherein the aesthetic is not the primary goal. The *functional music* is far older and more abundant than music played or composed for aesthetic purposes. All primitive music is functional music... [and] even today a majority of the reasons given for school music ascribe to its functional goals. (Radoocy and Boyle, 1997, p. 31)

With the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the government has slowly encouraged the development of arts programs, realizing the importance that they hold for the students of America. According to Dr. Susan Sclafani, an assistant secretary in the U.S. Department of Education, "schools must include the arts as part of the curriculum if students are going to reach the high levels of achievement required by the NCLB [No Child Left Behind] policy" (2005, p. 1). Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones of Ohio stated in an International Music Products Association press release:

In today's climate of high stakes testing, it's important to recognize that skills learned through studying music translate to skills that help students succeed in life. Music education aids critical thinking and more. I believe it imperative that we recognize its importance in the lives of our children, and strive to

make school based music education available to all of America's youth.

(School Music Matters, 2006, p. 1)

Educators and government officials, agree that the study of music is an important part of a student's education. However, in order for school systems to implement better music programs in the schools, there must be reasons to support the study of music in schools.

### The Value of a Music Education

Psychologists agree that the study of music is important for students. Howard Gardner, a cognitive psychologist who developed the theory of multiple intelligences "suggested...that, while children may demonstrate greater strength in one of the seven intelligences, all children possess musical abilities that can be nurtured through instruction" (Campbell and Scott-Kasner, 2006, p. 7). Students, including young children, have the capacity to experience music and its benefits: "Where general music education has been imaginatively tried out it has been proven that children have an inherent disposition to respond to many aspects of musical art" (Sunderman, 1972, p. 144).

A music education is vitally important for every student for several reasons. The study of music is helpful in developing student's brain development and test scores. The study of music provides every student with an easy and interesting way to learn about other subjects. Studying music also provides a way for students to experience cultures of the past and present. Studying music provides students with the opportunity to creatively express emotions and thoughts.

By studying the influence of music on students and their academic performance, some correlations have been found between improved academic performances and students who study music. “The arts are, and have always been, essential for developing and sustaining [the] mind...” (Swanwick, 1988, p. 50). According to Reverend Enola Pirog, author of “The Power of Music,” “recent evidence hints that...hearing music may increase brain development and IQs in fetuses and infants” (Pirog, 2006, p. 42). A study performed by E. Glenn Schellenburg of the University of Toronto, “lends support to the idea that musical training may do more for kids than simply teach them their scales—it exercises parts of the brain useful in mathematics, spatial intelligence and other intellectual pursuits” (Mundell, 2004, p. 1).

A study performed by Clifford K. Madsen and Jere L. Forsythe, titled the “effect of contingent music listening on increases of mathematical responses,” showed that “music listening can serve as a positive reinforcer for increasing students’ performances on non-musical academic activities” (Madsen, Greer, & Madsen, 1975, p. 25).

According to Danny Rocks, president of the American Music Conference “recent scientific research has drawn attention to the positive connection that music making has on developing the brain and improving learning abilities—especially in the area of critical thinking” (Rocks, 2006, p. 1). The results from these studies prove that students who study music experience benefits in other academic subjects, such as math, and subjects that require critical thinking, and spatial intelligence. Therefore, students should be given the opportunity to study music, not only because music is enjoyable, but because there are correlations between improved test and academic performance and the study of music.

Not only does the study of music help to improve academic performance, but it also involves other academic subjects. “The study of music serves as a mental discipline which expedites the learning of other subjects” (Radocy and Boyle, 1997, p. 60). According to Samuel Hope, the director of the National Association of Schools of Music, “the intellectual functions of art, science, history, and philosophy come together with the knowledge, skills, subject matters, and purposes of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts” (Campbell and Scott-Kasner, 2006, p. 6-7). For example, when studying science, examining music can become a “specialized science” in which the “qualities of sound, acoustics, and timbre” may be studied. The study of music can also involve mathematics, especially when studying rhythms and time signatures, which involve not only a knowledge of musical notes and timing, but mathematics in order to determine the appropriate lengths of measures and rhythms. The study of music also involves history since music has been a part of man’s history from the beginning of time. It can be used to reflect on historical time periods, since the study and composition of music is influenced by the different historical time periods. Teachers can also use music to study the geography of the world by studying music from different cultures and countries and discussing where the countries are and what qualities about the country’s geography may have attributed to the culture’s music (Yoh, 1996).

Because music is universal, it is a part of every culture: “All children have equal rights to knowledge of their cultural heritage, including music; to the development of their aural, artistic, expressive, and musical sensibilities; and to familiarity with music beyond the commercially available and currently popular” (Campbell and Scott-Kasner, 2006, p. 7). This does not mean that every culture must be studied in the music

classroom. But, it does mean that the music of different cultures should be included in the music classroom to expose children to their cultures and the cultures of those around them. By studying music in the academic classroom, students are exposed to cultures around the world, cultures which they might not experience otherwise. The Yale Seminar and, later, the Tanglewood Symposium both encouraged studying different cultures in the classroom: “It is through the study of the music of various cultures that we learn and gain a respect for the history of the various cultures and the contributions that they have made to society” (Reed, 2005, p. 69). By studying different cultures in music, students learn about people groups, creating a powerful common denominator between the students and the different people groups of the world:

Given that music is embraced by people everywhere for its unique qualities, to deny it a solid place in curricular studies would be a terrible mistake. Music is too powerful to be excluded from children’s lives... (Campbell and Scott-Kasner, 2006, p. 3)

In today’s society, where cultures are quickly becoming intertwined through technology, the study of music and the music of different cultures is very important for students in order that they may experience and gain an understanding of the different cultures of the world: “The visual, traditional, and performing arts provide a variety of lenses for examining the cultures and artistic contributions of our nation and others around the world” (Volk, 1998, p. 117). Both the Yale Seminar and the Tanglewood Symposium also made suggestions that schools include different forms of technology in the music classroom to provide students more access to diverse cultures.



Studying the music of different cultures has proven to be beneficial to students: “Through the ages music instruction has provided children with skills for their musical expressions and knowledge of their cultural heritage(s)” (Campbell and Scott-Kasner, 2006, p. 12). Every culture has its own form of music and uses its music to carry on traditions and values to its children. For example, the popular American tune “Yankee Doodle” allows a teacher to instruct students in the history behind the song and instills a sense of pride in the American Revolution in students. This is just one example of the way in which cultural music can be used to instruct children in cultural values. Therefore, not only studying music is important, but studying multicultural music is important in the academic classroom: “While the study of music and the arts is critical to the core of our education, it is the study of multicultural music and the arts that places us at the core of education for all regardless of race, religion, creed, or nationality” (Reed, 2005, p. 69).

In response to the concerns expressed about the decline of music in the academic classroom, the government passed a resolution stating the benefits that students receive from studying music:

On April 5, 2006, the U.S. House of Representatives (with the Senate concurring) unanimously passed House Concurrent Resolution 355. The bipartisan resolution states that, in addition to many other benefits, school music programs help to: enrich the academic environment; decrease student involvement in drugs, gangs, or alcohol; increase school attendance; and reach inner city students who have limited music education options outside of the school setting. (School Music Matters, 2006, p. 1)

Studies, such as the one performed by Clifford K. Madsen and Jere L. Forsythe, have shown a correlation between the study of music and academic performance, and the study of music teaches students about other subjects and cultures, but, in addition to these, the study of music also provides students with a creative outlet in which to express their thoughts and emotions. In 1967, the Tanglewood Symposium declared that “the music education profession must contribute its skills, proficiencies, and insights toward assisting in the solution of urgent social problems such as those in the inner city or other areas with culturally deprived individuals” (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 17). The officials who met at this symposium recognized that the study of music is beneficial to students and helps to keep them out the social problems found in the inner city, such as gangs. Too many children today are finding emotional outlets in gangs and fighting to express their thoughts and emotions and guarantee that their emotions are being heard. Music educators have the opportunity to influence their students for good. According to Darlene Vlasek, chair of MTNA’s State Presidents Advisory Council, a teacher, especially a music teacher, has the opportunity to positively influence their students:

The one-on-one or small group relationship we have with our students allows us to influence them constructively, be a positive role model, teach them how to accomplish large tasks successfully, and establish and achieve realistic goals, develop responsibility and time management, and challenge their critical, creative, and intuitive thinking skills. (Vlasek, 2006, p. 1)

In addition to the ability to influence positively students in music classes such as choir or band or music appreciation by being a positive role model, music educators are

able to teach students how to be successful, achieve their goals, and are able teach them to be responsible and creative:

It [the study of music] demands and encourages discipline...[and]aims to develop wholesome ideas of conduct...music education contributes to the development of citizenship by helping to produce an integrated personality; by giving students an opportunity to experience the democratic way of life which music groups demand... (Sunderman, 1972, p. 213)

Music teachers teach a subject of which there is no equal in the educational system, because no other academic subject in the school systems is able to utilize positively “the gregarious nature of man” (Sunderman, 1972, p. 143). The study of music provides students with the opportunity to enrich their lives and value “human living.” The study of music teaches students how to interact with each other and their surrounding societies in a positive way: “Group activities in music in both junior and senior high schools offer some of the most effective ways of developing cooperation, discipline, personal initiative, individual responsibility, and fellowship...[it] aims to develop good work habits” (Sunderman, 1972, p. 213). By studying music, students are provided with a positive role model and a positive atmosphere in which to learn how to interact with each other and their surrounding society.

### Conclusion

Music has been a part of mankind since the beginning of time. It has been studied throughout the ages by philosophers and students, laymen and courtesans. When America was settled, it became a part of a student’s education, eventually becoming a part of the curriculum of public schools. However, in the twentieth century, the study of

music has experienced a decline in importance within public educational systems. Since the 1950s, conferences and symposiums have met in order to discuss various issues, these issues being the decline of music education in the schools, what can be done to end the decline, and why music is an important part of a student's education.

Music is an important part of a student's education for several reasons. Every student, despite their IQ level, has the capacity to experience music. Correlations have been found between the study of music and the development of the brain and the improvement of academic progress. Music is one of the few subjects with the ability to involve other subjects within its bound and be used in other subjects as a teaching aid. The study of music teaches students about the different cultures of the world, especially the cultures directly around and affecting them. The study of music provides students with a constructive atmosphere in which to enrich themselves with positive examples and healthy group activities.

Therefore, the study of music is beneficial for all students. Without the study of music, students are not given the opportunity to excel in school work, understand other subjects, learn about different cultures of the world, or benefit from learning in a constructive and positive atmosphere. The study of music is an important part of every student's life and should, therefore, be included in the American school system as a required academic subject in order that each student may be provided with an opportunity to develop creatively, mentally, and socially.

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## Appendix

### Lowell Mason's Philosophy of Music Education:

1. The purpose of music in the schools is to create musically intelligent adults rather than to train professional musicians.
2. The quality of music used in teaching is of vital importance. Only music of artistic value should be used in the music class.
3. The process used in teaching is of greater importance and more lasting value than the product of that teaching.
4. To be most effective, music education must begin with the young child.
5. Music is a discipline involving all the senses and contributing to the total development of the human being.
6. To achieve in music, work is necessary.
7. Practical experience must come before theory; and theory must grow out of that practical experience.
8. Musical literacy is both a possible and desirable goal for most people.

(Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 7)

### Six Criticisms of Music Materials from the Yale Seminar, 1963

1. It is of appalling quality, representing little of the heritage of significant music.
2. It is constricted in scope. Even the classics of Western music—such as the great works of Bach, Mozart, [and] Beethoven—do not occupy the central place they should in singing, playing, and listening. Non-Western music, early Western music, and certain forms of jazz, popular, and folk music have been almost altogether neglected.
3. It stunts the growth of musical feeling because it is so



often not sufficiently interesting to enchant or involve a child to whom it is presumed to be accessible. Children's potentials are constantly underestimated.

4. It is corrupted by arrangements, touched-up editions, erroneous transcriptions, and tasteless parodies to such an extent that authentic work is rare. A whole range of songbook arrangements, weak derivative semipopular children's pieces, and a variety of "educational" recordings containing music of similar value are to be strongly condemned as "pseudo-music." To the extent artificial music is taught to children, to that extent are they invited to hate it. There is no need to use artificial or pseudo-music in any of its forms. 5. Songs are chosen and graded more on the basis of the limited technical skills of classroom teachers than the needs of the children or the ultimate goal of improved hearing and listening skills. This is one of the causes of the proliferation of feeble piano and autoharp accompaniments and of "sing-along" recordings. 6. A major fault of the repertory of vocal music stems from the desire to appeal to the least common denominator and to offend the least possible number. More attention is often paid to the subject matter of the text, both in choice and arrangement of material, than to the place of a song as music in the educational scheme. Texts are banal and lack regional inflection.

(Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 13-14)

Ten recommendations for the improvement of music education from the Yale Seminar, 1963:

1. The basic goal of a K-12 music curriculum should be on the development of musicality through performance, movement, musical creativity, ear training, and listening. Creativity in this case includes original compositions by students. 2.

The school music repertory should be broadened to include the best of Western and non-Western music of all periods. 3. A continuous and sequential program of guided music listening for K-12 should be developed. 4. Performance experiences should include ensembles for which authentic and varied repertory has been developed. 5. Advanced theory and literature courses should be available for students with high musical aptitude and achievement. 6. Musicians, composers, and scholars should be encouraged to go into the schools to help develop musicality in young people. 7. School music programs should take advantage of community music resources. 8. Opportunities for advanced music study, which exist in major cities in America, should be made available to all talented students in the country. Such a program should help establish a national network of schools or academies of music, art, drama, and dance throughout the country. 9. Films, recordings, and television should be used more in music education. A national education media system in music should be established. 10. Through regional workshops and clinics, programs should be initiated to improve teaching skills and techniques. (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 15)

Eight declarations for improvement in music education from the Tanglewood Symposium, 1967:

1. Music serves best when its integrity as an art is maintained.
2. Music of all periods, styles, forms, and cultures belongs to the curriculum. The musical repertory should be expanded to involve music of our time in its rich variety, including currently popular teenage music and avant-garde music, American folk

music, and the music of other cultures. 3. Schools and colleges should provide adequate time for music programs ranging from preschool to adult or continuing education. 4. Instruction in the arts should be a general and important part of education in the senior high school. 5. Developments in educational technology, educational television, programmed instruction, and computer-assisted instruction should be applied to music study and research. 6. Greater emphasis should be placed on helping the individual student to fulfill his needs, goals, and potentials. 7. The music education profession must contribute its skills, proficiencies, and insights toward assisting in the solution of urgent social problems such as those in the inner city or other areas with culturally deprived individuals. 8. Programs of teacher education must be expanded and improved to provide music teachers who are specially equipped to teach high school courses in the history and literature of music, courses in the humanities and related arts. As well as teachers equipped to work with the very young, with adults, with the disadvantaged, and with the emotionally disturbed. (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, and Woods, 2001, p. 17)