

Extramusical Skills in The Music Classroom.

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Historically, music skills have never been the only skills taught in a music classroom. Teachers have often used the inherent attributes of music to offer students a variety of opportunities to practice many of the skills they need to resolve life's daily challenges successfully. The ability to commit to a project or goal, to understand how personal success is often tied to the success of others, and to realize that there are many ways to measure and experience success are all examples of skills that enhance a students' ability to achieve objectives in both the music classroom and elsewhere. In education, such skills are referred to as societal and emotional skills.

For the most part, these skills are a subtext to the music curriculum. Checking our colleague's lesson plans, we would rarely, if ever, find a lesson marked "teach students skills needed to get along." But, it has become increasingly beneficial for music teachers to design lesson strategies that include appropriate emotional and societal skills to enable students to succeed in the music classroom.[1] As one music colleague explained, "My job is not to teach only music; my job is to teach about life through music."

Societal and emotional skills play an influential role in the music classroom, a role that has become increasingly complex. For students and teachers to be successful, it is important to understand how societal and emotional skills, called extramusical skills in the music classroom context, can be used to positively influence situational outcomes. To facilitate the use of extramusical skills, teachers may benefit from a discussion of the history, theory, research findings, and projected application of these skills.

Social Interactions and Learning

Teachers have always taught and students have always learned from two curriculums. The first, the cognitive curriculum, is explicit; it is outlined on paper and developed into a set of formal teaching plans. The second curriculum is what has been called the "hidden curriculum." This refers to all of the social and societal learning that students acquire in their day-to-day school experiences. One approach to promoting the hidden curriculum is to weave societal expectations into the cognitive curriculum by way of class rules and classroom management strategies.[2] Teachers provide students with the rules of acceptable classroom conduct and then go about constructing lessons that provide cognitive interchange. If the students have internalized the appropriate social skills through their daily life experiences, learning takes place; if not, learning suffers.

Another informal approach to the hidden curriculum is to communicate it through the overt value that a school places on various societal attributes. For example, if a school demonstrates a value for fair play, students are more likely to learn the tenets of playing fair. Similarly, in a school that rewards high standards, students are more likely to demonstrate precision and accuracy. If older students are used to model service, younger students will be more willing to serve.

Due to an increasing awareness of the dramatic consequences of a student's lack of skills needed to resolve daily challenges constructively and the recognition that many of a student's most profound lessons are learned, knowingly or unknowingly, through direct interactions with teachers and other students, the hidden curriculum's potential is gaining greater public awareness.[3] Motivated by findings in recent scientific research, an increased perception that many students lack the skills to manage their feelings and emotions, and the belief that many students have not been taught responsible behaviors, policy makers are beginning to promote school curriculums that formally address the societal and emotional skills necessary for achieving success.[4]

Emotional Intelligence

Teachers and parents have traditionally nurtured different domains of learning. The primary responsibility of teachers has been to educate the head while parents have been responsible for teaching the heart. Educators have been expected to emphasize formal cognitive learning experiences--experiences that come from carefully designed lessons that organize knowledge into bodies of meaningfully interconnected facts and generalizations and attend to rational learning, which is measured by the IQ (intelligence quotient).

Parents, on the other hand, have been expected to guide the child through life experiences in a way that nurtures a child's understanding of emotional feelings and appropriate societal behaviors. The traditional charge has been for parents to teach their children how to handle feelings (i.e., anger, sadness, jealousy, failure, and success) in an emotionally healthy manner. Daniel Goleman, author of the book Emotional Intelligence and a past senior editor of Psychology Today, refers to these emotional and societal skills as the emotional quotient (EQ).

In Emotional Intelligence, Goleman argues for an increased awareness of the relationship between IQ and EQ. "In a sense we have two brains, two minds and two different kinds of intelligence: rational and emotional. How we do in life is determined by both--it is not just IQ, but emotional intelligence that [also] matters. ...When these partners interact well, emotional intelligence rises as does intellectual ability." [5] Emotional intelligence includes a wide range of skills. For example, self-awareness is an EQ skill that consists of the ability to see yourself objectively, in such a manner that you can recognize what you are feeling and know the relationship between your thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Personal decision making, another EQ skill, requires you to examine personal actions and to understand the consequences. Included in this skill is knowing whether a thought or feeling is ruling a decision and applying these insights to issues that could be personally destructive. Self-acceptance is an emotional intelligence skill that teaches you to define yourself in a positive light, to identify personal strengths and weaknesses, and to laugh at yourself when appropriate. Other societal and emotional skills include managing feelings such as fear, anxiety, anger, and sadness; handling stress by learning to use exercise and relaxation methods; communicating by sending positive messages; cooperating in building group dynamics by learning when and how to lead and when and how to follow; fighting fairly, resolving conflicts, and learning to compromise by using the win/win model (a model wherein both parties experience satisfactory results); and taking personal responsibility for your actions and commitments. [6] Yet, in a large number of cases, for numerous reasons, some children have apparently failed to develop these and other societal skills needed to attain a sufficient level of EQ, or emotional literacy. [7]

Many people agree that the number of those who lack the skills necessary for navigating through today's complex society successfully is growing. Without intervention, the situation is not likely to improve. The place where society has the best chance of reversing its present direction is in the school because the school provides a place where basic lessons in societal and emotional behavioral skills, which students may fail to get otherwise, can still be nurtured and developed. [8]

For nearly two decades, school personnel have recognized the importance of instituting programs to enhance students' social, emotional, and physical well-being and to prevent drug abuse, unwanted teen pregnancy, AIDS, suicide, violence, and school dropout increases. Although the programs have been well-intentioned, they have produced limited success because they address these issues as isolated and unconnected. Too much emphasis is placed on the specific knowledge about a specific problem, and too little emphasis is placed on the skills needed to confront the underlying causes. Schools are now beginning to develop proactive and comprehensive programs that address the issues that affect emotional literacy. [9] It was to this end that CASEL was established.

CASEL, the Collaboration for the Advancement of Social and Emotional Learning, was founded in 1994 by an international network of educators, scientists, and concerned citizens.

The purpose of CASEL has been to develop a clearinghouse, a forum for the exchange of ideas to promote effective solutions to the societal problems facing schools. Through research, scholarship, and networking, CASEL participants seek to foster and disseminate important findings that can affect students' societal and emotional skills in a positive manner. [10]

Experiences that reinforce desirable behaviors are key to the development of appropriate emotional and societal skills. Some would argue that formalized instruction in emotional literacy should be limited to the domain of teachers specifically trained to teach emotional literacy skills, like school counselors or school administrators. Certainly these are the primary groups of people on which success depends, but the scope of emotional illiteracy is so pervasive in our society that students need to have opportunities to learn and practice emotional literacy skills in as many classrooms as possible.

If emotional literacy affects the quality of our lives, it is reasonable to suggest that many of those same skills affect the degree of success a student experiences in the classroom. By pinpointing and relating specific emotional literacy skills to the music domain, the music discipline becomes a conduit through which learning experiences can be designed to develop and enhance students' EQ. According to Jack Taylor, Nancy Berry, and Kimberly Walls, authors of *Music and Students at Risk: Creative Solutions for a National Dilemma*, the music classroom constitutes a uniquely appropriate setting in which to teach extramusical skills. [11]

[Extramusical Skills](#)

A growing body of literature supports the hypothesis that extramusical skills affect a student's ability to achieve success in the music performance classroom.[12] The effect of extramusical skills is perceived to be so strongly related to success in the music classroom that extramusical skills such as attitude, responsibility, participation, and attendance have long been used as criteria for grading students.[13] In his article "Imparting Values: A Challenge for Educators," Hoyt LeCroy lists integrity, self-esteem, tolerance, and civic responsibility as extramusical skills that could be taught and assessed through the use of continuous or additive rating scales.[14] Attentiveness was the focus of a study by Clifford Madsen and J. M. Alley, whose findings indicated that attentiveness, an extramusical skill, could be taught through reinforcement measures and that the ability to demonstrate such learned behaviors could be measured.[15]

These findings are, no doubt, not surprising to teachers, parents, or students. Research indicates that students and parents are aware of the multifaceted dimensions of the music classroom. John Hylton conducted a study to record the perceptions of 673 high school choral students on the extramusical dimensions of high school choral singing. His results indicated that achievement, musical artistry, integrative associations, communicative emotions, psychological factors, and spiritual factors were perceived by the students to be important insights gained through participating in choral singing.[16] Timothy J. Sharer conducted a study to assess parental beliefs concerning perceived and desired outcomes for high school choral students; his results showed that parents regarded extramusical skills as an important and valued result of their children's high school musical experience.[17] In addition, the data suggested that the parents in this study (590 parents from eight Nebraska school districts) were interested in seeing an increase in the development of extramusical skills in the high school music experience.

If musical skills are affected by a student's ability to demonstrate extramusical skills successfully and if certain students in classrooms and performance ensembles lack the EQ necessary to achieve success, music teachers may find it beneficial to design music curriculums that include formal learning experiences that teach such behavioral skills. A condensed and selected list of desirable extramusical skills includes:

- communicating in a positive verbal and nonverbal manner
- seeking out positive involvement with peers
- cooperating gracefully
- supporting others' rights to express ideas and to succeed
- striving for personal achievement and engaging in academic challenges
- attending to class in a dependable and responsible manner
- controlling impulses, delaying gratification, and accepting the consequence of personal behavior.[18]

Teaching Extramusical Skills

When designing formal strategies to teach extramusical skills, it is important to acknowledge that behaviors, both "good" and "bad," are influenced by life experiences. Formal learning experiences can be designed to provide opportunities for teachers and students to reinforce desirable behaviors while modifying or extinguishing undesirable behaviors.19 To develop strategies for teaching extramusical skills, teachers should (1) identify the learning objective, (2) pinpoint the desired extramusical skill, (3) list the necessary materials, (4) design a sequential and ability-appropriate instructional strategy, and (5) design an appropriate means to assess learning. For strategy examples, see the Teaching Strategies for Extramusical Skills sidebars.

Although a primary goal is to nurture a behavior to such a high degree that the behavior becomes its own internally motivated (intrinsic) reward, the teacher may initially choose to reinforce behaviors and enhance learning experiences with externally motivating (extrinsic) rewards. In his book *Winners without Losers: Structures and Strategies for Increasing Student Motivation to Learn*, James Raffini explains, "Internalization...refers to the process by which an individual initially acquires beliefs, attitudes, or behavioral regulations from external sources and progressively transforms these external regulations into personal attributes, values, or regulatory styles." [20] If external rewards, such as food, tokens, field trips, or privileges, are used primarily to convey information regarding mastery to the student, such rewards can enhance the student's sense of competence in the activity and increase his or her intrinsic motivation to participate in it. However, if the same rewards are used to control or manipulate students into performing activities that they may have chosen to perform on their own, students may view the rewards as the cause for performing the activity. This could undermine the student's perceived freedom to exercise self-determination regarding the activity and, as a result, decrease his or her intrinsic motivation for that activity.[21]

Summary

The American public has become increasingly aware of the correlation between emotionally illiterate children and emotionally illiterate adults--a consequence that increases the level of dysfunction within our society.[22] In response, policy-makers are beginning to ask schools to provide formal curriculums that nurture and develop students' emotional intelligence. Within the school, the music classroom provides a unique setting for students to learn, enhance, and practice pinpointed emotional and societal skills as extramusical skills. Pro-active strategies that focus on students' extramusical skills improve the chances of more students learning how to handle disappointments, to listen, to focus, to control impulses, to become responsible, and to care about learning. For a list of references to help incorporate extramusical skills into the classroom, see the Suggested Resources sidebar. As Daniel Goleman explains, "While not every boy and girl will acquire these skills with equal sureness, to the degree they do, we are all the better for it." [23]

Extramusical skills are influential and highly valued in the music classroom. Research has shown that extramusical factors, such as attitude, participation, and attendance, constitute a major portion of many music student's academic grade, a point that is especially true in music ensembles. Some concerned and influential music educators hold strong views regarding such practice. Music grades, they believe, should reflect only those music skills that are explicitly taught in the music classroom; grading students on lessons that were never taught explicitly, such as societal emotional skills, defrauds the music discipline and lowers the educational value accorded classroom music by our colleagues in education and by the American public. Yet, faced with so many who highly value these extramusical skills, music educators should use the inherent attributes found in music to the advantage of students by designing music curricula that include the formal instruction of extramusical skills. If lessons are complete with objectives, pinpointed skills, strategies, and objective learning assessment, the rationale for the weighted inclusion of extramusical skills into the overall composition of the student's academic music grade becomes increasingly defensible and even laudable. Music educators who successfully infuse music curricula with formal strategies to teach extramusical skills will contribute to an instructional model that could positively affect the emotional literacy of every child, in every classroom, in every school.

Notes

1. See William E. Fredrickson, "Social Influence and Effects on Student Perception and Participation in Music," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 15, no. 2 (1997): 29-32.

2. David Snyder, "Classroom Management for Student Teachers," *Music Educators Journal* 84, no. 4 (1997): 37-40; Douglas Nimmo, "Judicious Discipline in the Music Classroom," *Music Educators Journal* 83, no. 4 (1997): 27-32; Frederick J. Brigham, Amy Renfro, and Michele M. Brigham, "Linking Music Curriculum to Teacher and Student Behavior," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 15, no. 2 (1997): 24-28.

3. Kevin Ryan, "Mining the Values in the Curriculum," *Educational Leadership* 51, no. 3 (1993): 16-18.

4. Charles H. Wolfgang and Karla Lynn Kelsay, "Discipline and Today's Students: They're Sure Not What They Used to Be!" *Contemporary Education* 62, no. 3 (1991): 150-155.

5. Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* (New York: Bantam, 1995), 28.

6. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*.

7. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*; Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind* (New York: Basic, 1983); Howard Gardner, "Is Musical Intelligence Special?" *Choral Journal* 38, no. 8 (1998): 23-34.

8. Research and Guidelines Committee of the Collaborative for the Advancement of Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), *Promoting Social and Emotional Learning: Guidelines for Educators* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1997).

9. Timothy P. Shriver and Roger P. Weissberg, "No New Wars!" *Education Week* XV, no. 34 (1996): 33-37.

10. Roger P. Weissberg, Timothy Shriver, and Eileen Growald, "Preface: An Introduction to CASEL," in *Promoting Social and Emotional Learning: Guidelines for Educators* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1997).

11. Jack A. Taylor, Nancy H. Barry, and Kimberly C. Walls, *Music and Students at Risk: Creative Solutions for a National Dilemma* (Reston, VA: MENC, 1997).

12. Debbie Ann Rohwer, "The Challenges of Teaching and Assessing Creative Activities," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 12, no. 2 (1997): 8-11; Alan C. McClung, "A Descriptive Study of Learning Assessment and Grading Practices in the High School Choral Music Performance Classroom," doctoral dissertation, Florida State University (1996); Paul R. Lehman, "Grading Practices in Music," *Music Educators Journal* 85, no. 5 (1998): 37-41.

13. Claire McCoy, "Grading Students in Performing Groups: A Comparison of Principals' Recommendations with Directors' Practices," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 39, no. 3 (1991): 181-190.

14. Hoyt F. LeCroy, "Imparting Values: A Challenge for Educators," *Music Educators Journal* 79, no. 1 (1992): 33-36.

15. Clifford K. Madsen and J. M. Alley, "The Effect of Reinforcement on Attentiveness," *Journal of Music Therapy* XVI, no. 2 (1979): 70-82; Charles H. Madsen, Jr. and Clifford K. Madsen, *Teaching/Discipline: A Positive Approach for Educational Development* (Raleigh, NC: Contemporary Publishing Company, 1983); Fredrickson, "Social Influence and Effects on Student Perception and Participation in Music."

16. John Hylton, "Dimensionality in High School Student Participants' Perceptions of the Meaning of Choral Singing Experience," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 29, no. 4 (1981): 287-303.

17. Timothy J. Sharer, "An Assessment of Parental Beliefs Regarding the Perceived and Desired Outcomes of High School Choral Music," doctoral dissertation, University of Nebraska at Lincoln (1994): 94.

18. For a detailed listing of thirty-nine guidelines for social and emotional education, see *Promoting Social and Emotional Learning: Guidelines for Educators* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1997), 139. For more information, contact CASEL's Web page at <http://www.cfapress.org/casel/casel.html>.

19. Charles H. Madsen Jr. and Clifford K Madsen, "Learning the Modification of Behaviors," in *Teaching Discipline: A Positive Approach for Educational Development*, 32-41. Regarding learning assessment, see McClung, "A Descriptive Study of Learning Assessment and Grading Practices," 74-95.

20. James P. Raffini, *Winners without Losers: Structures and Strategies for Increasing Student Motivation to Learn* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1993), 83.

21. Raffini, *Winners without Losers*, 76. 22. Ruby Takanishi, "Changing Views of Adolescence in Contemporary Society," *Teachers College Record* 94, no. 3 (1993): 459-465.

23. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 285.

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### TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR EXTRAMUSICAL SKILLS--1

**Class:** Fourth-grade general music class

**Ability or Performance Level:** Lower to moderate

**Objective:** Students will use pinpointed extramusical skills to engage fully in class work for four minutes.

### Pinpointed Extramusical Skills:

1. Attending to class work
2. Supporting the rights of others to achieve
3. Controlling impulses and delaying gratification

**Materials:** Chalkboard (if applicable--video-camera, videotape, and video playback machine)

### Strategy:

- At the outset of class, the teacher points out the importance of a student's ability to give full attention to the day's music lesson.
- A list of behaviors that allow the student to demonstrate that skill is generated by the students through a teacher-led discussion.
- During class, the teacher reinforces targeted behavior frequently on the outset, but extending the time between verbal rewards of encouragement.
- The teacher offers a class challenge: Students are asked to work silently and independently for the next two minutes. By providing the letter names of all the pitch notes from the lowest through the highest, students are asked to identify the pitch range of their song in words.
- Informal assessment indicates that the students were successful at working independently in silence and identifying pitch range. After providing positive verbal reinforcement, the teacher leads the class in a discussion of the skills needed to work independently in silence.
- The teacher offers a second challenge: The class is asked to use the extramusical skills discussed in the day's lesson and apply them over the next four minutes as they rehearse the day's song.

**Individual Learning Assessment:** Through direct observation or through videotape for later review, each student is rated on the following scale:

"At an exemplary level, the student attended to his or her work, respected others' rights to achieve, controlled impulses, and delayed gratification for a time period of four uninterrupted minutes." (The teacher indicates the student's rating by circling one of the following: ( 1 ) strongly agree, ( 2 ) agree, ( 3 ) somewhat agree, ( 4 ) somewhat disagree, ( 5 ) disagree, ( 6 ) strongly disagree.)

### Rewards:

- One blue token is awarded and added to the group's token jar; the accumulation of fifteen tokens indicates a high level of extramusical skill mastery. The mastery reward should reflect something that the students value and something that the instructor can provide.
- If one child is unsuccessful completing the four minutes, the group should not receive the token; they can try again another day. If the token is awarded but undeserved, the instructor is unwittingly teaching a different lesson and reinforcing a different behavior.
- This lesson calls for four minutes of impulse control and delayed gratification. After success is achieved at four minutes and the token is awarded, the time interval is extended on the next attempt. Winning fifteen tokens will require emotional literacy skills from the students and the instructor alike.

## TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR EXTRAMUSICAL SKILLS--2

**Class:** Tenth through twelfth grade, high school mixed chorus

**Ability or Performance Level:** Moderate to advanced

**Objective:** Students will use pinpointed extramusical skills to conduct a 20 minute, student-led sectional successfully.

### Pinpointed Extramusical Skills:

1. Communicating in a positive nonverbal manner
2. Cooperating gracefully
3. Striving for personal achievement

**Materials:** Chalkboard, a second rehearsal space, and assessment forms (if applicable, a second keyboard, video-recorder, videotape, and video playback machine)

### Strategy:

- At the outset of class, the teacher mentions three pinpointed extramusical skills used by students when successfully participating in a student-led sectional.
- A list of behaviors that allow the student to demonstrate those skills is generated by the students through a teacher-led discussion. The list should reflect only those extramusical skills that have been pinpointed.
- At the appropriate time, the teacher announces the musical sections needing work, the assigned section leader, the prearranged rehearsal area, and the appropriate return time. A section leaves the full group, one at a time.

### Individual Learning Assessment:

Example No. 1: Through direct observation of an invited parent or colleague or through videotape for later instructor review, each student is rated on the following additive rating scale (a check is placed by the behaviors that were observed at an "agree" or "strongly agree" level):

Student's Name: ----

-- entered promptly

-- contributed appropriate ideas and questions

-- seated promptly

-- accepted group decisions graciously

-- organized promptly

-- used appropriate musical skills

-- responded respectfully to student leader's suggestions

Total number of positive responses: ----

Example No. 2: Post-sectional homework assignment. Students are asked to construct a paragraph in their journal. The paragraph should include ideas taken from the extramusical skills list and begin with one of the following incomplete sentences:

1. The success of a group ...
2. It wasn't the first time that ...
3. Extramusical skills are not limited to ...

### Rewards:

- The section leader, upon return, will be offered the opportunity to choose the musical selection to conclude the day's rehearsal.

- Those sections who demonstrate advanced extramusical achievement over the semester will be acknowledged for that achievement at the choir awards dinner.

### SUGGESTED RESOURCES

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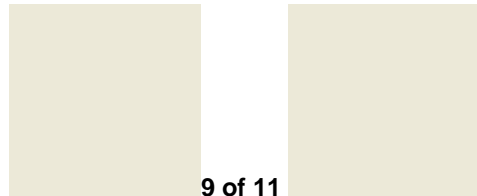
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