

Directed Listening

If the days are already full and it seems like there is no time to include music in the curriculum, you can provide a valuable musical experience/enlightenment in less than five minutes per day through the use of directed listening.

Establish *Listening Etiquette*

Instilling in your students a respect for performers and their performances that includes being quiet and paying attention (or at least pretending to) is a discipline that will serve them well throughout their lives. In some situations, it can be helpful to paraphrase your *Listening Technique* or *Listening Manners* into a short set of words that can be both recited quickly and remindful, such as “Eyes front, Ears open, Lips silent” or “Respectful and Silent” or “Good listeners listen”.

The Routine

Every day bring in music that you like and tell the students why you like it. Point out the especially musical parts and suggest things for them to listen for as it is being played. Keep that speech to 30 seconds, and keep the piece to three minutes or so, and you have taken a mere four minutes of classtime to take roll, calm the students, get everyone centered and in the room, and broaden the view of at least some of your students.

Don't limit yourself to classical music. Any music with appropriate lyrics is fair game, as long as you like it, and you can point out things for the students to listen for. Afterward, if you can spare another minute of class time, ask two or three students what they liked or did not like about the piece ... with the understanding that each opinion be accompanied by 'why'. (The 'why' is what matters. Learning to separate the parts from the whole and evaluate both their contribution separately, and how the parts all work together, is an important step.) Be firm about not accepting, "I dunno... I just liked it" as a response, and pretty soon you will notice your students' wheels turning as they listen.



Generally speaking, the richer the variety of musical pieces, the better. However, play it by ear! If you and your class become intrigued by a particular composer or an era or a group or a specific genre, go with it! Explore! Learn right along with your kids! Which brings us to our next subtopic: