

A Child-Led Education: Teaching Music to Children with Special Needs

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MTNA Pedagogy Saturday
March 9, 2013

***“If a child cannot learn in the way we teach...
we must teach in a way the child can learn.”
Dr. O. Ivar Lovaas***

Getting Started

- Increase in Incidence and Diagnosis
- Each Person is Different.
- Don't Limit Yourself or Your Student.
- Don't Assume.
- Ask Questions!

Why Music

- Helps students to relate to others
- Engages many areas of the brain
- Allows students to interact non-verbally with others
- It's fun!

Adapting the Social Environment

- Lesson Behavior
- Routines/Rules
- Prepare Others in Class
- Positive Image Building

Adapting Music

- Written Notation
 - Not the Ultimate Goal
 - Aural Approach
 - Familiar Music
 - Simplify, if Necessary.

Adapting Teaching Techniques

- Task Analysis
- Assessment
- Length of Lesson
- Activities

Music Learning Theory

- Every child has the innate potential to learn music. (Edwin E. Gordon, *A Music Learning Theory for Newborn and Young Children*, Chicago: GIA, 1997.)
- We learn music in the same way we learn language. (Wendy Valerio, Alison M. Reynolds, Beth M. Bolton, Cynthia C. Taggart, and Edwin E. Gordon, *Music Play*, Chicago: GIA, 1998.)
 - Listen
 - Babble/Speak
 - Read/Write
- Silence, movement, imitation, and improvisation are all important parts of the music learning process. (Gordon, 1997.)

Other Resources

- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: <http://www.asha.org>
- Library of Congress Braille Music: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/music/index.html>
- Braille Music: <http://www.dancingdots.com>
- NAFME Children with Exceptionalities Special Research Interest Group: <https://sites.google.com/site/exceptionalitiessrig>
- Piano Pedagogy Forum Vol. 5, No. 1 and Vol. 14, No. 1
- UT Austin Center for Music Learning: <http://cml.music.utexas.edu/DisabilitiesArchive/DisabilitiesOpener.htm>