

What is General Music in Fairfax County Public Schools?

Singing

Singing activities in the General Music classroom are designed to develop each child's potential use of the voice.

My philosophy is that all children can sing and should be encouraged to use the voice as means of expression and communication. This experience contributes toward the development of a positive self-image and provides each child an opportunity to participate in group spirit and unity.

Listening

One of the most important functions of the General Music program of studies is to provide musical experiences that train a person to use the ears to receive sound in an effective and organized way.

Ear training begins with guiding the child to explore the possibilities and uses of environmental sounds. This leads to teaching the child to explore and use the sounds of musical instruments in the classroom.

Movement & Rhythm

The child's body, so often in motion, is eager to respond to the rhythms of music. Response to the organization of musical rhythms can help the child to gain confidence in the coordination and use of the body.

Rhythmic activities provide children with an area in which they can achieve and develop self-esteem. To have confidence in the use of the body is an invaluable asset in the child's relationship with others in everyday life.

Music Reading

At grades 3, 4, 5, and 6, students begin to read traditional music notation. Students learn to interpret meter and key signatures as well as other musical terms.

Elementary students should acquire music reading skills that would allow them to continue to enjoy music in their lives on a level commensurate with their individual skills and interests.

Playing Instruments

Besides experiencing great joy through playing instruments, children may gain other valuable skills.

Grasping and manipulating such things as xylophone mallets, drum sticks, rhythm sticks, jingle bells & maracas, and fingering the notes on the recorder, will help to develop fine motor skills.

Creating instrumental sounds with beautiful tone quality makes listening to beautiful tones performed by others an exciting and meaningful experience.

Improvisation

Improvisation occurs readily with children who have had a variety of musical experiences.

Early improvisational experiences should have parameters limited to such activities as creating a new word or phrase for a song, creating a two measure rhythmic improvisation or creating a movement to interpret a short poem.