



Top 10 Things To Know About Music Class

A Note ♪ From Mrs. Williams

1. **We do a lot more than simply sing songs!** We do something different every time the students walk in the door and often do several different things within each class period. We do sing; but we also listen to music, play instruments, do movement activities, and play games. I tell the students that if they don't happen to like what we are doing at the moment, participate and do your best, knowing that we will soon be doing something different.
2. **Students have music once a week.** Each class is 38 minutes in length. It's not much time, but we try to learn as much as we can!
3. **Participating in music class will make you smarter!** Students' brains are stimulated in a different way in music class than they are during the course of the rest of their day. Simply by clapping a rhythm pattern, playing an instrument, singing a song or moving to music, new pathways are created in the brain as dendrites connect to one another. The formation of new neural pathways allows students to learn more as well as understand more difficult concepts, and it helps them to remember things.
4. **Students learn some big words in music!** They learn words such as "audience", "ostinato", and "accompaniment". Students even learn some Italian words since many of our musical terms come from the Italian language.
5. **All students are musicians and composers!** Students begin writing and performing music in first grade. By fourth grade, they can read, write and perform many notes and rests. We support one another by learning to be polite audience members!
6. **Third and fourth grade students play the recorder.** Third graders learn three notes and are able to play six songs. In fourth grade, the students learn additional notes and new songs. The fourth graders will be attending an Akron Symphony Orchestra concert with their recorders in March!
7. **We support our country in song!** We sing a patriotic song after the "Pledge of Allegiance" during the morning announcements. We sing one different patriotic song per grading period. Throughout their elementary years, the students learn nine different patriotic songs, including our country's national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner!"
8. **Our music curriculum is based on state and national standards.** These include history, expression, analysis, value/reflection, and connections/applications.
9. **Music grades are not based on talent.** I factor in the students' participation and effort as well as written work, which is minimal. I don't expect them to be perfect – I expect them to try.
10. **Music is fun!** I try to create a classroom environment where students can learn about music, create it, and perform it in both a risk-free and supportive setting. Even if a student does not go on to participate in choir or band in both middle and high school or to pursue it as a hobby in his/her adult years, I hope each will look back fondly on his/her days in elementary school and say, "I love music!"

