



Volume 11 Issue 2

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Announcements

- **No classes** from Tuesday, 11/24 through Sat. 11/28. Happy Thanksgiving! Tuesday, 11/24 is a make-up day for Election Tuesday so make sure to ask your teacher whether or not you have class.
- Our next Facebook Live Event will be November 21st at 10 am with Ms. Cierra. Everyone bring a friend and join us for a fun morning of music!
- Don't forget to join our Facebook group (Levine First Music) for information and updates.
- We hope you are listening to the songs through Sound Cloud. If you have any questions about it, please ask your teacher or one of us in the office below.

Questions or comments? Please feel free to contact us.

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Happy Birthday!

Elizabeth: 11/11

Favorite color: Pink and Purple

Favorite book: *Pinkalicious*

Favorite song: *Let It Go (Frozen)*

Favorite food: Yogurt

Favorite instrument: Triangle





Music and the Brain:

How to Use Music as a Source of Joy and Growth During COVID-19

Emily Park

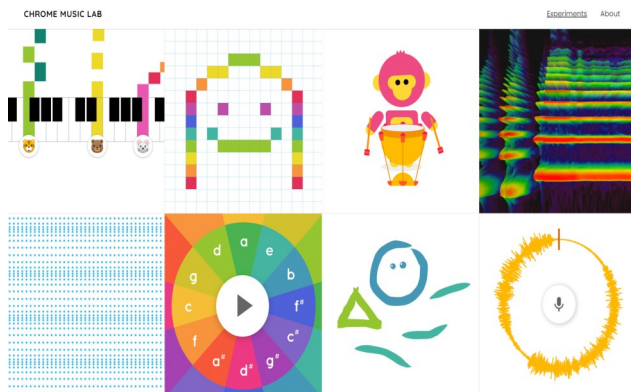
How much of music is hardwired into our brains? Do some of us have music already written into our DNA, or is it something that is only learned through rigorous repetition and practice? I think back to my childhood where some of my fondest childhood memories were music-related. I am fascinated by the brain's role in music and, specifically, in early childhood development. Music has revolutionized treatments for neurological, cognitive, behavioral, psychological, and physical disorders, but there is much more to its power. As Oliver Sacks states in his book, *Musicophilia*, "One does not need to have any formal knowledge of music - nor, indeed, to be particularly 'musical' - to enjoy music and to respond to it at its deepest levels. Music is part of being human, and there is no human culture in which it is not highly developed and esteemed." I believe that music helps us tap into parts of our humanity in ways that can't always be explained, but I also think it's important to understand the science behind how we experience music and the emotional benefits we can take away from making music with others.

Music is one of the few areas of study that activates almost every single part of the brain. The brain is split into four lobes. The frontal lobe is responsible for motor and language functions, personality, and judgement. The parietal lobe is the main sensory receptor. The occipital lobe deals with visual processing, and the temporal lobe manages auditory processing. Within these four lobes, different areas control speech, comprehension, memory, and sensory relay. Through musical exploration, students work on motor control, auditory processing, attention, emotional regulation, and memory (just to name a few)! They make emotional connections to the music as well, which strengthens their neural connections. The brain of a musician is distinct. According to Sacks, "Anatomists today would be hard put to identify the brain of a visual artist, a writer or a mathematician - but they would recognize the brain of a professional musician without moment's hesitation." A musical brain is inherently more connected and in tune with itself.

During a particularly unprecedented time, music remains a constant in its ability to change ones' outlook on the world and understand the emotions that come with the drastic changes that have taken over our lives. I know that when I hear my favorite song or play an instrument, I am transformed to a place where I am less worried about the uncertainty and am able to tap into those elements of connection, resilience, and strength that many of us are eager to regain during the pandemic. Right now, the most important thing we can do for our children is to give them a sense of normalcy; to show them that music continues to be a safe space to explore and process our emotions. Each week I am blown away by the enthusiasm and joy that students express over Zoom, and their ability to express honestly what they are going through in movement and song. While we want more than anything to be back together in the same room making music, we have been able to build community and find joy in returning to our weekly routines of coming together to make music virtually.

If we can put music at the forefront of early childhood development, we are not only developing our skills as musicians, but as human beings, because our skills as musicians transfer to just about every other field of study and help students become well-rounded individuals. Especially during a time when the world feels restrictive in so many ways, music can be freeing and help us return a sense of agency to our students.

Digital Source of the Month:



This month the Digital Source of the Month is the Chrome Music Lab. The Chrome Music Lab is full of fun, interactive, online music games and experiments that include rhythm, harmony, pitch and more!

Book with a Musical Hook:

We are thrilled to congratulate our own "Mr. M", Eric Maring, on the release of his own song collection "Two Little Blackbirds" in collaboration with the New England Dancing Masters.

This book is specifically geared towards making music with young children and their families. It includes recordings, both audio and video of the activities.

