

## Some Benefits of Extracurricular Musical Education for Primary Schoolchildren

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**Abstract** – Participation in extracurricular activities allows students to get involved in diverse activities. These activities promote social and academic success, foster a sense of commitment to a cause or purpose, and enhance life skills. This paper studies the effects of extracurricular musical education on primary school children. It also provides observations and the results of a brief survey of teachers. The findings reveal the benefits of extracurricular musical education in the development of schoolchildren as it enhances memory, augments creative and cognitive skills, improves imagination and increases emotional understanding and expression.

**Keywords:** cognitive skills; creativity; emotional development; extracurricular activities; musical education; primary school.

*Music is a moral law. It gives soul to the universe,  
wings to the mind, flight to the imagination,  
and charm and gaiety to life and to everything*  
Plato

### Introduction

Educational process plays a leading role in school education. However, most non-academic activities may be a valuable addition for schoolchildren as they provide positive social experience, increase activity, boost the sense of self-worth and teach to approach challenges with conscientiousness, concentration and persistence. Involvement in extracurricular activities favorably impacts psychosocial and academic outcomes. Children involved in extracurricular musical education are apt to be better adjusted and have an increased emotional understanding and expression.

### Literature Review

Music has touched the cultures all over the world and become a part of a society. It awakens a man's spiritual nature, develops cognitive ability and aesthetic taste, evolves desire for creativity [Anufrieva, Anufriev, Korsakova, Slutskaya & Sherbakova, 2015; Bakhtizina & Lukyanov, 2015; Lazutina & Lazutin, 2015].

Favorite music plays a role in promoting well-being, concentration and melting away a bad mood [MacDonald & Wilson, 2014; Priestley 1995; Vanstone, Wolf, Poon & Cuddy, 2015]. Listening to music engages non-verbal physical and mental processes, helps forward creative social interaction and emotional expression [Gabrielsson & Juslin, 1996; Cayari 2015]. Music advances communication between the teacher and his learners [Kobozeva, Mironova & Chinyakova, 2015]. Music helps to create a supportive atmosphere at extracurricular activities where children acquire socially appropriate conduct, develop peer relations and many social, cognitive and physical skills [Kuimova & Gaberling, 2014; Kuimova & Polyushko, 2015; Metsäpelto & Pulkkinen, 2014]. Extracurricular music activities contribute to better school grades, further sincerity, frankness and ambition; improve musical understanding and personal expression [Hille & Schupp, 2015; Menard, 2015]. Extracurricular music activities should be aimed at a “taste” cultivation rather than “proficiency” fostering [Pitts, 2008]. Learning to play a musical instrument or singing as a child positively relates to educational achievements in adolescence [Yang, 2015].

### **Discussion**

Music is the area of art and human knowledge to which it is necessary and possible to turn the child at the earliest stages.

Music makes people more communicative because playing a piece of music a person tries to convey the thoughts and feelings of the composer. The performing musician is used to feeling the thoughts and mood of the composer so he transfers these skills in conversation, tries to feel the nuances of intonation, emotions, tone and pace of the conversation of the interlocutor.

The language of music is more understandable and convincing than any other, as it influences the mind, subconscious and appeals to the human soul. Emotions that arise during listening to music significantly increase the impact of thoughts and feelings evoked by music. Beliefs and feelings, tastes and assessments that are impressed by music, are often perceived by listeners as their own ideals, as musical infusion is an unconscious process. Insight into the meaning of music is accompanied by elation and aesthetic pleasure. Thanks to the hedonistic sensations from music, its spiritual values could deepen and gain stability in the subconsciousness of the listener. With purposeful pedagogical influence, music contributes to a more rapid and successful formation of valuable orientations, tastes and interests.

Musical education has a number of advantages in the upbringing of schoolchildren. It:

- accustoms to the daily work;
- educates patience;
- trains willpower;

- forms perseverance;
- develops emotions;
- gives a particular vision of the world.

Music lessons require hard, tireless work and willpower, as perfection is born only out of big and long-term work. Music teaches the child not only to see but also to reproduce what he saw, not only to hear but also to represent what he heard. Consequently, it develops all kinds of perception:

- visual;
- auditory;
- sensory.

Furthermore, music promotes all kinds of memory:

- visual;
- auditory;
- motor;
- imagery;
- associative.

The play on a musical instrument encourages the development of:

- fine motor skills;
- memory;
- logical thinking;
- cognitive abilities;
- intelligence;
- emotional sensibility;
- creative skills;
- mathematical abilities;
- communication skills.

Sometimes music is a very convenient tool to explain “clearly” different cultures of different countries to a child. Tedious reading of scientific books about the culture of a country can be brightened by listening to national music of this country. While studying at extracurricular musical lessons, schoolchildren get to know about music from different countries and their history.

Music helps to expand schoolchildren’s horizons and nurture their talents. Music introduces children to prominent figures of art and music, and gives them positive examples of spiritual and cultural development of various outstanding musicians.

Music sharpens the sense of time perception, develops the ability to discern and reproduce temporal differentiations more precisely. Music improves orientation in spatial relations, stimulates curiosity and interest in activities, and induces exploratory behavior of the child.

To analyze the opportunities of musical education, we took two groups of third grade schoolchildren (there were twenty eight pupils in each group), gymnasium

18, Tomsk, Russia. In the first group pupils took extracurricular musical lessons since the first grade, in the second group they didn't have these lessons.

We interviewed seven teachers who gave lessons in general subjects to both groups. The teachers noted the following advantages among schoolchildren who study music. In contrast to the second group these pupils have a tendency to:

- better memory (86%);
- better cognitive performance (71%);
- better creativity and imagination (57%);
- enhanced critical thinking skills (57%);
- larger vocabulary (43%).
- higher reading score (29%).

In addition, music develops associative imagination, without which it is impossible to master other kinds of art. Music has an immense health potential. It is able to regulate the mental state, harmonize emotional, intellectual and spiritual development of the personality, his strong will, composure and discipline.

## Conclusion

Thus, music teaches us not only to listen, but also to hear; not only to watch, but also to see and feel. A person's happiness largely depends on what he sees around him and what emotions he experiences. If you want to make a child's world rich and emotionally rewarding, if you want him to become successful, well educated and highly motivated, give him some musical education along with his other classes.

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