

**THE CLASSROOM TEACHER'S GUIDE
TO MUSIC EDUCATION**

About the Author

Vernon Burnsed is Professor of Music and Coordinator of Music Education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University where he teaches undergraduate and graduate music education and research courses, and works closely with public school personnel in field experiences for music education students. Dr. Burnsed is an active researcher. He has written articles for the major research journals in music education and given research presentations at national and international conferences in the United States, Europe, and Africa.

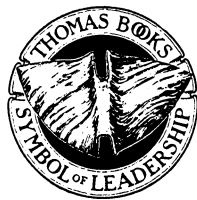
THE CLASSROOM TEACHER'S GUIDE TO MUSIC EDUCATION

Second Edition

By

C. VERNON BURNSED, PH.D.

*Associate Professor of Music
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Blacksburg, Virginia*



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To
Tyra S. Burnsed and Coleen Grumley

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The second edition includes contemporary thought on the philosophical rationales for music education, results of recent research in music education, and an expanded Chapter 5 on Music to Enhance the Learning Environment. Chapter 5 includes new greeting songs, a section on using music to teach topics and concepts throughout the elementary curriculum, and more suggestions for music and language arts. New songs are also included in the folk song appendix.

INTRODUCTION

This book is about music education in the elementary school. Its major purpose is to develop an understanding of why music education is important, how music education works, and how music can be a powerful force for the classroom teacher. It has realistic expectations for the classroom teacher. Music theory and performance skill are kept to a minimum; they are not a prerequisite for understanding the content of the book. The elements of music are presented through classroom activities very similar to those that occur in typical elementary music classes.

The text does not attempt to persuade the classroom teacher to teach music. Instead, it focuses on developing a broad perspective of elementary music education, and it illustrates how classroom teachers may use music as a powerful learning tool. A major emphasis of the text is that classroom teachers can utilize music to enhance the overall learning environment of their classrooms. Suggestions, class descriptions, and lesson plans are given for using music for routine activities, whole language, integrating music into language arts and social studies, and using music to develop the cultural literacy of students.

After completing the material in this text, students should understand the philosophical rationale for including music education in the public school. They should also be able to describe elementary music concepts and objectives for music education, discuss the Orff and Kodaly approaches to music education, and use music throughout the day to enhance the learning environment. With the proper in-class activities, the students should also develop competence in and positive attitudes about singing, and they should be able to provide children with quality musical experiences.

Singing and the Classroom Teacher

One of the most important outcomes of a music class for future classroom teachers should be the development of positive attitudes about singing. If classroom teachers can feel comfortable singing with their students, they can accomplish much. Singing with children throughout the day

can be a powerful classroom tool, and if it is done with the proper attention to voice quality and pitch, it can be a very positive influence on the musical development of young children.

Unfortunately, singing skill cannot be developed by reading a book. However, proper singing technique and positive attitudes about singing can be accomplished without an overemphasis on theory. It has been the author's experience that positive attitudes and feelings of competence about singing can be developed through singing, moving, and playing music in much the same manner as music is taught in the elementary schools. The course instructor is encouraged to use the Curwen hand signs, "movable do," pentatonic patterns, and rote songs to develop the singing skill of the class participants.

Text Organization

The material in this text is presented as follows: music education philosophy and practice; understanding the elements of music; child development and learning theory in music; contemporary approaches to elementary music education; and music to enhance the learning environment. When possible the material is validated by the results of contemporary research in music education.

Recommendations are made for classroom activities and songs and materials are provided; however, the instructor may wish to supplement the text with other songs, Kodaly, Orff, and listening activities. In many instances specific resources are suggested.

A sequential arrangement of folk songs is included with the text. Each song is to reinforce the tonal and rhythm patterns presented throughout the text. If possible, the instructor should teach many of the songs by rote before utilizing their notated forms. After students have developed an aural awareness of the patterns in the songs, then a visual association may be made. As they progress through the text, students should label all the pitches of the songs and practice singing them with "movable do."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am most grateful to my students and colleagues for their many contributions to this text. In particular, I wish to thank Dr. Pamela Hopton Jones for suggestions and contributions to Chapter 5 of this edition. I also express my sincere thanks to the music and classroom teachers of Montgomery County, Virginia and to Myles and Linda Burnsed.

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**THE CLASSROOM TEACHER'S GUIDE
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Chapter 1

MUSIC EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

WHY MUSIC EDUCATION?

One of the most important goals of this book is for the reader to understand why music education is an important part of schooling. Although most people will readily agree that they like and value music, many do not understand the role of music in education. Subsequently, in curricular and budget considerations, music is often regulated to a secondary or frill position in our schools.

There are a number of reasons for this phenomenon. One is that many music programs in public schools are actually selective performance group programs. This is especially true in the secondary school where unless students are in band, chorus, or orchestra, they may not receive any music instruction. This selectivity adds to the perception by many that music is only for the talented few.

Another reason many people do not understand the value of music education is that they are unable to see how knowledge and skill in music are essential for successful personal development. After all, you do not need to be able to sing to get most jobs, and music really does not help you balance your check book. To these people music education appears to be just entertainment.

Why then, is music education an important part of schooling? For many years it has been argued that music is included in the schools because music education is aesthetic education and its primary goal is to develop each individual's aesthetic sensitivity to music. Aesthetic education is the study of the nature of art and artistic properties. It involves perception, expression, imagination, and emotional reaction; it leads to the development of aesthetic sensitivity.

Aesthetic sensitivity is the ability to perceive and react to objects and events in life for their artistic properties and qualities. These objects and events may or may not be works of art. One may contemplate buildings for

their design, scenery for color and line, and the sounds of nature for patterns and timbres. This aesthetic manner of thinking and perceiving enhances living. It satisfies a basic human need, the aspiration for something more than just survival.

Aesthetic Thinking

An important part of aesthetic education and aesthetic sensitivity is what some authors have called an aesthetic mode of thinking. This mode of perception and expression involves imagination, feeling, and the consideration of events and objects from a non-logical point of view. When one thinks in an aesthetic manner, the overall feeling of the thought or communication is more important than its rationale or logic. Consider the following expressions. The first is by Robert Burns; the second two are by Paul Simon.

you stole the rose and left the thorn

hello darkness my old friend

like a bridge over troubled water I will lay me down

It is easy to see how this type of thinking is creative and imaginative, and how a society needs aesthetic thinking and discovery just as a society needs scientific thinking and discovery. Aesthetic education enhances individual existence and a society's cultural development. One of the purposes of schooling is to enhance the lives of individuals, to help them reach their fullest potential. Thus it is readily observable how aesthetic education is an important part of public school education. People make aesthetic decisions every day of their lives. The quality of life not only depends on the material but the emotional.

A society's art records the emotional and feelingful aspects of living in that society. No other medium of expression expresses the feelings and emotion of the cultures of civilization. One can read about a culture but when one views its art and listens to its music one may actually experience the emotional life of that culture.

Music as Procedural Knowledge

Another philosophical basis for the value of music education is that musicing (performing music) is an important form of procedural knowledge.

When one performs music one is thinking and reflecting in action; one knows how to do something rather than knows about something. This knowledge in action is critical to cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor development. David Elliott (1995) believes that musicing is essential to enable self-growth, self-knowledge, and optimal experience. According to Elliott, it is only through musical performance and the development of musicianship that one can achieve the optimal musical experiences that can enhance self-knowledge, esteem, and the quality of living.

Elliott and others have used the term “flow” to characterize optimal experience. Flow occurs when one’s attention becomes so focused on an activity that one becomes lost in the moment or unconscious of a separate self from the action. One experiences personal growth as a result of flow and life becomes more meaningful. Musical performance and listening to music can become a means of achieving flow and the resulting self-growth and awareness. Anyone who has participated in musically expressive performances more than likely has experienced flow. Some argue that flow and the aesthetic experience are the same. Others argue that they are different; however, what is important is that music can be an important source for a heightened awareness that enhances the quality of life.

It should be acknowledged that one need not be an expert performer to achieve flow as a result of musicing. Elliott points out that flow can be achieved when a challenge is presented and is capable of being reached. A match occurs between the performer’s ability and the challenge that is presented. Therefore, an elementary general music class might be challenged to perform a simple round with instrumental accompaniment whereas a high school choir may be challenged to perform a Bach *cantata*. Each should have the capability of achieving the challenge and experience growth, increased ability, self-awareness, and self-esteem from the resulting flow or optimal experience.

Utilitarian Rationales for Music Education

There are also many utilitarian or nonmusical reasons for including music education in the public schools. Strong music and arts programs enhance the learning environment, make school more attractive, and are a source of pride and identity for the school community. Everyone is pleased to see and hear outstanding performances by the band, orchestra, or chorus at community and athletic events and competitions. These performances encourage positive thoughts about the quality of school systems and are great public relations tools for administrators. Even in the elementary school,