

MUSIC INTEGRATION

*in the
Junior High School*

by

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PREFACE

IN spite of the troubled times that have fallen upon us, most of our educators and the bulk of our school patrons are convinced that music can be made a vital force in the lives of our growing boys and girls. Believing this, the majority of the junior high schools of this country allow time in the school day and provide the means whereby boys and girls may enjoy some type of musical experience. This experience designed to meet the needs of all pupils regardless of aptitudes and talents is usually called a *Course in General Music*. Students of unusual talent and desiring special training are taken care of in elective classes offering Theory, Ear Training and Sight Singing and other phases of music instruction. Elective courses seldom present difficulties if pupils are guided rightly in their choice of subjects. The problem most common in junior high schools is the General Music Course. This is due perhaps to the fact that it is too often neither one thing nor the other. Neither *general* with the purposes and aims suited to a music course that must be adapted to meet the needs of just a garden variety of boy and girl nor *specific* enough for teaching definite learnings and skills to the unusual pupil. The course presented in these pages is a record of ten years' experimentation with and learning from the usual or the ordinary run of boys and girls—those representing the bulk of the students in an average junior high school. What has been planned and organized in the suggestions that follow is what the pupils themselves have given proof of wanting and valuing.

Enjoyment, socially acceptable self-expression, self-realization, self-discipline, contact with beauty, recognition of the universality and interrelation of all things which are vitally connected with life and living, these are some of the things

that give music meaning and worth to young people. They have pointed the way and what is written herein is a feeble and inadequate effort to capture a gleam.

Therefore, this book is gratefully dedicated to the boys and girls of Cleveland Junior High School, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

LILLA BELLE PITTS.

INTRODUCTION

THIS work brings progressive teaching ideas into the ordinary school situation. It aims to breathe new life into junior high school music. It devotes itself to the phase which is required in most programs, classroom music for all pupils in the seventh and eighth grades, and frequently also in the ninth grade. Music classes in these grades need reanimation and orientation for they too often are still nothing more than formal and uninteresting continuations of an unbalanced note-reading program. Many teachers know from bitter experience that there is need of readjustment in the music classes for junior high school students. They realize that methods are changing; they find themselves in a new world of music production due to the phonograph, the sound pictures, and the radio, but still they are at a loss as to what they shall do.

How shall they use new resources and increase instead of decrease that great interest which their students evinced toward music in the grades? Faced with the curious emotional states of adolescent boys and girls, their varying sizes and changing voices, their unequal preparation due to their being drawn into the junior high school from rural, parochial, and private schools, in addition to various grade buildings, how can the teacher from all these differences develop a music program that shall be not only interesting and worth-while at the time but shall be a vital factor in building happy, well-intentioned, and clean-living youth? What significance for music teaching have the new educational theories of initiative, self-development, creative activity, projects, and integrated subject-matter?

This book gives much help on these and many other questions. But it is help which comes only when the teacher adapts the material to her own uses. The contents of the book must be

integrated by the teacher with the rest of her experience before it can be integrated with the work of the students. This statement is vital in considering the effectiveness of all teaching.

Is the successful teacher born or made? This question has often been debated, and it is constantly in the background of many discussions of how teachers should be judged. Adverse criticism often disposes of success with a shrug of the shoulder, implying that natural endowment has made such results easy and that no special credit is due the teacher for the good work she has done. Likewise, the distracted supervisor, after having coached a teacher long and earnestly, apparently without success, comes to the conclusion that there is no use trying to make a teacher out of a person who is not to the manner born. But two other types of persons must not be forgotten, the one who, possessed of most desirable native endowment, still does mediocre work, and is, in fact, surpassed by that fourth type, the unobtrusive and apparently poorly endowed teacher who, through constant work, obtains good results. There are so many combinations of endowment and training or preparation in good and poor teachers that the discussion of the relative importance of the two elements will doubtless go on forever. It would seem that both are needed, but in what proportion, no one can give a final answer.

Lilla Belle Pitts, the writer of this most helpful volume, is a remarkable educator. Anyone who has observed her work with junior high school pupils or who has sat in her college course realizes that she is constantly developing people to an extent that they, themselves, seldom realize or, at least, anticipate. Those who work with her are uniformly alert, focused, and happy. They are having the joy of discovery. It is a tribute to Miss Pitts' stimulating power that her students constantly feel they are bringing to the attention of their instructor matters which they, themselves, have worked out and which she, possibly, has not formulated. Education in her classes is a stimulating process of readjusting knowledge and solidifying and utilizing new powers. The excitement of this vital

process seems, moreover, to be predominantly with the students rather than with the teacher. She, apparently, is mainly an observer, or a commentator, who makes occasional contributions to a discussion which is primarily the responsibility of the students. Many who observe Miss Pitts' teaching and note her quiet dignity, her broad sympathy, her ready wit, her understanding comments and her constant subordinating of herself to the contributions which her students make, remark that she is a born teacher. They usually add, or at least think, how much better the teaching profession would be if we had more women of this calibre who, because of their native endowment, could duplicate this teaching. But, anyone who has known Miss Pitts over a number of years and who follows closely her habits of work can testify that she has grown steadily through constant study and prolonged self-criticism. Her comments on student contributions are the distillation of broad study, travel, and personal experience. In her case, as with all successful teachers, she is a product of fine endowment and never-ending training.

This brief analysis of the teaching personality of the author of this volume indicates the validity of the material which is now presented from a rich store of experience. A study of the manuscript of this book gives abundant evidence not only of the varied sources from which the material is drawn, not only of the clear and simple suggestions for its use in the classroom, but possibly, most characteristic of this remarkable teacher, of the constant presenting of material and suggestions so that whoever uses this book will naturally adapt the material to suit his own needs. Here are no set patterns: here is material and inspirational guidance. In other words, Miss Pitts even in writing for teachers continues to be a skillful teacher.

Careful study of this work until it becomes a part of the reader's thinking will result in making teaching what it should be, a joyous process of development into full effective living for both students and teacher.

PETER W. DYKEMA

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PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

MUSIC IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

APPRECIATION is the immediate aim and the ultimate end of music education in the junior high school. We wish to develop more discriminating and more intelligent consumers of music, but above all we expect "Musical Appreciation" to carry over into "Life Appreciation." To be familiar with good music and a knowledge of how it came to be, is to penetrate the heart of humanity. Music in common with the other arts was born of man's need to give feeling an ideal expression. From earliest times music was a means of communication between man and his fellow men. It still is. Likewise music was an emotional outlet which enriched the spirit and added significance to the events of life. So it does in the world of today. In the main that period in which story-telling, singing and dancing were natural and spontaneous expressions from all folk has passed. Today we depend more upon the efforts of others. The writer, the painter, the composer speaks for us and to us. What they give is ours for the asking.

Every creative artist is a human being first. He has the same sense perceptions and feelings that other people have. What makes him different is that he reacts to the experience of living more acutely and more intensely than the ordinary individual. Therefore, he lives a larger life to which he is able to give expression through a chosen medium. Our response to the artist's message is proof of the fact that he has given

ideal and objective form to something that we, too, have felt but lacked the power to express. When the artist speaks to and for us we not only gain insight into the lives and hearts of others but gain also a better understanding of our own groping spirits.

The composer of music in common with the painter and the writer has *something to tell*. Varying degrees of sensitiveness to the rhythm, melody and harmony are possessed by all, hence there are few human beings who fail to get at least a part of music's message. To increase our capacity for enjoyment and our breadth of insight into the larger life which is embodied in great music we must extend our listening experience. An understanding of the language, grammar, idioms and forms of the musical media must be had through the ear since music is an art objectified in flowing, highly organized sound.

The habit of seeking and repeating fine musical experiences will eventually create desirable results. Really satisfying performance for either individuals or groups is not always a possibility nor an actuality, but the listening experience has become practically a nation-wide possibility. The radio is bringing the world's best music into millions of homes. Opportunity is literally knocking at the door. Music education has its mission to perform in leading pupils to recognize this fact. When boys and girls are convinced that lasting music as well as the so-called "popular" music has meaning for them in terms of everyday life and youthful interests they will be increasingly friendly in receiving and seeking available musical opportunities.

There should be little discussion of "teaching appreciation" to young people. It is not a matter of teaching in the usual sense, but the motivating force should be an eagerness to share one's experiences with boys and girls, helping them to find more joy and beauty in life through music—music to sing, music to play, music to be listened to in quiet contemplation.

From time immemorial, humanity has poured out its joys and sorrows in song. Boys and girls today as always release

much pent-up physical and emotional energy in singing or in playing upon some musical instrument. Intelligent and expressive performance comes largely from insight into and understanding of the meaning of songs and compositions. This is gained from knowing something of the circumstances and conditions which have produced great folk and art music.

The appreciation of music means increased appreciation also of peoples, of history, of literature, of painting and of architecture. Learning to know great music means coming into contact with every field of human culture. It has been well said that a great musician has the quality of "universal reference."

Music is an art, the most abstract of all arts, but it grew from a human need, therefore, can be made humanly interesting. The thread of unity binding together the program of Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Grades is Human Interest. In appreciation through music, we aim to point the way to a larger life of mind and spirit, thus aiding young people to discover for themselves new values in life.

The General Aim of Music Education

"The general or humanistic aim of music instruction is to contribute to the character of the individual and society an additional measure of the idealism, the joyous preoccupation with unselfish interests, the elevation and purification of feeling and the psychic health dependent upon abundant but orderly expression of emotion that comes from appreciative contact with and the endeavor to create and recreate the beautiful in music." (Report of the Music Committee in the Fourth Year Book, Department of Superintendence. 1927.)

Specific Aims—So To Plan

1. That experience in music shall be of immediate interest and value to young people.
2. That subject matter and procedure shall minister to

physical, emotional and intellectual conditions of adolescent years.

3. That boys and girls shall realize music as a means of expression :

- a. Personal (composition and individual performance).
- b. Group (singing and playing).
- c. Vicarious (sensitive and intelligent listening).

4. That the arrangement and association of subject matter during the three-year period of junior high school will give students a general idea of the development of the principal musical forms.

5. That musical education shall play its part in the attainment of the objective articulated by the Commission For Re-organization of Secondary Education. (Gov't Bult. No. 35.)

- a. Health.
- b. Command of fundamental processes.
- c. Worthy home-membership.
- d. Vocation.
- e. Civic education.
- f. Worthy use of leisure.
- g. Ethical character.

6. That there will be increased ability in a ready interpretation of the symbols of musical notation.

- a. Treble staff.
- b. Bass staff.
- c. Key signature (locating *do*).
- d. Measure signature (meter $2/4$, $4/4$, $3/4$, etc.).
- e. Note values (the ones most commonly used).
- f. Rests (the ones most commonly used).
- g. Tempo marks (*Allegro*, *Andante*, etc.).
- h. Expression marks (*forte*, *piano*, etc.).
- i. Music reading (of reasonable difficulty).
- j. Harmonic feeling (recognizing and singing simple chords, the I IV V).

7. That pupils acquire an ability to use the singing voice as a means of satisfying self-expression through:

- a. Good intonation.
 - b. Correct placing of tones.
 - c. Unforced tones.
 - d. Artistic interpretation of songs.
 - e. Good harmony in choral singing.
8. That a permanent repertory of memory songs will be built up including:
- a. Folk Songs.
 - b. Art Songs.
 - c. Patriotic Songs.
 - d. Hymns.
 - e. School Songs.
 - f. Fun Songs.
9. That pupils will become familiar with the following forms of music literature:
- a. *Vocal Music*
 1. Folk songs (songs of work, play, war, worship, holiday, festival and the narrative song or ballad).
 2. Art songs (used in a broad sense to cover composed songs of the more elaborate types).
 3. Hymns.
 4. Patriotic songs.
 5. Chorals.
 6. Cantatas.
 7. Arias (from oratorios and operas).
 8. Concerted numbers (duets, trios, quartets and sextets).
 9. Polyphonic singing (rounds, descants, madrigals and the church music of the medieval period).
 - b. *Instrumental Music*
 1. Primitive and folk instruments.
 2. Folk Dance.
 3. Art Dance or Idealized Dance.
 4. The Dance Suite.
 5. Theme and Variation.
 6. The Fugue.
 7. Overture.