

## Which method is better for children to learn music?



Although there have been so many researches and wonderful issues on this topic so far, but maybe music education systems have been slow to change and people prefer an old method to new one even if the old one is wrong. Music education theory have been consequent of general learning theories developed in music. So we had better have a glance at theories of learning.

The first theory of learning returns to about 2500 years ago by ancient Greek philosopher, **Plato** who believed that mankind knows everything when is born just s/he needs to be reminded. It means that when we are taught we are being reminded whatever we knew before but have been forgotten. It is a philosophical concept than psychological theory.

This idea had been used to rule for thousands of years until 19<sup>th</sup> century when psychology was born. Since then, hundreds of theories have been issued which mainly have been completing each other or sometimes have been against old theories.

Maybe the first theory of learning which involved music learning was **Dr. Mari Montessori**(1870-1952) method in the late 19<sup>th</sup> in Italy. She believed **children should learn that how to learn!**



**Jean Piaget**(1896-1980) was the first psychologist dedicating his life to study children behavior and his articles are fundaments of children education systems world widely for general education in kindergartens and schools. But music was not subject of his researches.

**Émile Jaques-Dalcroze**(1865-1950), **Zoltán Kodály**(1882-1967), **Carl Orff**(1895-1982) and **Shinichi Suzuki**(1898-1998) are the most influent pioneers of children music education.

Among them Suzuki was lucky to be more clever and have this chance to live in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century when psychology was much more developed than before and essential concepts on human learning procedure had been discovered. Suzuki found that children learn their mom tongue just by hearing and repeating easy words and short sentences based on imitation of their parents. So he developed this idea to music and taught violin to little aged children by focusing on practical teaching and involving parents in teaching procedure, music theory and notation was skipped and postponed to future, in this way he succeeded to train Bach and Mozart on violin to little aged children.



Other methods mainly persist on training basic musical concepts like as rhythm, ear training, voice and notation. But unfortunately playing is not the subject of learning. In Orff method some easy instruments like as Recorder or bells are taught but when child is going to learn such instrument like as violin after passing Orff two years course or similar courses, s/he would compare violin with very easy instruments already experienced and would find violin difficult whereas children who has not experienced easy instruments have not any reference to compare, so they welcome violin easily.



How ever, I am afraid to say in such a method like as Orff, **Good audiences we have in future not good players.**

Thus we can divide methods to three main families. The first family which are just a pre-training course usually to prepare children and discover and develop their music abilities for future and mainly are based on rhythm, dance, voice and notation (reading) and takes about two years.

The second family is practical methods based on playing easy tunes on a challenging instrument by skipping theory and any pre-necessity elements just ability to imitate. In such methods aptitude is not important since gift is recognized as something achievable by training in a true environment.

The third family is combination of the two previous families. Nowadays you can find so many methods by mixing basic concepts of previous method families in deferent ways for deferent instruments.



Every method is based on particular learning theory and comes true according to our necessity. If you are looking for a funny unserious course just as fun and entertainment and just to make your child familiar to music , then the methods of the first family are quite good choice, but if you intend to have your child professional musician in future , then the second or third family of methods would be your choices.

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