

Does Music Affect The Mind?

One solid way to increase the speed at which people learn is with music. People learn through music and their minds grow faster because of it. Some music, when implemented properly, can have positive effects on learning and attitude. Music is a powerful thing, and when we understand its significance, it can bring dramatic changes both positive and negative into our lives.

The earliest stages of learning for young children are the most important. The fundamentals of learning are instilled into a child at a very young age and how much importance is placed on these fundamentals can have dramatic affects on the future of the child's learning. Music, when applied in a constructive way, can have positive effects on a child's learning and help them in many ways.

One way that music can make learning easier for a young child is by implementing music lessons into a child's normal activities. A small study was done two years back involving ten three-year-olds who were tested on their ability to put together a puzzle and the speed at which they could do it. After the initial test was taken, five of the children were given singing lessons for 30 minutes a day and the other five were given piano lessons for 15 minutes a week. The lessons were conducted over a six-month period of time, and after the six months, all of the kids showed substantial improvement in the speed at which they could put together the puzzle. The researchers understand this skill in putting pieces of a puzzle together as the same reasoning that engineers, chess players and high-level mathematicians use. In this study of inner-city kids, their initial scores were below the national average, but afterwards their scores nearly doubled.

Music, when involved in the classroom, can have great effects on the early stages of learning for the very young up through elementary age school children. Music can also have significant effects on older people in a learning environment. Music does not have the same effect on older people as it does on younger people, however. It is easily understood that for young children, getting them to do fun musical things like learning to play an instrument is somewhat easy compared to getting an adult to do the same thing. Children will do it because it is something new and exciting whereas adults need to be motivated to do something because they won't do something simply because they can. For adults it is a matter of choice, but when they choose to involve music into their everyday lives, the effects can be just as dramatic, but different when compared with music effects on younger children.

Listening to music as background can help when people when they're thinking, learning, or working, but the music needs to be implemented correctly. It can be easily understood that if it's vocal music, it needs to be somewhat quiet, for if it isn't, it can be very distracting to the mind. It is logical to conclude then that if it's instrumental, it can be somewhat louder than vocal music, but not too loud because any music that is loud enough will make it hard to learn or think. As we will see, the listener's preference to music must also be taken into account, because the primary goal is for the music to affect the person's mood and attitude positively, and if they are listening to music that they absolutely deplore, it won't help them think because it will be hard to shut it out of their mind.

One thing that music does that cannot be ignored is it stimulates the brain- sometimes positively and sometimes negatively, but it effects the brain nonetheless. Some positive effects on the brain can be seen from the study conducted by Rauscher, Shaw and Ky where they found a temporary increase in spatial reasoning after listening to a bit of Mozart. These findings are somewhat inconclusive, but cannot be ignored altogether. It shows how there is much more studying that needs to be done in the future on this subject.

Music is an important and extremely useful tool in the way we learn and to deny its power is a waste of a truly wonderful resource. In recent years there have been concerns about some types of music such as Gangsta Rap having very negative effects on peoples minds and moods. This type of music imprints an extremely violent image into people's minds and there has been growing concern about it and tying it in with violent crimes. In cases like this, it only shows how much more we need to study music to fully understand its full impact on the human mind. In these days where cutbacks are always eminent in people's local schools, people need to struggle to keep the music and art intact. Music and the arts are what make life worth living and without them, people lose hold of their culture and diversity. The ideal way to learn in the future would be to fully incorporate music into the curriculum of every school. If every school supported and encouraged their students to freely pursue music with the culture of music in their everyday lives, people would become much more efficient in their learning and would become much better students on the whole. Music is a power too great for man to comprehend at this point but through further study man can learn how to better harness its power to use it to its full potential..