



News & Announcements

Our free 7-day e-courses for ESL students and teachers have received very positive feedback from the more than 150 people from all over the world who have taken the course already!

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Music and Learning Links

- ▶ <http://www.edu-cyberpg.com/Music/bottomline.html>
- ▶ http://www.88keys.com/docs/mus_study1.html
- ▶ <http://www.gymboreeplayuk.com/untitled1.html>
- ▶ http://www.northern.edu/music/why_nsu.htm
- ▶ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/297073.stm>
- ▶ <http://www.dslextreme.com/users/maiki/MusicAndSpatialTaskPerformance.htm>

"I would teach children music, physics, and philosophy; but most importantly music, for in the patterns of music, and all arts, are the keys to learning."

Plato

Listening to Music While Studying

by Maureen Bouey

Probably most people would agree that music has some kind of an effect on all of us. Recently, some middle school students in the United States became interested in looking at how three different kinds of music (in this case, classical, alternative and country) can affect memory. They set up a study where fifty people memorized two lists of 20 words each – with one minute to memorize each list. After the minute, the list was taken away and participants had another minute to recall and write down as many words as they could remember out of the original twenty.

Three groups were used in the study, and each one listened to a different form of music (alternative, classical, and country). When memorizing the first of two lists, there was no music; during the memorizing of the second list, music was played.

Results for the participants who listened to classical music were the most positive, actually showing an increase in memory. Those who listened to the country and alternative music had lower scores when the music was being played, due to being distracted, while those listening to alternative music had the lowest scores of all. While not an official research study, it does nonetheless demonstrate an important link between learning and music.

So, what do the experts say? Let's take a brief look at some general information about studies of the links between learning and music.

Many studies have shown that linguistic rhymes, dances, movement, and play in the early years are very important in

bringing together the emotions, mind, and body of a child. There is also plenty of research to show that playing music to a child early in life helps to build the neural pathways that allow language, memory, and spatial development to take place.

Music has also been shown to change results in intelligence measurement. Over the years there have been many studies and numerous methods used to measure intelligence. Relevant to our topic, some of these studies have shown that high-frequency, clearly organized music has the ability to naturally stimulate and refresh the brain in a matter of just minutes. This kind of music seems to improve focus and concentration, and can therefore benefit concentration and studying.

Perhaps you've heard of "Super-Learning"? Dr. Georgi Lozanov, the Bulgarian professor who pioneered the research into Super-Learning, suggested slow Baroque music for optimal learning (music by Bach, Handel, Correlli, Telemann). He said that Baroque's precise and complex structure engages our brains to an optimal level. There have even been studies proving that this type of music can actually cause your IQ to go up by as much 9 IQ points! (Please do not mistake this as an indorsement of IQ tests.)

Numerous other benefits have also been linked to listening to Baroque music. Just a few examples are:

- ▶ Increased learning speed
- ▶ Reduced number of errors
- ▶ Improved creativity and clarity
- ▶ Faster physical healing
- ▶ Integrated brain for more efficient learning

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▶ To provide top quality, flexible learning support and service to students and parents of students through:

Superior private tutoring matched specifically to each student's needs *and* stimulating, small group classes.

▶ To enhance students' skills and increase their learning confidence through individualized support, recognizing each student's unique abilities.

▶ To improve quality of life, in individuals and communities through education.

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So we know there are definitely some beneficial links between learning and music – at least some types of music. And while Baroque is not the only kind of music that falls into this beneficial category, it is true that some types of music can definitely be unhelpful: distracting and interfering with the learning processes.

If your preferences run to more popular types of music, here are a few suggestions about how can you best prevent music from interfering with your studies:

▶ Play something that is on the mellow side. If the music makes you want to play the drums on your binder, it's going to be too distracting.

▶ Turn down the volume. You are looking for background music, not something you need to shout to be heard over.

▶ Pick your music before you start to study, then leave it alone. The time you waste picking out new music and changing CD's could be put to better use studying.

▶ If you're studying in the same room as somebody else, be considerate and wear headphones.

▶ It can sometimes be difficult to memorize things if you are listening to a song with lyrics. Try to find something that is strictly instrumental.

▶ If you do have to memorize a list of some kind, some people find it helps to make up a song using the items on the list. Again, listen to an instrumental piece of music, and put your lyrics to it.

▶ Put on some music that is familiar to you so you won't want to listen so intently. Save your new CD for another time.

▶ Try not to become so dependent on studying to music that you can't study without it. Every once in a while, study in a quiet place.

▶ Only study to the radio if you can be sure that you won't be listening to a lot of talking, commercials, or news, and if you know what kind of music you'll be listening to.

▶ If you find the music to be distracting at any time, turn it off. Some people can get so defensive about studying to music that they will keep it on even if it gets to be a hindrance.

(These tips were excerpted, with permission from: <http://homeworkhelp.about.com/library/blmusic.htm>)

Learning Styles Assessments

Understanding your learning style is understanding how you like to learn and express yourself. Knowing yourself as a learner, you can optimize your learning in the classroom and in life.

Smart Tutor Referrals uses an online Learning Styles Assessment tool developed by teachers and used by professionals for over 15 years. One great thing that many students really appreciate about this assessment is that the results are available immediately and can be printed off or emailed to another person (like a teacher, tutor, or parent, for example). The assessments are suitable for anyone over the age of 8 with an intermediate English level.

This assessment tool provides feedback on your: disposition, modality, optimum study environment, talents, and interests.

The cost is \$40. Please contact us for more information.