

MUSIC IN THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

by Melody McGrath Taylor

We all want our students to learn effectively. We all want to be that teacher who can reach everyone; who can make a difference for the students in our care. What we learn, all too quickly, is that music specialists have far too many students to be able to understand each learning style. Conversely, classroom teachers who are required to run their own music programs have far too many learning styles in their room to be able to take the time to learn about teaching music.

Music in the Inclusive Classroom is designed to support both the music specialist and the classroom teacher. Teachers will be able to access information on

- diagnoses and descriptions
- general classroom management
- individualized education plans
- supports for all learners
- strategies in the music room

Using this reference tool will allow you to quickly find the specific information you need, and adapt your lessons to support all of your learners. What you discover will enrich your teaching. It will help you to create a collaborative musical environment in which your students flourish, driven by the gift of music that dwells within each of them.

Themes & Variations

Box 25109 Deer Park PO, Red Deer, Alberta, T4R 2M2

Fax: 1-888-562-4647 Email: tvinfo@telus.net www.musicplay.ca

Printed in Canada

© 2014

ISBN: 978-1-927062-55-5

CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
Introduction	3
CHAPTER 1: DIAGNOSES AND DESCRIPTIONS	4
• Autism Spectrum Disorder	5
• Blindness and Visual Impairments	13
• Deafness and Hearing Impairments	17
• Developmental Disabilities, including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder	22
• Emotional Disorders and Mental Illness (Including Behavior Disorders)	30
• Gifted and Talented	36
• Learning Disabilities	39
• Physical and Medical Disabilities	44
CHAPTER 2: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT	47
CHAPTER 3: INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLANS	53
CHAPTER 4: SUPPORTS	57
• Behavior Plan	59
• Communication Aids	63
• Physical Movement	65
• Routines	66
• Social Stories	67
• Timers	68
• Visual Schedules	70
• Alternate Format Materials	71
• Assistive Technology	71
• Organization Plan	73
• Scribe	74
• Seating Plan	74
• Social Skills Training	75
• Creating a Safe Environment	76
• Problem-Solving and Empowering	78
• Enrichment	79
• Breaking Down Tasks	80
• Phonics and Phonetics	81
• Mnemonic Devices	81
• Repetition	82
CHAPTER 5: STRATEGIES IN THE MUSIC ROOM	83
• Rhythm (Auditory)	85
• Rhythm (Reading and Writing)	90
• Melody	98
• Expression	108
• Form, Texture, and Harmony	116
• Extra-Curricular Ensembles	121
Conclusion	124
Bibliography and Recommended Resources	125
Appendix	126

CHAPTER 1: DIAGNOSES AND DESCRIPTIONS

In this chapter, you will be given an overview of several diagnoses that students in your class may have. Each section will be divided into three topics. Each section contains summary tables on the last page. An additional table shows where in the book to find supports and strategies, allowing you to easily access the information you require.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- essential information you need to gather in order to plan for each child

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

- legal requirements in programming for your students with special needs
- modifications to programming (outcomes which are omitted or changed) must be noted in students' individualized program plans. The specifics do not need to be on these plans, which may just state "Bobby will have modified programming in math, science, and music" or "Krista will have modified programming in all subject areas."
- decisions as to whether or not each child is expected to meet curriculum outcomes lie with the specialists who perform assessments, the students' teachers, and the special education coordinator or principal in your school.

CHALLENGES

- helping to prepare you for behaviors or learning challenges that may be present in your classroom

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Students with *Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)* may present both impressive talents and unique challenges. When programming for a child with an ASD, it is important to determine the needs and strengths of the individual.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

ACADEMIC SKILL LEVEL

In the music curriculum, grade level reading materials supplement instruction; additionally, basic math skills help in reading rhythms. If you have a student who struggles in either or both of these areas, accommodations will be needed to support the student.

Points to consider:

- At what grade level is my student functioning in math and language arts?
- How will my student's academic abilities affect performance in the music room?

AREAS OF FIXATION OR OVER-FOCUS

Students who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder often fixate or over-focus on certain routines, objects, or actions. It is important to be aware of any fixations your student may have. For example, if Ben wants to play the bongos every time he enters the music room, he may become extremely frustrated and upset if bongo playing is not part of the lesson plan one day. If Angie is focused on the flickering light overhead, she may not be able to focus on the learning activity in the classroom.

Points to consider:

- What are the identified areas of over-focus?
- Which fixations are used for calming?
- Which are over-stimulating?
- What are some methods of distracting my student from areas of fixation?

AREAS OF STRENGTH

All children have strengths and weaknesses. Students with autism may have perfect pitch, for example, and therefore are able to learn to play some instruments quickly. Other children with ASDs may demonstrate talents in a wide variety of areas, including geography, reading, counting, singing, or interpretive movement. Being aware of each child's strengths will help you to program in a way that engages your students and helps them connect to their peers.

Points to consider:

- What are my student's talents?
- How can I use these areas of strength to support music instruction?

BEHAVIOR TRIGGERS

Children who have autism spectrum disorders may react strongly to changes in their routine or their environment, while these same changes may have little or no impact on many others in the class. It is important to be aware of the causes of both negative and positive behaviors. Some common triggers which may result in tantrums or meltdowns include the following:

- being denied a desired object.
- being asked to do something new.
- having to confront fears that are either rational or irrational.

Positive behaviors can be supported when your student knows what to expect, is able to count on a reward for following expectations, or is taking part in a preferred activity.

It is essential to understand how behaviors manifest in your student. Some children with ASDs can be disruptive when they are upset. They may shout or cry, or attempt to lash out at objects, themselves, or others. Some may try to regulate themselves by rocking, spinning, flicking their fingers, or staring. Each student may have a progression of behaviours which lead to the most troubled state.

This progression is illustrated in a grade four music class observed several times each month. We know that Nick mixes up his pronouns (saying “he” instead of “she” or “me” instead of “you”) when he begins to experience frustration or anxiety. After this, he begins to make illogical statements, or socially inappropriate comments. If he is not calmed at this point, he becomes quiet and still, causing most of his classmates and teachers to relax because the issue appears to be resolved. However, this is simply the third stage of behavior. Nick now moves from this stillness into a loss of control, which includes screaming, biting, and scratching. It is imperative to understand this sequence of behaviors so that you can organize your classroom in a way that helps your student feel calm and secure.

Points to consider:

- What can trigger negative behaviors?
- How can I distract my student when I believe a negative behavior is about to occur?

CALMING TECHNIQUES

Calming techniques can both prevent and defuse negative behaviors. Be aware of what works most effectively for your student. Some children are calmed by deep pressure, while others become agitated. Children can also be calmed by light adjustment, background noises, location in the classroom, and music. Students’ homeroom teachers and teacher assistants will help to identify the most effective calming techniques for each individual.

Points to consider:

- How do I create a calm environment in which my student can successfully learn?
- How do I calm my student when negative behaviors have begun?

PROVIDING MEANINGFUL SOCIAL INCLUSION

Relating to others appropriately may be a struggle for your students. Despite the challenges, it is important to foster a sense of inclusion and acceptance for all students in the music classroom. Learn which classmates are consistently helpful and friendly with your student.

Points to consider:

- How is my student included in classroom life for most of the day?
- What social skills programming is in place that I can use in my classroom?
- How have the other students been taught to relate to their classmate in various situations?

MUSIC SKILL LEVEL

Determine the level of musical skill of each of your students. Differentiation of instruction will support learners who have had previous music education and those who struggle with music instruction.

Points to consider:

- Has my student exhibited any signs of perfect pitch or exceptional talent in music?
- Does my student play instruments or sing?

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

Each student is unique. Some children with Autism Spectrum Disorders are able to complete many parts of the curriculum. Others may be greatly challenged in core academics, but show talent in music. If this is the case, the student might be expected to meet curriculum outcomes for performance and listening, but perhaps not for theory and history. Some students with more severe forms of autism may be working exclusively on social or life-skills goals, and will not be following curriculum outcomes for any subjects.

CHALLENGES

ANXIETY

When music class takes place outside the regular classroom, anxiety may be caused by disorientation or perceived loss of control. A student experiencing anxiety cannot comfortably participate in class and may begin to exhibit patterns of negative behavior.

ATTENTION

Children who struggle with attention and focus may be particularly distracted when they attend classes away from the homeroom. Maintaining attention may require use of lights, auditory and visual cues, or other means specific to your student.

Children with ASDs often have difficulty putting words together in a meaningful way. As a six-year-old boy with autism, Derek exhibits repetition of the phrase “It’s a garbage bag.” This is his response to any question he doesn’t understand. He embellishes the phrase if he is denied something. “Derek, you can’t bang on the window with that metal spoon” is answered with “Is it because it’s a garbage bag?”

Your student must be provided with communication alternatives in your classroom to help with effective expression of needs and thoughts. Derek now has a sign that says “I am frustrated” on one side and “I am happy” on the other. Using personalized social stories, we are working to help him understand the two feelings and to use these words to express his responses. Once he uses these phrases consistently, we will teach him to ask for help.

COOPERATIVE WORK

Small groups provide rich instructional opportunities in the music classroom. Because of communication and social challenges, this can be a difficult setting for many children. However, this is also a valuable opportunity for students to learn from each other. In addition to valuable life lessons on tolerance and cooperation, children gain knowledge and build respect from working together despite their level of ability.

In a grade five class, Jennifer is part of a group assigned to create a rhythm to accompany Mozart’s Andantino-Allegro. Outside of school, Jennifer has been taking piano lessons for four years and is working on advanced musical concepts. While her group members work on composing the rhythm using maracas and jingle taps, Jennifer concentrates on identifying the chords which mirror the harmonic movement of the piece. Because Jennifer is busy determining the correct chords, her classmates are able to practice their newly learned rhythm skills independently. Preparation for the final performance brings the two accomplishments together as Jennifer plays her chords to the rhythm created by her peers.

MOTOR SKILLS

Children with autism spectrum disorders frequently have difficulty with gross and fine motor skills. Covering the finger holes on a recorder may be an impossible feat, while pitch-matching on a bugle or a trombone can be as easy as humming a tune. Dancing and other large movements may result in falls or inadvertent physical contact with others. New fine and gross motor skills are more difficult to learn when there is excessive sensory information. Factors to consider are light, noise, and number of students.

OVER-FOCUS OR FIXATION

Fixations can offer both anxiety and relief for your student with an autism spectrum disorder. Two of my students experience challenges with items found in the music room.

SOCIAL SKILLS

Functioning acceptably in a social environment is often a hard-won skill for a person with an autism spectrum disorder. Whereas many typically developing children learn to adjust their behavior based on the reactions of others, children with ASDs often require instruction and rehearsal of social skills.

In the music classroom, it is important for students to listen to each other and to their teacher. They must respect personal space and the concept of turn-taking. Appropriate social responses are often not automatic and may need to be directly taught and practiced.

TRANSITIONS

When relaxing with a book or happily working on a project, most people don't like to be disturbed. This reaction is magnified in a child with autism spectrum disorder who is comfortable and happy taking part in an activity. An interruption can lead to major disruption.

Sample

SENSORY PROCESSING

A learning disability may be diagnosed because of a difficulty with processing sensory information. You will need to structure your lessons in a way that makes it clear where the student should focus at all times. Be aware of possible distractions such as noise from the hallway, a rattling furnace, or a flashing light on the sound system.

VOCABULARY

If your student has been diagnosed with a learning disability involving speech, auditory processing, or reading, vocabulary may be delayed. Be sure to use a rich vocabulary when teaching in class. However, be careful to use the new words repeatedly and in a variety of contexts. Displays on a word wall will further support the acquisition and development of new vocabulary. A word wall is a bulletin board which alphabetically displays high-frequency words related to the subject being taught. Developing a word wall should be a gradual procedure, as you add new words only when they are taught. Students may also create personal word walls in their notebooks or in folders designated for this purpose. After several months, your word wall may look like this:

A allegro	B band	C crescendo	D dynamics	E	F forte flute	G	H high
I instruments	J	K	L low	M melody mezzo	N	O	P piano
Q	R	S solo	T tempo	U	V Violin Vivaldi	W	X

A word wall kit, complete with one hundred music vocabulary word cards with definitions on the back, is available for purchase on the Musicplay website. These words are color-coded for ease of categorization. Further information about the development of effective word walls and the research regarding their benefits can be accessed through the Balanced Literacy program created by Scholastic.

1. Supporting a student with severe needs who requires constant assistance or physical support.
2. Supporting the class by intervening when a potential problem develops, or acting in response to a teacher's request.
3. Being accessible if needed for intervention, but not necessarily in the classroom.

When a teacher assistant is provided in one of your classes, meet with both the assistant and the classroom teacher to determine the TA's role in the classroom. Discuss how this will best support your music classes. If needed, have follow-up meetings throughout the year.

SUMMARY

Effective classroom management frees both teacher and students to focus on curriculum and the enjoyment of music. Knowing expectations, students are ready to engage in learning. Providing structure and guidelines creates a safe place where success and musical growth can thrive.

This chart is printed on a sheet of paper five times and laminated. If Nancy has fewer than five checkmarks in the right-hand column, the checkmarks are erased at the end of the day, allowing her to have a fresh start the following morning. When Nancy has five or more checkmarks, they are left on the laminated sheet and the second table is filled in on the second day. In this way, Nancy can easily see how many more days she needs to stay in the school in order to earn her reward.

Time	Stayed in Classroom	Stayed in School
1st period		✓
2nd period		✓
3rd period		
4th period	✓	✓
Lunch		
5th period		✓
6th period		✓
7th period		
8th period		

6. **Establish reinforcements.** Behavior plans should focus on rewards for the student. The goals developed should lead to rewards quickly in the beginning. Each student is motivated by something different, and it is often productive to have the student share ideas of what will motivate them. Nancy is offered an accompanied outing. Once she achieves her first goal of staying in the school for one half of the day for five days in a row, she is able to walk to the store with a teacher assistant and buy a fruit slushie. Other students have been rewarded by having the opportunity to use their iPod for one period or by having a 20-minute pass to play in the computer lab.

<p>You Earned . . .</p> <h2 style="margin: 0;">One ‘doodle’ pass</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">This coupon entitles the holder to 10 minutes of doodle time in a class of their choice.</p>
--

COMMUNICATION AIDS

When your students have difficulty processing verbal information, it is important to have other options.

PICTURE CARDS

Picture cards help you to show your student what you would like them to do, or offer them the opportunity to express their choices. For example, when playing instruments you may show your student a picture of a maraca and ask them to go get it. In a recorder class, you may show a picture of both a soprano recorder and a tenor recorder, and allow your student to choose which they would like to play. Picture cards are easily made by clipping pictures from your catalogues, affixing them to recipe cards, and laminating. Using the catalogues you ordered from will ensure that the picture matches the instrument exactly.



You may have students who use a Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) as a form of communication. In this case, you will be able to access the cards you need using the PECS software. Your student's teacher assistant, teacher, or parent will be able to help you use this program, or may print the required pictures for you.

STOP AND GO SIGN

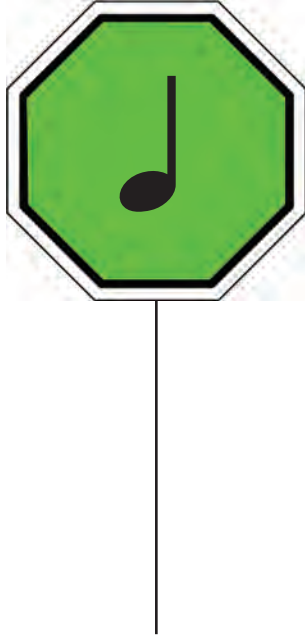
Having a visual cue for starting and ending music is helpful to all students. This sign can also be used when giving instructions. For example, "When I say 'go' I want you to move to the instrument area and sit in front of a xylophone." This instruction can be written on the board, with diagrams beneath the key words *go*, *move*, *instrument area*, and *xylophone*.

When I say go, I want you to move to the instrument area and sit in front of a xylophone.

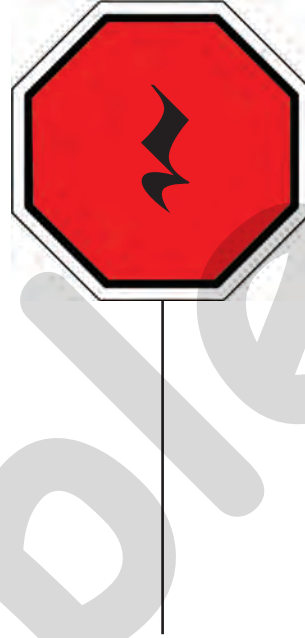


Create a stop and go sign by cutting out two identical octagons on green and red paper. Place a note sign on the green octagon, and a rest sign on the red. Laminate the two signs and then glue them together with a Popsicle stick in between.

front:



back:



WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS

To ensure that all of your students understand, you may need to write some instructions as well as presenting them verbally. This can be done on the board for the whole class to see, or on notepaper which you pass to your student. If a teacher assistant is in the classroom, you can communicate with their help.

PHYSICAL MOVEMENT

Music classes can be full of dancing, action songs, instrument playing, and many activities that provide the opportunity to move around. This is valuable for students who require movement to help them stay centered and focused. Within your lesson, it is a good idea to offer posture changes, stretching, and even location changes if possible.

Even with your planned movements from the risers to the instruments on the floor and back to the risers for an action song, you may have students who require more physical stimulation. You can provide additional movement opportunities, when technology is available, by having students change the digital resource to the next page on the SMARTboard; they can also fetch an instrument for a demonstration, or return a marker to your drawer. You can also place a Move-N-Sit cushion on an assigned seat (this works on the risers or the floor) or have a student sit on a therapy ball instead of a chair.

Having fidgets available in your classroom may benefit your students. Fidgets are items students can manipulate to help in maintaining focus and relaxation. They may include oddly shaped erasers, koosh balls, ribbon, and “Chewlery” (items such as coiled bracelets and necklaces which can safely be chewed). As long as your student does not over-focus or fixate on the fidget, it may be helpful in directing attention to the lesson. A basic fidget rule is “Fidgets must not hurt or distract anyone.” If a student is unable to comply with this guideline, then fidgets aren’t used.

Modeling action songs helps many students to learn new games quickly. However, a student with visual impairment will be relying on sound and tactile input. Songs with partner interaction or hand-holding actions will be easiest for your student with visual impairments to follow. Once you present instructions verbally, your student will have immediate reinforcement and practice time with a peer. Ensure that you do partner your student with a peer and not with a teacher or an adult assistant. If necessary, you may need to have an adult stand behind your student, physically assisting with the actions when needed.

Below is a list of Musicplay songs which have partner or group actions, and support peer learning:

Grade 1 The Grand Old Duke of York

Grade 2 Tony Chestnut

Grade 3 Third Base Coaches Dance

Grade 4 Wake Me! Shake Me!

Grade 5 Pass the Stick

Grade 6 Hanky Panky

ROUTINES

Music class involves a variety of activities and different locations in the classroom. It is important not only to teach routines, but to model and practice them.

When introducing a new routine, such as moving to the ‘instrument’ center, follow these steps:

1. **Explain the activity.** “Today we are going to play rhythm instruments. I have the instruments laid out in a circle on the carpet. There are enough instruments for each of you. We are going to play a game in which we will rotate, so you will all have a turn with each instrument.”

2. **State the expectations.** “When we move from the risers to the carpet, we will begin with the front row. The line leader will move around the circle of instruments until she arrives at the triangle. Then she will sit down. You will each follow the person in front of you, and sit down at the instrument beside theirs.”



3. Give a reminder about the activity. “Since we are playing a rotating game, you will each have a turn to play all of the instruments today.”

4. Introduce a rehearsal of the procedure. “The two students at the end of the first row, Jamie and Paula, are going to show us how to move from the risers to the instrument circle.”

5. Practice the behavior as a class. “Now that we have seen how to move from the risers to the instrument circle, we will try it together. If we have trouble the first time, that’s okay. We’ll just practice until we get it right!”

6. State additional expectations. “Please remember that the instruments should not be making any sounds until it is time for us to play together. If an instrument is ‘talking’ when it shouldn’t be, it will have to go in ‘time-out’ in the instrument drawer.”

When the routine is to be repeated on another day, repeat each step. After the routine has been practiced two or three times, the class most likely will not need to model and practice each time. Continue to monitor the routine closely, and return to the six steps if your class is having difficulty.

SOCIAL STORIES

Social stories are developed to help a student understand a situation and learn coping strategies for the classroom. A social story may be created for any recurring event which causes your student to experience a negative emotion such as fear, anger, or stress. A social story should be written in the first person, and should include a description of time and place, a statement about the student’s feelings, and the response that is required of the student in that situation.

One situation that might require a social story is Instrument Time. A nine-year-old girl named Liz wants only to play the sleigh bells. As there are two sets of sleigh bells and twenty-eight students, she cannot play them at every instrument time. Liz is not able to understand this restriction. Despite verbal reminders, she always reacts strongly if it is not her turn to play the sleigh bells. Her responses range from screaming to attempting to hurt the student who holds the sleigh bells. A social story is developed. It is read to Liz before each music class, and again shortly before Instrument Time. The first social story takes this form:

In music class, we sometimes get to play instruments.

There are a lot of different instruments to choose from.

I always want to play the sleigh bells.

Sometimes it is another student’s turn to play the sleigh bells.

BEHAVIOR TRACKING FORM

Incident Report: _____

Office Referral: _____

Student: _____

Referred by: _____

Grade: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Before School Block 1 AM Break Block 2 Lunch Block 3 PM Break Block 4 After School

Referred Due To:

Consequence:

- _____ I-1 Physical Contact
- _____ I-2 Classroom Disruption
- _____ I-3 Inappropriate Language
- _____ I-4 Defiance/Disrespect
- _____ I-5 Bullying/Assault
- _____ I-6 Fighting
- _____ I-7 Homework
- _____ I-8 Vandalism
- _____ I-9 Drug/Alcohol Violation
- _____ I-10 Continual Lateness
- _____ I-11 Skipped Detention/Study Hall
- _____ I-12 Dress Code Violation
- _____ I-13 Violated School Electronics Policy
- _____ I-14 Other: _____

- _____ C-1 Spoke With Student
- _____ C-2 Loss of Privilege
- _____ C-3 Parent Contact
- _____ C-4 Detention/Study Hall
- _____ C-5 Time Out
- _____ C-6 Removed from Class
- _____ C-7 Referred to Youth Worker
- _____ C-8 Referred to Police
- _____ C-9 Parent Meeting
- _____ C-10 In-School Suspension
- _____ C-11 Out of School Suspension
- _____ C-12 Material seized and retained at the office

_____ **I-15 Behavior Escalated (See Summary Below)**

Location:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ L-1 Classroom | _____ L-6 Hallway | _____ L-11 Bus |
| _____ L-2 Locker Room | _____ L-7 Playground | _____ L-12 Office |
| _____ L-3 Lunchroom | _____ L-8 Computer Lab | _____ L-13 Library |
| _____ L-4 Washroom | _____ L-9 Study Hall | _____ L-14 Gym |
| _____ L-5 VC Room | _____ L-10 Other: _____ | |

Summary of Events:

Administrative Follow-Up (Office Referrals Only):

Copy Provided To: Office File: _____ Classroom Teacher/Referring Staff _____

Administrator's Signature: _____

