PLAYful Musical Environments that Foster Learning:

Listening, Making, and Moving to Music in Early Education Settings

Eric Rasmussen, PhD
Chair, Early Childhood Music
Peabody Preparatory of the Johns Hopkins University
In Language

Conversation - easy to create and improvise even by 3 years old!

In Music

Most symphony players do not create or improvise.
Stages of Music Development

(audio)

- Absorption - a 3-month old just listening
- Random Responses - a 5-month old kicking
- Purposeful Responses - eye contact, engaging
- Imitation - not recognizing differences yet
- Assimilation - recognizing differences and correcting using the breath and movement
- Absorption never stops. [Older kids listening live on stage next to Baltimore Symphony players.]
Listening Vocabulary

Thinking/Speaking

Improvise/Create

Reading

Writing
Toddler twins chatting
(audio)
Creativity/Improvisation
Taste
Light
Touch
Sound
Musical “diet”: an analogy

Chicken wings or salmon souffle?

Why not both?

And then add Thai food,

chocolate covered ants,

and sushi, too!
Everything you need to know about music:

- Tones
- Rhythm
- Melody
- Harmony
- Expression
- Timbre
Melodies are made up of tones and rhythms. Tones need a place to end called a “resting tone.” This provides context.

Once understood in the voice and ear, the resting tones can be named:

DO, RE, MI, FA, SO, LA, LA, TI
Rhythm Content and Context

**Rhythms** make sense when there are two kinds of beats: **BIG beats** and **little beats**. This provides a context for rhythms.

A  B  C  D  E

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A  B  C  D  E
The biggest pieces missing in early childhood music education:

- one-on-one interactions
- musical conversations
- spontaneous music making with no agenda but to **PLAY MUSICALLY**
The biggest piece to try to eliminate during music playtime?

TALKING

Talking distracts the child’s aural learning brain from the musical components.

Talking and noise short-circuit music learning.
Takeaways:

• Just be musically playful with children—and with yourselves too. Spontaneously.

• Interact individually with children—tonally and rhythmically.

• Play great music and be expressive.

• For babies and toddlers, get into their world. Don’t always be trying to bring them into yours.

• Sing, dance, play, be happy, and just have fun!
This vision is a tall order, but

* Remember, it’s for the children.

* Take it one small musical interaction at a time.

* When in doubt, just remember to sing, chant, move, and dance!
Thank you!

Please be in touch.

Eric Rasmussen
TeachMusicToKids@gmail.com
FaceBook - Teach Music To Kids
@rizzrazz

Music to move to: playlists on Spotify
www.bit.ly/DrEric1
www.bit.ly/DrEric2, 3, 4, 5