

Why Music?

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This article has been slightly edited for use.

I. Music is a Science. It is exact, specific, and it demands exact acoustics. A conductor's full score is a chart, a graph which indicates frequencies, intensities, volume changes, melody, and harmony all at once and with the most exact control of time.

II. Music is Mathematical. It is rhythmically based on the subdivisions of time into fractions which must be done instantaneously, not worked out on paper.

III. Music is a Foreign Language. Most of the terms are in Italian, German, or French; and the notation is certainly not English - but a highly developed kind of shorthand that used symbols to represent ideas. The semantics of music is the most complete and universal language.

IV. Music is History. Music usually reflects the environment and times of its creation, often even the country and/or racial feeling.

V. Music is Physical Education. It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lip, cheek, and facial muscles in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back, stomach, and chest muscles, which respond instantly to the sound the ear hears and the mind interprets.

VI. Music Develops Insight and Demands Research.

VII. Music is all these things, but most of all, Music is Art. It allows a human being to take all these, dry technically boring, (but difficult) techniques and use them to create emotion. That is one thing science cannot duplicate; humanism, feeling, emotion, call it what you will.

That is why we study music:
Not because we expect to make it our life's work,
Not because we expect to play or sing all of our lives...

But so we will be human
So we will recognize beauty
So we will be closer to an infinite beyond this world
So we will have something to cling to
So we will have more love, more compassion, more gentleness, more good
- in short, more Life.
