



Meadowbrook Music Class Newsletter



February 2021

Hello Meadowbrook Families,

As this school year continues on, it becomes more and more evident to me that I will be traveling to each of the classrooms for the remainder of the school year. This has certainly not been an easy procedure for me, as there is so much more that I could be doing in the actual music room. But, I'm trying to focus on the positive things we've accomplished this school year. We've really placed focus on rhythms earlier this school year, and I'm continuously impressed by the knowledge that they've retained from our early lessons. Our creativity to think outside the box has also greatly increased this year, and there are many things that I and the students have learned to be stronger musicians when we will get back into the actual music room! We continue to thrive as best we can through all the challenges presented this year!

If you have any questions or concerns about anything music related here at Meadowbrook please feel free to reach out to me through my email!

Be kind, and take care!

Mr. Falk

bfalk@waukesha.k12.wi.us



What's Happening In Music Class? (K-2nd Grade)

Our Kindergarteners have been diligently learning about high, middle, and low pitches, and how instrument sizes and affect the sound of their pitches. 1st grade has also been reviewing their knowledge of pitches, and both Kindergarten and 1st grade have been greatly working on their xylophone and mallet performing. Xylophones are always a great tool for both visualizing and hearing different pitches. In 2nd grade, we recently covered various tempo vocabulary words, and applied many movement and performing activities to better understand the vocabulary. We also briefly explored the music genre of The Blues, and how singing about your problems can (strangely) make you feel better. Within our next block of lessons I'm hoping to talk about dynamics with 2nd grade, and continue with some more xylophone performing in 1st grade. Kindergarten will briefly move and perform to bouncy/smooth music, and then learn about short/long sounds (early rhythms).

What's Happening In Music Class? (3rd-5th Grade)

Not much has changed with our current track of units in 3rd-5th grade, as we are still learning about each of them from what I described in my last newsletter. As for what's coming up... 3rd grade will soon be doing a unit learning about the treble clef staff. I also like to take this opportunity to do a color composition project with them each year. 4th grade will be focusing on various musical elements and their vocabulary, as well as exploring the life and music of the famous composer Beethoven. As for 5th grade, I'm looking into doing a unit on the history of jazz music, as well as exploring other music genres.

5 Easy Things To Do To Support Your Child In Music

- 1. SING TO YOUR KIDS:** Really! Any song! This is the #1 best thing to do for your kid's musical development. Regardless of your skill level, you are the best model for your child and by doing so, you are modeling an aptitude for music making. Children who have parents who say, "I can't sing" or "I don't sing" are likely to have the same attitude for life! *Singing is a part of life.* We want our children to sing lullabies to their children, and to be able to sing happy birthday to their grandchildren. You don't have to be Adele, Aretha Franklin, or a Luciano Pavarotti. Just sing!
- 2. ASK:** Ask your child what they did in music class! If they say, "nothing" try to dig a little deeper. See if your child can explain an activity that they did or teach you something that they learned. This shows that you are interested in what they are doing in music and that is an important part of their education.
- 3. PLAY WITH SOUND:** Fill a small bin with small instruments to make a musical toy box for "playing music" at home. If you don't have any instruments you can make them! Then let the kids make some noise! There is definitely a difference between noise and music, but many *kids need to experiment* with sound before they can *create music with sound*.
- 4. CHANGE THE STATION:** Try listening to a variety of music. This will broaden your child's taste in music and help to develop their musical ear. There are hundreds of musical genres, so why listen to the same thing all the time?? Please use your discretion when listening to the radio. Be aware of what your kids are listening to. Unfortunately, most of what is on the radio today is inappropriate for children. Instead, try making a Pandora station, or a playlist for your kids. Or if you're thinking a little old-school, go to your local music store and fill a basket with used CD's!
- 5. GO TO CONCERTS:** Turn off the TV and get out there! Whether it's live music at the coffee house, a school event, or a concert in the park, going to a concert is a very exciting thing for kids of all ages. You don't have to pay money to see live music; you just need to know where to look! Check your local newspaper for listings.