

MEMT 420
Midterm

1. According to Curwin and Mendler, the social contract is a means of assisting classroom management. Briefly discuss 3 reasons why you, as a music teacher, would embrace and utilize this; also present 3 reasons why you, as a music teacher, would not utilize this. (Your arguments might be those you'd use in a discussion with a principal and fellow faculty if your school was considering adopting the social contract and you presented both pros and cons.) (12 points)

The social contract is a democratic way to approach classroom management. A social contract does not place all of the decision-making upon the teacher, but places guided decision-making on students (Curwin and Mendler, 48). Social contracts also help build respectful and appropriate relationships between teachers and their students. When students are allowed to have input on rules and consequences, they are more likely to have positive attitude towards the teacher. When students are involved in the decision-making process, they are respected by being included in the process, and therefore respect their teachers for that inclusion. Another positive aspect of the social contract is that they can serve any type of student in any type of classroom. Social contracts are not limited to general or arts classrooms or certain students (Curwin and Mendler, 48).

Social contracts can, however, take significant amounts of time and effort to create, especially with younger children. Creating a social contract requires meeting with every class, and it usually takes about three class periods to create. This process can take away from the academic learning process, yet three class periods spent of defining rules and consequences is small compared to dealing with classroom problems every day for the rest of the year. Another drawback of social contracts are that they do not protect the students from how the consequences stated will be enforced. A list of consequences for breaking rules is great, but a teacher can chose to threaten or punish a student within the confines of a consequence and actually not accomplish their goal. Social contracts can also be very wordy and long documents. With input from students, the list of rules could possibly go on for pages, so the teacher will need to guide them to a sensible number.

3. Based on your readings and class work, present a rationale for including listening lessons in your daily classes that might appear in the student handbook that you compose for your music program. Cite (author, year) inclusions that are not your own. (6 points)

Listening lessons are part of your child's music classroom experience:

- To teach students appropriate audience etiquette.
- To help students focus on one musical element (melody, rhythm, harmony, form) at a time.
- To teach students general musical information, such as families of instruments.
- To teach students to identify beat patterns (two, three, four).
- To teach students about styles of music (.
- To present different kinds of music to students (i.e. spirituals, folk songs, jazz).

- To teach students the concept of same and different (form).
- To enhance directions.

(Above ideas from Dr. Debra Hedden on 18 February, 2008).

4. Compare and contrast the learning characteristics of preschoolers and primary children. (10 points)

Preschoolers are very active learners. Preschool children learn through play, movement, and singing. Preschoolers have very short attention spans, about three minutes, so the activities must be concise and quickly paced. This age group also learns best when songs are simple, catchy and rhythmic, and sometimes the best songs for them are the silliest ones! Active lessons are great, especially those that incorporate movement and rhythm. This age group learns best through play, so activities should be structured so playful experimentation is allowed and encouraged (Levinowitz, 1998). Preschoolers do not wait for directions, so the teacher must be one step ahead of them (all the time). This age group is also not going to be working together, as they are very egocentric. Preschool children will play instruments by themselves, for example, but are not likely to understand group playing.

Primary students, like preschoolers, also learn through movement and singing. Kindergartners, for example, learn primarily through physical engagement. It is best to have them doing activities for most of the lesson, especially because they are so tactile. They have very short attention spans, so lessons need to be effectively paced and interesting to keep their curiosities peaked. First and second graders learn primarily through physical engagement, but also respond very well to iconic presentations. Third and fourth graders are more independent thinkers and begin to understand the abstractions presented by symbols. They enjoy activities that involve small muscle movements and role-playing. Fifth and sixth graders are quite independent and are thinking abstractly very well. These students like to sing a wide variety of songs and have an interest in understanding the how and why of music (Rozmajzl and Boyer).

5. According to Bloom, there are six levels of learning that occur among lower-order thinking skills and higher-order thinking skills. Provide a brief description of each of the six levels and present an example of each one in terms of a music lesson plan. Do not write a lesson plan, merely list the 6 levels, briefly describe each level, and give a short example of each. (18 points)

According to Bloom, the six levels of learning are:

1. **Knowledge** – a lower-order thinking skill; the recall of previously learned information. In a lesson, this could be labeling chord and note names, major and minor scales, reading rhythms, identifying intervals.

2. **Comprehension** – a lower-order thinking skill; understanding the meaning. In a music lesson, this could be describing different styles of music, summarizes the life of a composer.
3. **Application** – a higher-order thinking skill; the use of previously learned information in new situations. In a music lesson, this could be predicting chord changes while playing instruments and singing, relating major and minor keys to “moods” of different pieces.
4. **Analysis** – a higher-order thinking skill; breaking down information into parts and coming to conclusions. In a music lesson, this could be breaking down rhythms to their smallest unit, distinguishes pitches in melodic dictation, points out errors in listening to a recording.
5. **Synthesis** – a higher-order thinking skill; the creative application of prior knowledge to produce something new. In a music lesson, this could be composition and improvisation.
6. **Evaluation** – a higher-order thinking skill; the use meta-cognitive skills in judging the value of material based on a set of personal values and/or opinions. In a music lesson, this could be comparing and contrasting two performances of the same piece of music, critiquing a performance, defending a certain style of music.