

A. Introduction

Contemporary music educators advocate a number of fundamental principles when teaching music which include:

1. Similar to the learning process of other art forms, active involvement and experience in music is crucial in the learning process, which include performing, listening and creating. They are inter-related and of equal importance.
2. A learner in music can express himself/ herself through music. This can nurture his/ her personal growth.

B. The above principles can be fulfilled by the adoption of “experienced-based” learning, which is the basis of the following teaching guidelines:

1. Enrich musical experience: create opportunities for students to encounter music through:
 - (a) the real-life use of music in their everyday lives such as ringtones, background music in various situations, TV jingles and movies theme songs etc.,
 - (b) the provision of appropriate and diverse performance and listening materials which are carefully designed in accordance with different music contexts and themes. Students are encouraged to perform differently and appreciate critically.
2. Organize musical experience: facilitate the accumulation of musical knowledge and the acquisition of practical skills from musical experiences, which students can follow up with self-assessment by:
 - (a) guiding students to consolidate musical experience by questioning in different levels.
 - (b) exploring various ways for students to perform and participate in listening activities to discover how different musical elements interact and relate to each other. For example, different arrangements of metre, rhythm, scale, dynamics, articulation and the timbre of the instruments used which will have varying effects on the music produced.
3. Apply musical experience: through the application of musical knowledge and practical skills, students can create their own musical works to express their own emotions and ideas, and so use music as a medium to communicate and share with others.
 - (a) Utilize different combinations of musical elements to compose songs in accordance with the set themes and assessment criteria.
 - (b) Listen to and perform their works with different techniques followed by self-assessments so that they can make improvements in the future.

C. Teachers can apply the following strategies to encourage students to perform, listen and create:

Performing:

1. Explain the background information and context of the songs or music to be performed. This can lead onto a discussion on how different musical arrangements can contribute

to a variety of intended effects. Teachers may encourage students to compare types of performance and comment on their impact.

2. Remind students of the importance of grasping intonation and the precision of the rhythm of musical work. Teachers may encourage students to feel the mood of the songs/ music, which is vital in performing. Then teachers may evaluate students' performance according to different performing focuses.



Listening:

1. Before they start listening to any musical excerpts, brief the students on the musical background or encourage them to search and collect information for themselves.
2. As well as paying attention to the learning focus for listening, which includes the differentiation of musical elements, teachers can show students the effect created by the variety of musical elements including metre, scale, dynamics, tempo, articulations and timbre of instruments. This broadens the students mind and widens the scope of their musical appraisal.

Creating:

1. Let students compose music for theme and topics that they are interested in. The teacher can outline the requirements of a task, the various methods to use to complete it and the assessment criteria that will be applied. Show students how to appraise previous pieces of work against pre-determined criteria and encourage them to appraise similar musical works for reference.
2. Teachers can remind students to have a clear idea for their composition before they start, and then select a way to complete the task according to their abilities. The students should assess the overall effect given by their musical work and make any necessary amendments with prompt feedback being given by the teachers.
3. Provide suitable opportunities for students to introduce and perform their own musical work. Teachers can show students how to vary their performance and how to assess their own work against pre-determined criteria.

D. Applying appropriate teaching strategies in music lessons:

Teachers can raise the effectiveness of their teaching by following the suggested learning focus in each activity, along with the suggested teaching strategies, when conducting their lessons. Where appropriate, suggested teaching strategies for the content are indicated by an icon –  Performing (Teaching Strategies) OR  Appreciation (Teaching Strategies). Details are included in the accompanying E-Book and on the Teacher's Page of the New Trend in Music Education Website.