

Mapping

Robert E Dunns' "mapping" technique has the students drawing the music. Not making drawings about the music, or pictures inspired by the music, but (compensating for the child's lack of descriptive vocabulary) describing what they hear with color, line and form. Since most children under the age of eleven demonstrate so called "one-track listening" where they fixate on one aspect of the music at a time, their pictures describe different and personal perceptions of the music. By having each child explain his drawing to the group, the children define their own experiences and at the same time share listening strategies with their classmates. These new tools are then used for their next encounter with music.

Methodology – "Mapping"

1. Divide into groups of 3-5 students. Ideally, each group should have a moderator to steer the discussion, keep the group on task, and sum up each discussion.
2. Provide each group with paper and colored pencils, markers or crayons.
3. Play short, instrumental music examples that vary in style and complexity.
4. After listening to each music example, the students should draw the music. This should result in a kind of a map showing what the music did, where the music went, and how it got there.
5. Students in each group should show their map to the rest of the group and interpret their drawing for the others. Questions and comments should be allowed, but kept on task by the moderator.
6. The process should be repeated several times (3 is usually a good number of times for this activity).
7. At the end of the activity, each student should compare all of his or her maps. How do the maps change? Does the last map have more information about the music in it than the first map? If you were to draw a map for the first music example again, would it be any different?
8. The moderator should sum up the activity with a few questions:
 - Can you see any differences in your drawings?
 - How do you listen differently now than when we started?
 - Have you become a better listener?
 - What new words have you learned to describe what you hear?

Visual Thinking Strategies - VTS

Abigail Housen has her main research focus on visual art and aesthetic maturity, but her techniques are equally applicable to music. Her Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) use each student as a resource for exploration and discussion suitable to the student's own level of aesthetic maturity. VTS-discussions should be open, but structured, and require a skillful moderator. The point is not to come to a definite conclusion about the artwork, but to explore a myriad of perceptions, ideas, and opinions about art. The strength of this technique is that it helps students to externalize their internal feelings and thoughts, and to have them challenged and refined through group discussion.

Methodology - VTS

The methodology is centered on small group discussions steered by a moderator, and is based primarily on just three important questions.

1. *What is going on in the music?*
2. *What do you hear that makes you say that?*
3. *What more can you find?*

The central question for young listeners is: "*What is going on in this music?*" It is the first question Housen uses in the Visual Thinking Strategy. By using the active phrase, "*is going on,*" we encourage beginners to do what they do naturally: enter into the music and then create a list or tell a story. This question focuses the listener's attention on the music. When a group of beginner listeners responds to this question, everyone starts listening longer and more intently, discovering new details, and being exposed to multiple points of view. As listeners present their different viewpoints, everyone in the group is able to access new interpretations and strategies.

To keep a group of beginner listeners focused on the music, the question, "*What do you hear that makes you say that?*", asks that listeners support their interpretations. This question concentrates the group discussion on the music, prompting everyone to listen longer and harder, hear more complexity, interact with one another, and revise and expand their initial interpretations. Listeners learn to reason by citing evidence found in the music.

A third question: "*What more can you find?*" revitalizes and renews the process of listening and ensures that the group continues to listen intensely, discovering that the more they listen, the more they hear. The openness of the discussion has the added benefit of assuring the students that there can be more than one correct answer, or indeed no "correct" answer at all.

The most effective experiences for stimulating aesthetic development are:

1. Question-based
2. Give the learner repeated opportunity to construct meaning from different points of view
3. Take place in an environment that supports looking in new and meaningful ways
4. And are inspired by rich, varied, and carefully chosen works of art.