

Mixing Math & Music

Introduction

For my project, I worked one-on-one with a 6th grade student. With mathematics as my concentration and a love for music, I integrated both math and music to create discussion and activities for my student. I used connections to music to cover four different and simple math areas in order to help my student better understand the concepts while having fun along the way.

Objectives

Essential question: Can integrating music with math help students learn and remember math and numeracy skills while also boosting their interest?

Supplemental questions:

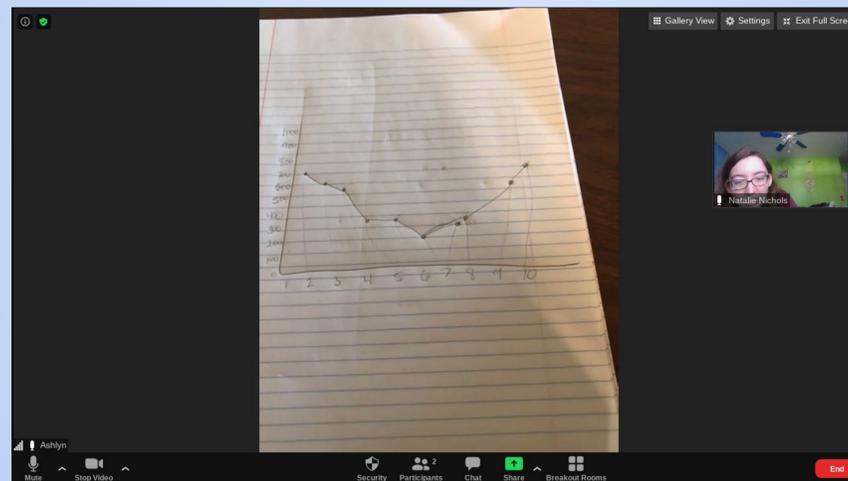
- Does the student have a good idea of the math topic beforehand?
- Do music concepts related to math topics help students understand the connection between the two areas?
- Does allowing students to make creative through different activities increase their interest in both music and math?

Materials & Methods

- 4 Pre-workshop assessments (Multiplication, Fractions, Unit Rate, Graphing; worksheet or Google Forms)
- 20-30 minute discussion/review of math concept (together on whiteboard, School House Rock videos, online games)
- Introduce the connection to music (discussion, song samples, clapping & counting, vocal activities)
- Mini project/assignment song writing to review topics (Google Song Maker) and performances
- 4 Post-workshop assessments (Multiplication, Fractions, Unit Rate, Graphing; worksheet or Google Forms)

Results

- Student learned that music can help with the memorization of math.
- Some post-workshop assessments showed faster testing speed.
- Pre-workshop assessments showed proficiency in math from beginning
- Student showed high interest in both math and music concepts once the music activities were introduced
- Interest and understanding of math and the connection to music shown in ending mini projects



Conclusion

The main thing that I learned from this project was how to adapt to the student and their interactions with the discussion or assignments and how to adapt to time constraints, which was sometimes difficult. This is a good ability to work on, especially with having to work with multiple students as a future teacher. Something else that I learned was the true benefits that including arts in the standard curriculum has with students. Seeing the students' involvement and passion for music really stood out to me and I'm sure that that same passion and excitement for other students can be found in the classroom with other art forms like dancing, music, visual arts, and others.

References

- Hirako, M. (2018). *INTEGRATING MATH AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC INSTRUCTION: A HANDBOOK FOR 5TH AND 6TH GRADE TEACHERS* [PDF]. California State Polytechnic, Pomona.
- Wilson, N. (n.d.). Why is Music Education in Schools Important? Retrieved from <https://theinspiredclassroom.com/2017/05/why-is-music-education-in-schools-important/>

Natalie Nichols
Liberal Studies
Fresno Pacific University