

Differentiating Musikgarten and Kindermusik

From: "Betsy Grizzell" <singgrizzell@comcast.net>
To: <gartenloop@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: **Differentiating MG and KM et al?**
Date: Monday, 21 February, 2005 2:55 AM

Katy,

When I switched from KM to MG, it was becoming clear to me that KM was moving away from being truly developmentally appropriate. They were adding things like recorders, dulcimers, on top of the glocks that children were already having trouble playing. At that time, MG was a simpler, gentler, cheaper, truly-interested-in-the-child program. For me, it was easy to see that MG was interested in how to best present music to the child and the family. KM seemed more interested in how to sell stuff. Over the years, MG has responded to the demand for things like keyboard, multiple-age programs, babies, etc, etc. I'm a bit disturbed by this, especially when I read about teachers having trouble with children who seem too young for a program, or programs being combined simply because there a not enough students to keep them separate. But, MG allows teachers to adapt to suit their needs. KM keeps a tight, franchise-like hold on their program. They also seem more interested in selling materials than educating families. Why else would their "Maestro" teachers be chosen based on sales?

As an educator, it's important to know all of the whys and wherefores of the different programs and to be able to verbalize them. But parents generally want an easy answer. I also believe that, in "selling" my program, I should try not to bash another. So I try to talk up MG: truly developmentally appropriate, flexible, a kind of whole language approach to music literacy.

I also believe that there are crummy MG teachers, and great KM teachers. In other words, it's more about you than the curriculum. Do your best to be true to your own teaching vision. Parents who want your kind of program will come to you.

Betsy Grizzell

----- Original Message -----

From: Katy Gilberts
To: gartenloop@yahoogroups.com
Sent: Saturday, February 19, 2005 9:49 PM
Subject: [gartenloop] Differentiating MG and KM et al?

I'm refreshing my brain to answer questions more effectively, regarding why MG is what I recommend and "do". I realize this is an "old news" question, but I can't seem to find in my reams of training notes what the answers are, for myself and especially for potential customers. I'm considering just knowing what I teach and not attempt to give an inservice of the city's musical and/or movement offerings, yet I believe knowing my "competition" is not only important for marketing but personal clarity as well.

Not to ask you all to do my thinking for me, I have correctly/incorrectly compiled the following, but I'd so appreciate any input. I have another demo class in four days,

Differentiating Musikgarten and Kindermusik

thus the review and such. Keep in mind, if you would, that I am recently raising my head from the day-to-day teaching and bleary-eyed fatigue [normal not bad fatigue], and now I'm attempting to remember the basics again -- yes, primarily for my demo class, as far as what brought me to do it today, lol. I am just looking for information, not controversy. I am so proud of what I teach that I'll likely not teach anything else ever, albeit in my first year only so who knows, but I would love a more "veteran" view of how to explain what I/we do, when compared to others. I'd love input from KM teachers, too. Aren't there some on this site? Anyway, in no particular order:

a.. (training notes) MG based on developmental concepts AND as a pathway to literacy

b.. Lorna, "Our primary purpose is musik-making in the home." (same as KM, right?)

c.. Reading KM's site, I mainly see a difference in that "pathway to literacy" isn't emphasized as much as all the other things (music at home, family a key participant, music in a child's life, all sound the same as MG)

d.. Ultimately, prepare a child to play by ear AND by note, waiting until the last "minute" to add the written music. Prepare child for private lessons, if desired, at completion of our program.

e.. The parallel of music literacy and language literacy supports the sequential curricula we use as well as how a child's learning with MG enhances language and other developmental processes. (I just got docked half a grade on that sentence, from my English professor.....)

f.. (A favorite of mine) Infuses American folk songs (and other nationalities) into our students' and families' lives, when they could be so easily forgotten.

g.. The parental presence creates an "informal learning" experience which is best, at the ages we feel it is needed to do so. This includes even classes where 5-15 minutes of parental presence is required, versus the whole class with younger ones.

h.. MG uses several songs throughout the 0-9 curriculum, as familiar songs are easier to springboard new learning from. (that grammar professor again.....)

i.. MG's founder considered "lower-cost materials" as a foundational element of MG.

j.. MG's emphasis is less visual than "others" and believes that the visual is all around us and using other senses such as the oft-ignored ear or voice is better for learning and taking music home with you. Imagination is emphasized over tangible books, at times anyway, and multi-sensory experiences are emphasized over, again, purely visual props or materials. Other programs are multi-sensory but some are too "visual" at least "too" in the sense of MG's priorities.

Well, that's enough, as I may be trying to avoid doing the laundry and packing for a short vacation!!! LOL

Thanks in advance!
Katy, Seattle