

Switching from Kindermusik to Musikgarten

Extracted from Gartenloop at YAHOO.com Posted by: Ruth Jan 26 2004, 10:10 PM

Question: How do I switch from teaching Kindermusik to Musikgarten?

From: "Bill and Laurie Mueller" <laurie.mueller@g...>

Date: Sat Sep 4, 1999 6:58 am

Subject: "Young Child" letter

OK, everyone: the following is the letter I sent to my "Young Child" families when I decided to switch to Music Makers. Since I am currently teaching 12 week semesters, I am teaching each (5 week) unit of Music Makers for 6 weeks:

To my wonderful "Young Child" families,

This summer, I had the opportunity to attend two events sponsored by Musikgarten, another music curriculum for young children. Having gained an overview of their product, and comparing it to Kindermusik, I have decided to switch ALL CURRICULA to Musikgarten this coming term, with the exception, for one year only, of Growing with Kindermusik. What this means for you is: Your child will be taught the Musikgarten "Music Makers" curriculum, not the "Kindermusik for the Young Child" that I had advertised. Financially, the bottom line is YOU SAVE \$15, because the materials are less expensive. Therefore, the tuition due for this program will be \$135, not \$150 as advertised.

The reason I am "jumping ship" is because, simply, I feel this curriculum is musically superior to the one(s) published by Kindermusik. The progression of learning makes more sense and gives the children a better foundation for music literacy. Music literacy is being able to look at a piece of music and being able to hear "in your head" what it should sound like. It's kind of like being able to read -- you are a literate person if you can read this letter; you are not a literate person if what you see is a jumble of alphabet letters that don't make any sense. The musically literate person is not one who can merely look at music and say, "That's middle C," or, "that's a whole note," but one who can hear the phrases in their mind's ear. This is my goal for your children! We may not achieve it every time, but we will give them a SOLID foundation toward that end.

Like Kindermusik for the Young Child, Music Makers is a two year

curriculum (although you are not obligated to complete it). Music Makers does not require any mandatory instruments for the children to take home, although we will be working with a variety of pitched (ie glockenspiels) and nonpitched (ie drums and other percussion) instruments in class. This is in contrast to Kindermusik, which includes the children purchasing a glockenspiel, a recorder, and a dulcimer before the end of the two year program, at an expense to the parent of close to \$100 for instruments alone. The Musikgarten philosophy is that it is better to help the children to look FORWARD to the future discipline of more formal music lessons than simply to dabble in one instrument or another.

The first year, called "Music Makers at Home in the World," includes two six-week units per semester. The two units for fall will be "My Home Place" and "My Neighborhood Community." Family materials for EACH unit include a song/story cassette, poster with game pieces, instrument page, notation game, and parents' book. You may pick up your cassette and parents' book for the first unit in the St. Andrew's church office anytime after Monday, August 16, or you can wait until the first day of class. Please call the office first, to make sure someone is there. I will leave them marked with your name in my husband's (Pastor Mueller's) office.

Posters and notation games will be distributed in class.

I would like to invite you to stay for the entire first class (Sept 11), if you are able. Then you'll be able to see and experience the kinds of things we will be doing. I know 9:00 comes early, but what a great way to start the day! Some of you have other children in the Cycles class, and you will need to be with them. We'll be sorry to miss you, but be sure to join us at the end of Cycles for the end of our class!

I'm really looking forward to some new adventures in music making, and the beginning of music literacy for your children!

Sincerely,

Laurie S. Mueller

From: Dsd551@xxx.xxx
Date: Tue Aug 3, 1999 10:23 pm

I "made the switch" with very little fuss; I only lost one family, as far as I know. It's best to have a handout to give everyone ...but be prepared to also verbally explain. Many parents do not read papers! However you do it, make sure you do it with the utmost confidence. Do not apologize for your professional decision and make sure you have "sound" reasons that you can express well. I always mention that :
.....the same authors are at work in the "new' curriculum
.....that I am much more flexible as a teacher
..... that there is much more active music making and ear training going on than ever,
.....and of course, the cost to the parent is reasonable.

Always it should be made clear that the choice of curriculum is the teachers choice, as the teacher is the one that has to make it "come alive" Ultimately parents are looking for a relationship with the child and quality teaching, not curriculum anyway. BUT If they are caught up in "Name recognition" you may have to directly assure them of the quality of the newer curriculum.

Dorothy Denton. Mansfield, Ohio

From: SegueNC@a...
Date: Sat Jul 31, 1999 11:53 pm
Subject: Re: Changing brand names! And some book reviews!

As you can imagine, I handle the KM question a lot. For those of you who have not taught that program, **I have found it saves time and breath to ask the person what they know about that organization, then base your conversation on that knowledge.** Those of you who have taught it I'm sure have other comments you might want to share 😊

Scott

Message 614 of 4863 |

From: "Jim Keen " <ro@k...>
Date: Sat Jul 15, 2000 9:19 pm
Subject: Switching Programs

I didn't give my parents a letter but instead just told them that after much thought and consideration I felt it was important for me to give them the best available. As an educator I am always attending workshops and reading research results and information and because I have the child and the families best interest at heart this is what I am going to do. I have over 100 students and I lost two families who were related! Their reasons were not justified but I let them go. I found that people respect me and my input into their lives and that I will do what is best for them. Talking about the importance of quality of the programming and not the glitz of the home-materials helps. Good luck and I am sure that you will come through this with flying colors. I did the switch cold turkey and it was the best thing I ever did!

Roann of Colorado Springs

Message 680 of 4863 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message Index
Msg #

From: JoanneTMS@a...
Date: Fri Aug 11, 2000 6:43 am
Subject: Re: [gartenloop] letting parents know

I have never taught KM, but many parents who inquire about my studio have heard of Kindermusic, but have never heard of Musik Garten.

I simply tell them that Kindermusic is a program that Audrey and Lorna wrote many years ago. **Musik Garten is the newest program that they have developed.**

Most parents want the most up to date program.

Joanne
NJ

From: Betsy Grizzell <chrisrosegriz@e...>
Date: Fri Aug 11, 2000 11:02 am
Subject: Re: [gartenloop] letting parents know

Write down a few reasons why MG is better than KM, using positive phrases whenever possible. (I admit that I get into KM bashing sometimes, but it can turn parents off.) Keep your list by the phone, or use it as an outline when you talk to your parents.

For me, that first year was sooo difficult, because I was not sure what I was doing! But several years into making the BIG SWITCH, I am happier than ever, and find defending my decision VERY easy. I have written about the switch in my newsletters, and would be happy to forward copies to you (snail mail, please).

Re: YC year 2: In the first year of my BIG SWITCH, I offered YC Year 2. I thought I should finish up those children in the program they started in. I made it clear that this would be the end of KM for my studio.
Good luck! Be prepared for some parents to go with the big name, but know that many others will follow you.

Betsy Grizzell

Message 3184 of 5164 |

From: "Betsy Grizzell" <singgrizzell@e...>
Date: Fri Jan 17, 2003 2:03 pm
Subject: KM vs MG: this is long

Here are some newsletter articles from when I began adding MG classes to my KM lineup. Of course, I talked to the parents in class quite a bit, and made sure they understood why I was doing it.

Here is one of my first efforts to explain my decision to offer MG:

Well, the first semester of Betsy's MusiKids is almost over. The Kindermusik classes, of course, are coasting along. After all, this is my 6th year of teaching Kindermusik (that makes me a KM veteran!). But what about the new Musikgarten classes? Rather than whine about having to plan 4new classes a week, including trying to memorize the many, many songs that go with those lessons, let me say what I like about Musikgarten:

. Musikgarten is about education, not entertainment.

As a music educator, I like this!! Not only has Musikgarten put together a great curriculum, but they continue to report on the newest findings in music education. The materials, including the home tapes, are meant to enhance the classroom experience, not to provide quick-paced entertainment for the child.

. Musikgarten uses a slower, gentler approach.

I especially like the nature themes, and I know the children do, too! The children also like the repetition of material and the longer activities. This is not a sound-bite approach.

.Musikgarten classes are for children!

Obviously, you say, but this means that sometimes things are less than stimulating for the adults. Those long scarf dances, long rocking songs, and frequent repetitions of activities may be annoying to some adults, but they're designed to fit children's needs. And the parents who have expressed concern about Musikgarten have children who are excelling in class! (Thanks for your honesty, folks, I truly appreciate the feedback!)

.Musikgarten's founder and training staff are dedicated educators.

The talk coming from Musikgarten (in their newsletters, in phone conversations, in their training courses) is not about how to increase the size of one's studio (an all-too-annoying company line with some other music programs), but how one can best teach music to children.

I'm very pleased with my decision to teach Musikgarten classes, along with a handful of Kindermusik classes. I have some tweaking to do and some bugs to work out--I did this when I first started Kindermusik, too. (The results of end-of-semester evaluation forms will help; I look forward to your comments!) As a music educator, I know Musikgarten is the route I want to take. The business end of my studio is taking care of itself--unfortunately, I often must turn people away. But as a music educator, I know that the work is never done. And working with a team that is dedicated to children and music will fulfill my desire to be the best music teacher I can be.

This one came when I decided to leave KM:

Last fall we decided to teach MusikGarten. Many of you stuck with us, even though there were a few problems. In 1999, we fine-tuned the programs,

thanks to your frank comments in the Course Evaluations. This fall, we will cut the cord! Due to Kindermusik's continued revisions and price increases (\$43.95 plus costs for Beginnings materials!), and an ever-increasing bottom-line orientation, we will discontinue our Kindermusikofferings. This is not due to any blind loyalty to MusikGarten's founders, as suggested by Kindermusik in a recent Wall Street Journal article – we did not know the MusikGarten team before we went looking for an alternative to Kindermusik. It is due to the belief that MusikGarten has children firmly in mind, and offers a better (if less glossy) product for bringing the joys of music to children. This cord-cutting is a scary prospect -- being able to advertise as a KinderMusik instructor has brought many parents our way. But educational philosophy wins out over bottom line!

Thanks to all our loyal parents, especially the ones who continue to comment and question, and help us to improve! And thanks for your many referrals, too!

Here is my current (and on-going) blurb. I try to not mention KM at all.

Why Musikgarten?

I choose to teach Musikgarten because it is, educationally, so good! I stick with Musikgarten because I like their quality and integrity. Musikgarten is about Music and Children. Their instruments are developmentally appropriate, and made of natural materials, not plastic! Home materials arrive on time, and feature excellent musical content. And Musikgarten instructors are trained in person, not through correspondence-type courses.

This is inserted into my newsletter for new inquiries.

Reading Music

There are many goals at Betsy's MusiKids. We hope to show the children that music is fun. We strive to show the parents how to experience music with their child, not only in class, but at home. And one of our primary academic goals is Music Literacy--knowing how to decipher a page of music. Here's how it happens:

- Children must have ample aural and oral experiences to learn any language.
Simple songs allow all the classes to hear & sing the "language" of music!

- Patterns are experienced: simple tonal or rhythmic patterns are isolated and receive aural & oral attention; we listen to & repeat simple patterns in Family Music with "ba-bas".
- Our patterns are transferred to age-appropriate instruments. Orff instruments (large-barred xylophones and metallophones) are easy to play, and the relationships of the tones in the patterns are now seen and felt. Rhythmic patterns are felt on drums. These experiences start in Cycle of Seasons and continue throughout Music Makers Years 1 & 2.
- Our patterns receive names. Just as a furry animal climbing a tree is labeled a "squirrel", so a pattern of three descending tones of a minor third & major third becomes "sol-mi-do". Using solfege not only names the patterns but defines the relationships of its components: sol to mi is always a certain sound (minor third). Rhythms also are named with patterns: Gordon "du-days". Music Maker students become solfege & du-day meisters!
- Now our patterns are linked to pictures: musical notation. The notation for "sol-mi-do" makes sense to the child because they have heard it, sung it, & played it. The child is then able to look for that pattern & others in a piece of music. In Music Makers Year 2, children are handed a song sheet and proceed to "read" it.
It's very much like learning any language. Hearing and speaking French (experiencing it aurally & orally) paves the way for reading and writing French. (Now, what's French for "squirrel?")

[Message 3193 of 5164](#) | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) [[Up Thread](#)] [Message Index](#)
[Msg #](#)

From: "Dixie Cramer" <kmofww@v...>
Date: Wed Jan 22, 2003 8:46 pm
Subject: Re: [gartenloop] KM vs. MG again

In spite of my love for KM (which I've taught for 10 yrs.) I had such a hard time justifying IT & making it work for me that I switched to Cycles by MG for 3 & 4-yr.-olds last fall. At this time I have no intention of switching all my curricula over to MG, but I've felt very successful with Cycles. The activities are presented simply & there's not alot of clutter to wade through in learning each lesson. The parents of my students seem pleased with the simpler home materials (thus lower cost) & happy with the curriculum. I create home activities & send home an overview for the

semester, listing which activity goes with which lesson. If KI continues to revise its curricula, I will probably begin switching to MG as each level undergoes revision. If I have to learn new curricula, I might as well learn a program I can use indefinitely. At this point my studio is undergoing a name change & a new look to accommodate my diverse offerings. Kind of hard to deal with those changes, but exciting, too!

Best Wishes,
Dixie in WA

Message 3199 of 5164 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message Index
Msg #

From: cnhuffman@a...
Date: Sat Jan 25, 2003 9:25 am
Subject: Re: [gartenloop] KM vs. MG again

Hi!

I have not made the switch from teaching KM to teaching MG, but I did take my daughter to both MG & KM classes prior to teaching MG myself, and started teaching MG in a community that only knew KM until NOW! I would like to share a few ideas. Most of the parents I work with, including myself, in the babies/toddlers classes overwhelmingly prefer the MG classes because they really feel that they are getting their money's worth, learning fundamental musical literacy (with the patterning activities, etc.), and they like the pace and simple instruments, etc. They absolutely love the CDs for their exceptional quality and simplicity. Second, as far as teaching the MG curriculum for the babies/toddlers there is quite a bit of common material, songs & activities, and I've certainly used some of the ideas I got while doing KM with my child in my own teaching of MG. The way the MG curriculum guidebooks are set up, they are so easy to follow and the lesson suggestions are so well-constructed, that I would urge you to simply consider taking that leap and going for it (your parents are going to have to purchase new KM materials each session anyway...why not try something newer and better?). I think you will find your background in KM will add extra special touches to your teaching of MG, and you will not be sorry you did it for one second.

The continuity you will achieve with using MG for babies/toddlers as a base leading up to Cycles and Keyboards is truly worth the effort. Finally, the MG workshops offered in the summer were just a rewarding and helpful experience. If you have the opportunity to take the

workshops, DO IT! Then your transition will truly be a "piece of cake." And your parents can't help, but appreciate all the hard work you're doing to make their child's musical journey the best of all possible experiences!

From a KM & MG Mom, and MG teacher...
Cindy Huffman
Musikgarten of Tallahassee

Posted by: ellenjoh Aug 2 2004, 02:28 AM

Message 3203 of 5164 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message Index
Msg #

From: dsd551@a...
Date: Mon Jan 27, 2003 11:13 am
Subject: Re: [gartenloop] Digest Number 790

Dear Loopers-on -the -Fence:

I also switched to MG several years ago and never looked back. I found it easy to switch when I was very matter-of-fact with my parents. I still have people calling me the Kindermusik lady....but i don't care as long as they sign up!

I would recommend switching all levels of material / curriculi at once, as they reinforce and support each other in MG. That continuity and consistency of philosophy and CD quality throughout the program from birth to early piano is what I treasure in the MG curriculum. I can then be much more creatively consistent (not boring or breathless) as a teacher. Just get the teachers manuals early and give yourself time to get comfortable with some new music; I found it rather easy. I also found myself "at home".

Dorothy Denton
MUSIC MOVES STUDIO
Mansfield, ohio

[Message 3204 of 5164](#) | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) [[Up Thread](#)] [Message Index](#)
Msg #

From: Roann Keen <ro@k...>
Date: Tue Jan 28, 2003 10:44 am
Subject: Re: on-the-fencers

I did the switch slowly. Had I to do it again I would have made the switch immediately as Dorothy says. The continuity with-in the studio is important and I felt so divided. I too worried about my parents but was encouraged by others that my parents follow and come to me because of my teaching and ability to relate to the child not because of what I teach. My parents have learned to trust me and what I feel is best for my students and their children.

The freedom I have in teaching Musikgarten, the support and encouragement from headquarters and other teachers; the on-going study of music, brain development and early learning that takes place at Musikgarten; MG's open ear to the teachers teaching their curriculum and the willingness to address their concerns; the no-frills but superior quality approach to family materials; the excellent quality of their educational staff and hands-on training is enough to convince me that I have chosen correctly.

Roann Keen, Colorado Springs

[Message 3206 of 5164](#) | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) [[Up Thread](#)] [Message Index](#)
Msg #

From: "Betsy Grizzell" <singgrizzell@e...>
Date: Tue Jan 28, 2003 11:16 am
Subject: making the switch to MG

One of the most important things to do is to educate the parents on why you're switching and what to expect. The no-frills materials can be disappointing to some. They need to know that the money went into the product, not the packaging. Educate them, too, on the continuity from one level to the next. In Family Music, while we're doing an activity, I'll

quickly point to the wall where I have pattern cards and song sheets from Music Makers Home and World displayed. I'll mention that this song will come back again, and we'll be doing such and such with it. This can take less than a minute.

If something in the curriculum troubles you or your parents, call MG. They will be able to tell you why they have done something a particular way.

You can pass that info on to your parents. I did this when I first tackled patterns and solfege vs F-A-C-E.

Finally, constantly remind the parents that this class is for their children, not for them. For instance, it's not the children who need new programs/books/songs. They prefer repetition! It's the parents who get bored. I tell them so, reminding them to look at their child and see how they enjoy the repetition.

Betsy Grizzell
Naperville, IL

[Message 3212 of 5164](#) | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) [[Up Thread](#)] [Message Index](#)
[Msg #](#)

From: "Robin Knorr" <theknorrs@i...>

Date: Tue Jan 28, 2003 9:43 pm

Subject: Musikgarten vs. Kindermusik

Hi. I'm sorry I'm a bit behind. I'm just catching my breath starting this semester's classes! Some of the highlights I give my parents as to why I switched from KM to MG are below. I have attached an excerpt from my parent orientation notes that I use to speak from. Most of the attached you should all be familiar with, however, once I've gone through these points with my parents during orientation, I've never had anyone question my switch. I think one magic line sums it up:

Kindermusik is entertainment and Musikgarten is music education. I like to start my orientation by asking how many parents play an instrument. Then I ask how many wish they did? Then I ask, of those who do play an instrument, how many are sorry they play? This always leads the parents to realize that this class is not just a one semester class. It's a 6 year process of development. Let me know if you have any questions and

I hope you all have a great semester! Regards, Robin in Indiana :-)
p.s.- The "other program" is obviously Kindermusik.

Let's discuss why I switched to the Musikgarten curricula:

Musikgarten is an aural program that teaches music to children as they learn language, through listening and imitation.

Musikgarten uses poetry to introduce the concept of rhythm in language. The other program doesn't offer poetry as a way to highlight the rhythm in words.

Musikgarten uses storytelling rather than reading a story during story time. Again, this is done to encourage the development of the children's active listening skills. When the visual stimulus (a book) is not present, the visual system is not in competition with the aural system. Don't misunderstand. I love reading to my children as much as the next parent. However, during this class, which is an aural class, I'm going to try to find and activate the children's active listening skills by not having visual distractions in the room.

Musikgarten asks that parents attend with their children through the Cycles class. There are a number of students that just weren't ready to attend class by themselves at age 3. Also, in order to continue the musical learning at home, we need to have the child's best teacher, YOU, in class with us! The other program asks that children come alone to class by age 3.

Musikgarten has a core group of songs that move with the children as they progress from one class level to the next. By the time the children reach the keyboard class, they are extremely familiar with many of the songs they will be playing by ear in the keyboard class. Isn't that brilliant!? If they have the song in their head, they can play it by ear on the piano. As Maria Montessori stated, "the child now has a self correcting instrument" and the child will know if they are playing it correctly and will have the motivation to play it until it is correct! The other program doesn't offer a keyboard program.

Musikgarten integrates rhythmic and tonal patterns into every lesson. Let's discuss the tonal patterns first. Tonal patterns are introduced into lessons immediately starting with the baby class, thus stressing the importance of aural (active listening) training from birth. The other program does not use tonal patterns in its classes. The tonal language used in Musikgarten is solfege. The patterns will begin in the baby and toddler classes on neutral syllables. Bum, Bum, Bum, As the children progress through Cycles, they will be able to repeat

those patterns, on pitch. Once they can repeat them on pitch, I will give them the tonal language:

Sol Mi Do Do Mi Sol Sol Sol Mi Sol Sol Do.

I may do monthly assessments of the children. They will think they are singing for fun into the magic microphone. The assessments are for me to understand where the class is. It also gives them a solo opportunity in a safe and positive environment. This opportunity is never provided in the other program.

We will use the Edwin Gordon rhythm language in our classes. The other

music program uses the Kodaly (ta, ti ti) rhythm method, but only in the 5-7 yr. class. Zoltan Kodaly was a twentieth century Hungarian composer. Kodaly assigned the rhythm language based on the note length (all quarter notes are "ta". all eighth notes are "ti"). Gordon assigned his rhythm method based on the position a note holds in a measure of music.

This method is more functional and is an improvement over any other type of rhythm language because the down beat or macro beat is always identified with the same "word", "du", as is any subdivisions (micro beat) of the down beat ("du de"). This method begins in the baby class on neutral syllables..ba, ba ba ba-ba, ba-ba ba-ba ba. As the children progress through the toddler class into Cycles, they will begin to "feel" the beat and return the rhythm patterns accurately. When they can repeat accurately, I will feed them the rhythm language du du du du-de du-de du-de du-de du.

For all of these reasons, I feel that Musikgarten is a superior choice for early childhood music education and I appreciate your confidence during this transition.

Message 3213 of 5164 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message Index
Msg #

From: "Robin Knorr" <theknorrs@i...>
Date: Tue Jan 28, 2003 10:09 pm
Subject: Switching from KM to MG - Jean Pr

Hi Jean!

I switched all of my classes last year...babies through Music Makers (age 6). I'm not going to pretend it was easy.but it was definitely worth the effort. Making a clean break worked best for me. In order to sell MG to my families, I felt like I had to go with the whole program. I had a little resistance from my parents but not much the first semester. This semester, everyone is on board 100%! Find a good mentor (I am very fortunate to work with a studio partner that can help me when I need it!) and talk to everyone on the gartenloop. They are a good resource for encouragement and ideas. Also, after you complete your first semester, you'll be delighted to know that the songs are repeated in the other classes.one of the brilliant building blocks to music literacy that MG has incorporated into their classes. The children repeat the songs in several classes only to go on to play them by ear at the piano...in short, this makes your lesson preparation easier! Beware, however, that some songs may resemble songs you learned in the Kindermusik curricula but they are just a little different.I made the mistake just this week of singing a song I learned while doing Kindermusik only to learn that it wasn't quite the same in the Musikgarten curricula.it keeps you on your toes!

I wish you luck! Let me know if you want to discuss the switch further!

Regards,

Robin in Indiana :-)

[Message 3325 of 5173](#) | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) [[Up Thread](#)] [Message Index](#)
Msg # Go

From: Glenda Evans <kmjourneys@s...>

Date: Fri Mar 21, 2003 1:56 pm

Subject: RE: [gartenloop] taught Kindermusik; now beginning own business with Musikgarten

Hii Teresa,

I am not sure if you were referring to just business training or the curriculum training as well.

I would definitely recommend taking any training you can. I too am a fully trained in KM and making the switch to MG.

I am currently doing the KM OT, MG Cycles and YC both semesters. I will be taking MMH and MMK this spring and adding both to my program

in the fall.

I participated in a condensed MG training for KM teachers and it was great to get an overview of the sequencing and building blocks that prepare for each age level. It totally sold me on the MG philosophy. I find the manual very basic -easy to use, but to make it come alive you need to see how master teachers do it. You will also draw a lot on your past experience with KM.

If I were starting over I would start with Toddlers and Cycles (Toddlers first)(That's what I did with KM) I find the Toddler age is most popular . Then it feeds into the Cycles age, which then feeds into the next levels. Then you also will get to "grow" with the program, experiencing how the activities carry over to the next level. Musikgarten also offers audit classes for those trained to go back and take a course again for very reduced fee. What a great opportunity to see another personality's approach to presenting the curriculum and I always pick up more after I've taught something -that's when the questions come.

(I find many drop out at Cycles age because they go to preschool and some get music specialists there or feel it's enough) But then I'll get those next siblings coming back to Toddler age.

Glenda

I am fully trained (before the video-training) in and have taught all curriculums in Kindermusik; however, I did not take their business course. Now that I have moved to a new state, I want to start my own business using the Musikgarten curriculum.

Teresa in Natchez, Mississippi

Message 5541 of 6031 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message Index

Msg # Go

From: Glenda Evans <kmjourneys@s...>

Date: Sat Sep 18, 2004 5:21 pm

Subject: RE: [gartenloop] Why MMH vs YC

Hi Lisa,

Here is my long answer to your question -it's not a simple answer for me. I enjoyed the YC program -I had taught it since the revision. Since my

beginning with KM, I had gone through curriculum change at each level and found the materials getting more elaborate and expensive. I taught the first year of IT (their latest revision) and felt it was more like playschool than what I wanted in a music class. I am a piano teacher have had some Orff training and taught Kodaly for a music school for a short period.)- I felt four semesters of the same type of activities -just a different theme would not provide older children with what they are capable of.

So I switched to Cycles the next year. I would have continued with YC but when I heard Lorna do a presentation on the philosophy of Musikgarten and saw the wonderful skill sequence that evolves from babies, toddler, through to 7 yr old and the KB it just made so much more sense for me to offer this approach. I love the way songs come back through the different age levels - they become so familiar to the children, and in the next level, they are able to do more extensions with that song. Siblings that have heard it on the older child's CD light up and exclaim "I know that one!"

We really do want children and families to build a repertoire of songs that will be sung again and again and passed on to the next generation. If they just learn only new songs every semester -they will soon be forgotten.

Whenever I ask children for a favourite song -at any age, Twinkle Little Star always comes up. They love it and they remember it. It's probably sung in every school, nursery and kindergarten and home.

I found that the retention from YC to piano lessons didn't seem to transfer like I would have expected. They forgot what G etc. was on the staff , and didn't connect the relationship of notes. Some still struggled with relearning the notes and reading. Their ears were good though. I believe the playing on the glock was more memorizing the dots. They did get a great introduction to a variety of instruments though and it was fun. I have used the ta's and titi's in piano teaching for years but also found it was more limited to the first year and they still didn't "feel" the rhythm.

With MG, the Gordon rhythm patterns are amazing. Children pick up the simple to complex rhythm patterns and can feel it very naturally, (which is what we want). They can easily differentiate duple from triple time because it has a different language. They can feel it, think it, hear it and read it, write it, compose and improvise.

With MG we use sol-fège instead of direct pitch)G,A,B etc. This is a great skill to develop, because the ear is developed in a way that they can transpose to higher or lower pitches using the same language, (it's

taught in children's choirs) and they can differentiate between major and minor quite easily.

If they go on to MG keyboard and later piano they are further ahead in ear training and can play their songs that they have sung, in different keys.

Transposing isn't a natural skill for most traditional piano students because of learning to read fixed notes rather than hearing and seeing the patterns.

My parents? I explained why I was making the change -that it was a tough decision. But because I was now doing the keyboard program and I understood the skill learning Sequence it just made much more sense to this. For those new to the program of course it wasn't an issue. Of returning families, two expressed disappointment (they wanted the same program for sibs).

Several actually expressed they were glad and told me why which I was very pleased to hear. Others expressed confidence in me with the decision.

YC Teacher's guide is very easy to follow. I find MG is a lot more work to prepare and sort through but I am glad I made this decision. I've learned a lot more about what I'm doing and why (I still have lots more to learn – and that's what makes it exciting and a challenge.)

If you decide to do the Musikgarten keyboard program and continue with the younger classes you will understand what I've written and will eventually want to switch.

Hope this has been of help to you and others.

Glenda

From: "Laurie Mueller" <gartenmusik@v...>
Date: Wed Dec 22, 2004 2:49 am
Subject: switching programs

This is only one opinion, but here goes.

If you want to change to MG, just change. Don't worry about gradual, or not having a baby class, or whatever. You are the teacher and the business owner. You know what is best for your business and you know what you want to do. What curriculum you choose to use may be your most important decision, as far as teaching. Why let parents dictate that choice? These parents are with you for a relatively short time; your business is forever. You cannot let them make this important decision for you.

That said, you can't present it to them that way. **You need to say to them, in an excited way, that you have discovered THE best way to teach children music and you will be offering this program** beginning (this winter, next fall, whenever).

It may be a good idea to write a letter to your current families, sharing your excitement about the MG curriculum, and briefly, why you are excited. I get excited about MG because when a child goes through this program, they become musically literate. This means, not only can they enjoy hearing and dancing to music, they can enjoy making (composing!) their own music, and "reading" music. MG is fun, but it's fun with an incredible bonus – the whole program is woven together with the purpose of developing musically literate, creative human beings (and also emphasizes the role of the family).

I wrote a letter to my families years ago -- their children had taken "Growing with Kindermusik" and I had gotten them excited about what was coming in "Km for the Young Child" before I took MG training and changed my mind! I had gotten them all psyched that they would get glocks, and now they wouldn't. So I wrote them a letter telling them why I was switching, and offering to answer any further questions they had. They all stayed, because they sensed that I was excited about what this program would do for their children -- and that I cared about giving them the best program I could offer.

The transition itself was not without bumps, but I wouldn't have done it any other way. I agonized over how to do this, but once it was "done" I never looked back. Think about what your future with MG looks like, instead of just concentrating on how difficult it is right now to transition.

Good luck -- you can do this!

--Laurie in PA