

FACE THE MUSIC . . .

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Take a moment to consider the figurative meaning of “face the music:” to face the consequences. What are the consequences of engaging in the pursuits of music, opera, dance and theatre? Experts tell us about the “Mozart Effect,” that you’re sure to experience increased cognitive powers if you listen to classical music. They tell us that children who engage in the arts are better students and become more productive, creative adults, leading to better jobs, and becoming more savvy consumers. Former Secretary of Education Richard Riley was recently quoted as saying: “If young Americans are to succeed and to contribute to what former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan described as our ‘economy of ideas,’ they will need an education that develops imaginative, flexible, and tough-minded thinking. The arts powerfully nurture the ability to think in this manner.”

But maybe the consequences of engaging in the arts are simply to experience great beauty; to be moved to laughter and tears or to action, to inspire discussion and challenge ideas; to exercise the complete range of human emotions; to pass on our values throughout history, to restore humanity itself. These are the consequences that await young adults who “face the music.”

THE VALUE OF BEING ABLE TO THINK “SYMPHONICALLY”

A multiplicity of systems and intelligences are part of who we are and what we need in order to experience life to its fullest. According to Howard Gardner of Harvard University, “we are all able to know the world through language, logical-mathematical analysis, spatial representation, musical thinking, the use of the body to solve problems or to make things, an understanding of other individuals, and an understanding of ourselves. Where individuals differ is in the strength of these intelligences and in the ways in which such intelligences are invoked and combined to carry out different tasks, solve diverse problems, and progress in various domains.” We need every possible way to represent, interpret, and communicate about our world because of a very simple reason: no one way can provide a complete picture.

- **Linguistic Intelligence** – the ability to communicate through the spoken and written word. Our ability to think like an author, a poet, or a journalist.
- **Spatial Intelligence** – the ability to visualize in multiple dimensions, shapes and colors. Our ability to think like a graphic designer, an architect, or a visual artist.
- **Logical Intelligence** – the ability to analyze, quantify and objectively reason. Our ability to think like a mathematician, a physicist, or an engineer.
- **Naturalistic Intelligence** - the ability to comprehend, value and preserve the ecosystems of the world. Our ability to think like a biologist, a meteorologist, or an environmentalist.
- **Kinesthetic Intelligence** – the ability to understand, train and maintain the human body. Our ability to think like a physician, work like a craftsman, or move like an athlete.

- **Existential Intelligence** – the ability to use collective and cultural facts, values and beliefs to understand the world and human consciousness. Our ability to think like a philosopher or an archeologist.
- **Interpersonal Intelligence** – the ability to interact, socialize, and collaborate with other people. Our ability to think like a sociologist.
- **Intrapersonal Intelligence** – the ability to self-reflect, self-evaluate, self-direct and self-discipline personal goals, needs and actions. Our ability to think like a psychologist.
- **MUSICAL INTELLIGENCE** – the ability to not only imagine, create, and perform in sound, but to think *SYMPHONICALLY*. Musical intelligence combines the ability to synthesize disjointed pieces of information into a creative interpretation with the skills to communicate that interpretation, individually or as a member of a team, in a memorable context with emotional impact. **Our ability to think like a MUSICIAN not just a performer.**

What VALUE should parents place on the ability to THINK like a musician?

Students skilled in music possess the fine motor skills, cognitive capabilities, creative perspectives and collaborative capacities for:

- 1) Understanding human experiences, both past and present;
- 2) Learning to adapt to and respect others' ways of thinking, working, and expressing themselves;
- 3) Learning artistic modes of problem solving, which bring an array of expressive, analytical, creative and developmental tools to every human situation;
- 4) Understanding the influences of the arts in their power to create and reflect cultures, in the impact of design on virtually all we use in daily life, and in the interdependence of work in the arts with the broader worlds of ideas and actions;
- 5) Making decisions in situations where there are no standard answers;
- 6) Analyzing nonverbal communication and making informed judgments about cultural products and issues; and
- 7) Communicating their thoughts and feelings in a variety of modes, giving them a vastly more powerful repertoire of self-expression.