



Musical Notes

Can you believe Thanksgiving and Christmas are just around the corner? For those of you that haven't met me yet, my name is Damaris Nevitt and I teach music here at Lighthouse Christian School. It has been a pleasure to meet so many wonderful students. There is a lot of talent here and I am looking forward to developing the music program here to include an elementary choir and a middle school choir. A band and orchestra program may not be too far down the line, either.

No other art form affects us like music and unfortunately so many schools have had to cut the music program due to lack of funding and support. We are blessed to be at a school that has vision and an appreciation for one of God's greatest gifts. The lack of music education has caused many of our students to never have heard of Beethoven, Handel's Messiah, or be familiar with opera and the Broadway musical. All which have contributed to our rich heritage and history.



This past quarter we have begun a comprehensive study of music, according to the national standards and the state of Florida standards. We have learned musical notation which is the first and foremost component of music education. It includes the notes, rests, and symbols that are the "language" of music and gets us ready to perform music with competency. Teaching students music notation has one goal only...teaching students to read music. Just because students know how to read the symbols of music does not guarantee that they can read music unless they put it into practice through reading actual song sheets not just learning songs by rote.



I have also incorporated our American heritage in teaching about American composers and American art forms such as the modern day musical. We have sung a variety of songs from sacred, to popular and silly. Just ask your student about "Hip Hop Turkey" or the "Muwa Ha Ha" song learned at Halloween time.

Classical music appreciation is a big part of our study this year and so far we have learned about Johann Sebastian Bach. It has been said that "musical style communicates a life style and a philosophy". People who listen to "hip hop" tend to imitate the style of dress, speech and mannerisms exhibited by that kind of music. People who love "country" tend to have a pair of boots somewhere in the house. These are generalizations, but learning and listening to a variety of styles will teach an appreciation for all kinds of music. Classical music of the great composers must be included in an effective and thorough music education curriculum because it is the highest quality of music in style, form and content. As part of our classical study we are also learning about the instruments of the orchestra. We are in our third week of study and have learned about the strings and woodwinds so far. The younger grades have learned about "Peter and the Wolf" and have seen the instruments play characters in the story.

My goal this school year is to prepare our students musically with a sound foundation of notation, music reading and appreciation for a lifetime of enjoyment and praise to God. Thank you for letting me be a part of your child's musical education. I look forward to meeting all of you at some point this school year.

Mrs. Damaris Nevitt 