



Is The Suzuki Method Right For My Child & My Family?

An Article by Meredith Haynes & Ginger Acopiado, Owners

Music-in-the-Box is committed to helping parents build stronger families through music and embraces the Suzuki method—both its underlying philosophy and its pedagogical techniques. Music-in-the-Box offers introductory Suzuki group violin and piano classes for families who wish to consider continuing music through private music instruction. Our sessions allow your child to sample instrument instruction prior to making significant financial or time commitments.

If you love our Music Masters classes, you will love our group violin and piano instruction referred to as Music Masters 4. Families are usually not aware of what the Suzuki method is all about. We have prepared this document to give you a brief understanding of the Suzuki method. You may refer to www.suzukiassociation.org for a comprehensive discussion of the method.

More than forty years ago, Dr. Shinichi Suzuki realized the implications of the fact that children the world over learn to speak their native language with ease. He applied the basic principles of language acquisition to learning music and the Suzuki method quickly gained world-wide acceptance. Hundreds of thousands of families in more than 40 countries have enjoyed Dr. Suzuki's efforts to nurture loving human beings through proper education and good music. Is the Suzuki method right for your family?

I hated music lessons as a child. How is this going to be different? Unlike many traditional methods, every Suzuki child is approached with love, kindness, and respect. Because the parent is involved at every moment, the child-parent relationship flourishes. Each child learns at his/her own rate, building on small steps so that each one can be mastered. And the practice methods and games are so much more fun!

I'm afraid to push my child into music. Why should I? This is a common concern. Try looking at the study of music as merely a vehicle which will carry your child through all the character development moments every child deserves. Through music lessons, a child will learn perseverance, problem solving tools, self-control, polite interaction, and personal responsibility. Think about it: why would you want to avoid something that guarantees good self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment.

Does the parent have to attend the lesson? Parents attend every lesson and work with the child at every practice at home. Your child's teacher will show you how to create an enjoyable learning environment at home.

Why start so early? The early years are crucial for developing mental processes and muscle coordination. Routines are easily established with 3 and 4 year-olds. Scientists are clear—begin music learning before age 7.

What is practice like for such young children? A clever piece of the Suzuki method is listening. Every day you will play the Suzuki CD so your child hears the music they are currently working on as well as pieces they will learn in the future. This is a magical method to ensure success for your child. Your teacher will also give you ways to practice with your child every day. The key is lots of repetition and lots of listening. Just a five minute practice will accomplish much!

Is it true Suzuki method children do not learn to read music? Only in Japan. In Japan, all children learn to read music in school, therefore, instrument instruction does not need to focus on reading, but rather proper techniques and polishing. In America, we introduce music notation through games and play until the child is able to read books, as is common in traditional lessons. By the time the child is reading, they are already successful musicians eager to take their play to the next level.



The Music Masters Class

How Music-in-the-Box Utilizes the Suzuki Method

From birth until a child is ready to enter school, [Music-in-the-Box](#) has dedicated its focus to walking very young children along the path of music education in a way that engages their mind, body and emotions. Because we embrace the Suzuki instructional method and science of teaching, we utilize its principles throughout the Music Masters experience. Our students learn nearly all the songs they will encounter in the first year of Suzuki violin or piano lessons. Our teachers are trained to treat the children with respect and encouragement expecting only what each child's individual development will allow. The [products](#) we offer allow you to continue the fun at home.

The Suzuki emphasis of each class is listed below.

BABY MUSIC MASTERS

- *Begin early to build a solid pattern of interacting musically with your child.*
- *Create musical family traditions and habits*
- *Improve your child's capacity for intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth.*
- *Create avenues for all learning styles—auditory, kinesthetic and visual*

MUSIC MASTERS 1

- *Enjoy interacting musically with your growing child in gentle and respectful ways.*
- *Learn how to create music in purposeful, relevant and meaningful ways.*
- *Prepare for music lessons by learning Suzuki melodies.*
- *Grow your child's self-control and self-esteem through learning to control his impulses.*
- *Take very small steps toward music mastery.*
- *Repeated curriculum builds comfort and confidence*

MUSIC MASTERS 2

- *Build an important relationship triangle of parent-teacher-child*
- *Achieve a remarkable level of music theory vocabulary and comprehension.*
- *Create a desire for quality literature, art, and music.*
- *Become accustomed to listening—both to the teacher and to the music.*

MUSIC MASTERS 3

- *Refine your child's musical abilities in voice and tone.*
- *Encourage social development such as turn taking and applauding other's success.*
- *Further develop music theory and music performance*
- *Encourage independent activity and choices*
- *Achieve significant preparation for private instrument instruction*

MUSIC MASTERS 4: Group Instrument Instruction - Violin or Piano

- *Transfer your child's musical abilities to violin or piano.*
- *Introduce performance skills*
- *Apply basic music theory concepts through instrument play*
- *Share Suzuki method practice games and support*
- *Develop the musical ear encouraging perfect pitch*



A Comparison: Suzuki and Traditional

| THE SUZUKI METHOD | THE TRADITIONAL METHOD |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzuki teachers believe that musical ability can be developed in <i>all</i> children. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many believe musical ability is inborn. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzuki teachers are trained to work with young children effectively, engaging them in age-appropriate fun & encouraging lessons. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional teachers may or may not work well with very young children. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzuki parents play an active role in every moment of the learning process and are trained by the teacher to be effective practice partners. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional teachers allow drop-offs and parents are only involved in enforcing practice time and discipline resolution. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzuki children associate sound with notation, much the way they learn to speak prior to reading words, with a little coaching, repetition and positive encouragement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional method children combine learning to play their instrument with learning to read in all its complicated glory. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzuki students are less likely to fall to victim to stage fright in all aspects of their life, as they have been "performing" from an early age. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional method children often battle performance anxiety because lessons start later when children become self-conscious and aware of the reactions of their peers |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzuki students focus on playing beautifully, every time, through imitation and a developed ear. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional methods do not focus on playing beautifully in the beginning. Self-correction cannot take place when learning only through sight. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzuki students become capable music readers when they are physically and mentally able. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional students read music from the beginning and therefore cannot begin lessons at an early age. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzuki lessons are fun because technique is taught through the context of a piece of music. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional methods focus on technique separately making practice dull for young children. |