

Title:

5 Important Tips on Piano Lessons

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Summary:

The connection between music and memory is becoming clearer every day. Learn why music is so important to the mind and also receive invaluable information before embarking in the beautiful journey of learning to play the piano. This is must-have information to make an educated decision before embarking in the wonderful world of Piano studies.

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Article Body:

5 Important Tips for Piano Lessons

Must-Have information before deciding on Piano Lessons!

Music is a very important part of our lives. It does a lot more than just please our ears - it is an integral part of human development.

Several years ago, there was an experiment done by scientists at the University of California at Irvine in 1993. (published in the journal Nature) They had college students listen to Mozart Sonata for two Pianos in D Major, a relaxation tape or silence. Immediately after these sessions, the students took a spatial reasoning test (the ability to put together puzzles) and the students' scores improved drastically after listening to the Music. The reason is because music and spatial abilities share the same pathways in the brain.

Another experiment was done later on by researchers at Appalachian State University and the researchers were successful as well in connecting music to boosting "brain power".

They gave preschool children (ages 3-4 yrs. old) training for 8 months. Children were divided into 4 groups: Keyboard lessons, Singing lessons, Computer lessons and No lessons. After 8 months of this treatment, the children were tested on their ability to put together puzzles (spatial-temporal reasoning) and to recognize shapes (spatial-recognition reasoning) and the results were astounding! They found that only those children who had taken the keyboard lessons had improvement in the spatial-temporal test. (The children did not, however show any change with the spatial-recognition.)

Another interesting observation I've made is the connection between the Medical profession and the Music profession - a large majority of M.D.'s are Classically trained musicians! I've encountered many and have asked them all the same question - how do you make the connection between the medical and the musical - and the response I've had is that they are both very intricate and require a rare focus and mathematical mindset in many different directions at once. It's achieved by many years of training in either and/or both fields, which by the same token - enhance each other. So to them - the similarity in brain function and focus is evident and invaluable to both the medical and the musical. It will be interesting to see the results of further study in that matter. Currently, there is no conclusive proof scientifically of the connection between Medical and Musical.

Now - for the 5 Tips for Piano Lessons!

1) Interest:

Assess the interest of your child. Is this something they really like - or is it your dream? The child should show genuine interest in music and a keyboard in order for their learning experience to be a pleasant and successful one. If they are not interested - ask yourself why you even pursued it? Is it because you have an inner desire for it? It's NEVER too late to begin! Sign yourself up for Piano lessons if that's the case. I've have students of every age - some played when they were kids then quit. As they got older, regretted quitting and vowed to one day pick it up again. Then there are others who always had the desire but not the opportunity and now find themselves retired with plenty of time on their hands. They've actually become Piano virtuosos! I give you these lovely examples to give you hope and a nudge - psssst! It's never too late! The student must be genuinely interested.

2) Instrument:

It's fine to begin Piano lessons on an electronic keyboard. As time goes on, the student will know in which direction they'd like to take the Piano lessons. If it's just for personal enjoyment, it's fine to stay with a keyboard. If it's for classical Piano training - then the student should be switched over to an acoustic Piano. In my experience as a Piano teacher, I've realized that a Spinet Piano (the ones that have a low back) unless it is given as a gift, should not be purchased. It would be preferable to purchase an "Upright" which is a Baby Grand Piano, but instead of the strings being vertical they're horizontal. The reason being, that the action on the keys is much better technically for the student's hand, and it sound substantially better to the ear.

3) Teacher:

Ask around and get feedback from others about their teachers. Find out the

teacher's background. Where did they get the education from, how long have they been teaching, where do they teach from, what are the surroundings like? Ask current students how patient the teacher is and how do they feel during the lesson. You should get a pretty good idea about the teacher by how current students are progressing. Does the teacher's personality blend with your child's. Remember, this is a choice! In school the children have to adapt to the teacher that has been assigned to them, and that's a good thing. They learn to get along with different types of personalities, but Piano is an extra-curricular activity and should be a pleasant one that they look forward to.

#### 4) Schedule:

Children can be easily overwhelmed by too much in their schedule. As adults - we've experienced overload for ourselves and it's SO counterproductive! It's highly advisable to limit activities in order for the kids not to be pulled in too many directions.

Once activities have been chosen, I've found with my own kids and students that by writing down a daily schedule, everything gets done and there are no excuses for forgetting to practice.

#### 5) Dedication:

Once a schedule is in place, practicing piano will become part of daily routine. After a while, the student won't be so "worried" about time, but will want to achieve goals set by the teacher. The student will need dedication in order for the craft to go from mechanical to musical. Encourage them to listen to a wide range of styles and genre's in order for them to develop their own taste for music. At an early stage, dedication can be ingrained in a student by participating in Recitals, Talent Shows and Worship Services. It takes diligence and dedication - also sacrifices to make piano a beautiful craft.