

Strategies for Improving High School Students' Music Appreciation Ability in Chinese Senior High School Music Teaching

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ABSTRACT

With the deepening and development of China's new round of curriculum reform, senior high school education has increasingly emphasized the comprehensive cultivation of students' overall quality, covering morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, labor, and cultural literacy. As an important part of senior high school education, music courses are not only a key carrier for enhancing students' aesthetic taste but also effectively relieve academic pressure and enrich their spiritual world. However, current senior high school music education in China still faces many practical difficulties, such as insufficient school attention, weak students' interest in music learning, poor reserve of music theoretical knowledge, unclear assessment criteria for music appreciation ability, and insufficient consideration of the feasibility of teaching reforms in different regional contexts. These problems have seriously restricted the improvement of students' music appreciation ability. Based on teaching practice, integrated with global research on music pedagogy and aesthetic education, as well as cognitive and affective learning theories, this paper explores effective strategies for enhancing senior high school students' music appreciation ability from four dimensions: concept transformation, method innovation, resource integration, and evaluation optimization. It also clarifies the assessment criteria for music appreciation ability and analyzes the feasibility of reform implementation in urban and rural schools, so as to provide more comprehensive and practical reference for the reform of senior high school music teaching.

Keywords: Senior High School Music; Classroom Teaching; Appreciation Ability; Improvement Strategies; Assessment Criteria; Feasibility Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Music appreciation ability is a core component of students' aesthetic literacy and an important manifestation of their comprehensive quality development. The new round of basic education curriculum reform clearly states that senior high school music teaching should focus on the goal of "aesthetic education", guiding students to feel the charm of music, understand its connotation, and form independent musical aesthetic judgments.

Existing global research on music pedagogy has laid a solid theoretical foundation for this field. For example, Dalcroze's eurhythmics emphasizes the connection between body movement and music perception, Kodály's method highlights the combination of national music culture and music education, and Orff's approach advocates integrating music, movement, and language to stimulate students' inherent musicality. In the field of aesthetic education, Dewey's theory of aesthetic experience emphasizes the interaction between students and artworks, emphasizing that aesthetic development comes from personal emotional experience and cognitive participation. However, under the inertia of exam-oriented education in China, music courses in senior high schools are often regarded as "non-core subjects". Problems such as insufficient allocation of teaching resources, rigid teaching methods, unclear assessment criteria for music appreciation ability, and inadequate consideration of regional differences in reform feasibility are widespread, making it difficult for students to truly engage with and understand music. The cultivation of appreciation ability has fallen into a "formalized" predicament.

Cognitive learning theories (such as Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives) point out that students' understanding of music goes through the process of knowledge memory, comprehension, application, analysis,

evaluation, and creation. Affective learning theories (such as Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory and Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory) emphasize that music appreciation is not only a cognitive activity but also an emotional experience process, which requires the coordination of emotional perception, emotional expression, and emotional regulation. Integrating these theoretical insights into music teaching can better explain how students engage with music emotionally and intellectually, and provide a scientific basis for the design of teaching strategies.

Therefore, exploring scientific and effective improvement strategies to solve the problems in senior high school music teaching, clarifying assessment criteria, and considering the feasibility of regional implementation is of great practical significance for implementing the curriculum reform requirements and promoting students' all-round development.

CURRENT SITUATION OF CULTIVATING STUDENTS' APPRECIATION ABILITY IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC TEACHING

2.1 Insufficient Attention to Teaching and Imbalanced Resource Allocation

Most senior high schools focus their teaching on college entrance examination core subjects. The class hours of music courses are compressed, and even "occupied or diverted" in some cases. Schools have obvious insufficient investment in music teaching resources, lacking professional music teachers and inadequate equipment such as musical instruments and multimedia teaching tools, which are difficult to meet the basic needs of appreciation teaching.

There are significant differences in resource allocation between urban and rural schools. Urban schools have relatively sufficient funds to purchase advanced teaching equipment, invite professional musicians to give lectures, and organize students to participate in off-campus music activities. In contrast, rural and underfunded schools face more severe challenges, such as a shortage of full-time music teachers, outdated or insufficient musical instruments, and limited access to online music resources due to poor network conditions.

2.2 Rigid and Single Teaching Methods, Lack of Interactive Experience

Current senior high school music teaching mostly adopts the traditional mode of "teacher plays—students listen—teacher explains", which lacks interest and interactivity. Teachers overemphasize the inculcation of music theoretical knowledge, ignoring students' subjective feelings and experiences. This leads to students passively accepting knowledge, being unable to actively participate in the music appreciation process, and their learning interest gradually fades.

The lack of integration of cognitive and affective learning theories in teaching methods makes it difficult to mobilize students' emotional resonance while imparting knowledge. Students can only memorize superficial theoretical knowledge but cannot deeply understand the emotional connotation and cultural background of music works.

2.3 Uneven Student Foundation and Weak Theoretical Reserve

There are significant differences in the music foundation of senior high school students. Some students lack basic music common sense and have vague cognition of core concepts such as musical notes, rhythm, and melody. At the same time, the types of music students are exposed to are relatively single, mostly confined to pop music. They have little understanding of diverse musical forms such as classical music and national music, resulting in a narrow appreciation perspective and difficulty in forming systematic appreciation thinking.

2.4 Unclear Assessment Criteria and Lack of Objective Evaluation Basis

At present, there is no clear and unified assessment criteria for students' music appreciation ability in senior high school music teaching. The evaluation method is mostly single summative evaluation, focusing on students'

mastery of theoretical knowledge, while ignoring the assessment of emotional experience, aesthetic expression, and cultural understanding in the process of music appreciation. This makes it difficult to objectively evaluate students' progress in music appreciation ability and cannot provide effective feedback for teaching improvement.

STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING STUDENTS' APPRECIATION ABILITY IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC TEACHING

3.1 Transform Teaching Concepts and Establish Students' Subject Status

1. Break the cognitive prejudice of regarding music as a "non-core subject", incorporate music appreciation teaching into the students' comprehensive quality evaluation system, and enhance the attention paid by schools and students to music courses.
2. Design teaching content based on students' interests and cognitive laws, respect their personalized aesthetic experiences, encourage students to boldly express their understanding and feelings about music, and abandon the constraint of "standard answers".
3. Guided by cognitive and affective learning theories, pay equal attention to students' cognitive development and emotional experience in teaching, and promote the coordinated development of students' intellectual and emotional engagement in music appreciation.

3.2 Innovate Teaching Methods and Strengthen Interactive Experience

1. Adopt situational teaching methods, using multimedia technology to create scenarios related to the historical background and life scenes of musical works. For example, play film and television clips of the Chu-Han Contention when playing *Ambush from Ten Sides*, allowing students to intuitively feel the emotional connotation of the music and deepen their cognitive understanding through emotional experience.
2. Introduce interactive teaching, organizing activities such as group discussions, music appreciation debates, and simple musical instrument performance experiences. Let students deepen their understanding of music through communication and practice, and improve their participation enthusiasm. This method is consistent with the cognitive learning theory's emphasis on active participation and knowledge construction.
3. Implement interdisciplinary integrated teaching, combining music with Chinese, history, art and other subjects. For example, when appreciating poetry-matched music works, link Chinese knowledge to interpret the artistic conception of lyrics, and combine historical backgrounds to understand the formation reasons of musical styles. This helps students establish a systematic knowledge framework and improve their comprehensive cognitive ability.

3.3 Integrate Curriculum Resources and Broaden Appreciation Horizons

3.3.1 Enrich Teaching Content with Diversified Resources

1. Break the limitation of a single music type, introduce multi-element materials such as classical music, national music, and world music. At the same time, integrate local music cultural resources, such as local operas and folk musical instruments, to enhance students' cultural identity.
2. Utilize new media resources to build an online music appreciation platform, recommending high-quality music apps, live online concerts, music documentaries, etc. Guide students to independently expand their appreciation scope after class, realizing the organic combination of classroom teaching and extracurricular extension.

3.3.2 Analyze the Feasibility of Resource Integration in Different Contexts

1. For urban schools with sufficient funds and resources, strengthen inter-school cooperation and off-campus practice, organize students to visit concert halls, participate in music club activities, and invite professional

musicians to give lectures on campus. Let students improve their appreciation ability in a real musical environment.

- For rural and underfunded schools, focus on exploring low-cost and accessible resources. For example, use free online music teaching platforms to make up for the shortage of offline resources; invite local folk artists to enter the campus to teach folk music and folk musical instruments, reducing the demand for expensive equipment; rely on local natural and cultural environments to carry out situational music activities, which are low-cost and highly operable.

3.3.3 Case Studies of Urban and Rural Schools

- Urban School Case:** A key high school in Beijing integrates resources from local concert halls and art galleries, cooperating with them to carry out "music appreciation + on-site experience" courses. Every semester, students are organized to listen to 2-3 professional concerts, and musicians are invited to conduct post-concert exchanges. With the support of sufficient funds and convenient transportation, this model has significantly improved students' music appreciation ability and expanded their artistic horizons.
- Rural School Case:** A high school in a remote county in Guizhou uses local ethnic minority music resources (such as Dong folk songs and Miao lusheng music) as the core of teaching content. Teachers organize students to interview local folk artists, learn to sing folk songs and play simple folk musical instruments. With the support of government educational poverty alleviation funds and social public welfare projects, the school has purchased basic musical instruments and improved network conditions, making it possible to use online resources for teaching. This model not only solves the problem of insufficient resources but also inherits and promotes local culture, achieving good teaching results.

3.4 Optimize the Evaluation System and Focus on Process Feedback

3.4.1 Establish Clear Assessment Criteria (Rubrics)

Formulate a multi-dimensional assessment rubric for music appreciation ability, covering four core dimensions with specific performance indicators and grading standards (see Table 1).

Assessment Dimensions	Performance Indicators	Grading Standards (Level 1-4)
Emotional Experience	Ability to perceive and resonate with the emotional connotation of music works	4: Can deeply perceive the emotional connotation of music, express unique emotional resonance, and connect with personal life experience; 3: Can perceive the main emotional connotation of music and express basic emotional resonance; 2: Can initially perceive the emotional tendency of music but cannot clearly express it; 1: Cannot perceive the emotional connotation of music
Theoretical Cognition	Mastery of basic music knowledge and understanding of musical elements (rhythm, melody, harmony, etc.)	4: Profoundly understands musical elements and can accurately analyze their role in expressing emotions and themes; 3: Master basic music knowledge and can simply analyze musical elements; 2: Has a preliminary understanding of basic music knowledge but cannot apply it to appreciation; 1: Lacks basic music theoretical knowledge
Expression Ability	Ability to express personal understanding and views on music works	4: Can clearly, comprehensively, and innovatively express personal understanding and views, with strong logicity; 3: Can clearly express personal basic understanding and views; 2: Can simply express partial understanding but lacks clarity; 1: Cannot effectively

		express personal views on music
Cultural Understanding	Understanding of the cultural background and artistic value of music works	4: Profoundly understands the cultural background and artistic value of music works and can analyze their connection with the times and society; 3: Understands the basic cultural background and artistic value of music works; 2: Has a preliminary understanding of the cultural background of music works but lacks in-depth understanding; 1: Does not understand the cultural background and artistic value of music works

3.4.2 Adopt a Diversified Evaluation Mechanism

1. Abandon the single examination evaluation mode, and incorporate students' classroom participation, appreciation expression ability, independent learning achievements, and personalized aesthetic insights into the evaluation scope.
2. Adopt a combination of process evaluation and summative evaluation. Through classroom observation records, appreciation report comments, group mutual evaluation, self-evaluation, and teacher evaluation, timely feedback students' learning situation, affirm progress, point out deficiencies, and guide students to continuously improve their appreciation ability.

CONCLUSION

Improving senior high school students' music appreciation ability is an important measure to implement the "Five Education Principles" and the core goal of senior high school music teaching reform. This process requires the joint efforts of schools, teachers, and students, and needs to fully consider the differences in regional educational resources and the actual needs of students.

By transforming teaching concepts based on cognitive and affective learning theories, innovating interactive teaching methods, integrating diversified curriculum resources while considering the feasibility of regional implementation, and establishing clear assessment criteria and a diversified evaluation system, the practical difficulties in current teaching can be effectively solved. The case studies of urban and rural schools have proved that as long as teaching strategies are adjusted according to local conditions, music appreciation teaching can achieve good results regardless of the level of resource allocation.

Only when music teaching truly returns to the essence of "aesthetic education" can students be guided to enrich their spiritual world, enhance their aesthetic literacy, and achieve all-round development of comprehensive quality while feeling the charm of music. In the future, senior high school music teaching needs to continue to absorb global advanced music pedagogy and aesthetic education research results, further optimize teaching strategies in combination with the times development and students' needs, and make music appreciation an important nourishment for students' growth.