



Four Easy Adaptations That Can Be Used to Teach Music

It is an unfortunate truth that many music teachers are expected to teach students that they have never been given the tools to teach. Classes chosen for inclusion are often "specials" because...well, we won't go there. As a result, music teachers end up frustrated and even bitter and students who are actually capable of learning to make music miss out on the enriching experience that music class should be. Additionally, private music teachers are intimidated or overwhelmed with the idea of teaching students with special needs. They choose to not extend their services to this demographic simply because they aren't sure how.

If you are one of these teachers and feel frustrated or overwhelmed with what is being expected of you, we can help! The good news is that this doesn't have to be the case. You can be confident teaching neurodiverse kids and even enjoy your work with them. There are solutions and we can discover those together starting with these four ideas.





Color Coding

Students can have a hard time recognizing notes at first. One of the first skills taught in most types of therapy is matching. We can use this to our advantage when teaching music. There are great curriculums that offer color-coded instruments and music. This is also easy to do yourself using simple tools like google slides and garage sale stickers. It's also easy to fade away from colors once the student shows understanding of how the notes work.



Easy-to-Play Instruments

Physical limitations and fine motor deficits may make it difficult for ESE students to Play the same instruments as the other students. This can lead to frustration from not being able to keep up or exclusion from the activity. There are some instruments that are easier to play. Our favorite is deskbells. There are also adaptive tools that can be used to make a difficult instrument easier to play. Some examples include Big Buttons and hand grips for mallets. You can even get creative and use simple solutions like wrapping a drum stick with electrical tape.



Visual Prompts

For students with processing disorders or hearing deficits, too many demands or noise can be a hindrance to their learning time. It can also create frustrations that can result in disruptive behaviors or withdrawing from the activity. Using pictures and video modeling, you can reduce some frustration as well as give the student a head start to navigate your lesson or class more independently.



Visual Schedule

Anxiety is often evident in students who aren't sure what to expect. They may get upset, ask when is it over many times or just physically try to escape their present environment. Visual schedules are a specific type of visual prompt that will help your student navigate through expectation of your session. It can be created with clip art pictures or pictures of your classroom. You can use a checklist or move activities from "to do" to "completed". It helps reduce the anxiety of what is coming next and assures them that they have completed things required and are moving closer to transitioning to their next activity.

Help every student have success and reduce your frustrations in your lessons.

Schedule a coaching call now!