

This Year

by Patricia Bourne

This year, I will remember...

- To keep an open mind and consider new ways of thinking and teaching.
- To protect my singing and speaking voice.
- When necessary, to chant the mantra, “I am the adult in this situation.”
- That repetition and small steps are good.
- That productive behavior can be taught.
- That anticipation is a good thing. Allow children to look forward to events.
Don't rush them.
- To be more organized so that optimal learning happens, even when I'm absent.
- To not be afraid of conflict; it will happen.
- That being mean feels terrible afterwards. There's never a reason to be mean.
- That fatigue is an enemy—it makes me the kind of person most people do not want to be around.
- To bend, flex, breathe, and question before jumping to conclusions or jumping down someone's throat.
- To observe the kids in alternate settings.
- To not let bad days and mistakes cause feelings of personal failure.
- To ask colleagues how their day is going.
- To do a better job of informing parents of the great things their children are accomplishing.
- To read a wide breadth of literature.
- To practice patience.
- To apologize and move on.
- To find one thousand ways to teach a single concept.

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National Hispanic Heritage Month

Hispanic Americans, also known as Latinos, are U.S. residents who were born in or whose ancestors came from Spanish-speaking lands. These include Mexico, Central and South America, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic. In all there are around 37 million Hispanic Americans who make up about 12% of the population.

Drawn together by their common language and traditions, Hispanics often form neighborhoods, called *barrios*. This is particularly true in large cities like Los Angeles, California. Among these common traditions is a strong commitment to family. For example, members of extended families often live next door to one another. The Catholic religion is another thing that is common to many Hispanics. Why do you think that is? If you think it's because Spain is a Catholic country that established Catholic missions in all of their colonies, you're right!

Missionaries from Spain were actually the first Europeans to settle in America (becoming the first Hispanics). The year was 1565, and the settlements were in St. Augustine, Florida. In fact, "Florida" is Spanish for "floral." A little more than 400 years later, in 1968, the U.S. Congress declared the week surrounding September 15th and 16th National Hispanic Heritage Week. Twenty years later, in 1988, President Reagan declared that instead of a week, September 15th would now be the start of National Hispanic Heritage Month.

Why September 15th?

Mexicans (who make up the largest part of the Hispanic population) celebrate *El Grito de Independencia*, or Independence Day, on September 16th. It was on this date in 1810 that Mexico started its war for independence from Spanish rule. It would take 10 years, but eventually they succeeded. To mark this occasion, Mexicans gather the night before—on September 15th—and wave flags with the Mexican national colors of green, white and red, sing and dance to traditional songs, light fireworks, and eat traditional foods.

A Few Well-Known Hispanic Holidays

El Día de los Reyes (Three Kings' Day)—Celebrated on January 6, this is a Christian holiday also known as the Feast of the Epiphany. It marks the day when the Three Wise Men (or Three Kings) brought gifts to the baby Jesus. Today, Hispanics celebrate by gift giving and spending the day with family.

Carnival (or Carnaval)—This celebration happens just before the Christian observance of Lent and ends on Mardi Gras, or Fat Tuesday, which is the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. It is the last big party before the fasting that is traditionally done during Lent. In fact, the word carnival comes from the Latin expression *carne vale!*, which means "flesh, farewell!"

Cinco de Mayo (Fifth of May)—Celebrated on...you guessed it...May 5, this marks the victory of the Mexican Army over the French in 1862. Many Americans, regardless of heritage, use this day to embrace Mexican culture at the many festivals that are held around the country.

El Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)—Lasting from October 31st to November 2nd, this is a celebration of loved ones who have passed away. The ceremonies and traditions of *El Día de los Muertos* date back more than 3,000 years to the Aztecs who lived in what is now Central and South America.

Hispanic Music

Mariachi is a well-known type of music group. Dating back to the 1880s, mariachi started as street music in the Mexican state of Jalisco. These groups can include as many as 20 musicians, but typically include two violins, two trumpets, a Spanish guitar, a guitarrrón (a small acoustic bass), and a vihuela (a high-pitched five-string guitar). Today, mariachi musicians wear traditional Mexican cowboy, or *charro*, dress, and are commonly heard at weddings and other celebrations. *Rancheras*, *cumbia*, *salsa*, *meringue*, and *banda* are other forms of Mexican dance, each of which is always set to special music.

Hispanics have also made important contributions to all types of music, from classical to rock and pop. For example:

- Christina Aguilera—Pop singer
- Plácido Domingo—Opera singer and one of The Three Tenors
- Manuel de Falla (1876–1946)—Pianist and classical composer known for his ballet *The Three-Cornered Hat*
- Antonio Carlos Jobim—Jazz pianist and composer famous for his *bossa novas*
- Tito Puente—Jazz percussionist
- Carlos Santana—Rock 'n roll guitarist

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The First Music Class with Kindergarten

by Denise Gagné

Teaching Kindergarten Students to Follow Directions

The first week of school is an exciting time for children in kindergarten. It can also be scary for children who are shy or are suffering from separation anxiety. If your students have had experience with playschool or a structured daycare, they may already be used to following directions and listening to a classroom teacher or a music teacher. However, it isn't unusual to have kindergarten students without any prior classroom experience. These students really need to learn to listen to and follow directions. It is this mix of excitement, anxiety, and lack of social skills that makes the first music classes with kindergarten so challenging.

You can help your students learn to follow directions using songs that require them to listen to the lyrics and do what the lyrics say. For example, *Listen as I Play the Beat* is a song in which the children have to say their name on the beat. It provides practice keeping a steady beat and it will introduce the children to many different

unpitched instruments. The other teaching purpose of this activity is to learn students' names. This isn't a huge problem for the kindergarten classroom teacher, but for the music specialist who may see up to 800 students each week, learning names is really difficult.

Each time you use the chant (every class if you are a specialist), choose a different instrument to keep the beat. Ask the students questions about the instrument: What is it made out of? (wood, metal, other) How is the sound made? What is this instrument called? How is it played? This leads to instrument classification. Eventually the students will be able to tell you if the instrument is a membrane (drum), metal, wood, or shake/scrape. In the beginning of the school year, you'll play the instrument on your own. Later in the school year you may want to have some children join you in playing the beat. This is a great way to assess if they are able to keep a beat!

The image shows three systems of musical notation for a song. Each system consists of a voice line and a hand drum line. The voice line is written on a treble clef staff in 4/4 time, with lyrics underneath. The hand drum line is written on a single staff with vertical tick marks representing the beat. The lyrics are: "Lis - ten as I play the beat. Gee this drum sounds real - ly neat! This is such a sil - ly game. Sit down when you hear your name. My name is Pat - ty. My name is Sar - ah."

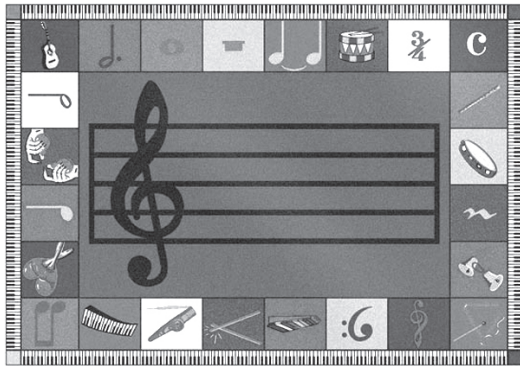
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Kindergarten Classroom Management

Seating Plans

A helpful tool to use with kindergarten students is colored dots, which may be made or purchased. A formal seating plan is hard to implement for kindergarteners, but it's easy for them to understand when you say, "Sit on a dot." If you don't have dots, you could use pieces of painter's tape.

If you used several different colors of dots or tape, you could tell each child (or group) to sit on a particular color. Similarly, the Noteworthy Music Rug features 24 squares with a different music symbol in each. You can assign each child a square/symbol, and that becomes his or her place to sit in music class.



Use this same idea when you want to have children form a circle—arrange pieces of painter's tape in a circle (or tape down the dots in a circle).

Line-Ups

Setting classroom routines will also help with your classroom management. One such routine is forming a line and traveling quietly through the school.

On Your Lip will teach the children how to form a line-up in your classroom and how to walk through the hallways of the school. With one finger on their lip indicating "sh" or quiet, they should remember not to talk in the hallway. The other hand on their hip is so they remember not to touch the walls or poke another student as they walk through the hallways.

Once students know this is your expectation, practice the behavior until the students have the behavior mastered. Re-teach and practice if the students get forgetful as the year goes on. If you are walking down the hall and students don't meet your expectations, take them back to the classroom and explain that since they forgot the correct way to walk down the hall, they need to practice it. As a music specialist, you might see 25 different classes in a week. Each of these classes has a classroom teacher who has his or her own expectations, which may be a little different. Regardless, it is your job to teach your expectations to all 25 classes.

On Your Lip

Denise Gagné

Put your fin - ger on your lip, on your lip! Put your
3 hand on your hip, on your hip! Put your fin - ger on your lip and your
6 hand on your hip put your fin - ger on your lip, on your lip. Zip zip!