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### **A Technological Take-Over: The Positives and Negatives of Technology in Music Education**

Technology in music is something that I have yet to formulate a solid opinion on. There are countless benefits to applying technology in music education. Our youth that we are educating today are more familiar with technology than we ever were growing up. Introducing technological approaches to music will make these students more interested and more likely to be engaged in a learning environment because technology is something that these youth are so adapted to, and it is extremely accessible. Something like an iPad ensemble promotes participation in all students in a musical setting and allows them to be able to explore creatively. However, this may also be seen as a negative. Not everyone has the talent and ability to sing, or to play the trumpet, piano, violin etc. Part of creating music and working with an instrument is the thrill that not everyone can do the same things or re-create the same sounds that you are doing as a musician. Its also the physicality of us as musicians producing musical sounds with our bodies, these sounds being articulated through our instruments, rather than pressing buttons and having a technological machine do the work of talent for us. There is no doubt that technology in music makes things like audio editing, streaming, composition, notation, and collaboration a lot easier, but it limits the amount of characteristic talent that is typically required to produce authentic musical sound.

If I were to choose a side on the debate of technology in music, I would have to say that there are certain parts of music education that I would personally limit in my own music classroom. Primarily, I would focus on the beneficial software that is available for music composition and notation, for streaming and sharing audio files, for creating musical videos, for editing and enhancing music tracks, and for exploring the potential sounds of instruments and how they work with each other in a technological setting. I wouldn't say that technology should be a main focus in music education, nor that it should replace already implemented pedagogical practices. Exploring software programs like Garage Band to create music is good in moderation. However, as musical educators we have to promote and distinguish the difference between authentic musical sound that we actively create as musicians based on our own talent, and the technology that we use in ease to create music that is already pre-recorded and requires little musical effort as students. What are we really learning about the trials of transposition if we just click a button that creates the sound for us? How are our students as musicians learning to properly breathe, keep a beat, listen to make harmonies, useful dynamics etc. if we rely on iPads to recreate all these things for us and leave our students in a subconscious technological daze? Williams comments on this and says that one of the challenges they have faced in their iPad ensemble is time-keeping. I think a possible solution to this problem would be to first introduce a real instrument and have the student become familiar with keeping the time and recognizing beats and measures before handing them a technological instrument that does all the time-keeping for them.

We cannot allow technology to take over for these things, no matter how convenient it may seem to us. As mentioned before, there are certain aspects of musical education that would

extremely benefit from the accessibility of technology. But there are certain other aspects of music education that we must preserve the talent, handwork, and authentic musicianship of creating and collaborating music. What technology comes down to is that its not necessarily a *better* way to approach creation music, its just *another* way.

Work Cited

Williams, D. A. (2014). Another Perspective The iPad Is a REAL Musical Instrument. *Music Educators Journal*, 101(1), 93-98.