



INCORPORATING MUSIC THERAPY INTO YOUR MUSIC EDUCATION PRACTICE

PRESENTED BY:

**Ashley Shabankareh
amshabankareh@gmail.com
www.ashleyshabankareh.com**

WHAT IS MUSIC THERAPY?



Music Therapy is the clinical & evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program. Music therapy interventions can address a variety of healthcare & educational goals including promoting wellness, managing stress, alleviating pain, expressing feelings, improving communications, and more.

Like music educators, music therapists are accredited and must have a bachelor's degree or higher in music therapy from one of AMTA's 72 approved colleges and universities and must hold the MT-BC credential.

While there are a lot of similarities between music therapy and music education, music education tends to focus on musical skills, while music therapy focuses on improving non-musical skills. Music educators can utilize music therapy interventions to support all students, especially their students with disabilities.

TYPES OF MUSIC THERAPY



There are four types of music therapy. These include receptive, recreative, improvisation, and composition.

Receptive:

Receptive music therapy consists of listening to music, including live or pre-recorded music. Listening to music can be the primary form of therapy for some clients, and with others, it can be used as a segway into a therapeutic discussion. Topics that can be utilized include song themes and/or processing emotions brought up during the song.

Recreative:

Recreative music therapy is utilizing any pre-existing music, either utilizing a recording or recreating it on your own. For example, you could sing and provide accompaniment for yourself to popular tunes or utilize body percussion to play along to a song.

Improvisation:

Improvisation involves spontaneous music-making using instruments, body percussion, or the voice. This style of intervention relies upon the therapist to listen and interpret to respond to the student/client's mood.

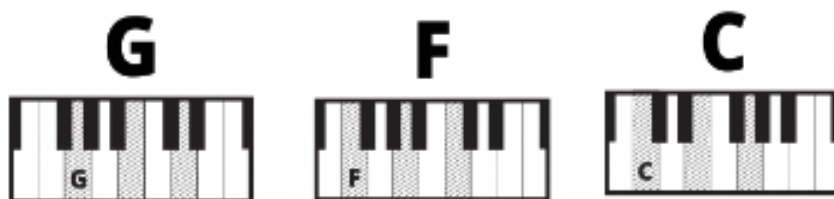
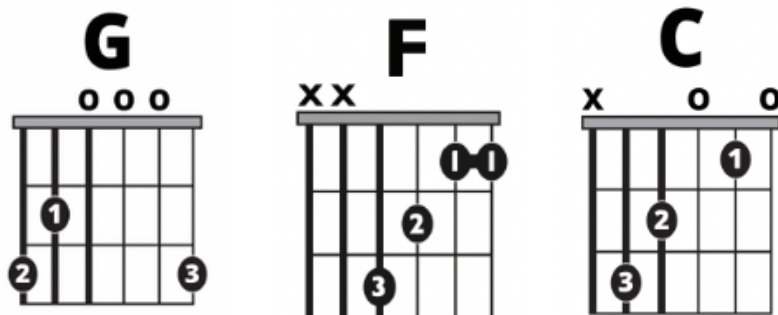
Composition:

A process where the therapist writes a song to support the client's goals or where the therapist supports the client in creating their own music or lyrics.

SAMPLE HELLO SONG

Hello songs are more than just a greeting. They set the foundation for individuals and groups engaged in music therapy, help you make assessments, build rapport and trust, initiate interaction and participation, and establish a tone or theme for your session. You can utilize pre-written hello songs or create your own piggybacking on popular music melodies.

An example using the melody of Lady Gaga's *Born This Way* is below:



SAMPLE HELLO SONG

G

F

C

G



G

F

Hey there my friends, It's time to begin

C

Get ready to sing and play

G

F

It's time for music and I'm glad you're here

C

Come on everybody sing

G

F

We're telling [student/client name] hey, how are you feeling today?

C

G

Glad you're here, let's play some music today!

[Repeat Previous Two Lines Until all Students/Clients have said how they're feeling]

G

F

Everybody, hey hey hey, I'm so glad you're here today

C

G

Come on everybody sing

A QUICK GUIDE TO RECREATIVE MUSIC THERAPY IN THE CLASSROOM



Recreative methods are methods that incorporate the use of a pre-composed song, which includes, but isn't limited to playing along with a recording or performing it for/with your client/student. The guide below can help you make considerations to support students when choosing songs to utilize in a therapeutic context to support social, emotional, cognitive, communication, and physical goals!

- What goal(s) are you working on with your client? (Social, emotional, cognitive, communication, physical)
- What song are you using?
 - Are you playing along with a recording? If so, what version?
 - Are you performing the song? Will you be singing, playing an instrument, etc?
- Will your client need an instrument or a prop? Which one?
- What sort of interaction will your client have with the song?
- If performing the song:
 - What is the key of the song? Does it fit your voice range? What key will you perform it in?
 - What are the chords of the song?
 - Can you play those chords? If not, how can you modify it?
 - What is the tempo of the song? Does it need to be adjusted for your client?
 - What is the song form? How will you modify it to support your client's goals?
 - What other tools do you need to help make playing and engaging with the song more comfortable for your client?

GETTING STARTED WITH THERAPUTIC SONGWRITING



There are different types of therapeutic songwriting to help you support your student's goals. These include:

- Strategic - Composing a song ahead of time to use for a specific goal or a student
- Process - A composition you do with a student or group of students over one or more sessions.
- Spot - A composition you write on the spot with a group of people, often as a sing-along.

It's important to remember that as you write songs for your clients or write songs with your clients that the *process is the product.*

Some Considerations as you get started writing songs for and with your students:

- What does the melodic phrase sound like when you say the lyrics out loud?
- Do you want to emphasize certain parts of the lyrics?
- Is the melody simple, singable/playable for your student?
 - Do you have an even number of phrases to help with singability?

FURTHER READING



- Alice Hammel and Ryan Hourigan - *Teaching Music to Students With Special Needs, A Label-Free Approach*
- Felicity Baker - *Therapeutic Songwriting: Developments in Theory, Methods, and Practice*
- Denise Grocke and Tony Wigram - *Receptive Methods in Music Therapy*
- Melita Belgrave and Seung-A Kim - *Music Therapy in a Multicultural Context*
- Pamela Ott - *Music for Special Kids: Musical Activities, Songs, Instruments, and Resources*
- Sheryl L. Kelly - *Simple Songs, Functional Fun: Music Therapy Activities For Any Child*
- Deborah Spiegel, Suzanne Makary, and Lauren Bonavitacola - *Creative DBT Activities Using Music: Interventions for Enhancing Engagement and Effectiveness in Therapy*