

Dear Parents:

The following pages give you a brief introduction to the Suzuki method of violin instruction as well as a little of my background and qualifications.

FAQ

How old does my child have to be?

Children of all ages can and should listen to classical music. Formal lessons can begin after the child is out of diapers. Parents of younger children are encouraged to observe classes at no charge. Adult students are welcome as well.

Do we have to know anything about music?

No. You only need to make an honest attempt to do what I ask of you. The five week parent class is a time to determine whether or not violin lessons will fit into your family's lifestyle and time constraints. When the parent completes the parent class, their child will begin instruction. The object of the parent class is to prepare parents to be the "home teacher". In the class parents will learn everything their child will learn for their first year of study! The parent class also gives me time to get to know each parents teaching and learning style.

Does my child have to be quiet and pay attention while the Suzuki recordings are played at home?

No. Think of how your newborn child learned to speak. Children learn to speak only because they heard you speak to them. Your child did not have to pay attention to hear you. They were IMMERSED in an environment that supported the acquisition of your native language. Playing the recordings much in the same way that you have a radio playing in your home is the kind of listening that is required everyday.

Why does the parent have to learn to play the violin with the child?

THE PARENT IS THE HOME TEACHER! The parent models the skills necessary to learn the instrument by building a musical environment in the home. By being IMMERSED in this environment the child learns to value art through an ability to play the violin in just the same way the child learned to speak. This is why you may have heard the Suzuki method referred to as the Mother Tongue method. Parents don't worry! It may sound difficult, but it is not. You will learn these skills one small step at a time from me! Then we will model them for your child to learn.

How much time will this take?

Parents will initially attend a 10 week parent class course which meets for one hour per week. You will also be required to observe a group or private lesson. Your daily practice may be five or ten minutes twice daily. Attending one group lesson, one private lesson and practicing 5 or 10 minutes daily is the same schedule you and your child will follow after parent classes are over.

Do I have to buy a violin?

Not yet! You and your child will begin instruction on a “violin box”. Parents will learn to make their violin box in the parent group class.

Buying a violin is sort of like buying a car. It’s easy to be over charged. I will help you to purchase or rent a violin when the time comes. You may not need a real violin for one or two months.

What does it cost to rent a violin?

Some where between \$12.00 and \$20.00 per month. Violins come in many sizes. As your child grows out of their violin, the next size is exchanged without any additional charge. Pawn shops are great places to find violins, BUT it is easy to be cheated. I will be happy to accompany you if you find one. There is a huge community of Suzuki violin students and teachers in the DFW area. We teachers all work together in finding instruments for our students. All parents are either selling violins or looking for the next size.

Are there any other materials I will need to purchase?

You will need to purchase the Suzuki recordings (CD or Cassette). I will assist you on where to get the best price. You will also need Suzuki Book I for violin and a 10 week parent class workbook. We will study several short books describing the Suzuki philosophy. You might find these at the library. I sometimes find them at half price books.

Introductory reading selections:

Suzuki, Shinichi. (1990). *Man and talent*. Ann Arbor, MI: Shar Products Publishers

Suzuki Shinichi, (1969). *Nurtured by love*. Smithtown, NY: Exposition Press.

Suzuki Shinichi, (1981). *Ability development from age zero*. Miami, Fla.: Warner Brothers.

These books are short, easy reads. Parents generally read them over the course of the parent class and first months of their child’s instruction. I will be happy to order all your class materials if you wish.

Why should my child receive musical instruction?

Musical activities support and engage “whole brain learning” by integrating and developing all learning styles (visual, aural, kinesthetic etc.) at the same time. When an activity involves one or more of the senses at the same time, the brain builds neuron pathways or connections across these differing centers in the brain rather than in one center. In my violin program, all this is accomplished in a non competitive and nurturing environment where the responsibility for learning is shared between the parent, teacher and the student.

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