

out on opportunities. In fact, I feel in a way that I am wasting your time and mine reviewing all of this well documented information.

But I feel we must keep trying to break down the barriers – to persuade those responsible for policy making that to rock the boat, to take a risk, to accept responsibility for change will be more likely to secure them a creditable place in history than never to have tried.

The choice is ours: The future of Australian music is in our hands: Orwell's 1984 has arrived

### MUSIC AND THE SLOW LEARNER

Why should music be included in the curriculum of a slow learner? As with an average child in the regular classroom we have to look at the requirements of the slow learner and what he/she needs for self actualisation and development. These necessities have to be considered alongside the competence which can be expected of him/her in terms of growth and maturation.

Slow learners require a remedial-type education program that is designed to overcome particular disabilities. With the slow learner we have to assume there is a general slow down, as compared with peers, in the progress of their development or that there is an actual break-down at some point. This is of relevance when considering a music program for slow learners and an individually tailored, carefully graded and modified music program needs to be designed building on what the child can do but aimed at experiential concepts several years below a slow learner's chronological age.

Music can make a unique contribution in meeting the needs of slow learners and in helping them realise their full potential. Through consistency, firmness, warmth and acceptance on the part of the teacher successful learning experiences can be directed through music. For the most part slow learners lack concentration, confidence and memory and so need a different approach to the teaching of music – more practical, more vivid and more vital than the usual approach in the regular

and we are all still alive! Please, let's not waste our own and future lives with further procrastination.

The solutions are all documented. All we need is the courage of our convictions to move forward towards the national enrichment of this well blessed country.

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school. The willingness of the teacher to accept a change, or variation, in regular teaching strategies will have great bearing on the success of the music program.

By participating in a wide variety of music activities slow learners can be helped to become more aware of themselves and of others. Music provides a social arena wherein children can learn to communicate, create, relate to one another, co-ordinate a work effort, experience leadership and appreciate the joy of doing something together. A child's self-image concept can be expanded in the group situation when emotions and things wanting to be expressed can be released through the creative environment provided by music. R.M. Graham says that *basic to any process or progress in the music education of exceptional children is the development and preservation of an accurate body image and healthy self-concept*. Other educators concerned with music and the handicapped endorse this view and find that as a result of consistent, positive musical experiences the slow learner's self-image is improved. The child in relating to others as a member of a group experiences a feeling of capability and security which leads to the development of poise, self-confidence and personal satisfaction. The feeling of confidence can contribute markedly to the slow learner's re-entry into regular classroom participation.

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