THE SUZUKI TALENT EDUCATION METHOD
FROM A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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"It is in our power to educate all the children of the world to become a little better as people, a little happier. We have to work toward this. I ask no more than the love and happiness of mankind, and I believe that is what everyone really wants."

Sinichi Suzuki
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of the Talent Education Method</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Development</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heredity vs. Environment</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rote Learning</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation Learning</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Development</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Learning</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Factors</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-Student Relationship</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Theories</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Evaluation of System</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Applicability of the System</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in American Public Schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sinichi Suzuki's Talent Education program is a philosophy of life rather than a method of education.¹ It is based upon the assumption that the only superior quality a child can have at birth is the ability to adapt himself with more speed and sensitivity to his environment. Suzuki feels that any child is able to display superior abilities if only the correct methods are used in their training.² Any child is admitted into his Talent Education program with no test whatsoever.³

Suzuki began his method after World War II, believing that music can be a great force for world peace⁴ and because he felt that children were being deprived of beauty.⁵ Conductor Seiji Ozawa stated, "The people needed an outlet, and music was the perfect answer."⁶

Suzuki states that "all children skillfully reared reach a high educational level but such rearing must start from the day of birth. Here, to my mind, lies the key to the full development of man's potentials and abilities."⁷ He feels that each child can develop a music capacity equal to his linguistic capacity.⁸ As one article stated, children's training should be begun early before their auditory senses are dulled and while their minds and ears absorb every part of their environment like sponges.⁹

In his opinion, cultural sensitivity is not inherited,
but is developed after birth. The hereditary ability of the mind is measured only by the speed with which it adapts to the surroundings. Suzuki writes that everyone's personality is carved and chiseled by circumstances and the environment. To survive, a child instinctively adapts to his surroundings—if they are crude, the child is thus. On the other hand, if they are refined and polished, so will be the child.

Under this method, the parents assume the responsibility for the education of their child with the other members of the family also being important as models for his behavior. As P. Gordon writes, "It is family involvement that is at the center of Suzuki's thinking." Suzuki states that the purpose of Talent Education is to train children not to be professional musicians but to be fine musicians with high ability in any other field they enter.

From birth on, the parents are to play a recording every day for the child while he is engaged in an enjoyable activity. In this way, the child learns to associate music with pleasant events and music will eventually become pleasurable for its own sake. The child will gradually learn to recognize the piece which should be evident from his behavior. Other pieces can be added slowly, thus developing the listening repertoire of the growing infant. These listening sessions will tend to train the ear to the tonal system that is being used. Suzuki
states that a child can be taught to be tone deaf or he can be trained to have highly discriminating pitch depending upon his early experiences with the tonal system.  

This method of learning by audition and later imitation has been called the mother-tongue approach. The keenness of hearing is evident in the child's learning to speak his mother tongue. Suzuki feels that he has but analyzed and adapted language-learning techniques which are used in every culture to other areas. At the present time, the mother-tongue approach is being used to teach violin, cello, piano, English, math, painting, calligraphy, and kindergarten classes. All children learn language during the first three to four years of life. Suzuki feels that this is done primarily by hearing and imitating sounds. He states, "If the child is brought up day after day in this atmosphere of good music, there can be no doubt that the child will eventually grow into a young person with an excellent ear for music."  

In preparation for the infant's ten-year program, a parent, usually the mother, begins to study violin. The child is taken to her lessons and sees her practicing daily at home as well as hears the recordings of the pieces she is working on. According to Suzuki, the next step depends upon the child. If he is reared in a loving environment where imitation of the parents is encouraged, he will ask to also be able to play. At this point, the mother takes the child to her lesson and asks the teacher,
and the process is begun\footnote{36}

Before the child actually touches the violin, he spends about three months playing musical games with the teacher. These are rhythm and pitch exercises which acclimate the child to musical sounds\footnote{37} as well as physical exercises to develop motor control\footnote{38}. These preparatory lessons span the first Suzuki Book and are aimed at involving the child's whole being\footnote{39,40}. Each skill is broken down into small segments easily mastered by the student. It is imperative that each segment be thoroughly mastered before going on to insure success at later levels\footnote{41}. Each skill is isolated but learned concurrently with others\footnote{42}. Each individual progresses at his own pace with new skills introduced as the child is ready for them\footnote{43}. During this period, the pupil is learning correct posture, correct bow and instrument hold, and the movements necessary to draw the bow across the strings\footnote{44}. The child is also listening daily to the first piece he will be playing, Twinkle Twinkle\footnote{45}.

When the child has the prerequisite skills, he is given a scaled-down violin, usually a 1/16 or 1/10 size instrument\footnote{46}. Once a week, the child is brought by his parent to a private lesson\footnote{47} in the European style\footnote{48}. In this, other children and their parents are present, but only one child plays at a time\footnote{49}. As one child begins to tire and lose interest, another child takes his place\footnote{50,51}. Observing other children taking lessons is assumed by Suzuki.
to aid in motivation. The lessons at the beginning usually last about fifteen minutes. Also, once a week, there is a group lesson in which all the children play. Suzuki feels that the child, seeing other more advanced students, will use the older children as models and will imitate their behavior, thus acquiring skill in violin as well as the setting of realistic goals for himself. During the lessons, games are played to keep the children's interest and to develop skills. These games usually are a form of follow-the-leader with the teacher as the leader.

The pupil is never coerced into practicing, but is expected to practice daily for approximately fifteen minutes in the beginning. In the home, the mother must show constant patience with praise and attention to spur the child on. She must guide the child without his feeling pressure to do it. Through her active influence, the parent functions as an assistant teacher, always present to correct and to reward behavior.

The pupil progresses at his own pace, mastering each piece before he is allowed to progress to the next. Although each student advances at his own rate, they all master the same repertoire. Because of this, they're able to play together in the group lesson.

The training for the first two to three years of playing is entirely aural. This is done so that the basic skills will become second-nature to the child before he faces the task of note reading. Then, the process of
learning to read is essentially association with the music that is already known. The child is more free to concentrate upon tone, pitch, and interpretation since he isn't struggling to read. These children have been found to have extremely well-developed tonal memories. Those who learn by hearing also give a more artistic performance.

Great stress is placed upon memory. Even after the student has learned to read music, they play all lessons and concerts from memory. They also continue to study recordings.

Constant repetition is the key to improvement of the basic factors of technique. While the student is progressing, he is constantly repeating materials learned earlier. Suzuki explains that he expects improvement in some aspect of the piece each time. This repetition never seems to bore children. Each lesson consists of three parts--time spent on current pieces, time spent reviewing material, and the remainder spent previewing new material or learning a skill needed in an upcoming piece. In the group lesson, the entire group begins with the first piece learned and then progresses through the literature. The students drop out as the material becomes more difficult until only the older, more advanced students are remaining.

There are five levels of attainment which a student can achieve. These levels are achieved when Suzuki feels the student has mastered the various skills. He personally
listens to a recording of each student enrolled in the program.\textsuperscript{91}

When a wrong response is learned, Suzuki recommends that a new response be learned to take its place.\textsuperscript{92} This is done through repeated presentations of the correct response until it becomes the natural response thereby replacing the wrong one.\textsuperscript{93}

Suzuki feels that listening not only teaches melody and rhythm, but also teaches a concept of good sound and artistic performance.\textsuperscript{94} This method increases pitch discrimination and the awareness of a beautiful sound as well as general musicality.\textsuperscript{95,96} Listening helps the student to achieve an "inner image" of tone and structure rather than a strict model to be copied.\textsuperscript{97} The repertoire to be studied is mainly from the Baroque period with Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, and folk tunes also studied.\textsuperscript{98} Suzuki feels that the pieces themselves are stimulating to the child whereas exercises are not.\textsuperscript{99}

Suzuki feels that "each music lesson is an opportunity for human encounter",\textsuperscript{100} permitting human and musical growth through the sharing of music.\textsuperscript{101} The child learns by this that he is valued as a person\textsuperscript{102} and grows in a relationship based on love and beauty.\textsuperscript{103}

He writes that the teacher must at all costs develop and maintain happy terms with his pupils.\textsuperscript{104} Praise of their efforts must always precede corrective criticism.\textsuperscript{105} In order to effectively identify with them, Suzuki feels
that it is necessary for the teacher to come down to their level both physically and mentally.\textsuperscript{106}

Education, Suzuki states, should bring out and develop the human potential.\textsuperscript{107} Suzuki writes that a child of three is at the stage when his personality is being formed and his abilities inculcated.

The group approach is felt to be advantageous by creating group cohesion.\textsuperscript{108} Each child comes to identify with and to make his own contributions to the group thus motivating without competition.\textsuperscript{109}

An important concept in Talent Education is that cooperation, not competition, motivates the children.\textsuperscript{110} In group lessons, the more advanced students often help the beginner.\textsuperscript{111} Any sense of competition or the comparing of students is avoided.\textsuperscript{112}

Suzuki feels that the child eagerly looks forward to the group lessons so that these are a prime source of motivation.\textsuperscript{113} The presence of the more advanced students, and the games played there are both important factors.\textsuperscript{114} The group concerts are also important in motivating the student.\textsuperscript{115} He feels that punishment should be avoided.\textsuperscript{116} Suzuki writes that by providing proper models, the behavior will change students.\textsuperscript{117}

Most importantly, Suzuki feels that it is the teacher's obligation to educate the parents as well as the children, to inspire them and to capture their enthusiasm\textsuperscript{118} so that they will be able to guide their child's development.\textsuperscript{119}
The Suzuki method knits a closer relationship between the parent and the child by providing an opportunity for them to share each other's experiences to a degree rarely possible. The close association of the mother and child is vital to the learning process.

Suzuki feels that it is essential that the teacher be able to perform well since he will be imitated by his students when he demonstrates and plays games with the students. In addition, he writes that the adult human environment must be at a high level and must continue to improve in order to provide a better learning situation for the child.

He feels that man should continually try to change his weaknesses into merits, being eager to learn from others. He feels that each human being has only the responsibility for living.

Suzuki has an overwhelming faith in what music can do for the human soul and character. He feels that the ultimate direction in life is to look for love, truth, and beauty. To do this, one must constantly strive to develop ability to the fullest through experience and repetition. For Suzuki, a true artist is a person with beautiful thoughts, feelings, and actions. He feels that it is important for children to come in contact with distinguished people in order to perceive and grasp humility, sincerity, knowledge, and love.

His whole method is based upon love for children.
He feels that they are examples of life in its truest form—children try always to live in pure love and joy. Suzuki writes that he learned from Mozart's music that in spite of the sadness, love can make this life happy.

An important concept in the method is mutual respect. He respects the rights of children not to be turned into machines for the sake of music.

Suzuki feels that the idea that talent is inherited can make a student become suicidal if he feels he lacks the ability to succeed. Suzuki believes that his method brings hope.

In order to guarantee that every child be raised in a nurturing environment, Suzuki would like to have child-probation officers for infants. These officers would be government-regulated and responsible for child-training in the home.

Many elements of this system are basic to the Japanese culture. These are: the atmosphere of sharing in the education of the child by the family members, the stress placed upon the development of the senses, an environment that naturally encourages the kind of development desired by the group, the respect for beauty, and a dependence upon learning through the medium of imitation.
There are basically two approaches to child development. One is the natural approach which allows the child to develop according to inner needs or drives, and the other is the guided-experience approach emphasizing the need to delineate the steps and stages in learning and the need to lead the child systematically through these steps. Theorists supporting the natural approach include Rousseau, Freud, and A. S. Neill, the most famous current exponent of this philosophy. Skinner, Bloom, Hunt, and Hicklin are the leading supporters of the guided experience approach. Suzuki believes in the need to structure the environment and to teach specific skills so he would therefore be classed under guided-experience.

Physiological development holds the key to every aspect of human functioning. The waiting until the age of five or six to begin the teaching of note reading in the Suzuki system is sound because eye development is not complete until then. It is physically impossible to focus upon small objects until this time. It also takes time to be able to make discriminations involving rotation and reversal. These typically are unable to be done until around five years. One of the reasons for this is need for the education of attention. Growth is learning's chief contributor as a modifier of behavior. Piaget
feels that mental structures change in a regular sequence of stages that are related to age. The growth of perceptual ability in the child involves both a gradually increasing sensitivity of a child's receptors to the information provided by his environment and an increasing ability on his part to register and interpret this information. This concept is basic to Suzuki, in which the child grows up surrounded by music. Of all the mental processes, perception is probably the one that shows the most rapid progress during the first couple of years of life. According to Suzuki, this is the crucial time for training the child in the tonal system that is being used—he could be taught to be tone deaf or to have highly discriminating pitch perception. The infant is able to comprehend and to respond appropriately to the affective tone of many of the sounds made by his mother. Suzuki feels the playing of music during enjoyable periods causes music to become enjoyable itself through association. This has been found to occur, especially when it was used from the time of birth.

The evolution of a child's self-conception is mainly a progressive awareness of his separateness from other people and things. The second, third, and fourth month is the crucial time for the communication of the idea that the child is loved. The whole atmosphere that surrounds the child is a key part of this process. Feeding is about the sole time in the beginning when that is possible.
This goes along with Suzuki's idea of playing music during enjoyable periods such as feedings.

During preschool years, a child's discriminatory capacities develop further in all domains. He becomes capable of auditory discrimination and memory. Suzuki feels that beginning training early in these areas will help them to develop to a remarkable degree.

One specific anxiety that is very common to a two-year-old but that may also carry over into later childhood is called separation anxiety. This is elicited by the parent's leaving him or his having to leave his parents by going to sleep. For those infants in whose lives music has been an integral part of the loving, parental environment, music can come to be a transitional tune. This is a reassuring reminder of the mother-child unity, in which he felt pleasantly safe and gained relief from the tension states that are a normal part of infancy. When the transitional phenomenon is an auditory, musical one, it would seem that music has claimed an early and very likely a lasting importance in the child's life. It may be that a transition tune is an essential first step in musical development. Early music lessons, for a child who has taken this first step, would seem natural and even necessary. The preceding would seem likely to occur as a product of the Suzuki philosophy.

The period from ages 2-5, is critical for the disciplinary and role-modeling activities by which parents socialize
their youngsters and transmit their culture to them.\textsuperscript{170} The discipline should foster self-control and social judgment without detracting from his initiative and self-confidence.\textsuperscript{171} During this time, Suzuki feels that it is imperative for the adult environment to be of high quality and to be constantly improving for the child to develop proper attitudes toward learning. Also, it is important that any criticism is always preceded by words of praise, thus reinforcing the good points of the work.

For children of this early age group, play activities reflect their new motor abilities.\textsuperscript{172} The preparatory exercises and the playing of the violin would aid in the development of the child's coordination.

Lee J. Cronbach, an expert in the area of child development, has devised a list of developmental tasks for each age group that states that for the ages of two to six, the general characteristics are energetic play and more regulated activity.\textsuperscript{173} The Suzuki system would tend to structure more of the child's time with lessons, practicing, and listening sessions. Maslow writes that young children seem to thrive better under a system that has at least a skeletal outline of rigidity.\textsuperscript{174} He feels that this is needed so that he will not become a neurotic adult afraid of the unknown dangers in the world.\textsuperscript{175} They also enjoy activity for its own sake.\textsuperscript{176} For them, their play is their work.\textsuperscript{177} Suzuki's games to involve the whole child
would be a practical application of this.

Cronbach also writes that the child has a need for approval by authority figures,\textsuperscript{178} in this case, the parents and the teacher, and for approval by the peers\textsuperscript{179} which the group lessons would help to provide. These children also need frequent rest periods.\textsuperscript{180} The fifteen-minute lessons make sense when viewed from the perspective of the short-attention span of a pre-schooler.
Theorists believe that individual differences in learning are due to differences in readiness for that specific task.\(^{181}\) In an area such as playing violin, factors such as strength, speed, coordination and flexibility become necessary skills.\(^{182}\) Suzuki accepts this and does not push the child too fast. Each step must be thoroughly mastered before the student is allowed to progress to the next.

There are two basic approaches to individual differences. These are based on heredity and on environment.\(^{183}\) All current theorists recognize the influence of both heredity and the environment but the camps are formed by the amount of emphasis which is placed on each one.\(^{184}\) Hereditarians believe that the child inherits definite predispositions which have an impact upon his later behavior and that many forms of behavior are due to causes too complex to trace.\(^{185}\) Environmentalists, on the other hand, believe that the child is a tabula rasa and that whatever he becomes is largely the result of environmental experiences.\(^{186}\) Those who favor this view endorse a rigid interpretation of determinism believing that all behavior is the result of specifiable conditions.\(^{187}\) They are likely to advocate a considerable degree of control over behavior with special emphasis on the guidance of behavior through predetermined
The current leading exponent of this system, B. F. Skinner, feels that the methods of science should be applied to human affairs by manipulating environmental forces. Suzuki definitely falls in the environmentalist camp by stating that no talents are inherited. In speaking of whether abilities are inherited or whether they are innate, Bloom wrote that evidence is now placing greater emphasis upon environmental influences, especially during the early years of life. He went on to say that the family, not the school, provides the early education of the child. Suzuki agrees entirely that the family itself must take the responsibility for the child's education.

Bloom feels that changes in characteristics are closely related to environmental conditions. In his opinion, a child's pre-school and primary grade education are the most important experience of his life. J. McV. Hunt writes that systematically enriched stimulation during the critical first six years of life will produce a significant advance in intelligence. Bloom even suggests, "In fact, it might be feasible to discover ways to govern the environment, especially during development, to achieve a substantially faster rate of intellectual development and a substantially higher adult level of intelligence." Hicklen hypothesizes that nursery school and kindergarten could have far-reaching consequences on the child's general learning pattern.

Froebel, an originator of the kindergarten movement,
writes that all the child is ever to be lies in the child and can be attained only through development from within outward. He felt that the early period of the child's life must be considered as uniquely necessary to the full realization of his potentialities. Suzuki took many of his ideas from Froebel's writings.

Skinner feels that students can be taught and encouraged to develop such traits as perseverance, originality, and creativity. These are among the traits Suzuki wishes to develop in his students while teaching them to be noble human beings.

Children do differ from birth in several aspects of temperament including levels of activity, eating, sleeping, and sensitivity to stimulation. Temperamental differences are genetically linked. Some investigators have demonstrated that infants can be classified into two groups according to their ability to cope with frustrations. The first group deals effectively with it, while the second group is easily upset by any change in routine or any threat to their interpersonal relationships. These children have an inability to cope effectively with new and unexpected situations. "Current evidence suggests that this basic coping capacity of infants is genetically determined. It is independent of the kind of caretaking a young child receives and persists into later childhood and adolescence." This is similar to Suzuki's concept of the ability to adapt to the environment.
ROTE LEARNING

Suzuki employs rote learning for much of his method. This involves establishing a capacity to provide the appropriate response on future occasions. 203

Different modes of impression are available for rote learning such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and vocomotor. 204 It also seems probable that individuals differ in the modality through which they perceive the best. 205 If this difference is innate, this would be another factor in the varying abilities of students of the Suzuki system. In general, it appears that no single modality is superior and that a multi-modal approach is likely to surpass a unimodal presentation. 206 Suzuki employs auditory, visual, and kinesthetic stimuli in his method of teaching.
MODELING

New responses made after observing a model are learned through imitation. By guiding initial trials, correct responses become established and incorrect preliminary trials are eliminated. This early guidance directs the learner's attention to more adequate skills and aids the learner in understanding the nature of a successful performance. It can also provide the encouragement to continue and to relieve the anxiety that may appear if the learner is uncertain about his ability to perform the task.

In the Suzuki method, the mother is always present to aid the child and to offer encouragement. She can also manage practice time more effectively, which has been shown to be quite important in learning.

The imitative behavior of children is an important mode of social learning and is itself learned rather than spontaneous. In young children, the imitation is probably little more than lack of differentiation between the child and the object imitated. A child acquires a concept of himself based upon reactions of others to him, demands imposed upon him, and a growing self-awareness. This self-concept adds a personal dimension to the kinds of choices a child makes of whom he will imitate and how.

Children learn behavior patterns, including related emotional and attitudinal features through imitating their
parents and other models. "In the schools and in many homes much attention is given to exemplary models...who demonstrate social norms or behavior that is considered desirable by the adults responsible for the education of the children. This social aspect of learning is probably more critical than is generally assumed." This is an important point in Suzuki. He feels that the adult environment must be of high quality and continue to improve to provide the proper model for the child.
IMITATION LEARNING

Bandura, in his work on imitation, has found that exposure to models has the effect of providing an opportunity to learn new response patterns, of strengthening or weakening inhibitions about engaging in the observed behavior, and of eliciting previously acquired but dormant responses. The interplay of modeled behavior, consequences to the model, and incentive and motivational conditions provide a complex set of determinants of both acquisition of responses and their performance.\(^{218}\)

The initial acquisition of imitative responses results primarily from the temporal contiguity of events\(^{219}\) with reinforcement as a determiner of whether or not and under what circumstances the acquired behavior will be performed.\(^{220}\) Imitation is facilitated when the model receives rewards for his behavior.\(^{221}\) For Suzuki, this means that the child will be more likely to imitate his mother if she is rewarded and enjoys the playing.

Studies have found that typically the more imitative person lacks self-esteem and competence because they have experienced insufficient rewards thus far, or because they have been rewarded for exhibiting matching and conforming behavior thus becoming more dependent.\(^{222}\) Most studies indicate that first-born children and women tend to be more conforming than other groups.\(^{223}\) However, the American cul-
ture tends to stress independence which is counter to this concept\textsuperscript{224} much more than the traditional Japanese culture does.
Children learn to discriminate voices within a few weeks of birth with phonetic, consonant, correct pitch, and stress patterns being discriminated in the middle of the first year. "The greater diversity of sounds in the babbling of normal six-month old children relative to that of deaf children suggests that the hearing of speech sounds stimulates the child." If speech sounds are found to be stimulating, music could possibly also be a stimulus. Suzuki feels that it is.

Around the first birthday, the infant says his first words. Language, according to grammatical rules, begins to emerge near the end of the second year of life. From the beginning, children's language gives evidence of being systematic, regular, and productive. They are able to analyze, order words, and invent new combinations at all levels of language. "Small children, whose cognitive powers are known to be limited in some respects, show a remarkable ability to reconstruct the language they hear." This principle is a foundation of the mother-tongue approach applied to music. Suzuki feels that the child will be able to reconstruct the sounds he has heard from birth upon his violin.
ATTITUDES TOWARD LEARNING

Basing his views on the theories of Piaget, psychologist J. Bruner feels that emotional overtones toward learning are established around three. Favorable attitudes are associated with parents who accept children, help them, participate with them in some activity, and exhibit cooperative attitudes with each child. Each of the previous points is an essential step in the Suzuki system.

Attitudes, values, and interests are the products of a life-long interaction between inherited predispositions and environmental experiences.

Some teachers are able to exert a profound influence on some students, even to the point of causing a particular individual to reorient his philosophy of life and to adopt new goals. The best general approach to take in order to influence the values of students is for the teacher to have value commitments which are firm and openly expressed and to be outgoing and warm in relationships with students.

Conditioning principles have been found to have the most applicability to the affective domain. Skinner feels that for a teacher to influence student attitudes, he should consciously try to shape them.
In order to develop motivation, the environment should be relatively free of punishment and there should be an ample supply of rewarding events.\textsuperscript{246}

For Suzuki, the attitude of the teacher is of prime importance for motivation.\textsuperscript{247} He must firmly believe that talent can be developed.\textsuperscript{248}

There are, built into the system, several ways to encourage motivation. These are hearing recordings he will later learn, seeing and hearing his mother practice, accompanying his mother to her lesson and seeing other children learning to play, by realizing the pleasure of accomplishments with appropriate reinforcement from using the part-method, concert experiences, and the social aspect of the group lessons with the teaching of games.\textsuperscript{249}
GROUP FACTORS

Group lessons are a central concept in Suzuki. It has been found that the characteristics of the group have a strong effect on the efficiency of an individual's learning. A group characterized by dissension results in unwholesome rivalries and unfavorable attitudes among individuals as well as low efficiency in learning the subject matter. A friendly group is marked by cooperation and more favorable attitudes as well as increased learning.

Groups tend to serve two main functions. The first is to provide standards for comparison, and the second is to establish norms for behavior. This can be a force for improvement but it could also deteriorate into mediocrity if the standards are allowed to fall. The teacher's influence is greater with younger children, but with adolescents, the influence of adults wanes relative to the power of the peer group in shaping values. This seems to indicate that great care should be taken in selecting the membership for various groups.
The teacher-student relationship establishes the requirement for a mutually satisfying work experience. The children quickly learn that they must earn the rewards of the teacher. This characterizes the first phase of learning. Much learning in this phase might be mastery through repetition. As identification with the teacher increases, the learner will progress to the next phase in which motivation for reward will be replaced by inner motivation. It's been proven that a child who has achieved this inner direction with one teacher might have to start the whole process again with a new teacher.

In Suzuki, the personality of the teacher and the quality of the student-teacher relation are very important since it is in large part for the relationship, that a child learns. The relationship with the teacher must be based upon the child's relationship to the parent. The child does not easily permit the first transfer of authority over his life from the parent to someone else, and he needs the assurance, through the parent-teacher relationship, that his parent fully approves of such a transfer. The parent must support and reflect the teacher's interest if a functional bridge is to be built up between child and teacher.

First-class teachers have communed with noble minds,
found their place in the world, and know the beauty of it. They are cultured people who have found harmony between the conscious and the unconscious minds. The best teachers have a mature capacity for love. It has been found that "children who are brought up by good teachers in this kindly way, not only learn more, but they learn to take hold of the problems of life by the right handle as it were."

The teacher's personality, the teacher-child relationship, the catalytic effect of the parent, and the musical interest and talent of the teacher and the parent, as well as the child, all have been recognized as vital contributors to Suzuki's successes.
Generally, there are considered to be two categories of learning theories, cognitive and associationism. Cognitive theories stress insight and the development of understanding of relationships between stimuli in the environment. They start with the familiar and base each step on those already taken so as to group items to their natural connections. These theorists view practice which does not contribute to understanding as being aimless and useless. Associationism stresses the significance of the association of the response with the stimuli. These theories minimize the idea that mediating perceptions may intervene between stimuli and responses. They also emphasize the role of prior learning in present behavior. Response patterns are felt to be built up gradually through an accumulation of many trials.

The associationists include Thorndike, Skinner, Guthrie, and Hull, while the leading cognitive theorists are Lewin and Tolman.

Thorndike

Thorndike's associationism theory of learning states that repeated exercising of a response strengthens its connections with the stimuli. Suzuki concurs with repeti-
tion and practice being central points. Thorndike also felt that previous experiences and attitudes cause certain predispositions which determine what goals the individual will seek and what will satisfy them. Suzuki also emphasizes prior experience in determining character traits.

Thorndike's theory involves the mastery of simple, component parts with understanding thought to be a natural result of well-organized learning. Suzuki also employs segmented learning with each task being broken down into small steps. Suzuki also subordinates insight and understanding believing these will develop with drill and habit. Thorndike believed that the teacher's job involves identifying the bonds to be formed, to identify the states of affairs that should bring satisfaction, and to apply satisfaction and annoyance to the identified states. I feel that Suzuki would agree with these points. The two theories differ in their views on the method infants use to learn. Thorndike felt that infants learn through classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and trial and error learning with trial and error being the most active. For Suzuki, imitation learning is the primary way. For him, trial and error would represent wasted effort with its random, multiple responses.

**Skinner**

Suzuki's theory is in agreement with Skinner's on the issue of shaping behavior to attempt to produce a prede-
terminated end result. This is done by following a desired behavior with a reinforcement. This generates a tendency for that behavior to be repeated. The stimulus-response theory also emphasizes task analysis in which steps are isolated and arranged in the proper sequence so that the desired can then be shaped. This is also done in Suzuki with each step being dependent upon the preceding ones. Skinner feels that differences in rate of formation of associations is due to differences in tendencies to attend to relevant stimuli. Suzuki feels that learning rate is dependent upon the ability to adapt to the environment. For Suzuki, the group experiences provide valuable motivation for the students. Skinner writes that in higher-order conditioning, secondary reinforcers are usually social thus concurring with Suzuki. In operant conditioning, reinforcement cannot occur unless the conditional response appears. Suzuki reinforces some aspect of the performance continually, sometimes before giving corrective criticism. Suzuki totally avoids punishment while Skinner feels that it has no weakening influence on a behavior.

Guthrie

Guthrie's S-R contiguity theory agrees with Suzuki about the mechanical and repetitious nature of learning. He feels that practice assimilates and alienates cues until a stimuli combination comes to evoke a whole family of responses. He bases his theory on temporal contiguity
with motivation, punishment, and reward being discounted. Suzuki is in disagreement on this point. The two theories concur on the issue of treatment of an incorrect response. They both feel that the correct behavior must be made to occur to the cue which previously gave rise to the faulty behavior through repetition.

Hull

Hull feels that learning takes place only as a consequence of reinforcement while Suzuki adds the concept of imitation to this. They differ in that Hull feels that mere repetition does nothing but generate inhibition.

Lewin

For field theorists, learning involves the gaining of new insights and perceptions. This is accomplished by the way he arranges the environment, but they do not control learning as the S-R theorists do. Discovery learning is an excellent example of this type of approach. In this, it is important for the teacher to understand the relationship between the learner, his environment, and his behavior emphasizing that how the student feels about what he learns is of great importance. Suzuki agrees with this, but feels that growing up with a subject will make it a natural part of one's knowledge as one's native language is. For Lewin, a leading field theorist, the teacher's task is to aid the learner to establish attainable goals and then
to assist him in attaining them.\textsuperscript{295} Suzuki would agree with this. Field theorists feel that psychological success or failure depends upon the ego involvement of the learner.\textsuperscript{296} Therefore, the goals must be real to the learner.

\textbf{Tolman}

Tolman's Sign-Gestalt theory is the most highly organized of the cognitive theories.\textsuperscript{297} He rejects the idea that learning is the association of stimulus and response, but that it is rather the route to the goal that is learned.\textsuperscript{298} He feels the goals must be capable of satisfying needs. In agreement with Suzuki, he feels that over-exercise of a response tends to fix it, making it more resistant to change.\textsuperscript{299} Tolman believes that rewards and punishment tend to regulate performance rather than acquisition.\textsuperscript{300}

\textbf{Psychoanalysis}

Psychoanalysis views the pre-school years as a crucial time for building the foundation of the personality.\textsuperscript{301} The child must discover himself as a unique, separate, worthwhile individual and at the same time adapt himself to the world.\textsuperscript{302} Disturbing influences at this time can block further development.\textsuperscript{303} If a disturbance was caused over toilet-training, this could be perpetuated in a struggle over music with a blocking of music as a source of pleasure as a possible result. Dr. Marjorie MacDonald, a musician
and a psychoanalyst, feels that the question is whether pre-school music would interfere or enhance his total personality development. 304

MacDonald believes that Suzuki was right in suggesting that musical development can be begun at the same age and in the same way as language development. 305 This early training serves as a foundation for the next step at three or four of introducing the violin. She feels that learning to play becomes comparable to learning more words and sentences in lingual development. 306
PERSONAL EVALUATION OF SYSTEM

I personally feel that much of the success of the Suzuki system is due to Dr. Suzuki's genuine interest in each child. The attention that the child receives from his family and later from his teacher, is assumed to be of such high quality the child naturally absorbs and imitates their behavior. I believe that the success of the system hinges upon the teacher's personality. He must be able to inspire the parents to begin and to continue this massive training program for their child which involves nothing less than the structuring of the environment. He must also inspire the child to want to achieve, which involves hours of practice. All of this work must be done in a warm, loving way because the child will imitate the behaviors he observes. I agree that these should be central concerns for all teachers.

It seems impossible to separate the method from the man. The system is built so much upon his personal qualities that any other using the method would probably obtain results differing to some degree from Suzuki's.

The period from birth to around six is characterized by a remarkable rate of learning about the world in which one lives. I feel that music and sound are a vital part of life. Suzuki's concept that exposure to music during this period will train the ear, and spark an interest in
music does seem to be well-founded. I do have reservations about trying to force a child to take up an instrument. This idea is also contrary to Suzuki. In the system, events are structured to try to make the child want to take lessons. I believe that it is extremely detrimental to try to force anything upon a child at this age. An aversion to that area could result from it.

The mother's role in Suzuki has considerable merit. She is present when the child practices so that she can help to eliminate incorrect responses before they become established habits. She can also help to manage practice time more efficiently. All of this assumes that the mother is warm, affectionate, and infinitely patient. It is often extremely difficult to be so patient with a person this close to you. Their difficulties can produce frustration much more intense than would be produced with someone else's child. I would recommend that mothers be counseled in this area before the program is begun.

The idea of learning music by rote is not original with Suzuki. The gypsies of Europe and American jazz musicians have used it for years. In a gypsy school in Hungary, music is taught by imitation.\textsuperscript{307} Even after the students learn to read music and learn theory, they continue to master orchestra music by rote.\textsuperscript{308} I agree with Suzuki that postponing note reading until after the student is comfortable with the instrument makes a lot of sense. The playing of an instrument is a complex task involving many separate
skills. There are a tremendous number of things for a student to remember without having him also trying to learn how to read music.

Psychologically, Suzuki uses principles from various learning theories. He seems to fall mainly under the S-R approach with his emphasis on the structuring of the environment making him very similar to Skinner. Suzuki believes that how a student feels about music is irrelevant—no one ever asks if someone likes his native language. I believe that by beginning music at this early age, it would become a natural part of the person.

I do disagree with the student's feelings being irrelevant. In order for music to become important to him, I feel that how the student feels about the learning process is a significant factor. I believe that the characteristics of the teacher are valuable in establishing the child's first interest in music.

Suzuki feels that by being brought up in such a rich environment, the child will show remarkable ability in every field. I tend to agree with this. A child who is brought up in a warm environment will be more eager to accept a challenge, better able to face failure, and to be generally more able to adapt to situations. There is some experimental evidence to support this. Rats raised in enriched environments have been found to have more developed cerebral cortices. 309

I agree that music can enrich a person's life. Sound
constantly surrounds us, and it can be a source of pleasure. By being exposed to music, one develops an appreciation of the beauty of the art. I believe that this awakening of the aesthetic sense can lead to a deeper appreciation of all of life.
POSSIBLE APPLICABILITY OF THE SYSTEM
IN AMERICAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Because the period from birth to age six is so vital to learning in the Suzuki system, and due to the public school system in the United States, I do not feel that the method could be applied on a mass education approach. I don't feel that parents would or that they should hand the care of children over to the schools at this early age. With the number of working mothers, the use of the mother as an assistant teacher is highly impractical. I do feel that the system could be used by families who are willing to accept most of the responsibility for the education of their child, and who have the time to invest in it. Suzuki would seem to be a natural choice for a family in which one of the parents plays an instrument.

If the mother is available, the use of the parent could be a valuable asset to a beginning instrumental program. She would be able to help the child to establish the correct habits from the beginning. Again, infinite patience would be necessary in order not to turn the child off to music.

Even in families where training on an instrument was impossible, ear training could be started early, thus making it easier to continue later on. Attitudes toward learning have been shown to develop around three, so this is a vital time in the child's life to interest him in what can
become a life-long process of growing through education. The parents' attitudes as well as the home environment could help to develop these positive attitudes.

I feel the program could be begun in the kindergarten class with the children who had received early ear training at home having a distinct advantage over the other children. By this age, they would be physically capable of note reading so the preparatory period could be considerably shorter. This would be good under our present system which stresses sight reading ability. I feel that for a strong program, rote learning should be combined with reading ability so that both skills are developed. In agreement with Suzuki, I feel that note reading should be postponed until the other skills are well established.

Motivation could be aided, I believe, if the repertoire of the system was expanded to include American folk tunes as well as popular songs.

At the present time, music education is being cut back in many school systems due to financial difficulties. Beginning instrumental training at an even earlier age will obviously put more strain on the budgets. I think that the importance of music in the curriculum and its contribution to the life of the student should be re-evaluated. It is one of the few subjects that can be used throughout life.

Suzuki is also a ten-year program. Due to the importance of the teacher-student relationship, this seems to as-
sume that the family will remain in one locality for the entire period. This is much more of a problem in our mobile society than it is in the traditional Japanese culture. Teachers trained in Suzuki would need to be more widespread than they are at the current time in order for the system to function.

As for his child probation program, I believe that as the world becomes more over-populated and resources become more depleted, some type of child regulation will probably come into effect. I do not believe a government-regulated probation program could be instituted in the United States because of this country's basic orientation to the freedoms of the individual.

Today's mechanized society has tended to remove much of the creative work from man's life. The joy of creating, of something for oneself is often forgotten. If a young child can begin to experience the pleasure of producing and creating his own sounds, he may be beginning a life of pleasure based upon his own efforts. The feeling may become generalized from music to other areas. Suzuki's suggestions for the environment are similar to the suggesting for an environment fostering creativity. I personally feel that this is one of the most important traits a person can possess.
"...perhaps it is music that will save the world."

Pablo Casals
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