Why teach music?

Music should be taught to give students the chance to understand it in a way they may not otherwise be able to. Also, music can build good character traits and make life more enjoyable for students. All students should be given that opportunity.

The understanding of music can be a complex thing, but it is satisfying to hear a piece of music for more than the sounds that are produced. Students could see a whole new world if they understand the structure of music or know the history of where the music came from. Understanding music in this way can also help children understand many other aspects of life in a way that is different than if they had not had music.

Understanding music fosters an appreciation of it that influences the life a child in a positive way. Music can be used as a way for people to express themselves, and teaching music can open up that aspect of music to students that may not have found it otherwise. By understanding and appreciating music, children can better understand themselves and all that they are capable of doing.

Teaching music can help children become well-rounded in the sense that music will help them have open minds. Understanding the history of music and how music works lets them imagine. This imagination will help them in life by being mentally flexible, and it can help them look deeper into music and find a way for it to speak for them.
What should be taught in music?

The content of music classes depends on the age of the children that are being taught. The fundamentals of music should be taught at varying levels of depth. This way, students will always have the fundamentals and can choose to continue building them or not.

In elementary school, students should be taught basic rhythms and melodies, how to sing with good pitch, and possibly to play an instrument. All of these activities will give them a foundation that can be built on later. This knowledge will serve them well, even if they do not continue with music.

In middle school, everything taught in elementary school should be fine-tuned and built upon. Students should be taught how to play their instruments or sing better, they should play more challenging music, and new instruments can be introduced. In addition, basic theory and history should be taught to help children have more context of what they are playing.

In high school, playing/singing abilities should be further built upon, and there should be definite growth from middle school. More theory and history should be taught for context, and more difficult music should be played. There should be more understanding of music to help the playing of it.

From elementary school to high school, music skills should be built upon. The fundamentals of music are always important, and building upon them should be the goal. By starting early, children will always have fundamentals that they can take further or not, depending on their tastes.
How should it be taught?

Music should be taught in a step-by-step, organized way. Everything that is learned should build upon and relate to what was learned previously. Music should also be taught both in a group setting and individually.

Teachers should start by teaching things visually. Examples of this are: what different notes look like and the names associated with them, types of rests and how long they last, and what different rhythms sound like. This helps to stimulate the sense of sight in the learning process.

Once those are learned visually, they should be taught aurally. The pictures and names of notes should be played on the piano and/or sung. Rhythms and rests should be clapped and counted. This connects sight and sound and will help in the retention of this information.

Finally, the children should demonstrate both visually and aurally what they have learned. This can be done by an individual identifying a quarter note, or by the group clapping a rhythm. By having children demonstrate what was taught, there is proof that they have learned and understand the material.

By teaching music in steps, students can connect sounds with written music and be able to identify it. Children are then able to understand how written music correlates to the sound they hear and produce. When students learn simple things like these, they can apply them later in school if they choose to continue with music and play more difficult pieces.
To whom should music be taught?

At first, the obvious answer to the question, “To whom should music be taught?” seems to be “to everyone.” This is true to an extent. At some point during their time in school, all children should be exposed to some form of music education. However, as children get older, music can become more optional and based on their desire for it.

In elementary school, music should be a requirement for all children. At this age, children can be taught the very basics of music, and it can be enjoyable. They can learn to sing familiar songs with good pitch and correct notes. Once children have the basics of music, they can decide whether they really like it and want to continue to study music in middle school and high school.

Once children get to middle school and high school, there are many more classes that are required, and children can choose whether or not music is something they continue to study. This is a time where children decide what their true likes and dislikes are, and not all children enjoy sitting in a band or choir class. This is alright because they were exposed to the basics of music in elementary school.

Ideally, music should be taught to all children at some point in their education. In elementary school is the best time to have this initial exposure. Children will learn the basics, and then decide whether or not music is something they wish to continue in school.
With what results?

Music should be taught not just to fill a period in a school day. It should be taught like any other subject where children learn something. Children should have an understanding of how music works, have an appreciation of music, and be able to play an instrument and/or sing.

Children should know about music in these ways because it is as valuable as math or science. In fact, music can help in these subjects as well as standing alone. The skills necessary to understand music (having an open mind) are very useful in other subjects like science. Outside of school, an open mind can help in the job force. A child may never use chemistry, but they will always benefit from the open mind they developed by studying music.

Students should also be able to play or sing music and appreciate it. Appreciating music can help children appreciate other things in life that take effort to achieve. It takes a lot of work and effort to play music, and students can later apply that work and effort to getting a job. They can appreciate the benefits of that job just like they appreciated the ability to make beautiful music.

Music has many benefits, and these benefits will help students for the rest of their lives. Music makes children open-minded and flexible, which are always good qualities to have. Aside from just learning in school, music should help prepare a students for life in other ways than being knowledgeable.