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Name Those Notes

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Abstract

The names of the notes on the treble clef staff are not currently taught in the Indiana State Music Curriculum. This concept is essential to the understanding, reading, and writing of music. Therefore, it is important that research based curriculum is developed for this topic. Fourth grade students will complete a pre-test and series of lessons about learning the note names. These lessons will include direct instruction, activities, and homework assignments. A different method or unit plan will be used at each school. Upon the conclusion of each unit, the students will re-take the pre-test as a post-test. Scores from both schools will be compared to analyze which method seemed to produce higher test scores.

Methods

Pre test and Post test conducted for each group before and after lesson instruction cycle, respectively.

School 1:
- Began students from scratch, learning middle C to C in the staff on first day.
- Completed staff and keyboard study guide to take home for practice
- Listened to musical samples of Freddie the Frog [2], followed by random identification of notes
- Completed fill-in-the-blank story by reading notes in small sections on a staff (each group of notes spelled a word)
- Participated in scavenger hunt in book to find songs in the key of C.

School 2:
- Based instruction on students’ prior knowledge (listing solfege note names students already knew and using intro text [1])
- Filled in gaps of learning with information provided in Freddie the Frog
- Students completed staff/keyboard study guide and the complete-a-story worksheets
- Songs were both read and sung
- Students went on a scavenger hunt in their books for songs in the key of C

Data

Pretest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student scores (test scored 1-26 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School #1 (N = 58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School #2 (N = 52)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student scores (test scored 1-26 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School #1 (N = 55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School #2 (N = 52)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graphs 1 and 2: (above) Distribution of scores for students in the pre- and post-test. 17 students from school #1 and 19 students from school #2 had prior music experience through private lessons. 12 in total were English learners or special needs students.

Conclusions

- Students from school #1 performed better after instruction
- Starting all students from scratch appears to be most effective for overall improvement in learning note names
- Large error in gain suggests need for more data to confirm results

References


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