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The 21st Century Classroom and Beyond: Student-Centered Learning and High-Tech in the Music Classroom

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Abstract

Innovation in the education has accelerated in the past couple of decades with significant impacts on classroom structure and tools. In particular a transition from teacher-centered to student-centered learning environments and the integration of student choice. These teaching theories have been celebrated by popular teaching models such as the International Baccalaureate and demonstrate high efficacy in student learning. These strategies are also notorious for the demands they put on educator's time and resources. New education technologies have shown their ability to relieve some of this strain on educators particularly in the field of music education and inquiry-based learning. However, it is important to understand the role of these technologies in classroom as tools and aids in the education process meant to supplement and not replace the part of a teacher. This paper is intended to evaluate the role of these technologies as aides in the new teaching landscape of student-centered and inquiry-based learning in order to provide insight into the classrooms of the future. In particular this paper will evaluate them in the context of International Baccalaureate (IB) framework. IB was chosen as the framing for this paper as it utilizes and encourages these teaching theories as well as being one of the most commonly used international education frameworks.

This paper has been developed as a literature review. Papers used to compile the analysis of digital tools were selected for relevancy to search terms and published within the last 15 years in order to create a current and comprehensive review of the technologies available to enhance instruction in the context music education. The results of this analysis suggest that though these digital tools may aid in developing students' knowledge, understanding, and skills within music and do provide a resource for the inquiry process integral to IB and many other student-centered approaches to learning these tools do not substitute for the interactive and guiding roles played by the physical presence of a teacher in the context of music education. Students still rely on instructors to structure the process and direct them toward useful and appropriate tools for conducting their inquiry.