



# Strategies and Analysis of Incorporating Musicals into Junior High School Music Teaching: a Case Study of the Music Class of Rongmei School

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### ABSTRACT

With the implementation of the double reduction policy, the concept of quality education has become more popular. As an important part of aesthetic education, the reform of music teaching has also been put on the agenda. Music teaching in the new era will not only improve students' music appreciation ability, but also cultivate students' expressiveness and creativity, and transform students from mere music learners into comprehensive roles of learners, performers and creators. Musical drama also contains artistic elements such as music, dance, and drama, and plays an irreplaceable role in cultivating the music appreciation, expressiveness and creativity of junior high school students. Therefore, music teachers should effectively implement the strategy of incorporating musicals into junior high school music teaching, and give full play to the important role of musical teaching.

**Keywords:** Double Reduction Policy; Aesthetic Education; Music Teaching; Musical

### Introduction

The *New Music Curriculum Standards* mentioned the basic concepts of primary and secondary school music courses: emphasizing music practice and encouraging music creation. Musical, as a new model developed in the new era in recent years, despite its short course of development, it has gained the love of countless parents, students and music teachers with its comprehensive, experiential, pertinent, and educational features. Integrating musicals into the music classroom of junior high school can well stimulate students' interest in music courses, thereby effectively cultivating their creative thinking and expressiveness. In summary, musicals have many aesthetic education values that conform to the progress of the times, fit the characteristics of students' physical and mental development, and meet the aesthetic needs and artistic expression of students.

#### 1. Musicals are the perfect carrier for comprehensive music education.

The musical has various forms, which can perfectly combine classical music with popular music. Through learning, students can learn about different styles and genres of music in ancient and modern China and abroad, which plays an important role in broadening the horizons of junior high school students and promoting students' creative thinking in music. Through exposure to different forms of musicals, students can fully experience the charm of musicals.

Secondly, musicals contain many artistic elements, which enable students to expand from a single aesthetic to an overall artistic aesthetic. We found that some students like classical music, some like pop music, some like theater performances, and some like dance art. Musical drama contains many artistic elements. For example, *Cat*, which uses dance as its main means of expression, and *Les Misérables*, which uses opera art as its main means of expression, are all based on one element while simultaneously incorporating multiple other elements. In this way, students can quickly find the most favorite or best element for artistic performance. Therefore, the teaching of musical theatre can truly implement the educational concept of educating all students without leaving anyone behind.

Finally, when we analyze the value of musicals from the perspective of cultural understanding, the reason why a classic musical can become a classic is because it can withstand the test of time and can meet the emotional needs of different eras and different nations. Therefore, in these classic and outstanding musicals, students can feel the cultural differences of various nations in the world, experience the emotional resonance across time and space, and learn to understand the existence of different cultures.

## **2. The feasibility of integrating musicals into music teaching**

In traditional music teaching, teachers have a single teaching style, which makes it difficult to stimulate students' interest in learning; students' learning methods are outdated, which is not conducive to the development of individuality. Musical just breaks through the single teaching mode of the previous music classroom, injects new vitality into the junior high school music classroom teaching, cultivates the vitality of the music classroom, and meets the needs of practicing music teaching activities.

It is worth noting that in recent years, due to the demand of the mass market, a large number of classic and successful musicals that meet the characteristics of the physical and mental development of young people have been produced. It combines the advantages of Orff, Suzuki, Kodaly, Dacroze... and Chinese folk song and dance, folk art, and traditional opera. Integrating musical theatre teaching into junior high school music classroom is an effective way for students to fully experience art, create art, and express art. The introduction of musicals into junior high school classroom teaching is a very feasible and innovative measure.

## **3. The strategy of integrating musical into junior high school music teaching**

In order to realize the aesthetic value of musicals, it is necessary to use various effective strategies of integrating musical into junior high school music teaching.

### **3.1 Collecting musical drama materials based on teaching content and goals**

In reality, most junior high school students know little about musicals. Therefore, in the early stage of teaching, teachers need to popularize the concept and outline the connotation of the musical in the textbook. For example, *The Sound of Music* in the first lesson of the second unit of the human voice edition, *Cats* in the second lesson, *Castle in the Clouds* in the third lesson *Les Miserables* and *One Day in the Golden Sands*, which can let the students have a deep impression on the musicals in the magnificent classic musical repertoire. This will enable students to have a preliminary understanding of the development of musicals and lay a solid foundation for later learning. For example, using the original musical "Golden Sands" in Lesson 4 as a demonstration example, teachers should guide students to appreciate it together. After the students have established a certain understanding of musical theater, teachers will then give an interesting introduction to the theoretical knowledge of musical theater. In this way, teachers use demonstrations and theoretical studies to deepen students' understanding of musicals.

### **3.2 Improving the aesthetic level of junior high school students through the appreciation of musicals**

Musical is the art of hearing. Perceiving music starts with listening. Teachers should play and appreciate carefully prepared musical works through multimedia equipment. Music in musicals is never a hodgepodge. From the overture to the singing of each protagonist, to the final curtain call, the composers have used a very unified melody and theme to connect them. Therefore, teachers must grasp these characteristics in the teaching process, lead students to listen to the musical themes of musical works, and conduct targeted appreciation teaching.

For example: In the classic musical *The Sound of Music*, its music runs throughout the whole musical. The high or low rhythm, chanting or narrating singing, and the humorous performances in the musical make people fascinated and immersive. In the test of the sword and shadow, life and death, the Austrians, with their strength and optimism, incorporated the elements of dance and music into the sword and shadow. It seems that music is life itself, the source of their invincible strength. The musical allows students to hear, see and think of beauty.

The plot of the musical is relatively simple and easy to understand, with beautiful music and colorful dances. The comedy color of musicals fully caters to the students' pursuit of relaxation and happiness, with exciting storylines and different stage effects. Music teachers should choose works based on the characteristics of students' physical and mental development, and choose works that meet the students' appreciation and aesthetics to improve the aesthetic ability of junior high school students.

### **3.3 Creating and performing musicals according to the teaching progress and students' learning ability**

Musical drama is an extremely comprehensive art form. If you want to popularize and teach it completely and abundantly, it is not enough to be able to sing, play, and teach. It also requires teachers to perform, speak, arrange, and organize on that basis. Such multiple identities can bring more detailed and unique perspectives to the study of musical theatre teaching. To perform well in musicals, teachers must guide students to speculate and research on the content, heart and image of characters in the play, and organize students to truly integrate into the arrangement and performance of musicals. In this way, students can truly feel the charm of music and experience the shock of art. Musical plays should be realized and found in the value and strategy of musicals in middle school music classrooms from the aspects of the selection of works, the appreciation and performance of musicals, etc. To integrate musical drama into the music teaching classroom of junior high school, teachers need to use situational teaching to experience the music content, musical artistic conception and musical situation. Musical drama has the characteristics of comprehensiveness, openness, profundity and creativity, according to which effective teaching design can be carried out. At the same time, musical theatre itself has a certain commonality with music teaching. Teachers can increase the use of multimedia in the classroom so as to deepen students' knowledge and interest in musicals. The prerequisite for musical theater to enter the middle school music classroom is to combine the core connotation of musical theater, an artistic genre, with the actual situation of the students, and apply it to teaching, so as to stimulate students' interest and make the classroom content more effective.

From the perspective of the choice of course types, teachers should focus on elaborating from the perspective of musical appreciation, guiding students to appreciate and analyze musicals from the role of characters, and design teaching based on the textbook of People's Music Publishing House. Teachers should take the campus as the theme and create musicals according to the daily life of students, so that musicals more closely related to students and make students fall in love with musicals. The teacher will play the "Castle in the Cloud" for students through multimedia during the lecture. After the students enjoy the musical, the teacher should guide the students to perform the classic parts. On the basis of the above, teachers

should encourage students to adapt and create musicals to improve students' aesthetic ability. A junior high school music class is only 40 minutes long, so in order to effectively introduce musicals into the classroom, they can be "miniaturized" and then introduced into the class. In the teaching of musicals, teachers should always insist on taking students as the main body, let them imitate and create music and plots by themselves, so that students can experience the specific emotions in musicals.

#### 4. Case and analysis of musical appreciation teaching in junior high schools

Musical	Composer	Plot	Musical elements			
			Form of performance	Artistic features	Music type	Artistic traits
Castle in the Clouds	Schoenberg, a French composer	In the musical <i>Les Misérables</i> , the singer is Cosette, Fantine's daughter, Thenardier, the owner of the restaurant where she was taken care of, abused her all day long. In <i>The Castle in the Clouds</i> , poor Cosette imagines that he can live a happy and joyful life in the castle of his dreams. It is a song that is easy to learn and sing.	Combine dialogue with singing. Recitative close to the tone of languages	It combines drama, music, singing and dancing, and is easy to understand. The content and emotional expression methods are concentrated in music and singing.	Pop music Popular musical instruments	Popularity Vogue Fashion Ideological artistry

First choose one of the passages as the focus of appreciation. The teacher first guides the students to think about the setting features of the stage, explore how Cosette's clothing is matched with the music to create an atmosphere, and analyze which musical elements are used in the play to express the character characteristics of the characters. Then, the teacher will also guide the students to analyze together which elements are included in the performance of the musical Castle in the Clouds and classify these elements. Through the group discussion in the form of "three releases and one combination" in our school, students in groups classify and summarize the musical elements. Then, they performed in small groups.

The integration of music disciplines refers to the realization of the connection and comprehensive application of different disciplines in the music curriculum under the premise of being music-oriented, such as the integration of music and poetry, dance, drama, film and television, fine arts and other different arts to improve teaching efficiency. Musical drama not only fully embodies the comprehensive concept of music-oriented discipline, but also has a high guiding significance in teaching practice, and embodies the consciousness and spirit that must be possessed in the new era.

#### 5. Challenges and opportunities in the context of double reduction

With the nationwide "double reduction" work in full swing, the concept of quality education has become more and more popular, and our country attaches great importance to the work of opera on campus. The Central Propaganda Department, the Ministry of Education and other departments jointly issued the *Opinions on the Introduction of Operas on Campus*. It emphasizes cultivating the consciousness of successors in the new era of inheriting Chinese traditional culture, enhancing young people's understanding and experience of traditional opera art, continuously improving students' aesthetic sentiment, and fostering students' sense of national identity, so that they can develop in an all-round way. Schools need to fit the lives of students, attach importance to the school's aesthetic education curriculum, comply with the physical and mental health of students, and constantly develop "the opera education forms based on the characteristics of the times, campuses, and students" (Shi Luyan, 2017). The study, arrangement, and performance of musicals can help students generate active, inquiry-based learning and cooperative and mutual-aided learning. Cooperative and mutual-aided learning is an effective way to cultivate creativity.

For this reason, first-line teachers must respond to the call of the party and the state to vigorously promote quality education and aesthetic education, persist in active exploration in teaching practice, and explore more forms and ways that are beneficial to junior high school music teaching, so as to promote substantial improvement of the music literacy and art appreciation ability of junior high school students and to meet the needs of the relatively more challenging work and to promote their individuality, creativity, and coping. Only when students participate in various types of music practice as a music activist and based on experience, can they obtain a comprehensive development of self-identity and self-growth in music that is higher than the form of material rewards.

## Conclusion

Quality education attaches the greatest importance to the all-round development of talents, especially the cultivation of practical ability. Therefore, the music classroom in the new era should not only highlight the cultivation of comprehensive ideas, but also emphasize the students' ability to feel, appreciate and create beauty. Therefore, teachers should follow the trend of the times, introduce musicals into the classroom, and guide students to participate in music practice through musicals, so as to achieve the goals of students' progress and teachers' development, and to improve classroom efficiency.

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