

The Big Ear Challenge 2021

Listen to music every day!

All children learn to speak their native language by listening and imitating what they hear. Your child is learning to play an instrument the same way. While the language environment happens all by itself, the musical one must be created. Surround your child with beautiful music. Listening to music will inspire him and create the desire to learn to play the instrument. Let's start the year off by revving up our listening. Beginning on Sept. 1st, we will be holding 'The Big Ear Challenge'. The Big Ear Challenge provides a gentle first step on the path back to the routines of the new school year. The goal is to listen to the Suzuki recording every day. Have your child keep track of how many times she listens to the Suzuki recording on the Big Ear Calendar. The challenge will run through September 30th. There are many ways to listen. Include them all in your routine.

Passive Listening: Play the recording of the pieces that your child is working on. Put it on in the car, during a meal or during playtime. You will be amazed at how much will be absorbed.

Active Listening: Listen and note specific details about the music.

For example:

- Listen to a piece just before you work on it
- Learn the names and composers of the pieces.
- Play a track or a small part of one, stop the recording and then sing it.
- Tap or march the beat as you listen.
- Count and name the phrases. If they are the same, give them the same name.
For example: Allegro AABA
- Students who are reading will benefit from following along in the printed music.

Inspirational Listening: Listen to music of different styles played by the world's great string players to inspire yourself and your child.

Here are some recommendations:

- A more advanced level Suzuki recording to get an idea of where you are headed
- Mozart Violin Concertos in A, D or G
- Bach Concerto in d minor for Two Violins
- Encore - Midori plays various short pieces.
- Masters of the Bow - a collection of short pieces played by various artists
- The Voice of the Violin - Joshua Bell plays slow arias on his Stradivarius
- Fire & Grace - Traditional Scottish music played by Alasdair Fraser and cellist Natalie Haas
- Haydn Cello Concertos in C and D

Extra Listening Projects

Week One:

Listen ahead, on your current level recording or the next level up, for a piece that your child really loves and is excited about learning.

Week Two:

'Power listen' to the piece that you are currently working on – listen to it many times each day.

Do you notice a difference when you practice it? Is it coming more quickly now?

Week Three:

Get to know Vivaldi's Autumn Concerto. Listen for dancers, a nap and hunter's chasing a wild beast.

<https://www.chambermusicsociety.org/watch-and-listen/video/2014-video-archive-3/vivaldi-concerto-in-f-major-for-violin-strings-and-continuo-rv-293-op-8-no-3-autumn-from-the-four-seasons/>

Week Four:

Listen to Encore by violinist Midori to hear some very advanced playing. Amazing, isn't it?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uollq1nkN0o&list=PLkW5ifAPWXdVHTacItcXxT4lv0t19dljF>

and/or

Prelude from the sixth suite for unaccompanied cello by Bach performed by YoYo Ma.

<https://youtu.be/aA9AwyESfN8>

Enjoy!