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A program of musical activities for trainable mentally retarded children

Cera, Loretta
Boston University

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Thesis

A PROGRAM OF MUSICAL ACTIVITIES FOR
TRAINABLE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

by

LORIETTA CERA

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Approved

by

First Reader  Jack Lemons  Professor of Music Education

Second Reader  Professor of Music Education
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Within the past decade, there has been increasing public interest in the establishment of special programs of education for mentally retarded children. The school program for mildly retarded children (the educable mentally retarded) is a well-established part of many school systems. The more recent development of programs for moderately retarded children (the trainable mentally retarded) is largely the result of over-crowded conditions in many private institutions and the desire of many parents to keep their children at home.¹

That music is an important part of the educational program for these children is borne out by the following statement of the Music Educators National Conference:

The importance of music in the educational program of mentally retarded children is an accepted fact by those who work with them daily. Music furnishes a variety of interests and activities and its material can be selected to appeal to many of these children.²

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study (1) to examine the value of music in fulfilling some of the physical, emotional and psychological needs of mentally retarded children in


a special classroom situation, (2) to outline a program of musical activities, giving careful consideration to the needs of these children, and (3) to evaluate the effectiveness of the suggested musical activities by examining the individual responses of trainable mentally retarded children to these activities.

Importance of the study. It is essential that teachers of special classes for trainable mentally retarded children know the importance of music as part of the education curriculum, and that they become familiar with the methods and materials used in providing musical activities which will enrich the lives of these children. In this study, an attempt was made to present suggestions for musical activities in the areas of singing, listening, rhythmic movement, and playing of instruments, and, further, to evaluate specific activities in each of these areas according to their effectiveness. It is thereby hoped that this will serve as a guide in the use of music in a special classroom of trainable mentally retarded children.

Scope of the problem. The scope of this study was limited to the inclusion of activities suitable for trainable mentally retarded children. Not included in this study were programs for the educable mentally retarded or the totally dependent mentally retarded.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The trainable mentally retarded child (or moderately mentally retarded child). The term "trainable mentally retarded child" shall be interpreted as meaning the child who possesses potentialities for
learning self-care, adjustment in home and neighborhood, and economic usefulness in a sheltered environment. These children are not capable of learning academic skills beyond rote learning of some simple words or numbers; their speech and language abilities are limited and their approximate I.Q. range is 25-50. Their mental ages as adults range from three to six years.

The educable mentally retarded child (or mildly mentally retarded child). The term "educable mentally retarded child" shall be interpreted as meaning the child who cannot profit sufficiently from regular elementary school work because of slow mental development, but who can learn some academic skills, particularly in a special class situation. The approximate I.Q. range of these children is between 50 and 70, and mental ages as adults range from six to twelve years.

Special class. Since the term "special class" applies to a specific situation referred to throughout the study, it shall be interpreted as meaning a specialized situation in a public school, better equipped to meet the needs of mentally retarded children than are regular classrooms; the teacher must have thorough understanding of the problems of mental retardation.

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5Ibid., p. 435.

Throughout the study, reference will be made to certain clinical types of retardation; therefore, the following definitions are made:

**Mongoloid.** This term shall be interpreted as meaning the child who possesses the following characteristics:

The skull is abnormally short in circumference with the frontal regions being flattened. The eyes are almond-shaped and have a downward slope similar to that in the Mongolian race. . . . they are usually short and somewhat stocky in build.

About 30% are idiots (severely mentally retarded), 68% are imbeciles (moderately mentally retarded), with about 2% maturing as mildly mentally retarded. Most mongols fall in the moderately retarded level of intelligence and will have the mental ability of the normal three, four, or five-year-old individual.⁷

**Brain-injured child (or brain-damaged child).** The term "brain-injured child" shall be interpreted as meaning the child who before, during, or after birth has suffered some injury to, or infection of, the brain, resulting in varying degrees of neuromotor impairment, mental retardation, or atypical behavior.⁸ The brain-injured child is not always mentally retarded, but in this study, the term will be used to denote those children in whom the brain damage has resulted in mental retardation.

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III. SOURCES OF DATA

The literature reviewed for the purposes of this study consisted of books and periodicals dealing with exceptional children (including the mentally retarded) in general, periodicals dealing specifically with music for the mentally retarded, and unpublished works related directly and indirectly to the topic.

This literature formed the basis of a plan of suggested musical activities which was given to the teachers of two special classes for the trainable mentally retarded, involving 18 children with chronological ages ranging from five to fourteen years. These activities were incorporated into the regular music period for a period of approximately four and one-half months.

With the plan of activities was included an evaluation sheet for the purpose of allowing the teachers to record reactions of the children to the various specific activities.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

Chapter II will consist of a review of related investigations, including bibliographical data and findings of the various studies made. In Chapter III, an explanation of the methodology will be attempted, with emphasis upon organization, methods of presentation, and evaluation. Chapter IV will present the capabilities of trainable mentally retarded children, and the implications in the organization of a music program for these children. Specific music activities and materials will be suggested in Chapter V as part of the music program.
for trainable mentally retarded children. An evaluation of this suggested program will be made in Chapter VI. This evaluation will be made on individual case-study basis, with particular attention given to the response of each child to specific activities; the response of the group as a whole will also be noted and a comparison of both special classes will be made. Chapter VII will be comprised of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED INVESTIGATIONS

In reviewing the research in the field of music for the mentally retarded, it appeared that investigations have been conducted in musical activities for educable mentally retarded children, rather than for the trainable mentally retarded. No evidence was found to indicate that any extended studies were conducted in the area of music for the trainable mentally retarded. However, the findings of the research conducted in music for the educables can be of great value in the investigation of musical activities for trainable mentally retarded children, if the following reasonable assumption is made: whatever limitations are possessed by educable mentally retarded children are possessed to a greater extent by trainable mentally retarded children. Added to this is the fact that a great many trainable mentally retarded children possess physical handicaps as well.

Therefore, whatever suggestions are offered in these studies must be viewed with these factors in mind if they are to be of value in the organization of a music program for trainable mentally retarded children.

The purpose of the experimental program conducted by Jackson was to investigate the possibilities arising from a music program for

mentally retarded children. What were suitable activities, and in what ways could they be correlated with other daily activities? Could self-confidence of mentally retarded children be increased through participation in these activities? Could relaxation during rest period be facilitated by use of recorded music? Could musical instruction contribute to the correction of singing and articulation problems?

Jackson's subjects were a class of mentally retarded children in a public school in Leon County, Florida, consisting of eleven boys and one girl between the ages of eight and thirteen, with an I.Q. range between 58 and 75. The young group (8 to 10 years) worked up to first grade level, the older group (11 to 12 years) from high first to second grade level. Song material was selected from Kindergarten-primary books, criteria being content, interest, and correlation with other activities.

On the basis of this experimental program, Jackson arrived at several conclusions: (1) The interest value of a musical activity must be given equal consideration with content and level of difficulty; (2) The non-singer can be taught to make better use of his voice through individual and group music instruction; (3) Some students who are excluded by the vocal approach respond to instrumental activities; (4) The correlation of music with other activities of the day may be used effectively as a medium for reinforcing academic concepts; (5) Successful participation in musical activities may bring increased confidence in this area. No generalization can be made concerning
carry-over to other areas; (6) These children do make use of their knowledge of musical activities during their leisure time; (7) Some types of recorded music seem to facilitate relaxation during rest period.

A similar project was undertaken by Anthon,10 whose problem was to establish a program for special classes to help each child physically, socially, and emotionally. Case studies were made of the 16 children involved; their I.Q.'s ranged from 48 to 76. Anthon found that constant repetition was an extremely important factor in working with these children. There was much variety in the regular class program. Periods of work were followed by periods of rest and all materials were conveniently located. All phases of the music program were carried on simultaneously to provide sufficient variety and an opportunity to reach all the children. Anthon noted that progress was difficult and that a high degree of patience was a necessity.

The purpose of the experimental program conducted by Deacon's11 was to suggest suitable musical activities for the educable mentally retarded at three age levels: primary, intermediate, and junior high school. The program included listening, singing, rhythmic response, and playing instruments. Implementation was made by means of marching


and other simple rhythmic activities, rhythm band exercises, group singing of rote songs, practice in recognition of parts of selections, exercises to develop loud and soft, low and high tones, imitative exercises to develop attention to musical sounds, participation in musical programs, listening, and dancing. Although specific books and records were mentioned, no evaluation of the program was attempted; this was, in fact, recommended as a subject for further research.

It should be noted that the studies reviewed to this point were conducted in special class situations, with the groups being homogeneous in nature. A different type of experiment was attempted by Oyster.12 Here the subjects were slow learners in a regular classroom situation, a heterogeneous group. The problem was to investigate how music might be of value in the education of a slow learner in a heterogeneous classroom, according to his own rate of development and ability.

The subjects were a fifth grade class consisting of 33 pupils, 17 girls and 16 boys. The intellectual ability of the pupils was graded in the following way: 2 of the pupils possessed very superior ability, 3 were superior in intelligence, 8 were high average, 11 low average, and 9 were rated inferior in intelligence. Thirteen of these children had I.Q.'s between 70 and 89.

The activities were the results of suggestions by teachers, pupil ideas, and classroom discussions. The appeal to participation by slow learners was made through group activities, as it was difficult for them to perform individually. Oyster suggests that it is not the acquisition of skills and techniques that is important in this situation, but rather, the participation by these slow learners in meaningful musical experiences. The indication was that the majority of the slow learners in this class preferred more rhythmic songs and songs with humorous texts. Viewing colored film strips and listening to records were also favored, with program music being especially well liked. The observation was made that the heterogeneous classroom situation provides the opportunity to develop acceptable attitudes, sharing, cooperating, and respecting individuality.

Galligan's focus for study was the philosophy, goals and procedures in setting up classes for trainable mentally retarded children. While not directly concerned with music activities for these children, the goals enumerated by Galligan certainly have a direct bearing on the establishment of an effective music program. These basic aims were: physical health and emotional security, power of communication, motor coordination, sensory training, and leisure time activity. More generally, the philosophy involved in


14These particular aims were underscored to further point up the direct relationship to the area of musical activities.
establishing a special class for trainable mentally retarded children was based upon the principles of personal adequacy, social competency, and economic usefulness.

With the exception of the Galligan study, all the experimental studies reviewed have been concerned with music for educable mentally retarded children. The findings can be of considerable value in determining what effective activities can be used with trainable children.

Jackson's experimental program was conducted with a class of eleven boys and one girl, ages eight to thirteen, with I.Q. range between 58 and 75. The results of this program indicated that (1) interest value of a musical activity must be considered; (2) non-singers or those who are excluded by the vocal approach respond to instrumental activities; (3) music can be correlated effectively with other activities of the day in an attempt to reinforce academic concepts; (4) successful participation in musical activities may bring increased confidence in this area, though no generalization can be made concerning carry-over to other areas; (5) these children do make use of their knowledge of musical activities during their leisure time; and (6) some types of recorded music seem to facilitate relaxation during rest period.

Anthon's project involved case studies of 16 children, I.Q.'s ranging from 48 to 76. Constant repetition was found to be an extremely important factor in working with these children. Also noted was the fact that progress was difficult and that a high degree of patience was necessary.
Deacon suggested activities for the educable mentally retarded at three age levels: primary, intermediate, and junior high school. Listening, singing, rhythmic response, and playing instruments were all a part of the music program. No evaluation of the program was attempted, this being a recommendation for further research.

The problem of slow learners in a regular classroom situation was investigated by Oyster. The subjects were a fifth grade class consisting of 33 pupils, 13 of whom had I.Q.'s between 70 and 89. As it was difficult for the slow learners to perform individually, appeal to participation was made through group activities. Participation by these slow learners in meaningful musical activities was held to be of more importance than acquisition of skills. Oyster observed that the heterogeneous classroom situation provides the opportunity to develop acceptable attitudes toward others.

Although Galligan's study on the philosophy, goals and procedures in setting up classes for trainable mentally retarded children was not directly concerned with music activities, the basic aims stated have a direct bearing on effective implementation of a music program. These aims were: physical health and emotional security, power of communication, motor coordination, sensory training, and leisure time activity.

It would appear, from a review of these investigations, that the area of music for trainable mentally retarded is still largely neglected. This may be due to the fact that the establishment of
special classes in public school systems for these children is a comparatively recent trend. However, the fact remains that a considerable amount of extensive research is yet to be done in this area.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In view of the fact that an effective program of activities must be based on the needs of the participants, it was necessary to examine specifically the needs of trainable mentally retarded children. This was attempted through perusal of the literature in this particular area.

It was also believed that a program of this type would be evaluated more effectively through active participation by the children themselves. The formulated program was therefore presented to two special classes of trainable mentally retarded children for this purpose.

I. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In reviewing the literature on this particular topic, it became even more apparent that there is a great need for more research in the area of music for the trainable mentally retarded. The research which has been conducted has been limited, for the most part, to case studies, such as were presented in a number of periodicals reviewed. These studies were conducted over a reasonably long period of time and the observations made were carefully detailed. The theses reviewed were of greater value in that they were concerned with the effect of musical activities on groups rather than individuals. While individual differences must certainly be taken into account, still the special teacher is more immediately concerned with what will be effective musical activities for the group as a whole. The
experiments reviewed were consistently well done, involving a reasonable length of time and carefully made observations. The remainder of the periodical literature was based largely on observations made by those who had had experience in working with mentally retarded children. The most comprehensive, informative, and consistently well-written literature reviewed was found in books; these did not deal specifically with music, but rather with the mentally retarded child himself, his limitations and his needs. This literature obviously is of great value to the special teacher of retarded children and also to the music teacher who must consider the needs of these children.

II. RESEARCH

The suggested program of musical activities was organized on the basis of the needs of trainable mentally retarded children. An examination of pertinent literature provided the framework of reference in this area. The program of activities presented to both special classes involved in the study was compiled with the capabilities of trainable mentally retarded children clearly in mind. This program was given the teacher of each special class with the instructions that these activities were to be presented as part of the regular music program over a period of approximately four and one-half months. The program was purposely limited, in order that the necessary repetition would provide the basis for a more valid interpretation of the results.

The teachers were provided with a check-list evaluation sheet for each pupil. On each sheet were listed all the specific activities
with areas representing different levels of response to be checked off. These sheets were actually for the benefit of the special class teachers in keeping a record of each child's progress by the simplest possible means. The information which comprised the case studies was obtained by means of conferences with the teachers, with these check sheets as written records of observations made.
CHAPTER IV

CAPABILITIES OF TRAINABLE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN AND

IMPLICATIONS IN THE ORGANIZATION OF A PROGRAM OF MUSICAL

ACTIVITIES FOR THEM

I. LIMITATIONS OF TRAINABLE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

If the music program for trainable mentally retarded children
is to be at all successful, careful consideration must be given to the
physical, social, and mental limitations of these children. As Ingram
states, "The areas of anatomical development, motor development, and
motor proficiency, as they are related to intelligence and total
adjustment, need study." ¹⁵ There are, however, certain general traits,
physical, social, and mental, which appear to be characteristic of
particular age groups. The following observations were made from the
special classes for the mentally retarded in Rochester, New York, for
a period of more than two years.

   Physical Limitations, Age Group: 5-7 years. The majority of
   retarded children in this age group seemed quite capable of walking,
   running, and jumping, but the ability to skip was acquired slowly.
   Coordination and control of fine muscles and the hands and fingers
   were slow in developing. Because their perception and association
   were slower than normal, the children in these classes seemed to
disregard environmental stimuli. The large majority of these children
developed normal speech slowly. For some brain-injured children

¹⁵Christine P. Ingram, Education of the Slow-Learning Child
or those deprived of early experiences, speech was delayed. It was apparent that much encouragement and reminding from adults was needed during these years.

**Physical Limitations, Age Group: 8-10 years.** In most of the children at this age level, muscular control of the limbs was fairly well developed, as was muscular control of the fine muscles of the hand and arms. Senses were fairly well developed, but the capacity for discriminating and interpreting sensations was found to be less than normal.

**Social Limitations, Age Group: 5-7 years.** At this age level, mentally retarded children tended to be followers in a group, with little initiative or imagination. Generally, they were found to be sensitive to criticism and were pleased with any comment of praise.

**Social Limitations, Age Group: 8-10 years.** Even with these older children, conduct was still dominated by desire for approval of adults and satisfaction of immediate needs. Suggestion and imitation were dominant in play and conduct. Any imaginative or creative play had to involve elements which had become very familiar through actual experience or through the use of pictures. Similarly, stories had to be familiar to be dramatized successfully. Much repetition of stories, plays, and games seemed to offer satisfaction.

**Mental Limitations, Age Group: 5-7 years.** Slower perception and association affected the quality and quantity of concepts and ideas of mentally retarded children of this age group. Language and vocabulary were considerably below the standards of average children.
Objects had to be defined in terms of use related to the experiences of the children. Success in immediate rote memory for a short sentence was rarely encountered before the age of seven years.

**Mental Limitations, Age Group: 8-10 years.** Lack of comprehension in the children of this age level resulted in failure to carry out directions. Rote memory was found to be fairly good, but memory of images was poor and concepts of time, weak. At eight years, a noticeable weakness of power of association was apparent; though there was some development in this area, it was consistently slow. Lack of adaption in a new situation seemed due to failure to make associations and to recognize similarities.16

It should be noted that these special classes were composed of mildly retarded, or educable mentally retarded children, rather than trainable mentally retarded children. However, the general nature of these characteristics would seem to indicate that these are traits which are possessed by trainable mentally retarded children as well, but to a greater degree.

Other observations have been made specifically with regard to trainable children. In Flint, Michigan, a program for severely retarded children was inaugurated in September, 1953. Four half-day classes were established, involving approximately fifty children. During the course of the program, it was found that with the younger children, particularly, coordination was poor, due partly to the fact that parents had not allowed these children to do too much for

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16 Ibid., pp. 16-21.
themselves. Most of the children had had little experience in playing with other children and were uncooperative at first. In some cases, speech was unintelligible; generally, speech ability was limited, even with the older children. Span of attention was short. The curriculum was very limited, since very few of the children could accomplish in academic activities.¹⁷

Lubman¹⁸ lists the following concepts as applying specifically to children with I.Q.'s of 50 or under:

1. Retarded children should be taught as much as possible through what can be seen.

2. The attention span of retarded children is short. An activity may be continued only as long as interest can be maintained.

3. Motivation of the trainable child is limited, but instruction in activities which they are able to perform offers a means of giving praise and gives to the children a sense of achievement which encourages greater effort.

4. Patience is necessary in teaching trainable children, for improvement is limited and slow.¹⁹


¹⁸Based upon her experience as Speech Therapist in Cuyahoga County, Cleveland, Ohio, where the speech program involved approximately 150 children.

Regarding the learning process of the severely retarded child, Wallin suggests:

With the lower grades (of mental retardation) or with children who have serious muscular impairment or incoordination, the proper gradation of the exercises or learning steps is often an essential condition of success in teaching. To confront such a child with a problem beyond his powers of analysis, comprehension, and execution, is to invite discouragement, resistance, or failure. If a child has no control over tools and no knowledge of the elementary processes, and is started on a complicated problem, he will blunder, spoil tools and materials, become confused, and lose his feeling of confidence and security.20

Again, Wallin states that:

Extensive repetition is required to secure understanding and assimilation, to fix what has been acquired, to perfect skills, and to develop dependable attitudes.21

II. IMPLICATIONS IN THE ORGANIZATION OF A PROGRAM OF MUSICAL ACTIVITIES

Despite the fact that trainable mentally retarded children do possess physical, social, and mental limitations to a considerable extent, there is still a place, and an important one, for music in their general educational program. "Music," declares Wallin, "sub-serves its vital function among these (low I.Q.) children, not only for its therapeutic effects . . . but for its cultural value and its value as an aid in language improvement.22


21Ibid., p. 192.

22Ibid., p. 342.
Using a four-fold program as a basis for activities (singing, rhythms, listening, activities using instruments), it would be practical here to examine each type of activity and the problems which should be considered within each area.

A. SINGING ACTIVITIES

In an experimental study of a class of mentally retarded children in the public schools of Leon County, Florida, Jackson observed that, with regard to singing activities, the most effective technique for teaching songs to these children was the rote method (part), and that the children were most successful with short, repetitious songs, involving few ideas and having simple rhythmic and melodic content. However, the primary factor in acceptance of songs seemed to be interest value, regardless of length or difficulty. Generally, the songs which are most suitable for mentally retarded children are those songs about things with which they are familiar—their homes, their families, their pets. Scheerenberger found that in selecting vocal activities for trainable mentally retarded children, the adequate songs were those which did not exceed twelve measures in length, with repetitious phase lyrics. These songs were taught successfully by the whole-song method because of their brevity.


The melodies which were easiest to learn and which were retained longest were those which were light, with a strong rhythmic beat. Some difficulty was encountered in selecting vocal material which would bridge the wide span between ages that may be found in a special class for trainable mentally retarded children. For example, a thirteen year-old child who has achieved second grade comprehension may have a larger range of experiences than a normal second-grader; hence, songs of that grade level may seem "babyish" to him. Where this occurs, it would be wise to select as many songs as possible from an area in which members of the class have a common interest. Certain "community-type" songs fall into this category; because of their universal appeal, they are learned without too much difficulty, despite their length.

Jackson also mentions action songs and songs using number concepts. In utilizing these types of songs with the trainable mentally retarded, learning may be facilitated by teaching the song first without the actions, adding the actions only after the song has been learned quite thoroughly.

For those children who have difficulty in singing on pitch, tone games may bring about some improvement; here, again, repetition is the keynote. Care should be taken to avoid slovenliness of speech in


singing. Where there is a particular problem in the pronunciation of certain sounds, some help may be afforded by songs in which those sounds are repeated.

After several months of individual work with ten retarded children at Jewish Hospital of Brooklyn, New York, it was found that, through the use of singing, the children were helped to overcome to a certain degree such psychological impediments as poor memory and quick discouragement; furthermore, there seemed to be at least a slight improvement in speech in all the children. It was also noted that best results were achieved when pictures were used to illustrate songs; the visual sense became an additional tool in aiding the aural sense. 27

B. RHYTHMIC ACTIVITIES

Aside from the obvious purpose of providing enjoyment, the use of rhythmic activities serves also a functional purpose in that these activities may contribute considerably to the development of muscular control. Mention has already been made of the generally poor coordination of trainable mentally retarded children. In view of this, initial rhythmic activities, particularly for younger children, should involve rhythmic manipulation of large muscles (marching, running, galloping in time to music). 28


Wallin adds to these basic activities by suggesting:

... calisthenics and rhythm work, including folk dancing and eurhythmics accompanied by music.

Music and rhythm make a very strong appeal to the mentally deficient and hence should be utilized in the physical training exercises whenever possible. This type of activity is of great value in overcoming the awkward, clumsy movements characteristic of so many defectives.

Marching to rhythm is especially valuable for children with low I.Q.'s. It should be spirited, the music should be lively, and there should be close attention to correct posture. A variety of rhythms should be used—marching, skipping, running, walking and running, walking on tiptoe, marching and clapping, and bouncing; they should first be demonstrated by the teacher. Simple dances, such as "Looby Loo,"... "Five Little Chickadees" may be taught.29

Rhythmic activities were a part of the music program at Flower Fifth Avenue Hospital's Clinic for the Mentally Retarded, where functional music classes were held for a period of over four years. The aim here was better posture, improved muscular control, and longer attention span.

The children raised and lowered their arms to the varying tempo of ascending and descending scales; they learned to discern between fast and slow, loud and soft. Through sudden changes in tempo, the pianist, who provided the music for these activities, brought in the element of surprise, which stimulated more attentive listening. This stimulation of attention was also secured through a number of other musical games—tossing a bean bag or ball in the right

tempo and stopping when the music stopped; dramatizing stories of ponies gradually becoming tired, or speeding trains gradually slowing down and stopping. These all served the same purpose: the development of muscular control and the extension of the span of attention.30

In planning rhythmic activities for the trainable mentally retarded, it must be remembered that these children are extremely limited in imaginative powers and need constant stimulation by dramatization, "make-believe," and through rhythms in which they may act out imaginary figures.31

C. LISTENING ACTIVITIES

For all practical purposes, listening activities may be grouped into two broad categories: passive, or "quiet" listening, and active listening, involving conscious attention and participation. With regard to choosing appropriate music for the former, "quiet" listening, Podolsky makes this statement:

In addition to music's capacity to attract attention, it is also capable of modifying the mood, stimulating the imagination and intellect.

Psychologically, the response of the nervous system to long-short music is quieting, to short-long, stimulating. Loud sounds


are stimulating because they are associated with danger; soft
tones are quieting because they are associated with the
gentle tones of nature.\textsuperscript{32}

Passive listening can quiet down or stimulate constructive emotional trends if geared to the existing emotions of the child.\textsuperscript{33}

In an individual study of ten brain-injured children over a seven-month period, it was found that music could be used to induce a state of relaxation in most of these children, the relaxative effect dependent upon the type of music used.\textsuperscript{34}

Jackson found that certain types of recorded music seemed to facilitate relaxation during the rest period. In describing these periods of quiet listening, she writes:

The first time music was played during rest period the class was more restless than usual, as evidenced by the children's moving their hands and feet and shifting their head positions. The composition played was a portion of the tone poem, \textit{Les Preludes}, by Liszt. There were also complaints about the music, such as, "I can't rest with the music playing."

Because of the negative response the teacher temporarily stopped playing records during the rest period. After further discussion it was decided that repetition of the records over a period of time might improve the response. Also, it was believed that restlessness would probably decrease after the class became accustomed to the situation.

The next records to be played were "Children's Prayer" from \textit{Hansel and Gretel} by Humperdinck and "Barcarole" from \textit{Tales of Hoffman} by Offenbach. The children responded better


\textsuperscript{34}Erwin H. Schneider, "The Use of Music with the Brain-Damaged Child," \textit{Music Therapy}, Vol. 3 (Lawrence: National Association for Music Therapy, 1953), pp. 95-98.
to these recordings than they had previously. However, one of the more passive children who was usually motionless during rest period began to sway during the playing of "Barcarole."

... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 

It seemed to the teacher of the class and to other observers that during the rest periods in which music was played there was less restlessness in the children as evidenced by a decrease in movement of hands and feet, shifting of head position, talking, and raising of hands for the teacher's attention.35

The inability to listen well is at the root of a number of problems in related musical activities; the child who cannot keep time to the music, or who sings off pitch, would probably achieve more satisfying results as his ability to listen improved. One method of stimulating this type of listening is through the use of activity records or records which tell a story which can be dramatized in the simplest manner; these require careful listening for effective participation. Listening games may also be a means of developing the ability to listen well. Active listening is one aspect of the sense training which is especially important in a program for the trainable mentally retarded and which is necessary if any significant progress can be expected.36 The process, again, must be a highly repetitive one.

D. ACTIVITIES USING INSTRUMENTS

Although the degree of retardation in trainable mentally retarded children is such that they cannot learn to play actual band


36"Sense Training" (Mansfield Depot: Mansfield State Training School, 1960). (Mimeographed.)
or orchestra instruments with any degree of proficiency, the use of simpler instruments can contribute a great deal to the enrichment of the music program. For all its simplicity, the rhythm band is an important part of musical activities for trainable children. As Weigl has stated:

Participation in a rhythm band is one of the best means for combining social adaptation with muscular control and increased attention span. The children become accustomed to adjust to something outside of themselves, to the tempo and dynamics of the music, to other participants. At first, they usually bang at random; then they learn to control their energies according to the requirements of the music. These are often more easily accepted than verbal directions. For some children it is important just to "let go," and find a socially acceptable outlet for their surplus energies and aggressions by beating cymbals or drums. Other, more timid ones may begin with a "gentle" instrument, such as triangles or bells. The choice of instruments should be left as far as possible to the children so as to strengthen their initiative. Their choice is often a good clue to their personality adjustment and self-image. It is heartening to see the previously shy child "graduate" from the triangles to the big, noisy drum or cymbals, or the clumsy, aggressive one wait for his entrance and come in softly when a pianissimo effect is desired.37

Simple harmonic instruments, such as the autoharp, may be used with very little difficulty by trainable children, even to the extent of accompanying a song with one or two basic chords. Utilization of tonal instruments offers another means for enjoyment and satisfaction. An ascending and descending scale played on a piano is not an impossible feat for a trainable child to perform and may offer a means of development and improvement of muscular coordination in the hand and finger muscles. "Live" performances on various instruments by

those outside the class can make an outstanding contribution to the musical experiences of these children. At Fuller Cooperative School for severely mentally retarded children in California, an experiment was conducted involving 24 children, including mongoloids and brain-injured children. The experiment consisted of six short weekly performances on the cello. Half the time was devoted to the actual playing by the instructor, the remainder of the time was devoted to the presentation of the instrument with its component parts. The children were allowed to handle the instrument and even to play it. The experience seemed to have been beneficial to them; their response to the music was physical, verbal, or emotional, through visible signs of satisfaction and pleasure. There also seemed to be some development in sense perception and an increase in span of attention; perhaps most important, music had become a means of communication with each of the children.38

In summary, then, it has been found that certain physical, mental, and social traits appear to be characteristic of particular age groups of mentally retarded children. Thus, in one special class of educables which was observed, the majority of retarded children in the 5 to 7 age group seemed capable of walking, running, and jumping, but were slow in acquiring the ability to skip. Speech ability also developed slowly for the majority of these children. Socially, children of this age group tended to be followers in a group, with

little initiative or imagination. Their mental ability was very much limited by their slow perception and association.

The older children, ages 8 to 10, were not as limited, physically. Muscular control of their limbs was fairly well-developed. With these children, suggestion and imitation were dominant in play and conduct. Lack of comprehension in the children of this age level resulted in failure to carry out directions.

With children who are severely mentally retarded, the following concepts must be borne in mind: (1) Retarded children must be taught as much as possible through what can be seen; (2) The attention span of these children is very short; (3) Motivation of trainable retarded children is limited, but offering activities which they are able to perform provides a means of giving praise which they need; (4) Patience is necessary in teaching these children, for improvement is slow and limited.

Though trainable mentally retarded children are severely limited, there is a necessary place for music in their general educational program. It is important, however, that the music program be geared to their limitations.

An experimental study conducted in a class of mentally retarded children in Leon County, Florida, indicated that the rote method was the most effective technique for teaching songs to these children. The primary factor in acceptance of songs seemed to be interest value. Another survey indicated that adequate songs were those which did not exceed twelve measures in length, with repetitious phase lyrics. Melodies which were easiest to learn and which were retained longest
were those which were light with a strong rhythmic beat. Tone games brought about improvement in ability to sing on pitch. At Jewish Hospital in Brooklyn, New York, it was found that, through the use of singing, the children were helped to overcome to a certain degree such psychological impediments as poor memory and discouragement. Further, all the children showed at least slight improvement in speech ability.

Because of the generally poor muscular coordination of retarded children, initial rhythmic activities should involve rhythmic manipulation of large muscles. Basically, the purpose of rhythmic activities, aside from the providing of enjoyment, should be the development of muscular control. Creative rhythms or simple dramatization may also aid in extending the span of attention of these children.

Listening activities may be grouped into two broad categories: passive listening, and active listening, which involves conscious attention and participation. Passive listening can exert a quieting influence if it is geared to the existing emotions of the children. Certain types of recorded music may facilitate relaxation.

One method of stimulating active listening is through the use of activity records or records of stories which can be dramatized simply. Listening games may also be a means of developing the ability to listen well. This ability is an important aspect of sense training in a program for the trainable mentally retarded, but the process must be a highly repetitive one.

Although the trainable mentally retarded cannot actually learn to play band or orchestral instruments with any degree of proficiency, they may derive a great degree of enjoyment through the use of simple
rhythm, harmonic, and tonal instruments. The rhythm band is an important part of the music program for trainable children and it can be an effective means for combining social adaptation with muscular control and increased attention span.

The autoharp may be used with little difficulty by trainable children, and they may even learn to play a simple scale passage or a tune on the piano.

All these activities contribute to the pleasure and the satisfaction these children may derive from active participation in varied musical activities.
CHAPTER V

SUGGESTED MUSICAL ACTIVITIES FOR
TRAINABLE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

The factors discussed in the preceding chapter provided the basis for the suggested content of the program of specific musical activities which follows. These activities fall into the four categories of singing, rhythmic activities, listening (active and passive), and activities using instruments.

I. SINGING ACTIVITIES

Songs have been grouped into the following categories: songs of a general nature, action songs, and patriotic and holiday songs.

Songs of a General Nature:

"A Getting-Up Song" Kindergarten Book (Ginn & Company), page 114. Here is an opportunity for individual response in suggesting different animals or in imitating sounds. This song may be used quite effectively in connection with a farm unit.

"Are You Sleeping?" Music 'Round the Clock (Follett Publishing Company), page 11. While these children would not be capable of singing this in round form, the element of repetition makes it suitable for unison singing. Suggestions for using instruments will be given later.

"Row, Row, Row Your Boat" Favorite Nursery Songs (Random House), page 2. Again, this cannot be sung as a round, but is simple enough to be sung in unison.
'Rig-a-jig-jig and Away We Go'

Music 'Round the Clock (Follett Publishing Company), page 49. After this has been learned thoroughly, children may clap in time as they sing.

"Five Little Chickadees"

Kindergarten Book (Ginn & Company), page 37. This is a good number concept song; five children may represent five chickadees, "flying" away, one at a time.

"Home On the Range"

Singing and Rhyming, Book 2 (Ginn & Company), page 38. Because of its direct appeal, this song should not be difficult for these children to grasp, despite its length. Repetition is necessary.

"Old MacDonald"

Singing and Rhyming, Book 2 (Ginn & Company), page 136. Again the opportunity for individual response is presented.

Action Songs:

"Will You Come?"

Kindergarten Book, (Ginn & Company), page 23. Suggestions for actions are given in the song itself.

"Where Is Thumbkin?"

Kindergarten Book, (Ginn & Company), page 51. This is a simple and appealing finger-play song.

"People On the Bus"

Singing and Rhyming, Book 3. (Ginn & Company), page 10. The actions to this song are suggested by the words.

"Pussy Willow"

Singing and Rhyming, Book 3 (Ginn & Company), page 125. Since this song uses the ascending and descending scales, it may be used as an action song, with children raising and lowering themselves slowly, or it may be used as a tone-matching song.
"This Old Man"  
New Music Horizons, (Silver Burdett) page 121. This is an old favorite, a finger-play song which can be taught from the beginning with finger actions.

"I Am the Wind"  
Sing and Do Songs, Albums 1 and 2, (Sing 'n Do Company, Ridgewood, New Jersey). These are two very appealing little songs which, however, must be repeated often because of their length. Suggestions for actions are given on the album covers of the records.

"My Little Puppy"

Patriotic Songs and Holiday Songs:

"America"  
Kindergarten Book, (Ginn & Company), page 57.

"Star Spangled Banner"  
Kindergarten Book, (Ginn & Company), page 83.

"Yankee Doodle"  
Kindergarten Book, (Ginn & Company), page 89. (The last two songs mentioned are in abbreviated versions, which makes them suitable for use with these children.)

"Five Little Pumpkins"  
Singing and Rhyming, Book 3 (Ginn & Company), page 80.

"I'm a Jack-o'-Lantern"  
Kindergarten Book, (Ginn & Company), page 75.

"Jingle Bells"  
Kindergarten Book, (Ginn & Company), page 82. (Sleigh bell accompaniment.)

"Silent Night"  
Kindergarten Book, (Ginn & Company), page 81.

"We Wish You a Merry Christmas"  
Music 'Round the Clock, (Follett Publishing Company), page 79.
Tone Games:

Telephone Game  Using a toy telephone, sing "hello" to the child, have him repeat it. If the child does not repeat it at the same pitch, the teacher will begin at his pitch at first and then try raising it.

Siren Game  Imitate a fire siren on "oooh," from a low pitch, ascending gradually to the highest possible pitch for the child.

Climbing-the-Ladder Game  Have the child sing up and down the scale on "ah." "This cannot be used too successfully until some progress has been made in pitch discrimination on single tones.)

The tape recorder can be most useful in tone matching work. If these tone games are recorded and then played back, the children have a chance to really hear themselves, which they may not be able to do while participating in the game. The recorder may also be used effectively with children who have speech difficulties.

II. RHYTHMIC ACTIVITIES

Activities Using "Large" Muscles (walking, running, sliding, marching, skipping):

From the RCA Victor Record Library:


"Waltz," Op. 9, No. 3


Suggestions for all these activities are given in the Notes for Teachers found in each album.

Activities Using "Small" Muscles (requiring finer coordination):

Bouncing a ball to music

Practice first in tempo without music and without the ball. Then add music, the ball. Childhood Rhythms, Volume II, (Evans).

Waving scarves to music

Make circles in the air with the entire arm; next, the arm from the elbow down; finally, make circles moving only the wrists and fingers. ("Valse Serenade" by Poldini, Volume I, Rhythmic Activities, RCA Victor Library.)

"Drawing" to music

Using crayons and a large piece of paper, children may "draw" in time to the music, using circular or up-and-down motion, depending upon the selection played. Any of the selections listed above (under "large" muscles) may be used.

Simple Dances:

"The Hokey Pokey"

A modern version of "Here We Go Looby Loo," this requires only the simplest movements, is quite appealing (Golden Records).

"Caroussel"

"Bow, Bow, Belinda"

"Chimes of Dunkirk"

The first of these is the simplest and could probably be used with almost any group. The last two are more difficult and their effectiveness would depend on the ability of the group. Instructions for the dances are given in the first part of the record (Folk Dances, Volume I, Evans).
III. LISTENING ACTIVITIES

Active Listening (Records):

"Lead a Little Orchestra"  This provides children with an opportunity to "conduct" or keep time to the music (Educational Record Sales).

"My Playful Scarf"
"A Visit to My Little Friend"
"A Walk in the Forest"
"Little Indian Drum"
"Strike Up the Band"

"American Folk Songs for Children"

Active Listening (Listening Games):

How Many Sounds?

What's My Song?

Drum Game

Passive Listening (Records):

"Creepy, the Crawly Caterpillar"
"Slow Joe"

These are all delightful records which provide opportunity for rhythmic expression or simple dramatization. The last provides opportunity for use of rhythm instruments. With all of these, the key is good listening (Educational Record Sales).

A singalong record (Educational Record Sales).

All have heads down. One, two, or three players sing at the same time. Children must tell how many have sung.

One player starts a familiar tune. When the other children recognize it, they sing along with him. The same thing may be done with rhythm instruments, recognizing them by sound.

Two drums are used. The teacher taps out a very simple pattern on one drum, the child tries to repeat the pattern after listening to it.

Both of these are single records, and therefore short enough to maintain interest (Educational Record Sales).
"The Little Engine That Could" "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs"
While these are both delightful stories, they are somewhat long and may be more effectively played in parts rather than in their entirety.

"Quiet" Music (for rest periods, art periods, etc.)
From the RCA Victor Record Library:

"Clair de Lune" Debusky. Volume V, Listening Activities.
"Music Box" Liadoff. Volume V, Listening Activities.
"Theme from Sonata in A" Mozart. Volume IV, Listening Activities.
"Little Sandman" Brahms. Volume I, Listening Activities.
"To Spring" Grieg. Volume VI, Listening Activities.

IV. ACTIVITIES USING INSTRUMENTS

In working with rhythm instruments, some of the records which may be used are "Strike Up the Band," a single record (Educational Record Sales), and Music for Rhythm Bands, an album (RCA Library).

39See Appendix B for the exact form of this section, as it was presented to the two special teachers involved in the study.
From this album the shorter selections, such as the "Serenata" or "Ratataplan" may be used quite effectively. The children may first keep time by clapping their hands; then a few simple instruments (sticks, bells, triangles, drum) may be added, not too many at one time. Rhythm instruments may also be used as accompaniment to songs. For example, in "Are You Sleeping?" a triangle may be rung at the beginning to simulate the sound of an alarm clock. A drum may be used to accompany "Yankee Doodle," and sticks may be used to accompany "This Old Man."

If an autoharp is available, the children may become familiar with it by simply playing chords. In some cases, it may be necessary for the teacher to guide the child's arm or hand movement. Later, after familiarization with the instrument, children may accompany very simple songs. "Are You Sleeping?" and "Row, Row Your Boat" may be accompanied with one chord (C or F, depending upon the range of the children's voices).

Melody bells may be used with the "Pussy Willow" song (see Singing Activities), if they are in a lower key, such as C. If a piano is available, the teacher may have the children play very simple scale passages, ascending and descending. This may also be used in tone matching games. While one child plays a scale tone, guided by the teacher, the other children may sing it. It may be possible to teach a very simple tune to some of the children, or at least to guide their hands while they are playing it. Here, again, the other children may join in singing. Simple tunes might include "London Bridge" (key of C) and "Mary Had a Little Lamb" (key of F).
CHAPTER VI

AN EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM OF SUGGESTED MUSICAL ACTIVITIES

The preceding chapter dealt with the activities program which was presented to the teachers of two special classes of trainable mentally retarded children. The activities were incorporated into the regular music period and individual responses to various activities were noted, as was the response of the group as a whole. These observations were expanded upon through meetings with the special teachers.

For the purpose of clarity, the two groups were considered separately, one group being referred to as Special Class A, the other as Special Class B. In order to form a more complete picture of each class, as a class, the group response was evaluated first. Individual responses were evaluated on a case study basis.

I. SPECIAL CLASS A: GROUP RESPONSE

Special Class A was comprised of eight children, five girls and three boys, ages ranging from six to eleven. Within this group, the I.Q.'s ranged from 30 to 53. Individual physical characteristics will be discussed as a part of the case studies.

A. GROUP RESPONSE TO SINGING ACTIVITIES

For the most part, group response to most of the songs suggested was good; that is, the songs presented little or no difficulty, initial interest was evident and it was continual.
With five of the songs ("Home on the Range," "Five Little Chickadees," "Old MacDonald," "I Am the Wind," and "My Little Puppy") some difficulty was encountered and a favorable response was slow in development. It should be noted that these songs were longer than most of the others suggested; related to this is the fact that the class was, according to their teacher, a somewhat immature group, as a whole. Of the tone games suggested, only one, the Climbing-the-Ladder game, seemed to evoke a favorable response from the class. These children seemed, also, to respond with interest to the use of a tape recorder in the classroom. Minimal improvement was noted in the singing ability of the group since the beginning of the program.

B. GROUP RESPONSE TO RHYTHMIC ACTIVITIES

The "large" muscle activities (marching, sliding, and galloping) seemed to provide these children with a measure of enjoyment; however, some difficulty was encountered with skipping activities. The "small" muscle activities (bouncing a ball to music and drawing to music) also presented difficulties; here, again, immaturity and poor coordination may have been the decisive factors. "The Hokey Pokey" and "Bow, Bow Belinda," both simple dances, were the only dances to which the children seemed to respond with little difficulty. No response was indicated in both the "Caroussel" and the "Chimes of Dunkirk" dances. Some improvement was noted in muscular coordination and control through the use of rhythmic activities.

The sources here are, respectively, Singing and Rhyming, Book 2, The Kindergarten Book, Singing and Rhyming, Book 2, and Sing and Do Records.
C. GROUP RESPONSE TO LISTENING ACTIVITIES

Listening was the area which seemed to evoke the least response from the group; this indicates a need for working even more within this area, as these children seemed to experience considerable difficulty in learning to listen well. For those activities involving active listening (dramatizing stories, following directions), no response was indicated. The same reaction was also noted for the listening game, How Many Sounds?; however, the Drum Game, also a listening game, did evoke a favorable response from the group. Not all the selections for passive listening were played; of those which were used in the classroom, "The Sleepy Family," "Skater's Waltz," "Hush, My Babe," and "To Spring" seemed to have been the favorites. Stories such as "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" and "Bambi" were found to be too much for the very limited spans of attention of these children. The Liadoff selection, "The Music Box," also met with no success, for reasons unknown.

D. GROUP RESPONSE TO ACTIVITIES USING INSTRUMENTS

Generally, response to activities using instruments (specifically, rhythm instruments and melody bells) was slow in development, with some difficulty encountered. The autoharp was one instrument which provided a source of initial interest to this group. No piano was available in this classroom.
II. SPECIAL CLASS A: INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

Subject: S. B., Female

Age: 8 years, 10 months

Degree of Retardation: I.Q.-41, M.A.-3 years, 5 months. Etiology of retardation unknown.

Physical Characteristics: S. B. is small for her age. She suffers from headaches and is absent from school quite often. Her coordination is poor, but she loves to dance and sing. Her speech ability is very limited, but she attempts some sounds as she sings, with an occasional intelligible word. She is the only one in the class with an excellent ear for tone and pitch, which she produces with some degree of accuracy.

Response to Musical Activities: S. B. indicated favorable interest in almost everyone of the suggested singing activities, including the tone game and the use of the tape recorder. Improvement was noted in her singing ability since the beginning of the program. Within the area of listening, again she indicated interest in most of the listening activities, with the exception of the active listening selection, "My Playful Scarf," which presented some difficulty. High interest level was maintained with most of the "large" muscle rhythmic activities, the exception being skipping. Response to "small" muscle activities was slower in development. Of the simple dances suggested, only "The Hokey Pokey" seemed to be a source of enjoyment for her. Some improvement was noted in her muscular coordination through the use of these activities. S. B.
seemed to prefer rhythm instruments to tonal and harmonic instruments; response to the latter was slower. Her teacher remarked that S. B. is probably the most musically talented child in the class. She has an excellent sense of pitch and can sing an ascending and descending scale quite accurately. She loves music and participates with genuine enjoyment, encouraging the others, in fact, by her obvious enjoyment. Her abilities seem somewhat unusual in a child with such extremely limited mental ability.
Subject: E. N., Female

Age: 6 years, 10 months

Degree of Retardation: I.Q.-43, M.A.-2 years, 10 months. Etiology of retardation unknown; evidence of simple brain damage.

Physical Characteristics: E. N. is small for her age and is quite immature. She has been hospitalized (an eye impairment), so she has fears and uncertainties to overcome. Otherwise, she is quite healthy and cooperative. She can talk and sing, though not well. Her attention span is short and her coordination poor. She is slowly learning to catch, throw, and bounce a ball.

Response to Musical Activities: E. N. indicated a degree of interest in most, but not all, of the songs in the program. Response to the tone game was slow and she indicated no interest in the tape recorder. Some noticeable improvement in her singing ability was noted. E. N., along with most of her classmates, responded least to the selections involving active listening, with the exception of the listening game using a drum; response to this activity was quite favorable. More interest was shown in the selections involving passive listening, with "Skater's Waltz," "Hush, My Babe," "Sleepy Family," and "Clair de Lune," as the favorites. The last two seemed to have a quieting effect on her. Because of E. N.'s poor coordination, rhythmic activities involving the use of "small" muscles presented some difficulties. "The Hokey Pokey," however, seemed to present no such difficulties. Little sign of improvement in muscular coordination and control was evident. E. N.'s response to activities using
rhythm instruments was slow in development; she indicated no response to the autoharp and melody bells. It may be that her general immaturity and mental age are the factors limiting her response. She likes music and the more appealing tunes stay with her. Some of them ("This Old Man," for example) she even sings at home.
Subject: R. R., Male

Age: 11 years, 6 months

Degree of Retardation: I.Q.-30, M.A.- 3 years, 5 months. The fact that he has two brothers in institutions for the mentally retarded suggests the possibility of congenital brain damage.

Physical Characteristics: R. R. is average in size for his age. He is an alert and interested participant in most musical activities, though he hesitates to participate in any unfamiliar activity. He carries a tune quite well, sings snatches of familiar songs at will. He likes rhythmic activities and is fairly well-coordinated. His health, generally, is good, though he seems to suffer from a chronic nasal congestion.

Response to Musical Activities: R. R. reacted quite favorably to almost all of the suggested activities, in all areas. He apparently enjoyed all the songs, with the exception of "Eensie Weensie Spider." The tone games and the tape recorder also interested him. R. R. followed the trend of the group in responding least to the active listening selections, with the exception, again, of the Drum game. He seemed to enjoy the shorter selections involving passive listening. The only rhythmic activity which presented some difficulty to R. R. was galloping; apparently he experienced no difficulty with "small" muscle activities. Improvement was noted in his muscular coordination through the use of these activities. His initial response to activities using instruments was a good one and it appeared to have been continual. Being one of the older children in the class, R. R.
brought more background of experience to this program. He enjoys music though he is reluctant to begin a new activity. Once it becomes familiar to him, he enjoys it. His voice is fairly true to pitch and it has a pleasing quality. However, he does not listen well; the area of active listening is one in which he could benefit from more experience.
Subject: S. N., Female

Age: 10 years, 5 months

Degree of Retardation: I.Q.-30, M.A.-2 years, 6 months. Etiology of retardation unknown.

Physical Characteristics: S. N. is a spastic-paraplegic; her mobility is limited by her fear of falling and her poor balance. Her speech is limited; participation in activities is also limited by her very short span of attention. She is not large for her age, and her responses are quite immature. Except for a considerable number of colds, her health has been fairly good and she seems to be a happy child.

Response to Musical Activities: For the most part, S. N.'s response to the singing activities was slow with some difficulty experienced. "Are You Sleeping?" and "Row, Row Your Boat" were the only two songs in which she showed any real interest. The tone game and tape recorder were of no interest to her at all. No discernible change was noted in her singing ability since the beginning of the program. The only phase of the active listening program which offered her any enjoyment was the Drum game. The passive listening selections, with the exceptions of the longer stories, seemed to have been more to her liking; again, "Sleepy Family," "Clair de Lune," and "Skater's Waltz" were the favorites. Because of S. N.'s physical limitations, rhythmic activities presented difficulties; sliding, skipping, and galloping were too much for her. No discernible change was noted in her muscular coordination through the use of these activities. Her
response to activities using instruments was slow in development.
Because S. N.'s responses are so very limited, her teacher considered
even a slight indication of interest as good, which it was. Her
physical limitations are the basis of so many uncertainties that she
is in a constant state of anxiety, which limits her ability to
participate.
Subject: P. W., Male
Age: 6 years, 6 months

Degree of Retardation: I.Q.-53, M.A.-3 years, 4 months. Mongoloid.

Physical Characteristics: P. W. is small for his age; this is his first school experience. His span of attention is very short and his coordination not very good, but these are probably both correlated to the fact that he is so young. His speech is repetitious and parrot-like, but he does learn to sing songs. His general health seems good.

Response to Musical Activities: P. W.'s response to most of the singing activities was rather slow. The tone games and a few of the songs ("Home On the Range," "Old MacDonald," "Eenkie Weensie Spider") did not seem to interest him at all. No discernible change was noticed in his singing ability since the beginning of the program.

No response to the active listening selections was indicated, with the exception of the Drum game; he seemed to respond quite favorably to this. Within the area of passive listening, P. W.'s favorite selections seemed to have been "The Sleepy Family," "Clair de Lune," and "Skater's Waltz." The rhythmic activities seemed to be quite difficult for P. W., again probably due to his general immaturity and poor coordination. Drawing in time to music drew no response from him at all. No discernible change was noted in muscular coordination through the use of these activities. He indicated some interest in activities using rhythm instruments, no interest in the autoharp or melody bells. P. W. is enjoying his first school experience. This
fact limits his response to all activities because he is still adjusting to the group and to the classroom routine. He likes music; his mother reported that he sings some of the songs at home.
Subject: B. C., Female

Age: 10 years

Degree of Retardation: I.Q.-36, M.A.-3 years, 6 months. Evidence of brain injury, etiology unknown.

Physical Characteristics: B. C. is handicapped by poor coordination and lack of manual control; there is a considerable degree of spasticity in her movements. Her speech is poor; she is able to pronounce individual words, but her connected speech is quite unintelligible.

Response to Musical Activities: Although B. C.'s speech is poor, evidently she participated actively in the singing program; her response to the songs and to the tone games was generally favorable. However, no noticeable improvement was noted in her singing ability since the program's beginning (B. C. entered the class in January of the school year). The only listening activities in which she seemed to indicate an interest were the passive listening selections, with the shorter selections favored. Even though her coordination is poor, she did not seem to experience any significant degree of difficulty with the "large" muscle rhythmic activities. No notation was made regarding her response to the "small" muscle activities, but it seems reasonable to assume that these would provide a greater measure of difficulty to a child of her limited motor ability. She seemed to experience no difficulty with the simple dance, "The Hokey Pokey." Her response to rhythm instruments was good; apparently she did not have the opportunity to use either the autoharp or the melody bells, as no notation was made regarding her response to these
instruments. B. C. does attempt to participate actively in music, even though she is somewhat hampered by her physical limitations. She seems to know most of the songs the class sings, though her sense of pitch is not too good and she tends to sing quite flat.
Subject: J. B., Male

Age: 7 years, 6 months

Degree of Retardation: I.Q.-46, M.A.-3 years, 3 months. Form of brain damage due to nephrogenic diabetes insipidus.

Physical Characteristics: J. B. is a very small 7 year old; his physical development is slow. His condition requires that he drink unusually large amounts of liquids. Since his liquid intake has been increased, some improvement in his physical and mental ability has been noted. J. B. has no real speech; he is finally managing to say, and not very well, a very few isolated words. He attends a speech clinic. His coordination is not too good but it is improving. He is in generally good health.

Response to Musical Activities: Though J. B. does not speak, apparently he enters wholeheartedly into the spirit of the singing; a good initial and continual response to all the singing activities, including the tone games and use of the tape recorder, was indicated. Some progress has been made with regard to his singing ability as his teacher remarked that he now tries to hum and sing syllables. J. B. did respond to the listening game but was unable to interpret his reactions. The passive listening selections "The Sleepy Family" and "Clair de Lune" seemed to have a quieting effect upon him. He did not appear to have experience any real difficulty with the rhythmic activities, with the exception of skipping and the "small" muscle activities. Some improvement was noticed in his muscular coordination and control through the use of these activities. He
enjoyed using rhythm instruments, but was slower in accepting the autoharp and melody bells. J. B. is handicapped by his lack of vocalization, but despite this severe limitation, he was an active participant in most of the activities. He now attempts to sing, particularly in the tone games. He likes rhythms and does fairly well until he becomes carried away with his own performance.
Subject: J. K., Female

Age: 7 years, 6 months


Physical Characteristics: J. K. is a large child for her age; she has no speech but she can hum a tune. She is highly active, nervous, and easily disturbed by changes in routine. Her coordination is poor and there is some spasticity in her movements. Her school attendance has been regular; she has not missed any days because of illness.

Response to Musical Activities: The only three songs in which J. K. was initially interested were "The Getting-up Song," "Are You Sleeping?", and "Row, Row Your Boat." Response to the other singing activities was slow. There seems to have been a noticeable improvement in her ability to hum since the beginning of this program. Again, the most favorable response to the listening activities was in the areas of the listening games and the passive listening.

J. K.'s response to the rhythmic activities seems, for the most part, to have been slow in developing and little sign of improvement in her muscular coordination was noted. Similarly, some degree of difficulty was experienced in the use of all the instruments, rhythmic, harmonic, and tonal. J. K.'s responses, generally, are limited by her lack of speech. She is really interested in music and can hum quite tunefully most of the songs her classmates sing. She has a fair sense of rhythm when trying to keep time with the others. She enjoys all the musical activities and seems to benefit by them.
II. SPECIAL CLASS B: GROUP RESPONSE

Special Class B was comprised of ten children, four girls and six boys, with their ages ranging from eight to fifteen years; six of the children were ten years of age or older. Within this group, the I.Q.'s ranged from 34 to 56; the children were either mongoloid or brain damaged children. Most of the children in Special Class B had been attending school for six years.

A. GROUP RESPONSE TO SINGING ACTIVITIES

The response of the children in Special Class B to the singing activities was, for the most part, very favorable, the exceptions being among those children having severe speech limitations. The selection "Row, Row Your Boat" was sung as a round and appeared to be one of the favorite songs; "Home On the Range," "Old MacDonald," and "Where Is Thumbkin?" were other songs very much enjoyed by the children. Apparently the length of the songs was of little significance in their acceptance. The majority of the children in this group responded quite favorably to the tone games (the Fire Siren game and the Climbing-the-Ladder game). The tape recorder was not used with this class.

B. GROUP RESPONSE TO RHYTHMIC ACTIVITIES

The response of this group to most of the suggested rhythmic activities seemed to be somewhat slow in development. With eight of the children, some difficulties were encountered, particularly with the "small" muscle activities. The suggested dances were not
accepted too readily; their teacher observed that these children seemed to prefer imitating the type of dancing done by older brothers or sisters. The one exception to this general response to rhythmic activities was in the area of drawing to music. This appeared to be heartily enjoyed by most of the children.

C. GROUP RESPONSE TO LISTENING ACTIVITIES

Again a somewhat slow response to listening activities was indicated by this group. The favorites among the active listening selections appeared to have been "Little Indian Drum," "American Folk Songs for Children," and "Strike Up the Band." Where a good initial response to the passive listening selections was indicated, the favorite selections were "Clair de Lune," "Skater's Waltz," and "Little Sandman." The listening games evoked an initially favorable response from three of the children; among the others, the response was slow in developing or there was no response at all (two instances).

D. GROUP RESPONSE TO ACTIVITIES USING INSTRUMENTS

Most of these children enjoyed using rhythm instruments, preferring to accompany recorded music rather than their own singing. The melody bells evoked continual interest on the part of six of the children. The piano and autoharp were not used in this classroom.
IV. SPECIAL CLASS B: INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

Subject: T. G., Male

Age: 7 years


Physical Characteristics: T. G. is very small in size. This is his first year in school; he appears to have made a satisfactory adjustment. His muscular coordination is fairly good, as is his speech.

Response to Musical Activities: The response of T. G. to the singing activities was favorable but slow in development, with some difficulty encountered (this includes the tone games). The exceptions to this were the songs "Where Is Thumbkin?", "Eensie Weensie Spider," and "This Old Man." His initial response to these was good and it was continual. Some improvement in his singing ability was noted since the beginning of this program. T. G. displayed somewhat less interest in the listening activities. His response to the listening selections, active and passive, was slow in development, with some difficulty encountered. He indicated no response to four of the selections ("Lead a Little Orchestra," "Little Indian Drum," "Snow White," and "Clair de Lune") and to two of the listening games (How Many Sounds? and the Drum game). T. G. did not respond at all to most of the rhythmic activities, the only exceptions being the marches, the galloping activities, and "The Hokey Pokey." His response to the use of the rhythm instruments and the melody bells was favorable but slow in development. Some improvement was noted in his singing
ability through the use of instruments. T. G.'s immaturity and his lack of school experience may have been the contributing factors to his generally slow response to most of the musical activities.
Subject: J. F., Male

Age: 8 years


Physical Characteristics: J. F. is small in size, has fairly good coordination, although he is quite pigeon-toed. This does not seem to hamper him except in skipping activities. His speech is fair.

Response to Musical Activities: J. F.'s response to the singing activities was favorable although slow in development in some instances ("Are You Sleeping?", "Row, Row Your Boat," "Home On the Range," and "Bensie Weensie Spider"); his response to the tone games was also favorable but slow in development. Some improvement was noted in his singing ability since the beginning of this program.

For the most part, the listening activities also evoked a favorable response, though a slow one, from J. F. Two of the active listening selections ("American Folk Songs for Children" and "Strike Up the Band") were initially enjoyable to him and remained so; one of the listening games, however (How Many Sounds?), evoked no response in him whatever. He appeared to have enjoyed the marching and galloping activities the most, with the other rhythmic activities presenting some difficulty to him. The sliding and ball bouncing activities were too difficult for him; he did not respond at all to these.

Some improvement was noted in his muscular coordination through the use of these activities. J. F. apparently enjoyed the use of rhythm instruments and the melody bells although, again, his response was slow in development. He did not care to use rhythm instruments.
to accompany class singing, preferring to use them to accompany recorded music. Some improvement was noted in his singing ability and his listening ability through the use of instruments.
Subject: R. P., Male

Age: 8 years


Physical Characteristics: R. P. is small for his age and is very active; his coordination is good. His comprehension, though still limited, seems to have improved somewhat; he follows directions more readily (there has been a change in his I.Q.).

Response to Musical Activities: R. P. is one child who appears to enjoy all types of musical activities. His initial response to all the singing activities was good and it was continual. The same was true of the listening activities, with one exception: his response to the story "Bambi" was slower in development. Also slower in development were his response to the sliding activities and to the suggested dances. Some improvement was noted in his muscular coordination through the use of these activities. He also appears to have enjoyed using the rhythm instruments (preferring to accompany recorded music) and the melody bells; moreover, some improvement was noted in his singing ability and his listening ability, apparently as a result of the use of instruments.
Subject: E. S., Male

Age: 9 years


Physical Characteristics: E. S. is normal in size; his coordination is fairly good. He has very little speech ability and is being given help in this area in school. His health is generally quite good.

Response to Musical Activities: E. S. was rather slow to respond to the singing activities, with the exceptions of holiday and patriotic songs and the tone games; with these, he appeared to have had no difficulty whatever. Some improvement was noted in his singing ability since the beginning of this program. He seemed to have derived considerable enjoyment from the listening selections and games. Among the active listening selections, the only one which did not evoke a good initial response was "Lead a Little Orchestra"; his interest developed slowly in a number of passive listening selections also: "Little Sandman," "To Spring," and some of the longer stories ("The Little Engine That Could," "Bambi," "Snow White"). Most of the rhythmic activities presented some difficulty; the only activities he found easy to perform were the marching and galloping activities. He did not respond at all to the ball bouncing and drawing to music. Only slight improvement was noted in his muscular coordination through the use of rhythmic activities. E. S. did appear to have enjoyed using rhythm instruments, preferring to accompany recorded music rather than class
singing. His response to the melody bells was favorable but slower in development. Some improvement was noted in his singing ability and his listening ability through the use of instruments.
Subject: J. M., Female

Age: 10 years

Degree of Retardation: I.Q.-54. Brain damage.

Physical Characteristics: J. M. is of average size for her age. Because of her condition, there is pressure on one side of her head; the head itself is odd in shape, almost square-looking. Her coordination is fairly good. This school is new to her; she entered only this school year (1960-61).

Response to Musical Activities: J. M. has a very good voice and participated actively in all the singing activities, including the tone games. Her response to all the songs was very favorable and continual. Improvement was noted in her singing ability since the beginning of this program. Her response to the listening activities was also one of interest, with the exception of two of the selections, "The Little Engine That Could" and "Bambi," both stories. Her response to these was slower in development. J. M.'s response to the rhythmic activities was more varied. She apparently enjoyed the "large" muscle activities and the drawing to music. However, her response to the other "small" muscle activities and the dances was slower in development and accompanied by some difficulty. Some improvement was noted in her muscular coordination through the use of these activities. She indicated a good initial response to the rhythm instruments and the melody bells; improvement was noted in her singing and listening ability through the use of instruments.

Quite obviously, J. M. is a child who derives much enjoyment from musical activities.
Subject: A. M., Female

Age: 11 years.


Physical Characteristics: A. M. is short and quite overweight due to inactivity. Her muscular coordination and speech are fair, health generally good.

Response to Musical Activities: The singing activities appeared to have given A. M. no difficulty at all; she responded quite favorably to the songs and to the tone games and her interest was continual. Improvement was noted in her singing ability since the beginning of the program. The listening activities did not seem to interest her as much. Except for four selections ("Little Indian Drum," "American Folk Songs for Children," "Strike Up the Band," and "Skater's Waltz"), her response to these activities, though good, was slow in development with some difficulty encountered. The rhythmic activities also presented some difficulty, notably the sliding, ball bouncing, and drawing activities, and one of the dances ("Caroussel"). However, some improvement was noted in her muscular coordination through the use of these activities. A. M. also appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed the use of rhythm instruments and the melody bells. Some improvement in her singing and listening ability by the use of instruments was noted. A. M. is another child who seems to enjoy music very much; she is perhaps hampered in her ability to participate more actively in the area of rhythms, for example, by
her overweight condition, although most of the "large" muscle activities (marching, galloping) did not appear to give her too much difficulty.
Subject: M. S., Female

Age: 12 years


Physical Characteristics: M. S. is a hyperactive child, although at times she moves very slowly; her movements are generally quite sporadic and her muscular coordination poor.

Response to Musical Activities: M. S. has a fairly pleasing voice and is able to carry a tune. Her response to most of the songs was good, with two selections being the exceptions: "Row, Row Your Boat," and "Where Is Thumbkin?". She seemed to have responded more slowly to these. She was not particularly interested in the tone games; the Climbing-the-Ladder game gave her some difficulty and she did not respond at all to the Fire Siren game. Some improvement was noted in her singing ability since the beginning of this program. Only one of the listening activities ("Strike Up the Band") evoked a favorable response in M. S. Her response to the other listening activities was slow in development. She did not respond at all to one of the listening games, the How Many Sounds? game. Her negative response to the rhythmic activities is quite understandable, in view of her poor coordination. The only activities which seemed to present only slight difficulty were the marching and galloping activities, both "large" muscle activities. No discernible change was noted in her coordination, even after participation in this program of rhythmic activities. Her initial response to the use of rhythm instruments was good and it was continual; she preferred using them to accompany recorded music.
rather than class singing. She appeared to be somewhat slower in responding to the melody bells, even though she displayed some interest. The use of instruments apparently brought about some improvement in her listening ability, not much in her singing ability.
Subject: C. T., Female
Age: 13 years

Physical Characteristics: C. T. transferred from the educable class to this trainable class; her mental faculties seem to be deteriorating. Her speech ability is severely limited; she has, in fact, almost no speech at all.

Response to Musical Activities: Despite her severe speech problems, C. T.'s response to the singing activities was surprisingly good. She could not sing with words but she could hum along or make some sound of her own. Apparently, none of the singing activities, including the tone games, failed to interest her. However no discernible change was noted in her singing ability since the beginning of this program. C. T.'s interest in the listening activities appeared to be slower in development. Two of the active listening selections ("Lead A Little Orchestra" and "Little Indian Drum") did evoke an initially interested response, as did the What's My Song? game. The other active listening selections and listening games did not seem to arouse as much interest in her. Of the passive listening selections, three ("The Little Engine That Could," "Clair de Lune," and "Little Sandman") seemed to have been her favorites; the others, again, did not interest her quite as much. With the exception of the ball-bouncing activity, all the rhythmic activities appeared to have provided C. T. with a large measure of difficulty. Some improvement was noted in her muscular coordination through the use of these activities. C. T. also enjoyed using the rhythm
instruments (accompanying recorded music and class singing) and the melody bells; the use of instruments also appeared to have brought about some improvement in her singing and listening abilities.
Subject: M. P., Male

Age: 14 years


Physical Characteristics: M. P. is quite small for his age; he has a somewhat vague look about him. His coordination is rather poor and his speech not too clear, though he is capable of speaking distinctly when he is reminded; this process of "reminding" must also be carried over into other activities, indicating a somewhat indifferent attitude.

Response to Musical Activities: M. P. did not appear to have displayed any indifference to the singing activities; his response to all of them, including the tone games, was good and it was continual. However, no discernible change was noted in his singing ability. He did not seem to have displayed quite as much interest in the listening activities; his response to all of these, while favorable, was slow in development. The rhythmic activities appear to have presented him with the greatest measure of difficulty; only four of these activities (sliding, galloping, circling movements, drawing to music) evoked some response in him and that was slow in development. No discernible change was noted in his muscular coordination from the use of these rhythmic activities. He did enjoy using rhythm instruments to accompany recorded music rather than class singing.
Subject: M. B., Male

Age: 15 years

Degree of Retardation: I.Q. -34. Mongoloid.

Physical Characteristics: M. B. is large in size for his age; his muscular coordination is poor, movements quite rough. His speech ability is severely limited; there appears to be a language barrier (his parents are Hungarian refugees, the child was born in Canada).

Response to Musical Activities: Generally, M. B.'s response to musical activities was sporadic and not always favorable. He did not respond at all to the singing activities, with the exception of three selections ("This Old Man," "My Little Puppy," and the holiday and patriotic songs) and the response to these was slow. His response to most of the listening activities was also slow, for the most part. Only two of the active listening selections ("Little Indian Drum" and "Strike Up the Band") appealed to him initially. Two of the listening games (What's My Song? and the Drum game) and one of the stories ("The Little Engine That Could") did not appeal to him at all. One of the rhythmic activities (galloping) evoked a good response in him; he was slower to respond to marching, ball bouncing, and drawing activities. He did not respond at all to the sliding and circling activities or to the simple dances. Apparently, however, participation in these activities did bring about some improvement in his muscular coordination. The use of rhythm instruments and melody bells did afford him a considerable degree of enjoyment, although he preferred using the rhythm instruments to accompany recorded music.
III. A COMPARISON OF THE TWO SPECIAL CLASSES

Because of the extremely limited mental ability and performance of trainable mentally retarded children, control groups obviously cannot be used in the evaluation of any program of activities; nor can even simple comparison of groups provide any clear-cut answers to the problems faced in establishing and implementing an activities program. But a comparison of groups can point up certain similarities in reactions and possible reasons for differences in reactions.

The most obvious difference between the two groups, Special Class A and Special Class B, was that of age. The average age in Special Class A was 8.7 years; in Special Class B it was 10.7 years. Furthermore, the children in Special Class B had had the benefit of more classroom experience; half the group were in their sixth year of school. The children in Special Class A were in their second year of school. These differences could be important factors in the reaction of a group to particular activities. For example, in the area of singing activities, the group reactions of both classes were similar, for the most part; where any real differences occurred, the songs were those which are longer than usual ("Old MacDonald," "Home On the Range"), or more difficult, melodically. It is quite possible that the attention span of the older group was longer and more developed than that of the younger group. This is further borne out by the fact that the listening activities did not particularly appeal to Special Class A but they managed to evoke considerable interest in Special Class B. It was previously mentioned that the teacher of Special Class A had indicated a definite need of her class for more
work in this area. It is interesting to note that the longer stories
("Snow White," "Bambi," "The Little Engine") were just too much for the
younger group; the response of the older group was slow in developing
but it was favorable. Apparently, the older children were capable
of assimilating such large doses of listening. At first, the
differences in reactions to the rhythmic activities seemed to be
quite peculiar; with consideration of the individual backgrounds,
however, these differences were found to be reasonable. It was the
younger group which had the least difficulty with the rhythmic
activities; ordinarily it is assumed that younger children lack the
muscular coordination and control of their older schoolmates. The
difference appeared to lie in the high percentage of children with
brain damage and/or physical handicaps in Special Class B. Neither
class was especially interested in the dances (with the exception
of "The Hokey Pokey" and "Bow, Bow Belinda" in Special Class A);
either the dances were too difficult (which could have been the
case with Special Class A) or the children had more sophisticated
tastes (which was the case with Special Class B).

Very little differences occurred in the area of activities
using instruments. Indications from both classes were that they
were thoroughly enjoyed, though slight difficulties were encountered
in some instances.

IV. SUMMARY

The activities suggested as part of the musical program for
trainable mentally retarded children were chosen with a definite
purpose in mind. A knowledge of the extreme limitations of these children demands care in the selection of the specific activities. There are other factors in the educational process of trainable children which can be distinct advantages. One of these is their intense desire to please. Another is the necessity of constant repetition; a song which would be boring to children of normal mentality may be appealing to trainable children because of its repetitious nature. Simplicity and appeal are the key factors involved in the choice of activities for trainable children. Songs such as "Are You Sleeping?," "Row, Row Your Boat," "Where Is Thumbkin?," "Pussy Willow," "Eensie Weensie Spider," were chosen because of their comparative simplicity and brevity. Longer and more difficult songs, such as "Home On the Range," "Old MacDonald," "People On the Bus," "Ity Little Puppy," and "I Am the Wind," were chosen because of their melodic appeal and/or the possible element of familiarity. It was interesting to note that, in the area of singing activities, the reactions of both groups were quite similar; the songs, for the most part, were enjoyed by the children. Where any sharp differences occurred, the songs were those which were longer or more difficult, melodically; with these, the younger group (Special Class A) seemed to have experienced more difficulty.

Because the muscular coordination of these children is generally not up to normal standards, emphasis was placed on rhythmic activities using "large" muscles, activities such as marching, galloping, sliding, and skipping. Some "small" muscle activities
were suggested (bouncing a ball to music, waving scarves to music, drawing to music) for the purpose of possible development of finer coordination. It was assumed that the younger group, because of their immaturity and lack of muscular control, would experience more difficulty with the rhythmic activities. This was not the case. The difficulty was encountered by the older group, Special Class B, and the difference had little to do with age level. The older group contained a comparatively high percentage of brain damaged children whose muscular control was sporadic and generally quite poor. With the possible exceptions of "The Hokey Pokey" and "Bow, Bow Belinda" (both quite simple dances), which appealed to the younger group, neither class was particularly interested in the dances suggested. The older children appeared to have had more sophisticated tastes, preferring to imitate the dances done by older brothers and sisters. This problem of more mature tastes coupled with limited ability is of special concern where there is a wide range of differences in ages within one special class; it becomes difficult to select an activity which will have high interest value to all the children.

The listening activities were selected with a view toward developing the listening ability of these children. This is an area which can provide them with a measure of enjoyment for the rest of their lives, if they have developed the habit of listening and the ability to listen attentively, even to a limited degree. It was to this end that the active listening selections were directed. They included short stories which provided opportunity for rhythmic expression or simple dramatization through listening to simple plots
or directions. Listening games were included with the same purpose in mind. The purpose of the passive listening selections was quite different; for the most part, these were chosen for their quieting effect. In the area of listening, it appeared that age level was an important factor. With their comparatively short spans of attention, the younger children did not respond as well to the listening activities as did the older group. There were three exceptions to this, and they were in the area of passive listening. "Skater's Waltz," "Clair de Lune," and "The Sleepy Family" were thoroughly enjoyed by the younger group. Logically enough, the longer stories ("Snow White," "Bambi," and "The Little Engine That Could") did not appeal to the younger group, either.

Aside from the obvious purpose of enjoyment, the instrumental activities were also selected for the purposes of providing an outlet for energies and a means of development of muscular control and attention span. Although neither of the classes had a piano available, the children did have the opportunity to use the rhythm instruments and melody bells. Special Class A also had the opportunity to use an autoharp; this instrument did not appear to have been used in Special Class B. The response of both classes to activities using instruments was quite similar; generally, it was one of interest and enjoyment. Both groups indicated a preference for using rhythm instruments to accompany recorded music rather than class singing.

The belief of the Music Educators National Conference that the importance of music is an accepted fact by those who work with the
mentally retarded appears to have been borne out by the response of both groups of trainable children to music. Certainly it was an accepted fact by the teachers of both these special classes.
CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With the recent development of public school programs for the trainable mentally retarded, new problems have arisen with regard to the planning and implementation of the activities prescribed by such educational programs. One of the most important of these activities is music, which can furnish these children with such a variety of interests and such a wealth of enjoyment. It was the purpose of this study, then, (1) to examine the value of music in fulfilling some of the physical, emotional, and psychological needs of mentally retarded children in a special classroom situation, (2) to outline a program of musical activities, giving careful consideration to the needs of these children, and (3) to evaluate the effectiveness of the suggested musical activities by examining the individual responses of trainable mentally retarded children to these activities.

The literature reviewed for the purposes of this study consisted of books and periodicals dealing with exceptional children (including the mentally retarded) in general, periodicals dealing specifically with music for the mentally retarded, and unpublished works related directly and indirectly to the topic.

I. SUMMARY

The term "trainable mentally retarded child," used throughout the study, was interpreted as meaning the child who possesses
potentialities for learning self-care, adjustment in home and neighborhood, economic usefulness in a sheltered environment. These children are not capable of learning academic skills beyond rote learning of some simple words or numbers; their speech and language abilities are limited and their approximate I.Q. range is 25 to 50. Their mental ages as adults range from three to six years.

The term "educable mentally retarded child" was interpreted as meaning the child who cannot profit sufficiently from regular elementary school work because of slow mental development, but who can learn some academic skills, particularly in a special class situation. The approximate I.Q. range of these children is between 50 and 70, mental ages as adults range from six to twelve years.

Since the term "special class" applies to a specific situation referred to throughout the study, it was interpreted as meaning a specialized situation in a public school, better equipped to meet the needs of mentally retarded children than are regular classrooms; the teacher must have thorough understanding of the problems of mental retardation.

Certain clinical types of retardation were also referred to throughout the study. The term "mongoloid" was interpreted as meaning the child characterized physically by an abnormally short skull, almond-shaped eyes, and a short and somewhat stocky build. Most mongoloid children are moderately retarded and will have the mental ability of the normal three, four, or five-year-old individual. "Brain-injured child" was interpreted as meaning the child who
before, during, or after birth has suffered some injury to, or
infection of, the brain, resulting in varying degrees of neuromotor
impairment, mental retardation, or atypical behavior. The brain-
injured child is not always mentally retarded, but in this study,
the term was used to denote those children in whom the brain damage
has resulted in mental retardation.

Although all the experimental studies reviewed, with one
exception, were concerned with music for **educable** mentally retarded
children, the findings were considered of value in determining
what effective activities could be used with trainable children.
Generally, these findings suggested that participation of slow
learners in meaningful musical activities was of more importance
than acquisition of skills. Listening, singing, rhythmic response,
and playing instruments were all a part of the music program, with
consideration given the interest value of each activity. Constant
repetition was found to be an extremely important factor in working
with these children. Also noted was the fact that progress was
difficult and a high degree of patience was necessary.

It appeared, from a review of these investigations, that
the area of music for **trainable** mentally retarded children is still
largely neglected. This may be due to the fact that the establish-
ment of special classes in public school systems for these children
is a comparatively recent development.

In view of the fact that any effective program of activities
must be based on the needs of the participants, it was necessary to
examine, specifically, the needs of trainable mentally retarded children. This was attempted through perusal of the literature in this particular area. It was also believed that a program of this type would be evaluated more effectively through active participation by the children themselves. A program of music was formulated and thus presented to two special classes of trainable mentally retarded children for this purpose.

An examination of the needs of trainable mentally retarded children disclosed that certain physical, mental and social traits appear to be characteristic of particular age groups of mentally retarded. In one special class of educables observed in another study, the majority of retarded children in the 5 to 7 age group seemed capable of walking, running, and jumping, but were slow in acquiring the ability to skip. Speech ability also developed slowly for the majority of these children. Socially, children of this age group tended to be followers in a group, with little initiative or imagination. Their mental ability was very much limited by their slow perception and association. The older children, ages 8 to 10, were not as limited, physically. Muscular control of their limbs was fairly well developed. With these children, suggestion and imitation were dominant in play and conduct. Lack of comprehension in the children of this age level resulted in failure to carry out directions.

With children who are severely mentally retarded, the following concepts must be borne in mind: (1) retarded children
must be taught as much as possible through what can be seen; (2) the attention span of these children is very short; (3) motivation of trainable retarded children is limited, but offering activities which they are able to perform provides a means of giving praise, which they need; (4) patience is necessary in teaching these children, for improvement is slow and limited. Though trainable children are severely limited, there is a necessary place for music in their general educational program. It is important, however, that the music program be geared to their limitations.

An experimental study conducted in a class of mentally retarded children in Leon County, Florida, indicated that the rote method was the most effective technique for teaching songs to these children. The primary factor in acceptance of songs seemed to be interest value. Another survey indicated that adequate songs were those which did not exceed twelve measures in length, with repetitious phase lyrics. Melodies which were easiest to learn and which were retained longest were those which were light with a strong rhythmic beat. Tone games brought about improvement in ability to sing on pitch. At Jewish Hospital in Brooklyn, New York, it was found that, through the use of singing, the children were helped to overcome to a certain degree such psychological impediments as poor memory and quick discouragement. Furthermore, all the children showed at least slight improvement in speech ability.

Because of the generally poor muscular coordination of retarded children, initial rhythmic activities should involve
rhythmic manipulation of large muscles. Basically, the purpose of rhythmic activities, aside from the providing of enjoyment, should be the development of muscular control. Creative rhythms or simple dramatization may also aid in extending the spans of attention of these children.

Listening activities may be grouped into two broad categories: passive listening, and active listening, which involves conscious attention and participation. Passive listening can exert a quieting influence if it is geared to the existing emotions of the children. Certain types of recorded music may facilitate relaxation. One method of stimulating active listening is through the use of activity records or records of stories which can be dramatized simply. Listening games may also be a means of developing the ability to listen well. This ability is an important aspect of sense training in a program for the trainable mentally retarded, but the process must be a highly repetitive one.

Although trainable mentally retarded children cannot actually learn to play band or orchestral instruments with any degree of proficiency, they may derive a great degree of enjoyment through the use of simple rhythm, harmonic, and tonal instruments. The rhythm band is an important part of the music program for trainable children and can be an effective means for combining social adaptation with muscular control and increased attention span. The autoharp may be used with little difficulty by trainable children, and they may even learn to play a simple scale passage or a tune on the piano. All
these activities contribute to the pleasure and the satisfaction these children may derive from active participation in a varied program of music.

The program of activities presented to both special classes involved in the study was purposely rather limited, so that the necessary repetition would provide the basis for a more valid interpretation of the results. The teachers were provided with a check-list evaluation sheet for each pupil. On each sheet were listed all the specific activities with areas representing different levels of response to be checked off. These sheets were actually for the benefit of the special class teachers in keeping a record of each child's progress by the simplest possible means. The information which comprised the case studies was obtained by means of conferences with the teachers, with these check sheets as written records of observations made.

The activities suggested as part of the musical program for trainable mentally retarded children were chosen with a definite purpose in mind. A knowledge of the extreme limitations of these children demands care in the selection of the specific activities. There are other factors in the educational process of these children which can be distinct advantages. One of these is their intense desire to please. Another is the necessity of constant repetition; a song which would be boring to children of normal mentality may be appealing to trainable children because of its repetitious nature. Simplicity and appeal are the key factors involved in the choice of
activities for trainable children. Songs such as "Are You Sleeping?," "Row, Row Your Boat," "Where Is Thumbkin?," "Pussy Willow," "Weensie Weensie Spider," were chosen because of their comparative simplicity and brevity. Longer and more difficult songs, such as "Home On the Range," "Old Macdonald," "People On the Bus," "My Little Puppy," and "I Am the Wind," were chosen because of their melodic appeal and/or the possible element of familiarity.

Within the area of singing activities, the reactions of both groups were quite similar; the songs, for the most part, were enjoyed by the children. Where any sharp differences occurred, the songs were those which were longer or more difficult, melodically; with these, the younger group (Special Class A) seemed to have experienced more difficulty.

Because the muscular coordination of these children is, generally, not up to normal standards, emphasis was placed on rhythmic activities using "large" muscles, activities such as marching, galloping, sliding, and skipping. Some "small" muscle activities were suggested (bouncing a ball to music, waving scarves to music, drawing to music) for the purpose of possible development of finer coordination. It was assumed that the younger group, because of their immaturity and lack of muscular control, would experience more difficulty with the rhythmic activities. This was not the case. The difficulty was encountered by the older group of children, Special Class B, and the difference had little to do with the age level. The older group contained a comparatively high percentage of
brain damaged children whose muscular control was sporadic and generally quite poor. With the possible exceptions of "The Hokey Pokey" and "Bow, Bow Belinda," (both quite simple dances), which appealed to the younger group, neither class was particularly interested in the dances suggested. The older children appeared to have had more sophisticated tastes, preferring to imitate the dances done by older brothers and sisters. This problem of more mature tastes coupled with limited ability is of special concern where there is a wide range of differences in ages within one special class; it becomes difficult to select an activity which will have high interest value to all the children.

The listening activities were selected with a view toward developing the listening ability of these children. This is one area which can provide them with a measure of enjoyment for the rest of their lives, if they have developed the habit of listening and the ability to listen attentively, even to a limited degree. It was to this end that the active listening selections were directed. They included short stories which provided opportunity for rhythmic expression or simple dramatization through listening to simple plots or directions. Listening games were included with the same purpose in mind. The purpose of the passive listening selections was quite different; these were chosen, for the most part, for their quieting effect. It appeared that, in the area of listening, age level was an important factor. The younger children, with their comparatively shorter spans of attention, did not respond as well to the listening
activities as did the older group. There were three exceptions to this, and they were in the area of passive listening: "Skater's Waltz," "Clair de Lune," and "The Sleepy Family" were thoroughly enjoyed by the younger group. Logically enough, the longer stories ("Snow White," "Bambi," and "The Little Engine That Could") did not appeal to the younger group, either.

Aside from the obvious purpose of enjoyment, the instrumental activities were also selected for the purposes of providing an outlet for energies and a means of development of muscular control and attention span. Although neither of the classes had a piano available, the children did have the opportunity to use the rhythm instruments and melody bells. Special Class A also had the opportunity to use an autoharp; this instrument did not appear to have been used in Special Class B. The response of both classes to activities using instruments was quite similar; generally, it was one of interest and enjoyment. Both groups indicated a preference for using rhythm instruments to accompany recorded music rather than class singing.

The belief of the Music Educators National Conference that the importance of music is an accepted fact by those who work with the mentally retarded appears to have been borne out by the response of both groups of trainable children to music. Certainly it was an accepted fact by the teachers of both these special classes.
II. RECOMMENDATIONS

In reviewing much of the literature on the topic of music for the trainable mentally retarded, it became quite apparent that there is a great need for more research in this area, particularly in view of the fact that special classes for trainable children are becoming more numerous. The area of music is one of the very few areas, possibly the only one, in which these children can achieve some measure of success. It is one of the most effective areas in which there can be considerable carry-over into their necessarily sheltered lives. In order to evaluate even more effectively specific types of musical activities for these children, more extensive studies are recommended, studies which would involve a longer period of time for implementation of the program and greater numbers of children. Few definite conclusions can be reached in studies of this type, but the result of such research could be a program of musical activities which would bring maximum enjoyment and satisfaction to these trainable children who need it so much.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
A. BOOKS


B. PUBLICATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT, LEARNED SOCIETIES, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS


C. PERIODICALS


D. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS


APPENDIX A
Evaluation Sheet

Name of Child:  
Age:  
Degree of Retardation:  
Physical Characteristics:  

**Reaction to Musical Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singing Activities: (To be considered: Appeal of song, rate of learning, interest, participation, improvement in pitch, diction)</th>
<th>Good initial response, continual, little or no difficulty</th>
<th>Good response but slow in developing, some difficulty</th>
<th>No response, great difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting Up Song</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are You Sleeping?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row, Row Your Boat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rig-a-jig-jig</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Little Chickadees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home On the Range</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old MacDonald</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will You Come?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where Is Thumbkin?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People On the Bus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pussy Willow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eensie Weensie Spider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>This Old Man</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack In the Box</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I Am the Wind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Little Puppy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday and patriotic songs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Singing Activities (cont.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone Games:</th>
<th>Good initial response, continual, little or no difficulty</th>
<th>Good response but slow in developing, some difficulty</th>
<th>No response, great difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone game</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Siren game</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climbing-the-Ladder game</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of tape recorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has there been any noticeable improvement in the child's singing ability (voice quality and diction) since the beginning of this program?</th>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>No Discernible Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Listening Activities:**

(Consider effectiveness of individual selections for their particular purpose—passive, to soothe and quiet; active, to stimulate attention, improve listening habits. Consider also the appeal of individual selections and stories.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good initial response, continual, little or no difficulty</th>
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<th>No response, great difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Active Listening:**

- Lead a Little Orchestra
- My Playful Scarf
- A Visit to My Little Friend
- A Walk in the Forest
- Little Indian Drum
- American Folk Songs for Children
- Strike Up the Band

**Listening Games:**

- How Many Sounds?
- What's My Song?
- Drum game
**Listening Activities (cont.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good initial response, continual, little or no difficulty</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Passive Listening:**
- Creepy, the Crawly Caterpillar
- The Little Engine That Could
- Slow Joe
- Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
- Bambi
- Sleepy Family
- Clair de Lune—Debussy
- Music Box—Lindoff
- Theme, Sonata in A—Mozart
- Skater's Waltz—Waldteufel
- Waltz in A—Flat—Brahms
- Rush, My Babe—Rousseau
- Melody in F—Rubinstein
- Little Sandman—Brahms
- To Spring—Grieg

**Rhythmic Activities:**
(Consider ability to participate in activities, ability to move fairly well in time to the music, muscular control and coordination.)

**"Large" muscle Activities:**
- March of Tin Soldiers
- Soldier's March
- Valse Serenade (sliding)
- Waltz, Op.9, No.3 (sliding)
- Jaglled (skipping)
- Wild Horseman (galloping)
### Rhythmic Activities (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Good initial response, continual, little or no difficulty</th>
<th>Good response but slow in developing, some difficulty</th>
<th>No response, great difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### "Small" muscle Activities:
- Bouncing ball to music
- Circling movements with arms, hands, later using scarves
- Drawing "in time" to music

#### Simple Dances:
- Hokey Pokey
- Carousell
- Bow, Bow Belinda
- Chimes of Dunkirk

**Is there any sign of improvement in muscular coordination and control through the use of these activities?**

#### Activities Using Instruments:
(Consider interest, ability to handle and to play instruments, possible improvements in other musical abilities through the use of instruments—singing, listening, for example.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Good initial response, continual, little or no difficulty</th>
<th>Good response but slow in developing, some difficulty</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Rhythm Instruments:
- Using records
- Accompanying songs

#### Harmonic and tonal instruments:
- Autoharp
- Melody bells
- Piano

**Has there been any improvement in singing ability through the use of instruments?** **In listening ability?**
APPENDIX B
IV. ACTIVITIES USING INSTRUMENTS

Rhythm Instruments:

Records: Strike Up the Band (Educational Record Sales); Music for Rhythm Bands (RCA Library). (Shorter selections from this album, such as "Serenata" and "Rataplan," may be used.) Begin by having children keep time by clapping hands. Then add a few simple instruments, not too many at one time (sticks, triangles, bells, drum).

Rhythm instruments may also be used as accompaniment to songs. For example, in "Are You Sleeping?" a triangle may be rung at the beginning to simulate the sound of an alarm clock; a drum may be used to accompany "Yankee Doodle" and sticks may be used to accompany "This Old Man."

Harmonic Instruments:

Autoharp

If this instrument is available, the children may become familiar with it by simply playing chords. In some cases, it may be necessary for the teacher to guide the child's arm or hand movement. Later, after familiarization with the instrument, children may accompany very simple songs. "Are You Sleeping?" and "Row, Row Your Boat" may be accompanied with one chord (C or F, depending upon the range of the children's voices).

Tonal Instruments:

Melody bells may be used with the "Pussy Willow" song (see Singing Activities), if they are in a lower key, such as C.

Piano

If a piano is available, the teacher may have the children play very simple scale passages, ascending and descending. This may also be used in tone matching games. While one child plays a scale tone, guided by the teacher, the other children may sing it. It may be possible to teach a very simple tune to some of the children, or at least to guide their hands while they are playing it. Here, again, the other children may join in singing. Simple tunes might include "London Bridge" (key of C) and "Mary Had a Little Lamb" (key of F).
A PROGRAM OF MUSICAL ACTIVITIES FOR
TRAINABLE MENTALLY RETARDED
CHILDREN

An Abstract of a Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate School
Boston University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Loretta Cera
August 1961
With the recent development of public school programs for the trainable mentally retarded, new problems have arisen with regard to the planning and implementation of the activities prescribed by such educational programs. One of the most important of these activities is music, which can furnish these children with such a variety of interests and such a wealth of enjoyment. It was the purpose of this study, then, (1) to examine the value of music in fulfilling some of the physical, emotional, and psychological needs of mentally retarded children in a special classroom situation, (2) to outline a program of musical activities, giving careful consideration to the needs of these children, and (3) to evaluate the effectiveness of the suggested musical activities by examining the individual responses of trainable mentally retarded children to these activities.

The literature reviewed for the purposes of this study consisted of books and periodicals dealing with exceptional children (including the mentally retarded) in general, periodicals dealing specifically with music for the mentally retarded, and unpublished works related directly and indirectly to the topic.

It was believed that a program of this type would be evaluated more effectively through active participation by the children themselves. A program of music was formulated and thus presented to two special classes of trainable mentally retarded children for this purpose. The program of activities presented to both special classes involved in the study was purposely rather limited, so that the necessary
repetition would provide the basis for a more valid interpretation of the results. The teachers were provided with a check-list evaluation sheet for each pupil. On each sheet were listed all the specific activities with areas representing different levels of response to be checked off. These sheets were actually for the benefit of the special class teachers in keeping a record of each child's progress by the simplest possible means. The information which comprised the case studies was obtained by means of conferences with the teachers, with these check sheets as written records of observations made.

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Within the area of singing activities, the reactions of both groups were quite similar; the songs, for the most part, were enjoyed by the children. Where any sharp differences occurred, the songs were those which were longer or more difficult, melodically; with these, the younger group (Special Class A) seemed to have experienced more difficulty.

Because the muscular coordination of these children is, generally, not up to normal standards, emphasis was placed on rhythmic activities using "large" muscles, activities such as marching, galloping, sliding, and skipping. Some "small" muscle activities were suggested (bouncing a ball to music, waving scarves to music, drawing to music) for the purpose of possible development of finer coordination. It was assumed that the younger group, because of their immaturity and lack of muscular control, would experience more difficulty with the rhythmic activities. This was not the case. The difficulty was encountered by the older group of children, Special Class B, and the difference had little to do with the age level. The older group contained a comparatively high percentage of brain-damaged children whose muscular control was sporadic and generally quite poor. With the possible exceptions of "The Hokey Pokey" and "Bow, Bow Belinda," (both quite simple dances), which appealed to the younger group, neither class was particularly interested in the
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