

The Mozart Effect

Can listening to the music of Mozart make you more intelligent? In 1993, the journal *Science* published the results of a study by a group of scientists at the University of California. They claimed that teenagers who listened to Mozart's 1781 Sonata for Two Pianos in D major performed better in some tests than other young people who listened to other music or no music.

At the time, other scientists were not sure about the results because only 36 students took part in the study and it was impossible to repeat it successfully. This didn't stop the media making 'The Mozart Effect' a big news story. Although the study related to very specific tasks, it wasn't long before parents were playing the Mozart sonata to their children, believing that they would become more intelligent adults. In the US state of Georgia, mothers of new-born babies even received a free CD of classical musical and in Florida a law made it compulsory to play classical music in child day centres.

However, researchers at the University of Vienna have now published the results of another study in another journal called *Intelligence*. In this new study they looked at the results of more than 3,000 individuals in 40 other studies from around the world. The results are very clear. There is no evidence that listening to the Mozart sonata increases the ability to perform specific tasks.

Jakob Pietschnig, who led the new study, pointed out that the young people who listened to music performed better than the group who worked in silence because people generally perform better if they are doing something they enjoy at the same time. Listening to music can make us feel good and we all perform better when we're feeling happy and positive.

If listening to music can help a child's general development, learning to play a musical instrument can have an even more positive effect. And the music doesn't have to be Mozart. It's reassuring to know that we can benefit from listening to different types of music. Life would be very boring if we could only listen to Mozart's Sonata for Two Pianos in D major 24 hours a day. What music do you like to listen to while you study, work or travel? Classical, jazz, rock ...? Bach, Tony Bennett, or Lady Gaga?

1 Use vowels (*a, e, i, o, u*) to complete the styles of music.

- 1 b l _ _ s
- 2 c l _ s s _ c _ l
- 3 c _ _ n t r y
- 4 d _ n c _
- 5 _ l _ c t r _ n _ c
- 6 f _ l k
- 7 j _ z z
- 8 p _ p
- 9 r _ g g _ _
- 10 r _ c k
- 11 s _ _ l
- 12 w _ r l d

2 Put the styles of music from exercise 1 in your order of preference.

3 Use the question words to complete the questions. Then answer them.

How many	What	When	Where	Who	Why
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- _____ did Mozart compose his Sonata for Two Pianos in D major?
- _____ did the 1993 group of scientists work?
- _____ were other scientists unsure of their research?
- _____ name did the media give to the results of the study?
- _____ led the new study at the University of Vienna?
- _____ studies did the scientists look at for the new study?

4 Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)? Correct the false sentences.

- Listening to Mozart's 1781 Sonata makes young people more intelligent.
- As a result of the 1993 study, people started playing classical music to children.
- For the new study, the scientists studied 3,000 young people in Austria.
- Science* and *Intelligence* are the titles of two scientific publications.
- In general, people work better when they listen to music.
- Listening to music has more benefits than playing it.

5 Put the words in brackets in the comparative or superlative form.

- I think listening to music while you work is (good) _____ than working in silence.
- In general, I feel (happy) _____ listening to music than reading a book.
- Jazz music is usually (relaxing) _____ than classical music.
- I believe Mozart is (great) _____ composer of all time.
- I think (bad) _____ kind of music is the 'muzak' you hear in shops and lifts.
- In my opinion, classical music has a (positive) _____ effect on young people than pop music.

6 Do you agree or disagree with the sentences in exercise 5? Change the sentences you disagree with to reflect your own opinion.

7 Look at the activities below and choose a favourite piece of music you'd like to listen to while you do each activity.

- studying _____
- driving _____
- falling asleep _____
- waking up _____
- travelling by train _____
- cooking _____

8 Compare your list with other students. Do you share similar tastes in music?

Glossary

claim (*verb*) - to say that something is true

compulsory (*adjective*) - something must be done because of a rule or law

journal (*noun*) - a magazine containing articles relating to a particular subject

point out (*verb*) - to tell someone something

reassuring (*adjective*) - making you feel less worried

researcher (*noun*) - someone who collects facts and ideas

specific (*adjective*) - related to one particular thing

sonata (*noun*) - a piece of classical music for one instrument

sure (*adjective*) - certain that something is true or correct

take part (*verb*) - to participate in an activity with other people

task (*noun*) - something that you have to do