

# Choosing A Music Teacher For Your Child or Yourself

Compiled by Marti Dudgeon, Texas Independent Music Teacher Forum Chair (2007-2010)

## How Do I Find the Right Teacher?

You will want a teacher who will inspire and nurture a student's musical growth and instill lifelong love of music. When seeking a music teacher:

- Consult with friends, family and others who are acquainted with teachers in your community.
- Ask for recommendations from local music teacher organizations, music stores, schools or churches.
- Arrange to interview prospective teachers, in person if possible, before making a commitment.
- Ask permission to attend a recital of the prospective teacher's students.
- Ask permission to observe them teaching a lesson.

## How do I Interview Prospective Teachers?

Teachers are willing and eager to explain their techniques and objectives.

The following are types of questions to ask during the interview:

- What is your professional and educational experience in music?
- What is your teaching experience? What age groups do you teach?
- How do you participate in ongoing professional development?
- Do you have a written studio policy? Will you review it with me?
- Do you regularly evaluate student progress?
- What instructional materials do you use?
- What kinds of music do you teach?
- Do you offer group lessons?
- Do you require students to perform in studio recitals during the year?
- Do you offer other performance opportunities for your students, such as festivals and competitions?
- Do you use technology in your studio, such as computers, music instruction software, and digital keyboards?
- How much practice time do you require each day?
- What do you expect of your students? Their parents?
- What are the fees for lessons, and other materials used?
- Can parents observe lessons?

## What is the Parent's Role?

Parental support in the learning process is vital whether or not you know anything about music.

- Take time to listen to your child play.
- Provide exclusive practice time on a quality instrument.
- Celebrate his or her continued accomplishments.
- Encourage sharing of their musical gift and talent.

## Benefits of Music Study:

- \* Hearing music stimulates the mind.
- \* Music instruction enhances abstract reasoning skills.
- \* Grade school students who took music lessons generally scored higher on cognitive development tests.
- \* In older people, music helps lower depression and decreases loneliness.
- \* Playing an instrument strengthens eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills.
- \* Music lessons teach discipline, dedication and enable students to achieve goals.