

Music facilitates connections: connections between music and other disciplines, connections between neural pathways in the brain, connections among human beings, and more. The importance of utilizing music as a tool to create and maintain human relationships cannot be overstated – especially in the lives of middle school students.

According to Rush, Scott, and Wilkinson (2014), music can provide students with a sense of family, allowing them the confidence to navigate many challenges associated with life as a pre-teen. Middle school students are at an age of transition as their coursework becomes more rigorous, their bodies change, and their social statuses suddenly emerge. Throughout the midst of this, music can serve as an anchor for middle school students. Although Rush, Scott, and Wilkinson (2014) wrote this sentiment from the perspective of band directors, the concept applies across all fine arts groups.

Green (2012) supported this idea, noting the importance of creating a welcoming learning environment for all students (with an emphasis on all). Many adults who participated in a performing music group often reminisce that their performing group allowed them to create friendships with people they normally would never have connected with. When all students are afforded an equal opportunity for participation, connections and friendships will undoubtedly flourish.

Although the middle school student must face many challenges, participation in a music group can allow for vital connections between students. Music can (and will) continue to serve as the bridge between humans, especially for middle school students.

References

Green, E. (2012). *On Teaching Band: Notes from Eddie Green*. Hal Leonard.

Rush, S., Scott, J., & Wilkinson, E. (2014) *Habits of a Successful Middle School Band Director*.

GIA Publications.