



Minijournal

2022

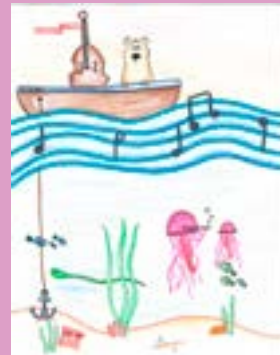
Minijournal Cover Contest



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JOSHUA J., AGE 10
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A big **thank you**
to everyone who
participated in the
2022 Minijournal
Cover Design
Contest.



MIA T., AGE 10
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2023 Minijournal Cover Design Contest

Guidelines: Original cover design by a Suzuki student between the ages of 4 and 14. Suzuki or music-related subject matter preferred. Please do not send computer-generated artwork. One entry per child.

Deadline: January 1, 2023

Send to: SAA Cover Contest; PO Box 17310; Boulder, CO 80308

The *American Suzuki Journal* is looking for student contributors to write columns about their experience. Columns could be about practice and motivation, community, listening, balancing music with school work, etc. If you are an interested student, please email allie@suzukiassociation.org.



SABRINA J., AGE 12
TEACHER EMMA DOWNING, OR

Find the Instrument!

I U R I P S F L U T E N U A
V E I U S L V G N N C I O C
I N O A U O T U N R C L R C
O O B I R B I I P N I O S O
L B T N O H U T L O C I O R
A M H U U F A A L A R V E D
L O M I B I C R O O E D C I
I R O R G A N E P R R H I O
F T N I N U O O L O R H O N
P I A N O E H H C L O B V A
O P A N T O O E U R O R A A
O F A E H T R U M P E T A N
F R E N C H H O R N U I A U
U M U I N O H P U E O N B O

VIOLA

TUBA

GUITAR

PIANO

HARP

ORGAN

CELLO

FLUTE

RECORDER

VOICE

ACCORDION

FRENCH HORN

TRUMPET

EUPHONIUM

BASS

TROMBONE

VIOLIN

The Richness of Ritual:

Deepening our family's enjoyment of music study by relying on the power of tradition



My daughter and her friend participated in Violin Federation every year together.

By Brittany Gardner

When you were a child, do you remember how you could always tell a certain holiday was coming up by how your house was decorated, what foods you ate, or what activities you participated in? Those traditions and rituals, when repeated regularly, serve to bring a family together and deepen relationships. Sure they take a little extra effort and often bend the structure of family life, but isn't the magic they create worth it? Traditions have the power to bring together families of all shapes and sizes and can make a big impact, whether elaborate or simple.

What if we used that approach in our musical journey as families so that music study wasn't just another task to be done but a series of celebrations and traditions that served to bind us together and deepen our relationships? Let's review what traditions are and why they are meaningful so that we can explore how we can apply these principles to our music study as Suzuki families.

Traditions are behaviors and actions that you engage in again and again—regular rituals that you perform at the same time or in the same

way. Traditions can be big or small, but they are different from routines and habits because they are done with a specific purpose in mind and require thought and intentionality. Traditions can strengthen any type of relationship, whether they're performed by a family, a set of friends, roommates, or coworkers.

You don't have to spend money or hours on end to create and maintain a tradition. Any routine or habit can be made meaningful with a little extra thought. Conversely, a repeated action that doesn't have thought behind it could be void of connective power and will end up as just another task to be done. Read: drudgery.

Meg Cox, the author of *The Book of New Family Traditions*, defines family ritual as "any activity you purposefully repeat together as a family that includes heightened attentiveness and something extra that lifts it above the ordinary ruts." When done right, traditions lend a certain magic, spirit, and texture to our everyday lives. What family doesn't want more of this?

Traditions are important for many reasons, including that they...

- **Provide a source of identity:** Participating in regular, repeated traditions helps a family create a sense of who they are by what they do.
- **Strengthen family bonds:** Doing activities together, especially activities intended to bring a family closer, gives space for members to practice their relationships and grow closer to each other.
- **Offer comfort and security:** The regularity and predictability of traditions help teach family members, especially children, that there are certain things in life you can count on.
- **Offer parents a chance to teach and reinforce their values:** Whether it's a religious observance or an outing to a local attraction, when families spend time together, it gives parents a chance to show what is meaningful to them.
- **Add a rhythm and seasonality to life:** Family traditions show our children that life ebbs and flows and doesn't have to be the same from one day to the next. Seasonality is a delicious mix of predictability and variety.
- **Offer parents a way to pass on family traditions:** When children participate in family traditions, they internalize them and learn from them. This experience makes it more likely that they will take the lessons forward with them into their adult lives.
- **Connect generations:** This may be my favorite part of family traditions. Watching the experienced elder teach a young child how to participate in or contribute to the tradition fosters empathy in the heart of the elder, and wonder in the heart of the child.
- **Create lasting memories:** These memories become the fuel for conversations, connection, reminiscing, and love at future family gatherings.

When it comes to creating family traditions, I consider the four following points:

1. **Find a purpose and make it personal.** Think of the principle or value you want to foster in your child, and look for a tradition that will support that. The activity you choose is less important than the motivation behind it. For music families, this means asking yourselves why you began music study in the first place. What gifts do you want your child to receive from this experience? Are you giving them space to develop?
2. **Incorporate something from your childhood, but put your own personal spin on it.** Are there traditions, small or large, that brought you great joy as a child? Maybe those same things would be meaningful to your children. For music families, ask yourself what caught your attention, kept you curious, and made you feel excited about learning as a child? How can you introduce those ideas to your children?
3. **You can create and eliminate traditions as needed.** Just as there are seasons in the year and seasons in our lives, so too can there be seasons of traditions. You can be flexible and change the activity of your tradition without feeling any guilt. Just because it worked for you and was beautiful years ago doesn't mean you are tied to it now. For musical families, the way you work and practice together with your child this year does not have to (and probably won't!) look the same as last year. This evolution means you are all growing. If something isn't working for you, don't force it. Circle back to the reason you're doing it, and ask yourself if you can find another activity to meet the same goal.
4. **Don't go overboard.** Ask yourself, "What is needed in this season?" You don't have to have a tradition for every day, nor do your traditions have to be

elaborate ordeals. Some of my most successful and meaningful moments with my children have been when we have gathered together with the express purpose of strengthening our relationships and have done so with a simple activity like sitting around a campfire or going on an evening walk. For music families, this means not getting too caught up in activities that distract from what you're trying to accomplish together. Does this mean focusing less on extra repertoire and more on review and fundamentals? Does this mean being okay with take-out or frozen pizza on those nights when you have music lessons and homework and other things to do?

To decide what traditions to implement in your own family, consider the following types:

Daily connection: These traditions should be small since you'll be engaging in them every day. Do you read your child a story at bedtime? Do you eat a snack together at the kitchen table after school? These actions can be meaningful moments of connection if they are approached with intention and thought.

An example of daily connection in music study would be the way you practice with your child. You could start your practice with a bow, read a book together or go to the park after practice, hide one funny assignment in the practice chart, or take a picture or a video and send it to a family member that doesn't live with you. The magic will happen here if you take a step back and focus on the tasks to be done and the possible connection that can happen with your child as you work together.

Weekly connection: These traditions will likely require more effort than the daily connections. You could have a family movie night every Friday, attend church

You already have the skills and experience with traditions to get creative and apply them to the way you study music with your children. There is meaning, connection, love, and wonder waiting for you.

together over the weekend, or make a special breakfast on Saturday morning.

Weekly lesson attendance is an example of weekly connection in music study. To foster connection with your child during this experience, you could let your child bring a note for the student who has a lesson before or after you, you could use colorful paper and stickers to present the new assignments for the week, or you could make it a point to have a conversation about the lesson as you drive home.

Life changes and annual connection:

These traditions usually require the greatest effort because they commemorate a large change. Think about how you mark birthdays with your children, what you do for the winter holidays, or how you mark the end of the school year.

Musical examples could include any annual events your studio participates in, such as a studio recital, attendance at a summer institute, or graduation recitals. You can take a picture of your child with their teacher at every annual recital and collect them in your child's music binder, write a thank you note to your teacher, or go out for a treat with friends after graduation recitals. One year, my younger daughter even made a paper chain to count down to the first day of institute!

You already have the skills and experience with traditions to get creative and apply them to the way you study music with your children. There is meaning, connection, love, and wonder waiting

for you. It just takes a little thought, a little effort, and a little intention.

Traditions have added so much richness to my life. I remember feeling like it was truly summer when I arrived at my grandparents' house for my annual week-long summer vacation. I always loved the first day of school because I came home to a fresh batch of homemade chocolate chip cookies. When I walked home from school every October 1st, I could trust that the full-size ghosts would be hanging from the trees in my front yard. I was always so happy to put together the relish tray at Thanksgiving dinner while the adults took care of the other, more complex dishes.

Daily practice sessions with my dad taught me that he was someone I could talk to and work through hard things with. Conversations with my mom on the way home from lessons always made me feel like she noticed my growth and valued my hard work. Going out for frozen yogurt anytime a member of my quartet had a birthday became a wonderful way to connect us as we grew up from little girls to young adults. Seeing my parents in the audience at so many of my performances showed me that I mattered to them and gave us the simple and yet priceless gift of time together. Traditions have the potential to give us connection, meaning, and love. And after all, where love is deep, truly, much can be accomplished.

References:

Meg Cox, *The Book of New Family Traditions* (Running Press, 2014).



Sometimes my niece would attend my daughter's lessons. They both took lessons from the same teacher when they were young.



Ms. Gardner recently completed an 11-year tenure at the Gifted Music School, where she served as the school's Suzuki Program Coordinator. She currently serves on the board of Intermountain Suzuki String Institute and maintains an active performing career, appearing with such groups as the Utah Symphony, Sinfonia Salt Lake, The Orchestra at Temple Square, and others.

Ms Gardner holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Michigan and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Performance from the joint degree program between Case Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Institute of Music.

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Crossword puzzle answers (see back cover)

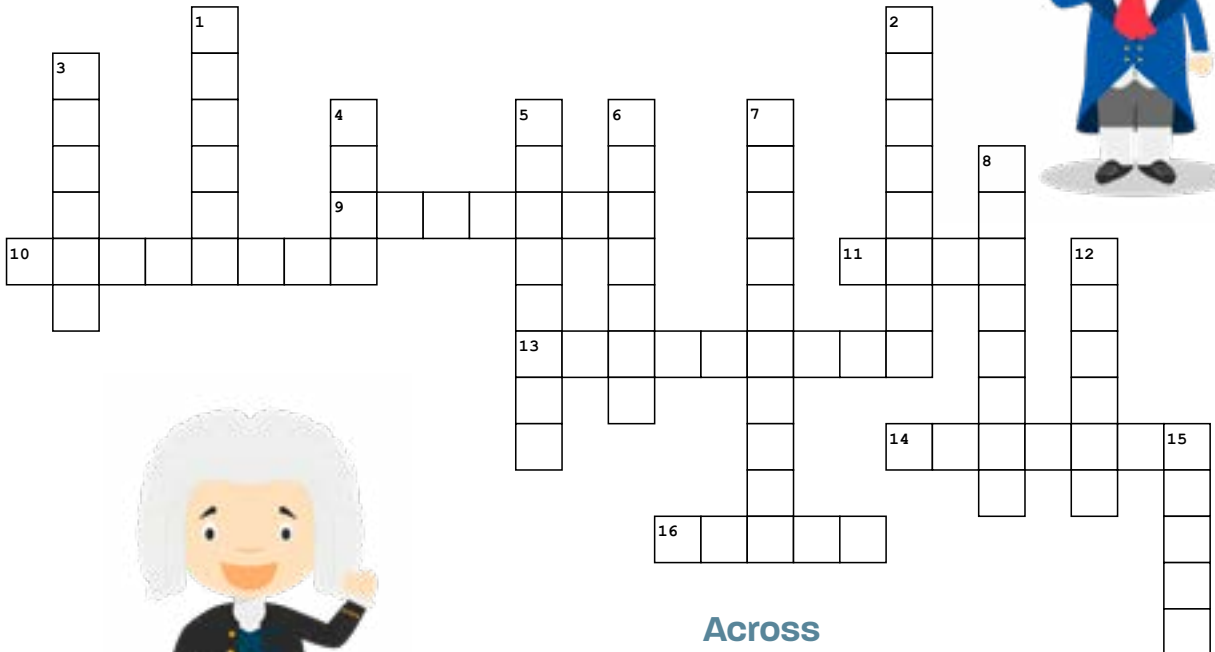
8.	Schubert	16.	Bayly
7.	Montgomery	15.	Lully
6.	Marquez	14.	Purcell
5.	Von Weber	13.	Beethoven
4.	Tokai	12.	Handel
3.	Dvorak	11.	Bach
2.	Schumann	10.	Paganini
1.	Dutton	9.	Kuffner

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Name the Composer!

Hint: If you don't know the answer, look the song up and listen to it!



Across

- 9. Arietta, Theme & Variations
- 10. Theme from "Witches' Dance"
- 11. Gavotte in G Minor
- 13. Ode to Joy
- 14. Rigadoon
- 16. Long, Long Ago

Down

- 1. Christmas-Day Secrets
- 2. Three Romances
- 8. Humoresque
- 4. The Moon Over the Ruined Castle
- 5. Hunter's Chorus
- 6. Conga del Fuego
- 7. Banner
- 8. Lullaby, Op. 98, No. 2
- 12. Chorus from "Judas Maccabaeus"
- 14. Au Clair de la Lune



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