

Thinking Like a Musician

Musicians listen carefully to the world around them. They notice sounds that other people might ignore and use their imagination to turn those sounds into music. Thinking like a musician means tuning in, exploring ideas, and letting creativity grow.



Listening

- **Notice sounds:** Musicians pay attention to rhythms, pitches, patterns, and textures in everyday life.
- **Listen closely:** They notice details, such as is a sound soft or loud? Short or long? Sharp or muted?
- **Hear the world as music:** Footsteps, birdsong, traffic, rain - anything can inspire a musical idea.

Imagination

- **Let ideas wander:** Musicians allow melodies and rhythms to pop into their minds.
- **Create new musical ideas:** They invent tunes, beats, and patterns that didn't exist before.
- **Turn feelings into sound:** Music becomes a way to show emotions, such as joy or sadness.

Experimentation

- **Try different instruments:** There are hundreds of different instruments that are played in different ways, each with its own unique 'voice' (timbre).
- **Play with sound:** They change tempo, volume, pitch, and timbre to see what happens.
- **Mix techniques:** Clapping, tapping, humming, strumming, body percussion...and so on!

Reflection

- **Think about what works:** Musicians listen back to their ideas and decide what they like.
- **Ask questions:** "What if I make this louder?" "What happens if I change the rhythm?"
- **Learn from each attempt:** Every rehearsal, performance, or experiment teaches something new.

Expression

- **Show feelings through music:** A melody can be happy, sad, spooky, or peaceful.
- **Share ideas with others:** Music helps communicate without using words.
- **Find their own sound:** Musicians discover what makes their music unique.

Encouraging Musical Thinking in the Classroom

- **Give time to explore:** Musicians need space to play, listen, and experiment.
- **Celebrate effort, not perfection:** Every attempt is part of learning.
- **Talk about music together:** Share what you notice, wonder, and feel when you listen or play.

A Final Thought

Thinking like a musician isn't about being "good at singing" or "good at instruments." It's about being curious, brave, playful, and open to sound. We value the process of making music over the final performance. Every child can think like a musician because every child can listen, explore, and create.