



Minijournal

2021



Minijournal Cover Contest



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TEACHER NENA LEMARRE, BARRIE, ON



MARIN, AGE 9,
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TEACHER NENA LEMARRE, BARRIE, ON

Cover Design
BY SOPHIA, AGE 10,
TEACHER: NENA LAMARRE,
BARRIE, ONTARIO

A big **thank you** to everyone who participated in the 2021 Minijournal Cover Design Contest.



SOCHIMA, AGE 10
TEACHER KIM VAN DONK, LANCASTER, PA

2022 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, 2022

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.



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Summertime Bingo



Go outside and whistle with the birds.	Play the longest note you can on your instrument and listen to the very end.	Sing your favorite piece like a rock star. (costume optional)	Draw a picture of an animal playing your instrument.	Host a 3-song concert. Make and deliver invitations too!
Tap along on your knees while listening to your newest piece.	Rap a song about what you're having for breakfast.	Play the first song you ever learned today 3 different ways: sad, mad, glad.	Figure out the note of your telephone's ringtone.	Take a walk and clap your hands twice as fast.
Draw a garden of musical notes.	Draw a detailed picture of your instrument.	Practice in a new location today.	Clean out your instrument case.	Listen to one of your songs three times in a row.
Surprise a family member with a musical message on their phone or by text.	Talk a walk and clap your hands in between steps!	Play a comfortable song, but skip the last note!	Sing your newest song like an opera singer. (costume optional)	Practice without speaking a word today.
Listen to the sound of a car horn and figure out the note!	Ask a grown up to sing their favorite song for you.	Draw a musical picture for your teacher.	Play a scale up and down, then play the scale down then up!	Explore! Create a new sound on your instrument then add it to the end of a tune.

Five in a Line Makes Bingo!



Find 10 Berries hidden in this Minijournal!

Special thanks to multi-talented Massachusetts member, Susan Reed, for her berry music and games!



Music for Global Citizenship: A Brief Memoir of a Transnational Suzuki Family



Suzuki Sensei in Australia

By Ai Mizuta, Ph.D.

In a tiny apartment in Tokyo, Japan, a baby is pulling out tissues from a Kleenex box one by one. Her mother is sitting beside her oldest daughter, who is practicing the piano, as she glances over to her baby girl making a mess. As a Suzuki parent, this was part of her parenting routine. I, the baby, was immersed in my siblings' musical activities before I could even walk or talk—from their daily practice, weekly lessons, monthly group lessons, to seasonal Suzuki music festivals. When I was two, my mother took me along to a festival where my sister and brother were performing. Toward the end of the festival, I walked over to a girl who was playing the violin. I told my mom, “this is my instrument,” and almost grabbed her violin away. I was so determined to play that my mother took me to have lessons of my own at Ms. Hiroko Masaoka's studio in Ochanomizu, Tokyo.

By then, my mom was a seasoned Suzuki parent. Suzuki sensei himself selected her 9-year-old daughter, Izumi, to perform piano at numerous festivals and tour the United States with him and her teacher, Ms. Misako Akiba. Her 7-year-old son, Hibiki, was also thriving as a young cellist under the guidance of Mr. Yoshihiko Terada. My

mom would take trains for hours in Tokyo—often crowded with no empty seats left—to take her three children to their designated Suzuki studios with a cello on her back and a three-legged chair. Now as a mother with two little girls of my own, I cannot imagine how exhausting that must have been.

My mother first encountered the Suzuki method in the early 1970s when she was invited to a children's concert, which was followed by a talk given by Suzuki sensei. All the performances exceeded her expectations. The young children not only played the notes accurately, but beautifully. They performed music composed by Mozart, Bach, and Beethoven—not the typical “kids' music” she had expected.

My mom was deeply touched by Suzuki sensei's philosophy, “When love is deep, much can be accomplished.” She was also fascinated with his concept that every child could learn and play beautiful classical pieces from a very young age and that there was no need to start from a series of “dumbed down” songs. He also said that understanding great music prepares children well for entering good schools.



My mom knew this was the way to raise her children. Despite her own exhaustion, her deep love for us and the connection between music and other life skills kept my mother going. As Suzuki sensei repeated, the mission of the method was not about creating professional musicians, but about raising good citizens.

Moving to Australia: music as a transnational cultural capital

When I turned four years old, our family moved to Brisbane, Australia for my father's work. My parents already knew English, but none of my siblings had any exposure to the language. The transition was especially difficult for my older siblings. They had friends and activities that they loved in Japan but had to leave everything behind.

There was a lot of stigma around being Asian in Australia when we moved there in the 1970s. The country had just dismantled a policy that barred non-European immigrants. If I brought a Japanese-style bento box to school, my classmates would say, “yuck!” I begged my mom to pack cucumber sandwiches instead.

As soon as we arrived, my parents looked for music teachers for each child. My mom and dad had very little knowledge about the musical terrain of Brisbane, so they looked very hard—from talking to street performers to visiting the Queensland Conservatorium. The Suzuki method was still not well established in



Brisbane but several teachers were familiar with the method.

Soon, my sister had an opportunity to perform at the conservatory. I could feel the excitement in the air when she played the Italian Concerto by Bach. Even as a 4-year-old, I knew something had changed. I felt accepted and validated. When I told my mom about this memory of mine recently, she recalled that an older woman sitting beside us had whispered to my mom, “We don't need any words.” We may have been muted linguistically, but we were unmuted through the language of music. Music transcends words. After that, we were a part of the local classical music community. We played trios at the local music festivals, my brother was asked to perform for the grand opening of a new theatre, we were featured in the local newspaper, and we even held a family concert. Playing music was a means for us to cultivate a sense of belonging in this new world. We no longer had to feel alienated because we shared the same language: the love for music.

In Brisbane, we served as the Suzuki bridge between Japan and Australia. One summer, Suzuki sensei visited with several Suzuki children from Japan. We hosted one of the Suzuki children, Naomi Picotte, for a few nights, learning and playing together. She has now become a distinguished Suzuki teacher in Japan. My mom and my dad began to give talks at symposiums and universities about their experiences raising three children through the Suzuki method.



Another one of the many positive side effects of years of Suzuki training was the ability to learn a new language rather quickly compared to other Japanese families who arrived in Australia around the same time. My sister, my brother, and I were able to speak English just as we were able to emulate the music that ran from our ears to our fingers. Our musical ears helped us distinguish subtle sounds and tones, which is crucial to developing oral language proficiencies.

Music and global citizenship

After four years in the city, just when we were finally calling Brisbane home, it was time to go back to Japan. It was hard for me and my siblings to readjust to Japanese society. Because I almost completely forgot Japanese, I could not express myself very well. I spoke funny, acted strange, and got picked on by my classmates. But again, it was the violin that helped me remain confident. Amidst the discontinuity of life between Australia and Japan—friendship,

language, favorite TV shows—music was the common thread.

When I left Australia, I was working on Book 6 with my violin teacher, Ms. Moira Williams. My mother found me a new Suzuki teacher in Tokyo, Mr. Hiromu Yasuda, and I resumed my violin lessons right where I left off. He had me record two graduation tapes to submit to Suzuki sensei, Vivaldi Concerto in G minor and La Folia, which to our surprise, Suzuki sensei chose as an outstanding performance.

Suzuki sensei was right when he told my mom that Suzuki children would excel in their schoolwork. While my sister pursued her musical career in Europe, my brother pursued a business career, and I pursued an academic one. Still, our music stayed with us, no matter where we went.

When I went to Toronto, Canada to get a Master's degree, violin helped me survive the impact of depressing weather, racism, demanding work, and the struggle of being away from family in a place where I had no connections. Despite my loneliness and depression, I managed to audition for the university orchestra. It was a place where I could make friends from all over the world, away from the competitiveness of academics. Even when I was working on tight deadlines, I would still go to rehearsals to feel the joy of playing Brahms with everyone.

Since then, I have gone back and forth between Canada and Japan to work and study. I have always made sure to join a local community orchestra in every city I live. During my pregnancies, my Ph.D. studies, and even right before my Ph.D. defense, playing the violin with fellow music lovers never disappeared from my “to-do list.” We all have different jobs and come from different places, but we meet to make beautiful music together that is beyond our differences.

I've found that the words Suzuki sensei told my mother about raising good citizens have rung true to this day. But we can even go beyond his words and say that the method helps raise global citizens who are capable of transcending language and racial barriers. As I teach an “Introduction to Global Citizenship” course to

undergraduate students here in Vancouver, I often wonder if we are overlooking the power of music education in solving our global problems. Suzuki sensei wanted to give the gift of music “for the happiness of all people” in the post-war devastation of Japan. This idea of music for hope and happiness is needed more than ever today, especially in North America where we must heal from the sociopolitical divide and the devastation of the pandemic.

Now, I am trying to give my daughters the same gift of music that my parents gave me. My nine-year-old daughter started her musical journey with the Suzuki Preparatory Class at the Vancouver Academy of Music when she was four-years-old and has since thrived. She has become a passionate chamber musician along with her commitment to junior orchestra. Through music, she is learning to be a good listener and a responsible community member, just like me and my siblings did. It is exciting to watch her learn to work with other musicians from diverse backgrounds, characters, and skill levels with patience and humor. The joy of playing music with her peers surpasses any frustration she may feel. Through music, she is developing one of the most crucial characteristics of a global citizen: respecting difference and working together to build something beautiful.

As a parent, it is easy to lose perspective and feed into the competitiveness of the field. I remind myself of the true goal of our everyday violin and piano practice by listening back to the

recordings I sent Suzuki sensei so many years ago. I felt quite guilty that I did not listen to them as carefully as I could have as a child, but here I am, telling my daughter what he told me about my playing of Bach Concerto in A minor as she is preparing for the recording of the same piece—“I listened to your Bach with joy. After many years of hard work, you are now able to play this masterpiece. Congratulations!” It is truly a joy to pass on his wits and advice as I hear them coming alive through the music of the next generation.



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Growing up in a transnational Suzuki family in Japan and Australia, Dr. Mizuta (or Ai) has continued to play the violin along with her professional career as a sociolinguist. She currently resides in Vancouver, Canada, with her historian husband, two daughters, and a dog, reliving her mom's life as a Suzuki parent.



Summer Berries

Susan Reed

Chorus

Sum-mer Ber - ries it's hot, hot, hot Sum-mer Ber - ries help mark the spot In the

year in the sea-son sum-mer ber-ries are the rea-son We all__ love the sum-mer time

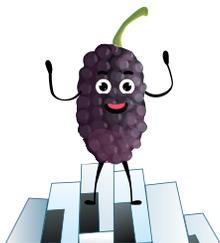
Verse

June brings straw - ber - ries__ Red ripe grow-ing wild in the field

Child - ren eat their fill they drop a few in__ the cup, They charge a

pen - ny a ber - ry 'til they're all eat - en up

July brings raspberries
 Frosty branches twist along the path
 Each berry's sweeter than the one before
 It's worth reaching through the pricklers to get yourself some more
 (Chorus)



August brings blueberries
 Those bushes lined up like desks in a row
 Warm berries from the heat of the sun
 It won't be long before school's begun
 (Chorus)

