

The top 10 reasons

to use karaoke in the classroom



1. IT WORKS!

Music is a proven teaching tool which fosters language retention and production in young learners (Medina, 1993, Jalongo and Bromley, 1984, Borchgrevink, 1982, Martin, 1983, Mitchell, 1983, Jolly, 1975). Using music in your classroom will help your students succeed as EFL students.

2. IT IS FUN!

Music, when used correctly, is very motivating for students. Students learn language in a fun way and gain confidence through repetition and voicing. Further, music appeals to the affective needs of students, their inner world and feelings. Music is an input (like stories and pictures) which makes its way through the student's inner filter (see Krashen's "affective filter hypothesis") and helps them learn by appealing to their emotive and social experiences. What pleases us, teaches us!

3. IT IS TEACHER FRIENDLY!

Teaching can be a very demanding and stressful profession. Karaoke is easy to use. It can be done with the touch of a button. It is prepared in advance and ready on demand, to be used repeatedly.

4. IT IS STUDENT FRIENDLY!

Karaoke is seen by students as "cool" and "high tech". With the popularity of programs like "American Idol", singing is mainstream, especially singing with a microphone. Everyone can be a star! Further, students like that their favorite songs can be used to help them learn English. It helps create a student centered classroom and gives students a feeling of empowerment and control in the classroom.

5. IT IS FLEXIBLE, ADAPTABLE!

Karaoke is a versatile teaching tool. It can be used to address all the language skills and can be extended in many ways. Students can listen for information (cloze exercises), sing in chorus, alter the lyrics, rewrite the song as a story, have competitions and even learn English by making their own karaoke files. Teachers can alter the lyrics (text) of the song, slow the singer's tempo for better student comprehension, filter the singer's voice and reformat the karaoke stream. Also, many other things through use of the player.

6. IT OPENS THE READING DOOR!

Karaoke is the perfect tool to help students begin to see and learn the associations between sound and script. It is a phonics powerhouse and by using karaoke, teachers are helping young learners to read and recognize script and the connections of sound, rhythm to text.

7. IT TAKES LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM!

Students will listen to and learn the songs outside the classroom. It helps begin students to be “self – learners”. Further, your own karaoke files can be made available to students to play at home, on their computers. It extends your classroom into the world and makes it relevant to the larger learning world.

8. IT IS INTELLIGENT!

Music is one of numerous forms of “intelligences” (Gardner, 1993). It is important for educators to foster the development of all these intelligences and address the needs of the whole child. Even or especially so with EFL / ESL teachers. Karaoke helps nurture musical intelligence and helps create a fully developed, balanced person. It is especially successful in educating those children with emotional difficulties.

9. IT ISN'T ONLY MUSIC!

Karaoke is commonly associated only with music. That shouldn't be the case. Karaoke can be created using any kind of audio file. It is especially good at making audio books with text for young readers. Speeches, newscasts, commercials can all be shown and text added. The teacher can record his or her own voice and add text to deliver lessons even! It is a powerful tool which allows students to both hear / listen and read the accompanying text.

10. IT IS FREE!

Who doesn't like a bargain? Karaoke players are available free online and can be downloaded instantly. Karaoke files for educational purposes are copyright protected and available for teachers to share. It shouldn't cost you a penny! There are also many libraries of free midi karaoke files available.

If you aren't using karaoke as a teaching tool – YOU SHOULD BE!

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