

# **Using Music Education to Connect Young Children with Chinese and Language Culture**

## **Abstract**

In the United States, large numbers of American families are adopting and raising children from mainland China. These parents, who are very motivated and devoted group – actively look for ways to maintain their child’s linguistic and cultural connections to their homeland. However, the breadth and depth of Chinese culture with which most Americans’ are largely unfamiliar has created a strong need for innovative approaches to helping these families to build bridges to a distant culture.

As an educator my studies in the field of music education led me to see music as a innovative tool for building cultural connections to China for these children. With this in mind, I created, and then implemented, a music-based curriculum to use music and music activities to exposure American children to the beauty, richness, and complexity of Chinese culture and language. The curriculum was implemented during weekly, one-hour sessions in a Parent/Child Learning Program, which consisted of an ongoing cohort of 10 parents and their children.

Over the course of one year of instruction, results, based on teacher and parent evaluation, demonstrated that, in general, children benefited significantly from the program, gaining new levels of understanding and connection with both traditional and contemporary Chinese culture.

**Keywords:** Young Children, Music Education, Adoptive Family, Culture, CHinese

# 使用音樂教育連結幼兒的中文和語言文化

## 中文摘要

在美國，有許多的家庭，領養來自中國大陸的幼兒。這些父母親都非常的投入，積極地尋求任何可以連結他們幼兒與自己家鄉語言與文化的方法。然而，精深的中國文化是大部分美國人所不熟悉的，因此，為這些家庭創造出一個新穎的方式，去幫助他們與這個距離遙遠的文化，建立起一座橋樑，有著迫切的需要。

身為一位教育工作者，在我音樂領域的研究裏，引導我為這些美國家庭找出一個創新的方法，那就是使用音樂為工具，去為這些領養的中國幼兒建立他們與中國文化的連結。有了這個動機，我因此創造並執行這一個建立在音樂基礎架構上的課程，利用音樂活動，引領這些美國孩子去探索複雜、美麗、豐富的中國文化和語言。

研究課程的執行為十對父母親與他們的小孩，採親子同時學習的方式，每週一次，每次一小時。

研究為時一年，結論乃建基於教學者與父母親的雙向評鑑，結果顯示，大體上孩子們從這個研究教學中得到相當多的助益，獲得對傳統與現代中國文化的了解與認識。

關鍵詞：幼兒、音樂教育、領養家庭、文化、中文