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### Piano Education: Classical vs Chords

When arguing what a 21st century piano lesson should look like, it circles most commonly around whether contemporary or classical teaching methods should be used. Some claim that classical piano lessons should continue to be taught, while others that teaching the younger generation the modern and digitalized ways of creating music is more beneficial. Should classical piano continue to be taught to our younger generation?

Classical piano training instills a better prospect of musical cognition. The origin of musical forms and the modern notation we have today all began in the classical era. Sofia Wilson claims that one cannot completely grasp the requirement of being comfortable with “intensive and deep music comprehension” or can’t fully “learn and master” the music theory when not classically trained (“The Benefits of Pursuing. . .”). Also, this “musical cognition” determines whether or not that student is stable as a musician (such as the skills of sight reading, composition, performance, etc. . .). In Wilson’s article, she speaks highly of classical pianists by stating that “[t]hey are trained to convey musical messages through their skills and talents by polishing their music communication with every emphasis on the piano, the delays, the staccatos, the allegro and a whole lot of various elements,” (“The Benefits of Pursuing. . .”). By teaching our younger generation piano in the classical style, they’re learning how to express music more thoroughly through use of technique, dynamics, and just the overall use of music theory.

Teaching our younger generation in the classical style also produces wider growth and development prospects in their future as a musician. It’s important to remember the classical techniques and methods for the piano because this familiarity can allow for inventive purposes.

Knowledge of music history of the baroque and romantic era is taught through classical style piano lessons. This allows the student to be more creative with ideas of different forms by using old and new forms and techniques alike to inspire that certain new musical idea. Because of the way a classical pianist is trained, Wilson conveys that “This will establish a state of versatility and capability as a pianist when approached by different arrays of musical styles and genres” (“The Benefits of Pursuing. . .”). By continuing to be taught in the classical style, our younger generation would be benefited with musical logic and understanding developing over time.

The want for contemporary method teaching over the classical method is a growing trend in our younger generation. Because the classical style of piano music is not as popular as it once was, our younger generation is tending to prefer the newer contemporary styles of being taught as an alternative to being classically trained. It’s stated in Randles’ article, “Music classes do not offer what most students want to learn. . . I saw many students who loved music, but just didn’t love the school music options” (“Why [M]usic [L]essons [N]eed. . .”). It’s only logical that if our younger generation doesn’t have that desire to learn piano by the classical techniques, they won’t want to take piano lessons in the classical style. This directs our younger generation toward a preference to be taught by those who offer piano lessons through styles and genres of music in their current generation. By not teaching classical style piano anymore, our younger generation can focus on what they enjoy doing more rather than learning something they’re not interested in.

Music is also much more different now since the classical era began; therefore, the ideal that piano should be taught through the new methods being discovered in the current era is a significant argument. It’s stated in Randles’ article, “I would like to suggest that more than half of the time spent in 21st-century school music education should be about students learning how

to make their own music – with an emphasis on recording and sharing it” (“Why [M]usic [L]essons [N]eed. . .”). Instead of teaching classical piano to students who are not even interested in it, Randles suggests teaching our younger generation music using only modern technology so that they can learn how to make their own music, record, and share it. By not teaching piano in the classical style anymore, students who are interested in music can share their “creative vision” more clearly with the world (Randles, “Why [M]usic [L]essons [N]eed. . .”).

Overall, both of these points hold their fair share of truth; however, though it may be factual, it does not necessarily mean that it’s logical. It’s true that a good amount of the younger generation does not enjoy the classical style of teaching music, but it’s also true that not all of the younger generation enjoy the newer styles of teaching music either. It is, in fact, established that our generation is advancing in the world of music with our new technology, techniques, and sounds, but one can still utilize these newer methods of music through their teaching while continuing to educate piano in the classical style. By ignoring the classical background of music, a student is jumping ahead through generations, only learning what has been discovered in their lifetime alone. They’re ignorant of the fact that the “new” musical theory and forms behind the music they play and listen to in their current generation are largely derived from the musical knowledge and techniques of the classical era. To learn in the classical style as a piano student builds a solid foundation as a musician and allows one to understand how the musical world got to where it is today. “The classical piano education, as a whole, provides a complete understanding and education of music” (Wilson). Reviewing these deductions, the concluded decision is that classical piano should still continue to be taught to our younger generation.

## Works Cited

Randles, Clint. "Why Music Lessons Need to Keep Up with the Times." *The Conversation*. 2

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Wilson, Sofia. "The Benefits of Pursuing a Classical Piano Education." *The Medium*. 24 Apr.

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