

Using Cantata Books from 3rd Grade and Beyond

Even the strongest student appreciates a playful, joyful approach to the teaching of curriculum concepts. Cantata Learning provides just the hook needed to engage the older student in concepts that may feel dull, mundane, or just plain confusing. Many of Cantata Learning's series are perfect as is for introducing shapes, math concepts, the animal world, science concepts, important people in history, and even the planets. For students at the younger end of this spectrum, the song and book are a playful and engaging way to familiarize themselves with a topic before moving on to large group instruction, skills practice, and assessment. For the older learner – the books become a surprising and stimulating way to kick-off an assignment, a project, or an entire unit. Introducing a topic with a picture book and music is not only unexpected, but a light-hearted, good-humored way to engage older students of all learning styles and levels. The book combined with the CD provides an unexpected twist on lessons and topics grabbing attention from the onset, boosting interest levels, and making a less than exciting topic – well, awesome!

How to use Cantata Learning with students in 3rd Grade and Beyond:

Read for Enjoyment: Even a seasoned learner enjoys a good story book now and then. So often, we view being “read to” as something only little ones enjoy. But, time and time again, even the 3rd and 4th grade student will be captivated by a picture book, drawn into the lyrics, inspired to sing along and perhaps even motivated to pick a book up and share it with a younger school-mate or relative. For the older student a picture book and sing along can bring back fond memories, be a playful way to transition from one activity to another, or even serve as a stress-reliever or minute manager in-between topics and classes.

Teach Concepts: Important people and events in history, learning about the planets, animals and habitats, even geometry concepts can seem a little less – well, boring- when the introduction is fun and lively. Sharing our Science Biographies series can be a fun way to approach a research paper. Perhaps students can use the books as inspiration to create a sing-along of their own after doing research on an important person in history. Engaging older students in our Shapes All Around Us series is a fun-filled way to springboard into a geometry unit. Can you make up a rhyme that would help you remember a right triangle from an equilateral? Use the book to inspire that lesson! And, of course, writers from grades 3 and beyond love to use these books as motivators

and story starters. Come up with lyrics of your own to a familiar story, illustrate it, than share it with classmates or younger students. Use lyrics to prompt poetry writing or creative writing of any kind. And, any older student would love to keep a Lyric Log. Use Cantata books to inspire the exercise then allow students to search for favorite lyrics of their own, write them down, keep a log, use them for reading practice, editing exercises, or inspiration for a class song or book.

Play and Learn through Music: For these students, the music is an especially unexpected and engaging way to introduce concepts. The rhyme and rhythm act as a mnemonic device to help students remember information and solidify ideas. Students of all ages can use Cantata's lively tunes to inspire the creation of their own music and lyrics as a way to memorize information across all subjects. It is encouraged that music become part of the daily classroom routine by inviting students to set new concepts, new ideas, events in history, and even current events to music – helping to enrich the learning experience, provide a deeper connection to the content, and simply have fun, too!

Extend the Experience: Use the Cantata model as your starting point for activities throughout the year. Create new books of your own and set them to original music. Share these books with fellow students or younger students within the school or district. Engage the students in hands on instrument making. Create a water xylophone or any number of amazing original “music makers”. It involves critical thinking, planning, creative problem solving, math, measurement, and more. Create your own music making writers workshop allowing your students to share Cantata books with younger students for inspiration, create instruments together, write original stories and scores – play and share. The possibilities are truly endless.

"Music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks and invents." --Ludwig van Beethoven

According to John Brewer of Johns Hopkins School of Education, *“The intentional use of music in the classroom will set the scene and learning atmosphere to enhance our teaching and learning activities. Plus, using music for learning makes the process much more fun and interesting! Music, one of the joys of life, can be one of the joys of learning as well. With the right techniques, any teacher can orchestrate a classroom environment that is rich and resonant-- and provides learners with a symphony of learning opportunities and a sound education!”*



CANTATA LEARNING