

# Therapeutic Recreation Protocol: Musical Art

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## General Purpose

- To express feelings
- To benefit from physical movement
- To increase dexterity

## Program Description

Participants are provided an opportunity to experience a variety of music combined with movement as a precursor to interpreting emotions using paint and paper.

## Materials Needed

- Sturdy watercolor paper in various sizes from 4x6 to 18x24
- Watercolors or other paint
- Shallow containers for water to wet brushes.
- Painters tape or masking tape to secure paper to hard surface and also to put on bottom of water containers so they do not tip over easily
- Brushes of various sizes
- Foam brushes
- A variety of instrumental music and speakers/system to play it
- If needed, tennis balls with holes cut through them so a brush can fit through each tennis ball for easier gripping and manipulate

## Populations

**Targeted primarily at small groups of dementia and low-functioning participants.**

## Contraindicated Criteria

Participants with limited arm and hand abilities may need assistance or adaptations made to brushes. One adaptation is putting the brush through a tennis ball so that the participant can more easily grasp it.

## Cautions

**The goal of the activity is not to create representational art or a finished, polished piece. Whatever the participant produces is a reflection of what the person is experiencing. It is about process not product. Much of the interaction may be 1:1 although participants are in a group. In this demonstration, instrumental music is used without words so that the activity does not become a singalong that may usurp the art and emotion goals of the activity.**

## Setting Up the Environment

**Participants will sit at tables but with enough room to move their arms. The facilitator may find it useful to use a rolling chair or stool so that they can have better physical and eye contact with students.**

## Intervention Activity

Begin the activity by greeting each participant and introducing yourself. Explain in very few sentences that we will be listening to music, moving and painting. Orient participants to the upcoming activities by asking each participant a question. Do you like music? Do you like art? Have you ever painted? Questions will vary or be eliminated according to the abilities of the participants.

Start the music and begin to move. Use snippets from a variety of music with different rhythms, tempos and instrumentation that evoke different moods or movements. Sway, flick fingers, look up and stretch, raise arms, make facial expressions, tap toes. Watch participants and assist them with gestures or movement they are making

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or attempting to make. Ask questions if appropriate. Does this music sound relaxing? Fun? Serious? If the music were a color, what would it be? Does this music sound like it would be green? Or pink? Ask participants if the music sounds like the movement you are doing. Incorporate oversized painting gestures to the music as a precursor to similar motions participants might be making when they work with paints and brushes.

While music continues to play, distribute art supplies. Acquaint each participant with the paper, brushes, and water dish they will be using. If needed, assist participants with getting started by helping them dip the brush in a color of their choice and moving the brush across the paper if needed.

### **Ideas for Music (Artists and Composers)**

- Aaron Copland
- John Phillip Sousa
- Eubie Blake
- Perez Prado
- Herb Alpert
- Scott Joplin
- Quincy Jones
- Tito Puente
- Gustav Mahler
- Ludwig Van Beethoven
- Dick Dale

### **Closure**

Thank each participant for coming and give them one compliment on their participation such as “I like the colors you chose” or “I really enjoyed watching you move to the music” or “I saw you smile when you liked the music.”