

# Music That Focuses the Brain

Research suggests that the soundtrack to your child's homework should comprise these 21 songs, proven to change the electromagnetic frequency of brain waves for optimal focus.

BY SHARLENE HABERMEYER



If you want your child or teen to retain more when cramming for a test, or to have laser-like focus when completing homework assignments, crank up the [study music](#).

Research indicates that music strengthens areas of the brain that, in a child with ADHD, are weak. Music strengthens the [auditory](#), visual/spatial, and motor cortices of

the brain. These areas are tied to speech and language skills, reading, reading comprehension, math, problem-solving, brain organization, focus, and attention challenges.

But not any music will do. Only certain classical music builds a bigger, better brain. Listening to jazz or pop doesn't have the same beneficial effects. A study conducted by Donald Shetler, Ed.D., of the [Eastman School of Music](#), found that kids who listened to classical music for 20 minutes a day had improved speech and language skills, a stronger memory, and greater organization of the brain.

*[Free Download: Music for Healthy ADHD Brains]*

Another study, done by Georgi Lozanov, M.D., a psychiatrist and educator, showed that some classical music pieces change the electromagnetic frequency of brain waves to about 7.5 cycles a second. This is called the Alpha Mode, wherein the brain focuses optimally — perfect for studying for a history test or completing a homework assignment.

I used classical music to help my five sons do well in school. I played classical music in the background from the moment they got home from school until they started homework. My boys were better able to focus and concentrate when classical music was playing, especially my son Brandon, who had learning challenges. He eventually went on to graduate from college with an A average.

## **Sounds of Success**

Music can be used to improve kids' understanding of specific subjects, such as science, the alphabet, numbers, literature, math, and U.S. history. I suggest the CD *Sing a Song of Science*, by Kathleen Carroll, which contains songs about layers of the earth, weather, energy, matter, and other topics. This CD is a must if you are teaching your child science concepts.

*Alphabet Operetta*, by Mindy Manley Little — in which the alphabet is sung in jazz, blues, and rock and roll styles — is a great alternative to the regular “ABC” song. Little also produced *My Favorite Musical Numbers*, catchy tunes to help kids master numbers.

*[How Music Unlocked My Son’s ADHD Brain]*

**Bad Wolf Press**, started by lyricist John Heath and composer Ron Fink, creates education musical plays that can be used in the classroom or at home. There are tunes on several subjects — literature, science, math, and U.S. history.

For kids who need help mastering math facts and spelling words, certain types of music are ideal. Any time you set something to rhythm, a child will remember it. Tunes with a strong repetitive beat — something that you find in rap music — work best. I promise you that kids won’t find it boring to listen to.

The CD *Baby Dance* has songs with strong, repetitive rhythms — pieces by Vivaldi, Mozart, and Haydn. Try the following approach when teaching math facts or spelling words: Sing a math fact or a spelling word to the song as you clap your hands or stomp your feet for emphasis. For instance, sing, “Two times four is eight. Repeat.” “Country is spelled c-o-u-n-t-r-y. Repeat.”

To amp up the brain benefits of listening to music, sign up your child for music lessons. The string bass, woodwinds, and percussion instruments are good choices for a child diagnosed with ADHD and LD, because the child can stand and move while playing them. Let her choose her own instrument. If she decides on drums, don’t worry. Just buy earplugs!

*[“Mozart Helped Me Focus My ADHD Brain.”]*

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## **Music to Learn By**

The following pieces of music were scientifically tested by Dr. Georgi Lozanov and found to help children and adults concentrate and focus better. It takes 15-20 minutes of listening for the electromagnetic frequency of the brain to change to a mode suited for learning. Remember: These pieces should be played as background music.

### **> Johann Sebastian Bach**

Brandenburg Concertos

Fantasia for Organ in G Major

Fantasia in C Minor

Prelude and Fugue in G Major

### **> Ludwig van Beethoven**

“Emperor” Concerto for Piano, No. 5

### **> Antonio Vivaldi**

The Four Seasons

### **> Johannes Brahms**

Concerto for Violin, D Major, Op. 77

### **> Arcangelo Corelli**

Concerto Grossi, Op. 2, 4, 5, 8, 11, 12

### **> George Frideric Handel**

Water Music

Concerto for Organ in B Flat Major, Op. 6, 7

### **> Joseph Haydn**

Concerto No. 1 for Violin

Concerto No. 2 for Violin

Symphony No. 101 (The Clock)

Symphony No. 94 in G Major

> **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

Concerto for Violin No. 5 in A Major

Symphony No. 29 in A Major

Symphony No. 40 in G Minor

Symphony No. 35 in D Major

A Little Night Music

> **Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky**

Concerto for Violin, Op. 35

Concerto for Piano, No. 1