



## Part 2: Who are Suzuki teachers?

By Kathleen M. Einarson, Elizabeth M. Guerriero, Patricia D'Ercole, Karin S. Hendricks, and Nancy Mitchell

Welcome to the second research article in a new series about Suzuki talent education research. In "Part I: The International Research Symposium on Talent Education" (ASJ volume 43, no. 4) we introduced the IRSTE, which is both a biennial event focused on Suzuki research and a group of researchers studying topics of interest to Suzuki teachers. Having introduced the members of our research team and provided a brief history of the activities of the IRSTE since it was founded in 1990, we would now like to tell you a bit more about our recent projects.

In this second feature, we'll begin discussing the results of our online teacher survey. The survey was sent to SAA members in the winter of 2015, and the 1,128 completed surveys we received offered detailed information about respondents. We asked questions related to teachers' backgrounds, their professional lives, and the ways that teachers are implementing group classes and parent education in studios across North America.

So, what have we learned about Suzuki teachers? Perhaps unsurprisingly, more than half of our respondents listed violin as their primary teaching instrument. Many other instruments were well represented, however, including piano, cello, viola, guitar, and flute. We were particularly excited by the number of responses from teachers specializing in some of the less well-known Suzuki instruments, including bass, harp, organ, and trumpet.

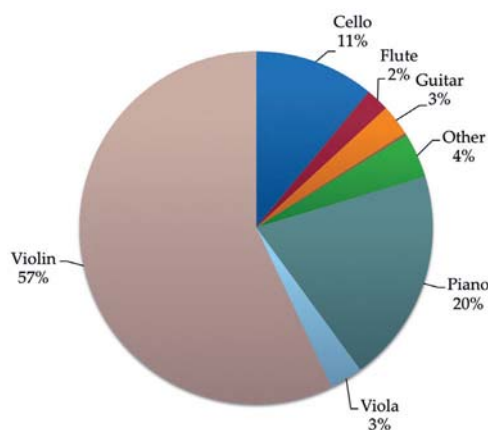


Figure 1. Respondents' Primary Teaching Instrument

Examining the age of our respondents, we observed that the largest group was comprised of teachers under the age of 35 (26

percent of total), which bodes well for the continued growth of the Suzuki community. The next largest group was comprised of teachers between 56 and 65 years of age (24 percent of total), many of whom are mentoring this new generation of colleagues.

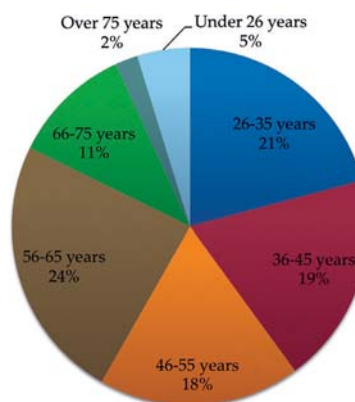


Figure 2. Respondents' Ages

Overall, Suzuki teachers have an impressively high level of musical expertise and training. Three-quarters of respondents have post-secondary music training (bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees in music), and many more have certificates or diplomas.

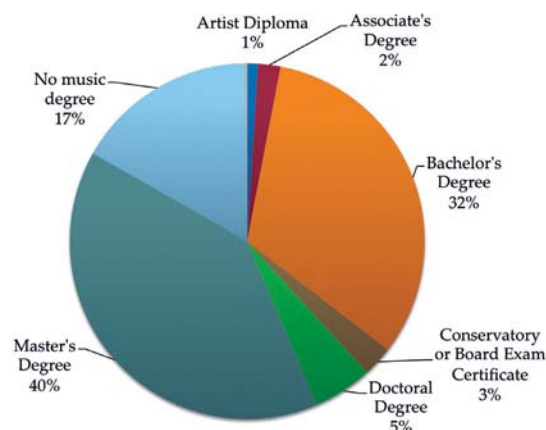


Figure 3. Respondents' Highest Level of Education

In addition to their collegiate music training, our survey participants provided information about their Suzuki-specific

pedagogical training. SAA-registered training is most accessible in a short-term format (e.g., training at a summer institute), with 90 percent of respondents having completed intensive courses this way. Many teachers have also undertaken long-term training (e.g., masterclasses in Suzuki pedagogy) and/or studied in Japan.

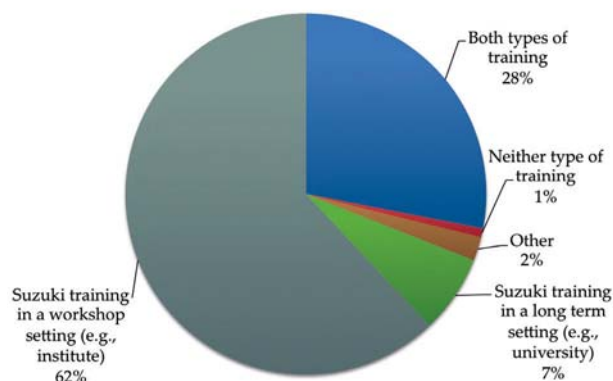


Figure 4. Respondents' Suzuki Pedagogy Training

In a coming article, we will examine survey responses that can tell us about teachers' studios, including studio size, age range, and level. We'll also start discussing group classes—which teachers offer them, how often they happen, how long they last, and what they cover. We hope this information can stimulate conversation between SAA colleagues, and in our larger music education community.

To be part of this discussion, please consider joining us at the 2016 SAA conference in Minneapolis for the IRSTE sessions on May 26 and 27. The sessions are open to teachers, researchers, and everyone interested in the future of Suzuki research. We are excited to announce that Dr. Ani Patel, the author of the renowned book *Music, Language, and the Brain*, will be our keynote speaker! 🎵

*Join the conversation!*



Suzuki teachers from around the world gather on our discussion forums to share tips and ideas. To ask a question or offer an answer, visit: [suzukiassociation.org/discuss/](http://suzukiassociation.org/discuss/)

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## 101 Japanese Children's Songs

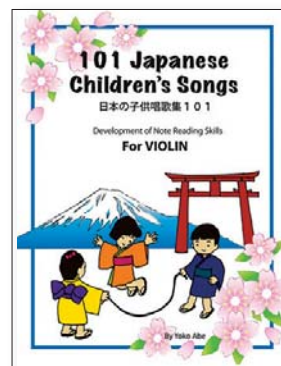
by Yoko Abe

From the author:

This book is a collection of 101 Japanese children's songs which were mostly composed from 1884 to 1921.

Japanese people admire the beauty of nature, season, and scenic places. Many lyricists and composers have expressed such beauty by creating songs for children. From 1912 on, Western music was accessible to the Japanese. Prior to that, however, they used the pentatonic five tone pattern, which is challenging to children who have not grown up hearing these tunes. Unable to guess notes or keys, they must truly read each note to play it correctly.

I hope that this collection not only improves note-reading and sight-reading skills for young students, but that it also provides them with pleasure while playing the tunes.



*"This book of Japanese folk songs is a wonderful gift: It is a fine collection of basic sight-reading material, mostly modal, and it strengthens the bond between Suzuki children of the Japanese and Western cultures. Dr. Suzuki would love this book!"*

— William Starr

*I have been using Yoko Abe's 101 Japanese Children's Songs for two years with my Suzuki Flute, Suzuki Recorder, and Native American Flute students with excellent results. This is a valuable addition to my collection!*

- The easy rhythms and intervals make it easier for students to learn pitches and fingerings.
- Students can create a variety of articulations.
- More advanced students can use this book for learning to transpose octaves or keys.
- Since the pieces are in pentatonic there is increased assurance that students focus on the notation rather than guessing the next notes as they may do in Major or minor keys.

*Two thumbs up for these appealing and beautiful selections for supplementary note reading!*

—Kathy Caldwell White

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