

Students convey importance of music

Musical tastes vary, preferences expressed

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It has been said that music has a power unlike anything else to bring people together in a very human, personal way, forming connections far deeper than words alone can.

Music has the ability to remind people of milestones in their lives, such as childhood, relationships, friendships, and more.

Some people favor a specific genre of music, some are passionate about a certain artist, and some love so many different types of music that it's impossible to pick a favorite. Music is a large part of human culture and personal identity.

Sophomore Natalie Hayner says music plays a great role in human expression.

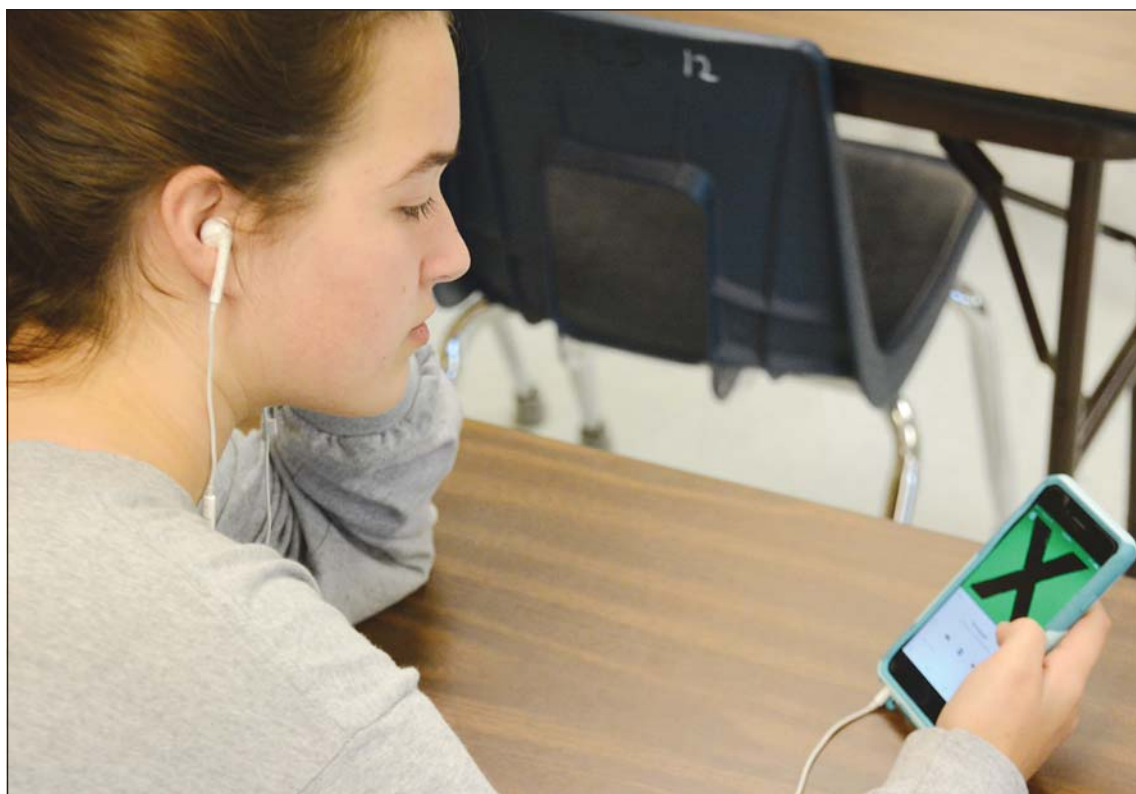
"I believe that utilizing music is one of the most important things people can do," Hayner said. "Music is an outlet for a lot of people and is crucial to some people's everyday life. Without music, life would be mundane and a lot less meaningful."

Hayner, who says she mostly listens to 90's rock and artists with independent styles, believes music can strongly affect and change people's lives.

"Music has impacted me immensely," Hayner said. "I went to a school that was centered around it. I use music to freely express myself, and when I went to my old school (Texas School of the Performing Arts), it's what I majored in. It really allowed me to come out of my shell and show people how I really feel inside."

Sophomore McKenna Thompson also claims that music has always been an important part of her life.

"Ever since I was little, I've had a deep love for it," Thompson said. "I am constantly humming, singing a song in my head, turning my desk



Sophomore Natalie Hayner enjoys music on her phone during a break in class. Most students store music on their phones or computers, downloading songs from iTunes or listening to music on apps. Music preferences can lead to arguments about favorite musical genre. PHOTO BY GENEVIEVE STUNKARD

into a drum, or dancing to music that isn't really playing. I believe music makes you the person you are, and can impact the way you speak, act, dress, and behave. Without music, I feel as if everyone would be extremely similar and conformed."

However, it is not uncommon for people to experience an intolerance towards their music tastes. Commonly referred to as "music shaming," this act of criticism towards others for having musical preferences that differ from one's own often generates self-confidence issues.

"I hear people criticize others for their taste in music all the time," Hayner said. "Recently, I had a friend tell me that my music tastes were trivial compared to hers. It didn't affect our friendship all that much, but I'm a lot more self-conscious talking about anything musical around her now."

Senior Cason Asher says he has also noticed frequent taunting

when it comes to the subject of music.

"There is definitely a lot of 'music shaming' going on, not necessarily just on campus, but in the world in general," Asher said. "I think that people shouldn't worry about what other people listen to and should keep an open mind. Music serves as a way of individualism and self-expression, while still being a very social platform to help people find others with like-minds and similar interests. It's supposed to bring us together."

Asher, like Hayner, says he favors music with an unconventional sound.

"I listen to a broad spectrum of different genres, but my favorite would have to be alternative rock," Asher said. "I love alternative because of how much freedom the artists have to shape the genre in a way that fits them, allowing each artist to have a distinct style."

Hayner believes certain alternative rock artists often bear the

brunt of ridicule in the music world.

"I hear a lot of judgment being passed on bands such as My Chemical Romance, Panic! At the Disco, and bands like Of Mice and Men," Hayner said. "I don't like hearing people's music being trashed. It may not be my taste, but I know that those kinds of bands have helped a lot of people cope with their own personal situations and have really made an impact on their lives."

Thompson agrees.

"I went through a phase of being obsessed with hard rock music in junior high, and I was teased quite a bit for it," Thompson said. "To this day, I still don't understand why people ridicule others for liking certain types of music. Everyone should have the right to listen to whatever music they choose without being harassed about it."

While junior Alycia Smith also claims to believe that no one should be condemned for their personal preferences, she disagrees that alternative rock withstands the

harshest criticism.

"My friends and I listen to popular music and bands like One Direction and 5 Seconds of Summer," Smith said. "People outside of my little circle of friends try to make me feel bad about listening to what I like. Guys especially criticize 'boy bands' by calling them untalented. I've basically become immune to that sort of thing because I've heard it so many times and have learned to brush it off."

Hayner finds the recurrent intolerance immature.

"I think belittling anyone's taste in music is really petty and low," Hayner said. "Trashing someone's taste in music is just as bad as trashing their clothing or taste in food or anything else they wholeheartedly enjoy. I'm not going to lie and say that I've never dissed someone's music, but that was years ago. I've since matured and learned to accept people in a more open way."

Hayner says she feels like the world would be a better place if people were more tolerant towards others' preferences.

"It's unfair to make someone feel ashamed for celebrating something they enjoy," Hayner said. "If there's a certain type of music that makes you happy, you should be able to listen to it without feeling guilty. You don't have to like all music, but at the very least, be respectful of those whose musical tastes are different from yours. Music should be celebrated, not shamed. After all, the purpose of music is entertainment. Music is supposed to be fun and not a competition."

Finally, Hayner says that a world without music would be monotonous and dull.

"I think music is so, so important, and I personally know people who have had their lives saved by music by being able to relate to certain artists," Hayner said. "That's why I believe all music, no matter how ridiculous or trivial it is to you, may be important to someone else. I mean, if we didn't have music, can you imagine how boring this world would be? No birds singing, no people humming, nothing. Just a bunch of people droning on."