

## THE POSSIBILITIES OF UTILIZING SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE PLATFORMS IN MUSIC EDUCATION

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**SUMMARY.** The digital native generations have unique media consumption and learning behaviours shaped by their daily exposure to technology. The social media platforms, in particular Instagram, TikTok and YouTube, are key channels through which younger users can discover music and access some educational content. These platforms can not only be used for entertainment, but can also provide opportunities for informal and formal music education. Classical music is frequently featured in memes and viral trends, increasing its accessibility and relevance for younger audiences. Particularly, certain elements of social media platforms are particularly effective in integrating music education through visual and interactive content. Through customised, interactive lessons, educators can harness learners' knowledge of digital tools to deepen musical knowledge and stimulate interest, as well as increase motivation and promote inclusion. Age-appropriate and socially relevant tasks can bridge the generation gap in education. To be inclusive and effective in music education, it is essential that teaching methods are adapted to evolving digital habits.

**Keywords:** social media, music education, digital generation

Generation Z is about to enter high school, and some of Generation Alpha are already in school, so while online platforms are constantly changing, we already have some idea of their consumption habits on which to base our new

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ideas. According to Zsolt Körmendy, “In order to tailor our inclusive education and music education activities to the receptive skills, attitudes, and habits of the target groups, we need to know them.”<sup>3</sup>

McCrindle defines the next generation, the Beta generation, as those born between 2025 and 2039, and predicts that by 2035 this group will make up 16% of the world population.<sup>4</sup> He defines the next generation in roughly 15-year increments, but the unpredictability of history makes it unnecessary to look that far ahead. McCrindle also makes the point that “The times, technologies and social events that we live through shape us all but are more defining for those experiencing them in their formative years.”<sup>5</sup> However, it can be predicted with relative certainty that „Generation Beta will be a technologically integrated generation, as well as a curious one, one that values diversity, and embraces change and difference”.<sup>6</sup>

### Using social media in our time

In an article by Nadine Koutsou-Wehling<sup>7</sup>, based on the eCommerceDB 2022 survey, the Alpha generation aged 12 to 15, use social media platforms are the third most frequently used by members of the Alpha generation to discover new music, after looking at funny posts and memes. The survey was conducted with 13 and 15-year-olds who were asked about the social networking sites they visited over a one week period. The results show that 74% of Generation Alpha respondents use Instagram, while 70% of the respondents use TikTok, while Facebook is in third place with 62%<sup>8</sup> (Figure 1).

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<sup>3</sup> Körmendy, Zsolt. *Koncertpedagógia, a Befogadóvá Nevelés Alternatív Útja. (Concert-Pedagogy, as an Alternative Path of Reception-centered Education)* 2015. Eötvös Loránd University, PhD dissertation. *ELTE.EDIT*, <http://hdl.handle.net/10831/32860> p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> “Generation Beta Defined.” *McCrindle*, 2024, [mccrindle.com.au/article/generation-beta-defined/](http://mccrindle.com.au/article/generation-beta-defined/). [Accessed 9 April 2024]

<sup>5</sup> “The Generations Defined.” *McCrindle*, 3 Dec. 2024, [mccrindle.com.au/article/topic/demographics/the-generations-defined/](http://mccrindle.com.au/article/topic/demographics/the-generations-defined/). [Accessed 8 March 2025]

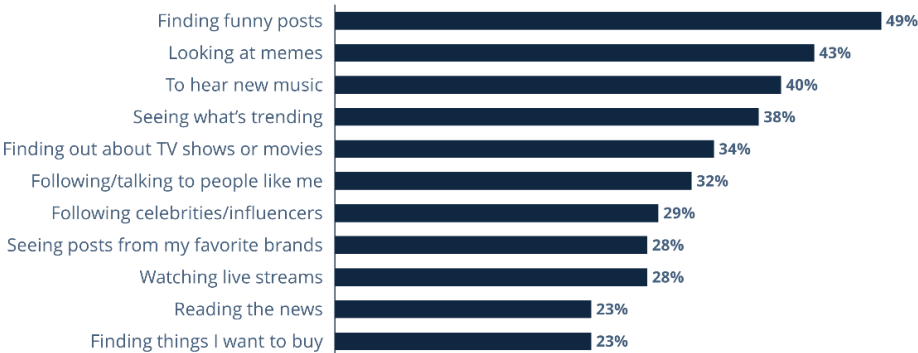
<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Koutsou-Wehling, Nadine. “Gen Alpha: Age Range, Social Media & Online Shopping Trends .” *ECDB.Com*, 12 June 2024, [ecommercedb.com/insights/gen-alpha-age-range-meaning-what-marketers-need-to-know-about-the-new-consumer/4747](http://ecommercedb.com/insights/gen-alpha-age-range-meaning-what-marketers-need-to-know-about-the-new-consumer/4747). [Accessed 10 April 2024]

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

**Figure 1**

**TOP REASONS GEN ALPHA USERS CITE FOR ENGAGING WITH SOCIAL MEDIA, 2022**



Notes: "What are your main reasons for using social media?", GWI Kids survey in 16 markets. Base: n= 9,908 respondents aged 12-15 who identify as social media users.  
Sources: GWI.

**ECDB**

**Responses of 12-15 year olds to the question about what they use social media for<sup>9</sup>**

According to an analysis of 2024 social media usage on DataReportal, the most visited sites worldwide by 16-24 year olds are social media platforms, music content sites are in fifth place. Among the age groups shown, they are the most frequent users of music content.<sup>10</sup> However, data on younger generations can often be misleading, as the load of a platform age to register, such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat, those under 13 would not officially appear, but age verification is easy to circumvent, it is practically a matter of conscience.

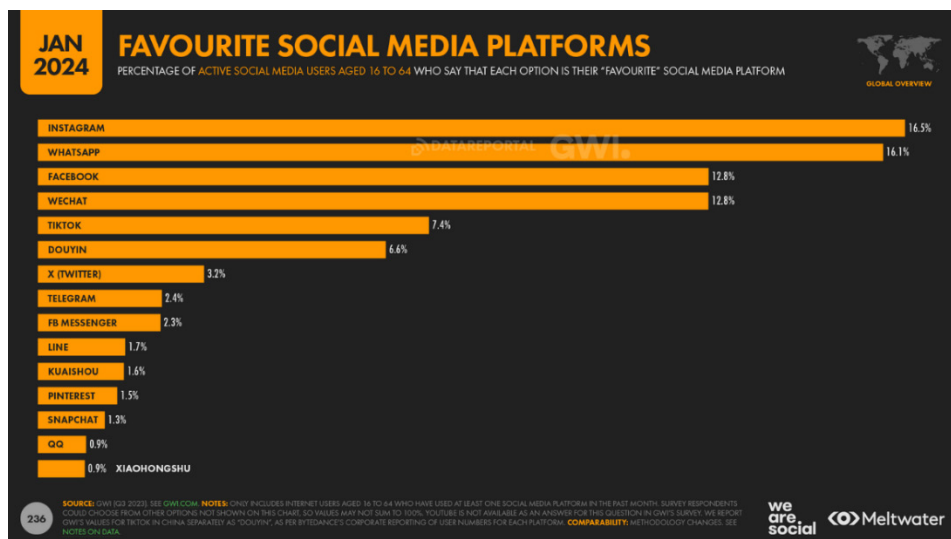
For the 16 to 64 age group, the most popular social media platform among global Internet users, according to the above analysis, is Instagram<sup>11</sup> (Figure 2). Based on these data, it can be assumed that Instagram could be a potentially useful platform for the connection of generations, as both students and teachers fall into this age group.

<sup>9</sup> source: <https://ecommercedb.com/insights/gen-alpha-age-range-meaning-what-marketers-need-to-know-about-the-new-consumer/4747>

<sup>10</sup> Kemp, Simon. "Digital 2024: Global Overview Report - DataReportal – Global Digital Insights." *DataReportal*, DataReportal – Global Digital Insights, 23 Mar. 2025, [datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-global-overview-report](https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-global-overview-report). [Accessed 9 April 2024]

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

Figure 2



### Most popular social media sites in 2024 for the 16-64 age group<sup>12</sup> Social media presence of the younger age group

There are many social media sites and apps that people use to chat, post comments, share pictures, connect with friends, or even play games. Parents and educators also have different views on the age at which children are ready to create their own social media accounts. There is increasing pressure on the secondary school age group to be connected online but the world of social media is not without its dangers. Since anyone can post and share different types of content, videos, pictures, ideas, advice, opinions, the social media, they may be exposed to inappropriate content and patterns of behaviour, which they need to be prepared for. Moreover, as the Internet also provides a kind of facelessness, they may say or do things that they would be less likely to do offline, in real life, including excessive sharing. This facelessness also means that it is easy to fake profiles, which can lead to abuse. Whether or not a child is ready to use social media sites can be influenced by their age, developmental stage, and maturity, which can affect their ability to have a safe and positive experience and make appropriate choices.<sup>13</sup> The solution to these is not to ban them, as the world of the internet is now fully part of everyday life, so the right way forward is to make people aware of the dangers and prevent problematic situations.

<sup>12</sup> source: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-global-overviewreport>

<sup>13</sup> "Is Your Child Ready for Social Media?" *CEOP Education*, [www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/is-my-child-ready-for-social-media/](http://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/is-my-child-ready-for-social-media/). [Accessed 14 April 2024]

The registration age mentioned above, generally older than 13 years, was introduced due to data protection laws, since online services cannot collect or store personal data of children under 13. When considering a child's access to social networks, parents should consider whether the child's current social and emotional skills and their maturity makes them capable of coping with the pressures of social networks use, the risks, the emotional impact, the unpredictable nature of social networks use, and whether it can be used responsibly.<sup>14</sup>

## Facebook

The Facebook platform is definitely worth mentioning as one of the first global social media platforms. With over 20 years of existence and, of course, its ease of use, most age groups are represented on the site with a personal profile. Facebook as a learning platform is also a matter of mixed opinion, but Kárpáti, in a study on the use of social media in education, highlights that Facebook for learning purposes can enhance social life in real life, as well as in the online space, and can be seen as a digital learning tool that can increase active participation and motivation of learners, thus it can be an important tool for informal learning.<sup>15</sup>

The 2012 study mentions among the possibilities the creation of a separate teacher profile, different closed or open groups for a class to share important information about a subject or a project.<sup>16</sup> Not necessarily class communities, but in the field of common interests, professions, hobbies, there are many possibilities to create a group. "Community of practice" groups exist where people can share professional advice, experiences, upcoming events, pictures, videos, and memes. However, the 13-17 age group only accounts for about 2.9% of Facebook users<sup>17</sup>, so this platform is not the most suitable for reaching the younger age group.

## TikTok

One of the popular platforms for sharing short music videos is TikTok, which content also transfers to other social media platforms. However, in

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Kárpáti, Andrea, et al. "Közösségi Média Az Oktatásban – Facebook-Esettanulmányok" (*Social Media in Education – Facebook Case Studies*) *Iskolakultúra*, vol. 22, no. 10, 1 Oct. 2012, pp. 11–42.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> "Facebook Statistics You Need to Know in 2024." *Herd Digital*, 28 Feb. 2024, [herd.digital/blog/facebook-statistics-2022/](https://herd.digital/blog/facebook-statistics-2022/). [Accessed 14 April 2024]

terms of the issues surrounding social media use, such as content control and protection of personal and sensitive data, TikTok is one of the more dangerous and less secure platforms, and is therefore not yet the most suitable platform for the younger age group.

Fears about TikTok data collection have led to legislation in several countries, in India, Nepal, and Pakistan, for example, a complete ban has been imposed. In Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Taiwan, Belgium, Great Britain, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands and the United States, government employees are banned from using the app on their government devices, in France all government employees are banned from using the platform in all government departments, and employees of EU decision-making bodies are recommended not to use the app, even on their own devices. The United States has for several years raised and is negotiating the full ban.<sup>18</sup> After a few hour-long shutdown in January 2025, the app has been brought back and there are still ongoing negotiations about the future of TikTok in the United States.

## Instagram

Instagram is the social media platform with the highest usage among 13-64-year-olds, according to the data mentioned earlier.<sup>19</sup> The platform is more or less based on visuality, sharing photos and videos. For the videos we want to share, we can choose music from a music library, similar to the way early silent films were shown.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, music manuals were provided to accompany films in which, for a particular scene, mood, or situation, musicians could draw up a few musical examples that could be used. Instagram's music selection works in a similar way. The algorithm generates recommendations for you, and you can choose from popular tunes and browse by genre, but also by mood, event or situation. In many cases, the results include classical quotations.

The most commonly used classical quotation for scary themes is Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, which was not originally related to any eerie topic, but started to be used in this context in various films. The work is also used on organ or other instrumentation in several horror films, one of the first examples

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<sup>18</sup> Papp, Attila. "Karnyújtásnyira Került a TikTok Betiltása AZ Egyesült Államokban." (*TikTok is within reach of being banned in the United States*) 24. Hu, 8 Apr. 2024, 24.hu/kulfold/2024/04/07/tiktok-betiltas-egyedul-allamok-kina/. [Accessed 14 April 2024]

<sup>19</sup> Kemp, Simon. "Digital 2024: Global Overview Report - DataReportal – Global Digital Insights." *DataReportal*, DataReportal – Global Digital Insights, 23 Mar. 2025, datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-global-overview-report. [Accessed 9 April 2024]

being the 1931 Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, the overture to Rossini's *William Tell* is widely associated with horseback riding and cowboys, and may even be a representation of haste and hurry. If we are engaged in some satisfying, precise, but even completely unnecessary activity that is still fun for some reason, then Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* is the perfect choice. Of course, trends come and go, and popular music is represented in a higher percentage, but in our opinion, classical music quotes are more timeless, so generational differences are not as much of a problem. A survey commissioned by the British Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in 2022 showed that 87% of children in the UK encounter orchestral music in their daily lives, but are more likely to do so at home than at school, with film music taking first place, the next most popular way to listen to orchestral music is on YouTube and other social networking sites.<sup>21</sup>

On social media platforms, including Instagram, content creators, known as influencers, can have a big impact on consumers. The personality of the content creator is a defining factor and can be used to build communities. A social media personality can capture the interest of young people and influence their tastes. The displayed content may also include educational materials that may shed light on interesting facts. This could include the aforementioned examples of the origins of the classical music quotations mentioned earlier, outlining interesting facts in music history, or quotations in popular music.

Such a meme-like revelation has recently been made about Beyoncé's new album *Cowboy Carter*. In the song *Daughter*, the singer quotes the 1783 aria *Caro mio ben*, which has made it familiar to the layman. Similarly, Lady Gaga used the fugue in B-flat minor from Bach's *Wohltemperiertes Klavier*, Volume I, 1722 for her 2008 song *Bad Romance*, and the *Prelude in F minor* from Volume II, 1744, is the basis for the 2004 song *They* from Jem. Such entertaining introductions can also stimulate interest and encourage the reception of the original works.

Some music institutions, orchestras, and concert halls also have social media, but also musicians and music educators are represented on the platforms. Among the content displayed are short videos with features that can help with listening development. These include features have opportunities to practice pitch spacing, triads, and rhythm examples. There are several profiles on the platform that produce this type of content. Among the features are response selection options, so that a tapped or clapped rhythm can be selected from the options provided. In a similar way, you can also use the feature to recognise

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<sup>20</sup> Hall, Sophia Alexandra. "What Makes J.S. Bach's Toccata in D Minor so Terrifying?" *Classic FM*, 27 Oct. 2021, [www.classicfm.com/composers/bach/why-toccata-d-minor-so-terrifying/](http://www.classicfm.com/composers/bach/why-toccata-d-minor-so-terrifying/). [Accessed 14 April 2024]

<sup>21</sup> Hall, Sophia Alexandra. "Research Says Orchestral Music Is More Popular on Social Media than in Schools – Tiktok Star Cody Fry Explains Why." *Classic FM*, 16 July 2022, [www.classicfm.com/discover-music/music-education/cody-fry-tik-tok/](http://www.classicfm.com/discover-music/music-education/cody-fry-tik-tok/). [Accessed 14 April 2024]

a chord, feature or interval being played, even asking for the pitch of a single note in a series of multiple notes. For posts, the tagging or hashtags can help to browse similar topics.

The previously mentioned memes and funny viral content also appear on the interface, which can make recognition easier and learning more feel at ease, and even encourage and inspire some people to create their own content. According to Szűts (2018), “virality is the process by which a piece of information (text, image, sound, video) gets maximum exposure for the size of the potential audience over a short period of time, while spread by a large number of users who voluntarily choose to share it.”<sup>22</sup> And memes are “an idea, a concept, a unit of thought that is meaningful in itself, which person-to-person through the mediation of culture and Internet communication channels.”<sup>23</sup>

Memes are usually short-lived, as they are mainly based on current events, but in many cases they can also be related to specific themes or subcultures.<sup>24</sup> In the context of music history, music literature or even music theory, such content occurs, often related to a particular composer or instrument. Fans of Chopin or even those who do not like Wagner can find content profiles, but pianists or violinists can also discover sites where specific features, problems, and characteristics of their profession are discussed.

## YouTube

Although YouTube is not a classic social media platform, it is a great place to create communities. Music and music education institutions and orchestras have YouTube channels, so we can watch live or recorded concerts, and the site also has a music streaming function.

The youngest generation, as reported by parents, is using this platform the most frequently. Millennial parents prefer this platform due to the YouTube Kids content separator feature, which allows children as young as a few years old to become consumers.<sup>25</sup> It is no coincidence that the first of YouTube’s highest-viewing videos to date at the time of writing is a song for children, Baby Shark, which was uploaded seven years ago, has 14 billion views, and 50% of the top ten videos are content for children.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Szűts, Zoltán. *Online - Az Internetes Kommunikáció És Média Története, Elmélete És Jelenségei. (Online. The History, Theory, and Phenomenon of Internet Communication and Media)* Wolters Kluwer Hungary Kft., 2018. p. 232

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. p. 394

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> “The Top 15 Social Media Platforms Gen Alpha Uses.” *YPulse*, 15 Feb. 2023, <https://www.ypulse.com/article/2023/02/15/the-top-15-social-media-platforms-gen-alpha-uses/>. [Accessed 14 April 2024]

<sup>26</sup> “Most Viewed Videos of All Time.” *YouTube*, 2024, [www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLirAqAtl\\_h2r5g8xGajEwdXd3x1sZh8hC](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLirAqAtl_h2r5g8xGajEwdXd3x1sZh8hC). [Accessed 14 April 2024]



As a video sharing platform, YouTube can be used to consume both longer and shorter content, including e-learning content, as well as entertainment and educational material. Educating people to be receptive to classical music coupled with visuals is certainly not a new idea. If we talk about classical music and visuals as a means of reception, we might think of Disney's 1940 animated film *Fantasia*, in which Walt Disney, with the help of Leopold Stokowski and Deems Taylor, wanted to bring classical music to the general public through animation.<sup>27</sup> I believe that a similar idea, adapted to the present day, can be implemented through the YouTube platform.

There is, of course, content of this kind on the video-sharing portal, but in Hungarian language, and their quality does not necessarily make them suitable for the generation growing up in the digital age. At the same time, the right visual content may be appropriate to educate people to be receptive. YouTube on the Learning Project platform offers a very wide range of video content. "From literature to nuclear physics, from popular culture to the history of the antique literacy, learning materials are available on a wide horizon. In this way, it is practically one of the world's largest free multimedia libraries for educational purposes".<sup>28</sup>

The Classics Explained channel, which produces animated content in English, features videos between 10 and 20 minutes, each featuring a classical music work. The videos discuss the composer, the creation of the work, its content, its characters, music theory, orchestration, and its afterlife, all presented in a professional, yet humorous and accessible way. Due to the duration of the videos, of course, not complete works are performed, but the relevant musical excerpt is always heard during the storytelling.

The possibilities are, indeed, inherent in the nature of online platforms and social media, the features change and expand from day to day, so that there is a constant flow of new and different features, therefore we must strive to be constantly keep up to date. Music streaming services can also be used for browsing, but these are more targeted, direct searches.

### **Ideas to implicate social media in music education**

In our view, inclusion of some elements of the possibilities offered by social media in music education can aroused interest of students, and incorporation of elements of online opportunities can improve their motivation for the subject and their receptive skills. However, it is important to introduce

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<sup>27</sup> *The Fantasia Legacy: The Concert Feature*. Directed by Jeff Kurtti, Buena Vista Home Entertainment, 2000.

<sup>28</sup> Szűts, Zoltán. *A Digitális Pedagógia Elmélete. (The theory of digital pedagogy)* Akadémiai Kiadó., 2020. p.124.

age-appropriate options into the lessons, which can greatly contribute to the deeper understanding of the topic.

The younger, upper-grade age group, i.e. children around 10–14 years old, are already at home in the world of technological devices, and the implementation of such methods can strengthen their motivation to master the subject. Above-mentioned educational YouTube videos, or perhaps self-made videos, can deepen the absorption by involving visuality. In order to capture the mood and content of individual music listening elements, students can even create their own mood images or short videos, thus giving their own story and content presented in the form of a video clip or short film to the pieces they have learned. It is also possible to reverse the method, meaning that music can be selected from a number of music options to match the perceived mood of a video segment or image.

In the case of operas, the age group can create a key scene in the online space, similar to online construction games, and create the characters. Tasks can be created based on the model of online escape rooms, whose difficulty can be tailored to the given age group and adapted to the current curriculum. Rhythm formulas, functions or melodies linked to numbers, years, melody fragments, maps, symbols can be used in a variety of ways, and multi-path tasks can also be created. The tasks may even include rhythm exercises and musical details that require real reproduction in an interactive way, such as the exact repetition of a rhythm, singing a given pitch or a short melody fragment, which are also trends on social media platforms. During the tasks, individual or collective solutions can be required, so that communication and social skills and mutual attention can be developed in the case of a joint solution.

The above-mentioned methods can also be applied to the 14–16 year old age group. In their case, however, a greater musical literacy can be assumed, and they can then choose a musical excerpt for which they make videos. In the case of program music works, a short, summary similar to the trailers used to announce films can be made using a similar method, in which case the essential musical themes of the piece are also summarized, so that an abbreviated, condensed version can be made from it, which also develops the students' knowledge of format. Presumably, most of the 14–16 year old age group already has their own social media profiles, enabling them to search for musical excerpts themselves, their own favorite, and even include popular music materials among the options.

For this age group, more complex abstract thinking-requiring tasks can be created for online escape rooms, but students can also create simpler paths of their own within the framework of individual or group tasks in project work. Within the framework of project work, the age group may even create their own songs using given musical excerpts and given tracks. The previously

mentioned memes can also color the subject and serve as motivation. In the case of a video or image-based meme, a subject requires background knowledge, implying knowledge of the subject is assumed, and thus the students feel “initiated”, which can serve as motivation for acquiring further knowledge and creating their own memes.

## Overall

The learning mechanisms and information processing of Generation Z, Alpha, and the next Beta generation are completely different from previous generations due to digitalisation. On-line platforms and social media sites are part of their lives and identities, and the Internet is their primary source of information. Graphic representation, the emphasis on imagery, is a complete paradigm shift in the way of thinking and processing information, but also in the way we process learning, which we must adapt to. Short micro-contents are based on visuality, but they also have musical trends related to different moods and emotions, situations, including many classical music quotations. This awareness and use of these classical music can become more popular and to promote an inclusive education.

The last decades of education have seen the emergence of various digital and on-line opportunities, which can be applied, but without the constant vigilance and training of teachers, generational differences make it increasingly difficult for teachers and students to connect and understand each other. Accelerated technological development means that digital methodological elements need to be constantly updated in order to approach students’ everyday use of technology, and social media platforms play an important role in this.

There are of course dangers associated with being on social networks, but by clarifying these, preparing for these situations, and providing appropriate education and prevention for the younger generation, problematic situations can be prevented and identified. With good quality content or elements of content that are familiar to the age group, we could practice rhythm, interval, triad, and function recognition in a simple way that suits the generation, and we could convey works of musical literature and interesting facts about music history, thus helping education and fostering receptiveness.

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