Affects of Appealing and Unappealing Music on Test Scores

Damara Cole

Freeport High School, Freeport NY USA

Abstract: This experiment was conducted to determine what possible effects there are on students reading comprehension test scores while they listen to music. Several students were given 3 separate tests, taken from http://www.collegeboard.com, at different times. While taking the first test, no music was played for the subjects to listen to. During the other 2 tests, music was played that the students personally thought was appealing and unappealing. The results may indicate that there may not be major difference in test scores if the students listen to music. Previous studies, done by music therapist, have shown that the mind thinks at the same rate of the music a person is listening to. For example, if a person is listening to music with a high tempo, that person will think at the same fast rate as the music.

Keywords: music therapy, test and music, increased scores and music

INTRODUCTION

Previous studies, done by music therapist, have shown that the mind thinks at the same rate of the music a person is listening to. For example, if a person is listening to music with a high tempo, that person will think at the same fast rate as the music.

METHODS

Seven students were chosen at random. Each student took test A without listening to any music. They recorded their answers on a scantron. The same students were given test B while listening to music that was unappealing to them. The students selected a music genre that was least appealing to them from a list of various genres. Such as, hip-hop, rap, classical, and heavy metal. The same group of students took test C while listening to music that was appealing to them. The tests were scored out of 100. Each test was taken from the reading comprehension section of a PSAT.

RESULTS

This experiment indicates that there will not be a significant difference in students test scores if they listen to music. As figure 2 shows, the test scores taken with music and without music are relatively the same. As figure 2 demonstrates, the test scores taken with appealing and unappealing music are not equal but half the students did better with appealing and half did better with unappealing.

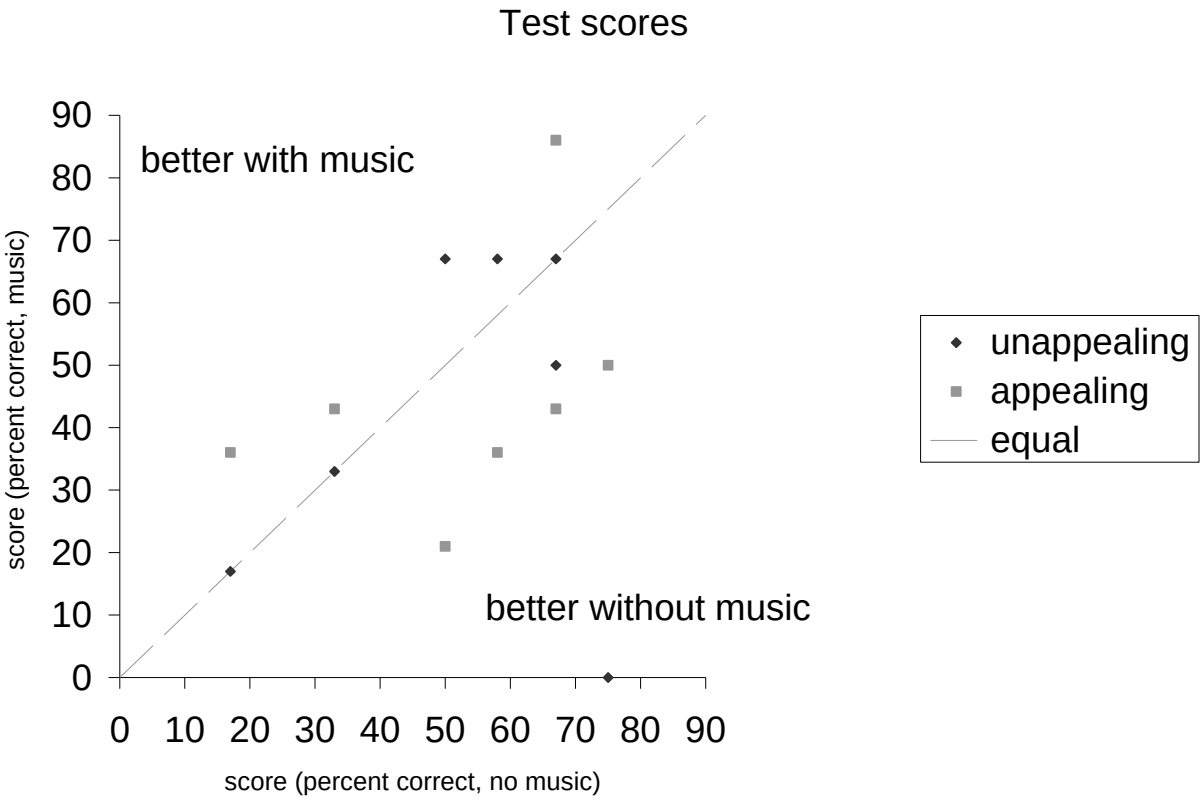

Figure 1: The y axis is the percent correct while listening to music. The x axis is the percent correct without listening to music. The dotted line represents a neutral position where all three test scores where equal.

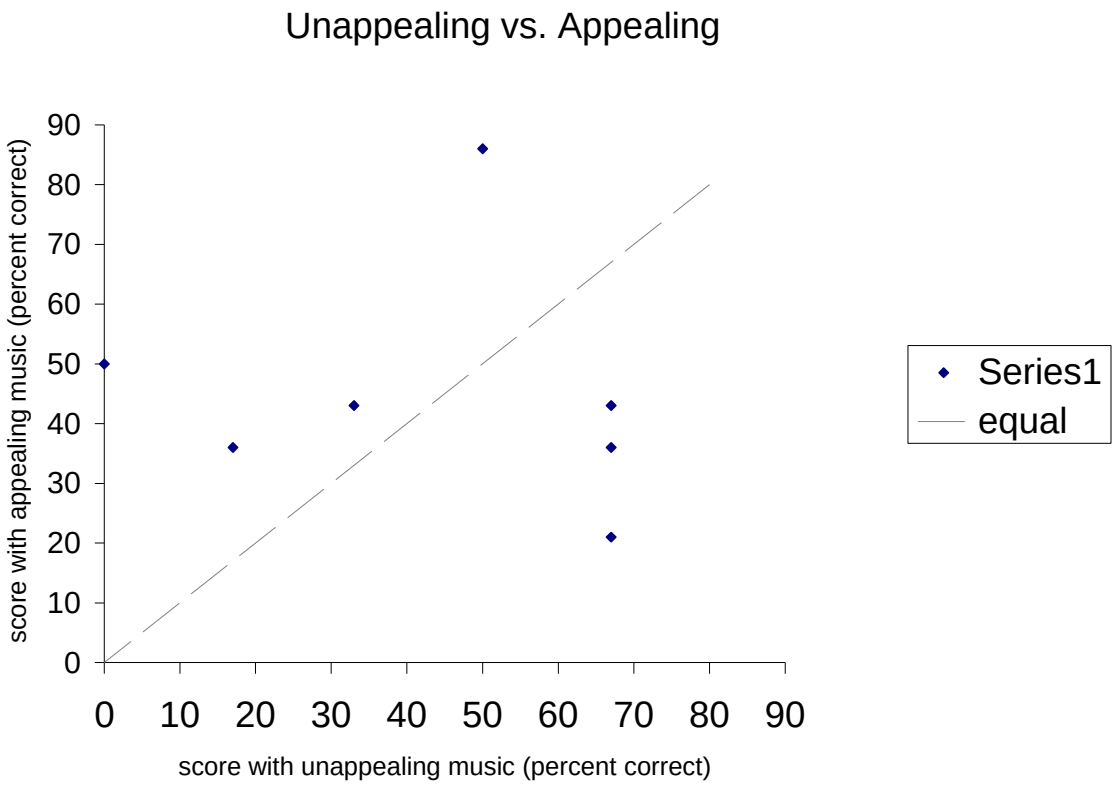

Figure 2: The y axis is percent correct while listening to appealing music. The x axis is percent correct while listening to unappealing music. The dotted line represents a neutral position where both test scores were equal.

DISCUSSION

This experiment was limited to seven teenage students in the ninth grade. Although similar experiments indicate that appealing music would have the most effect on a students test scores, the difference was not very significant. If the experiment was widened to a larger more diverse range of student, the results may vary.

CONCLUSIONS

The end results of this experiment seem to prove there is not a difference between students' tests scores if they listen to appealing or unappealing music.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Dr. Robert Muratore, and the support of Freeport Public Schools.

REFERENCES

1. http://www.cerebromente.org.br/n15/mente/musica.html
2. http://www.collegeboard.com
3. http://www.essortment.com/all/musiceffectbra_rqxt.htm
4. http://stress.about.com/od/tensiontamers/a/music_therapy.htm