

How Does Music Affect a Dog's Cognitive Behavior?

Isaiah
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This experiment was to test which music type dogs like to listen to, as well as music types that they do not like to listen to. It was based on research and experiments done in the past by other researchers cited in this paper. I will be verifying the research that they did. I am doing this so that people can be sure that the tested music types are good for dogs, and which music types are bad for dogs. I am also doing this so that they can ensure the best mental health for their dog.

Introduction

Do you like listening to music? Do you have fun listening to music? Do some types of music energise you? Do you find that some types of music distract you? Have you ever wanted to learn what the best type of music for your dog is? You might like music, but what about your dog? If you have a pet, and you love playing with it, wouldn't you like to see if they feel the same way about music? This experiment is designed to test just that! More specifically, it tests the types of music that are said to be the best for dogs, as well as the music types that are said to be the worst for dogs. This is important to assure that your pet is as happy as you are, and to help reduce your pet's stress and anxiety, which will keep them healthier. My initial research question is: How does music affect my dog's cognitive functions? If I change the music playing around my dog while he does a task using his brain, will the outcomes be affected?

Background Research

There has been lots of research put into the effect of music on a dog's brain, and I am just continuing this research. Classical music is said to have a positive effect on a dog's brain. Songs like *Fur Elise*, *Moonlight Sonata*, and *Blue Danube Waltz* are said to help dogs react better to stimuli. Reggae is also said to be good for dogs, as it has calming guitar and keyboard sounds to help improve reactions to stimuli. The type of music that is said to be the worst for dogs to listen to is any type of heavy metal or hard rock, as it distracts them from any stimuli. Songs like *Ace of Spades*, *Angel of Death*, and *Turbo Lover* all are bad songs in terms of reactions to stimuli in dogs. Although most types of rock are said to be bad for dogs, soft rock is actually said to be beneficial for reactions to stimuli, because the soft-sounding guitar helps them focus on the stimulus.

Procedure

The goal of this experiment is to determine how well a dog can cognitively process a command despite external stimuli. The command is either "cup" or "bowl," and the external stimulus is music. The materials needed to do this experiment are 1) a clear testing area where I can place one cup, a divider, and one bowl. 2) an area where the dog is to wait while I place a treat under either the cup or the bowl. 3) ten dog treats to allow the test to be run ten times per each different stimulus. 4) a way to play the music which is being tested in order to supply external stimuli. 5) a stopwatch and a log book.

Prior to running the experiment I trained the dog to understand the commands “cup,” or “bowl,” without external stimuli. Once this was completed, I was ready to begin the experiment.

I put the dog in a starting position, sitting 6 feet away from the cup, bowl, and divider. I put the cup on the left of the divider, and the bowl on the right of the divider, then started the music. I then hid a treat under either the cup or the bowl. After that, I gave the command “cup,” or “bowl” for him to go to either the cup or the bowl respectively. Then I used a stopwatch to record how long it took the dog to get the treat, from when I gave the command “cup” or “bowl,” to when he got to the treat. Then, I repeated this ten times to act as a control test, as well as ten times for every type of music. To get the average time for each type of music, and control, I removed the slowest time, the fastest time, and averaged the other eight.

Results

(In seconds)

Type of music	Avg.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Classical	1.06	0.85	1.76	1.2	1.49	0.79	0.82	0.86	0.74
Reggae	1.40	1.9	0.48	0.99	0.75	1.43	1.5	2.46	1.65
Control	1.36	1.43	1.05	1.13	1.22	0.86	2.49	2.03	.68
Soft rock	1.74	3.43	1.38	0.92	2.23	0.66	3.12	1.16	0.96
Hard rock	2.40	1.48	3.13	2.46	1.66	2.78	3.12	3.32	1.26

Summary of Findings

The goal of this experiment was to determine how well a dog can cognitively process a command despite external stimuli. Based on the results above, I can conclude that the best type of music for a dog’s reaction to stimuli is classical music. I can also conclude that hard rock is the worst type of music for a dog’s reaction to stimuli. As the author of this experiment, I can’t say which types of music my dog likes to listen to, but the experiment shows that he performs well while listening to classical music, performs second best while listening to reggae, but tends to get more distracted while listening to soft rock and hard rock. To ensure the best mental health for your dog, I would recommend classical or reggae music.

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