

**Composing and performing a short musical motif in a third grade
music classroom**

by

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Abstract

In my lesson demonstration video, I share a story with my students about the wind, “The Wind Blew” by Pat Hutchins. I first read the book from the piano and improvise short musical responses to each page of the book. This idea grew from the example Dr. Gurgel gave last summer, when she improvised to the children’s book, “Where the Wild Things Are.” I then share the story a second time by showing an iMovie version of the book that I had prepared in advance. This step served three purposes: it allowed all students to clearly see the pictures, it saved my voice from re-reading for multiple classes, and it showed students where they would add their short musical motifs. I had set up carts labeled with pictures from the book, each with several instruments. The students were then assigned to a cart to create a motif for a page from the book. After some improvising, students were asked to finalize their motif, and prepare to perform it with the iMovie. Following our first performance, students share ideas to improve their performance before trying it again.

The Master’s Program has impacted my teaching in many ways, large and small. I learned many things in Dr. Gurgel’s classes that have directly impacted the way I teach. Learning about the four major methods in elementary music education, along with many great resources and examples of how to use them, helped me to understand the purpose and best uses of my resources and lessons. Additionally, the improvisation class had a big impact on me, and I have since had my students do more improvising than ever before. I was inspired by one of the first lessons Dr. Gurgel gave us where she used the book, “Pout, Pout Fish.” I have since created many lessons using children’s books, including the two lessons in this report. Dr. Gurgel’s overall emphasis on imagination and creativity have become my most treasured and important goals in every encounter with music and students.

Another important development has been that Dr. Payne's research, philosophy, and history classes helped me put my experiences into perspective. As I have reflected on all the past and present musicians, educators, philosophers, and researchers, it has truly been eye opening and inspiring. At this point in my career, I really needed and appreciated the perspective and inspiration.

There were other important developments for me. In the very first class, I realized that I needed to learn Garage Band. I have done a lot more with Garage Band since, including using it to make backing tracks for an iMovie of student-composed rhythms, which my classes used to practice rhythms. In Symposium my first year, I was introduced to Little Kids Rock. I have since used their resources several times to find good lessons and songs for my 6th grade guitar unit. The experience we had of writing and performing a song gave me the inspiration and confidence to have my students do something similar as part of our guitar unit.

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Chapter 1 - Teaching Philosophy

I believe every person has the right to a complete and high quality education. I believe a person's genetics, race, gender, geographical location, family history, socio-economic status, religion, "talent," intelligence, capabilities, and disabilities should have zero bearing on their access to high quality education. The opportunity for one to receive a world class education, which takes a person beyond their circumstance, and prepares them for new experiences, and which strengthens their ability to continuously adapt and respond in meaningful and appropriate ways to a changing world, should be a guaranteed human right. I believe it should be an everlasting goal of every society to ensure a world class education for all people, and to work without hesitation to remove all barriers to such a provision. It should be the common goal of all generations to prepare future generations for their time. We must not be selfish in our desires of the here and now, but instead we must prioritize our contributions for the future.

When I was a kid, the phrase "knowledge is power" was used everywhere. I heard it all the time and it is a deeply ingrained concept in my philosophy of education. I believe knowledge is power, and I believe there is a large price to pay for that knowledge and the guarantee of greater knowledge for future generations. The highest quality resources (professional educators, professionally vetted and regularly updated curriculum materials, clean and modern buildings, social-emotional supports, highly managed technology, good food, updated equipment, and more) is extremely expensive. I believe the goal should be to move beyond just adequately paying for education, but to fund the possibilities for future generations to see the value in education in many ways, including by recognizing the tremendous sacrifices it took to build it for them.

I believe that the search for knowledge must be guided by great teachers who understand the way children learn, and who are creative and knowledgeable in their ability to bring them up. We must have great teachers. Great teachers inspire great learners. I agree with Eisner who said that teaching is an art form (Eisner, 1991, p.65). Teaching is a unique and awesome calling, and it takes artistry to work effectively to mold minds. The artistry comes in many ways, but one example of teaching artistry is when the teacher recognizes exactly what the students need and delivers the perfect idea in that moment. Artistry is when the teacher just knows what to do and what is needed in that moment. Sometimes that can be the result of skill or training, but it is the artistry that moves the educator beyond what they have been trained to do and to the level of a great teacher. Another example, specific to music, is when teaching a song, the artistic teacher makes immediate adjustments to meet the level of the students in that moment. Artistic music educators mold the medium to reach and then inspire the children's minds. Artistic teachers know how to deliver creative lessons in an effective and powerful way for their students.

I believe all people should experience a complete and high quality education which includes music as a core component. I believe all people should receive a quality music education that helps them develop their abilities to the highest level possible, so that they may be fulfilled in the musical experiences they will encounter in their lifetime. I believe music is natural human expression and an important source of beauty and comradery for the human spirit. While musical expression is natural, I believe it is most enjoyable when it is trained and developed with as many experiences as possible. I believe a person's musical identity grows with experience and training, and I believe the more you experience music, the more you get out of each experience. And, conversely, I believe that if a person does not train, develop, or use their full musical abilities, then they will not know what they are missing. They will likely continue to

enjoy music at whatever level they stopped training, or at their level of aptitude, but that experience will not be what it could have been. I believe every person who develops their musical abilities, enjoys a richer life. Not necessarily richer in money, but greater satisfaction in their spirit, heart, and mind.

I believe every human has the right to a great musical education. I think music is part of being human, so it should be trained to its fullest and highest potential in order to maximize one's experience in life. I also think it is for the greater good that music be developed to its fullest in people. I think it not only helps people individually, but it helps them come together on a social level. Music itself is without judgment or prejudice. Music is a sound that is ignorant of the human condition. Music does not care where a person is from, and it does not care if you cannot talk to the person next to you. Music is for everyone. Music is despite your circumstance. Music is happening always. Music may be drowned out occasionally in really bad times, but it comes back. Music is there, always, forever moving, and embracing everyone. Music sparks the brain and spirit, it is shared, and it is life.

Music is life, and music education is a human right. Although humans experience music naturally, we need teachers of music to help people realize the full experience music can be for them. Music teachers are both musician and teacher. It is a dual study. A music teacher must be both a practicing musician (because there is always more to practice or experience in music), and a practicing educator of music, who understands the steps and process of teaching people music. It is my belief that we need great music teachers to guide people through more than just passive music experiences. We have come too far to say that listening to professional musicians and singing in the shower is all there is. People need more than that. I believe a music education should be systematic, sequential, and comprehensive. It should include a rich and full experience

inclusive of many musical genres, and ways of both making and experiencing music. I do believe students should be taught to read and write in standard, Western notation, at least at a basic, functional level for the average person. I try to balance practical lessons in reading and writing music notation, with opportunities to practice, with opportunities to improvise and enjoy music without notation. Learning to read music is a continuous cycle, fueled by a need to know. Students also need literacy in music technology, and although students today are very “tech savvy” they do need guidance in how to compose music, so the music teacher plays an important role in guiding students in how to best use technology as a tool for creating and sharing meaningful musical expression. I believe students also need many experiences with playing a large variety of instruments and singing, in many genres. Having music in schools is the only way all children will have the opportunity to experience the wide world of music, especially playing a variety of instruments in a variety of styles. Schools are uniquely positioned to be able to provide the equipment and expertise of great music teachers. This is so important for the well-being of each person’s life, and for the well-being of the music we enjoy. I believe that music positively impacts the development of a child’s mental, physical, social, and emotional growth. No other subject can fully do what music does. Additionally, educating all people in music also helps continue the amazing level of musical output we all enjoy.

Some people may think that their music education did not do anything for them. But I would challenge that. Take for example, people who listen to the radio as their main source of musical experience. They may acknowledge they enjoy the music, or they might not really consider it at all. I believe we could not have great music radio stations if we did not have a generally musically educated populace. We take for granted how much background knowledge goes into every song and every choice we make in listening. Furthermore, a person may not

realize how much more they could get out of listening if they were also practicing music. It is a lot like the “more you know” phrase. Music knowledge and experiences build up and change your perspective. You may hear a song many times in your life, but as your life and musical experiences change, so does your understanding of that song. Again, music does not care what your circumstances are, but it is there for your experiencing. I think a music education is easily taken for granted and it is easy for people to think they would be in the same place even if they had not had any formal music education. Many people, I included, have forgotten all the amazing things learned in elementary music. But, as an elementary music teacher, I am convinced those experiences are foundational and life changing, even if we can no longer name them as such when we are older. I know how music affects children and how it helps them think differently and grow to their potential. It has a nearly mystical power over children, and it tickles parts of their brains that otherwise would sit dormant. Music classes fire up the whole brain and strengthen synaptic bonds. Music pulls thoughts together at both the subconscious and conscious levels, in ways that no other subject matter can. And, in elementary music we should be as general and wide open to possibilities as we can be, in order that children have enough experiences to find their path. It is always my goal to help open the children’s minds to all the possible things they can do in music.

My philosophy is influenced by my experiences. As a preacher’s kid, I learned a lot about love and compassion for the human condition, and that is certainly a thread in my philosophical tapestry. Also, without doubt, all of the educators in my life, music and otherwise, are woven into my philosophy. When I was growing up, we moved about every four to five years, so I had many different teachers, and I never experienced one teacher longer than five years. That one teacher I had for five years was my band director for 7th through 11th grade (we moved my senior

year). I still think about those school band experiences and the band teacher, Mr. Russell. In all the churches we were in, the hymnal, the choir, the organists, and the congregational singing, were an influence on me. I feel that church music is very important to my life, and that feeling also weighs into my philosophy of music education. I think people need to have enough training and confidence in their musical abilities to be able to participate in worship music, whether that is formal or more improvised. I absolutely believe in the separation of church and state, and I do not believe a public education should be a religious education. However, a complete public school music education does include the use of sacred music, but never to preach or teach religion. Music educators may explain the purpose of the sacred music, and they may use the music to teach musical concepts, and that may extend to the performance of sacred music. For most of the history of written music, the majority of the music was written for religious practice. Excluding all sacred music would exclude a great deal of significant musical works and world history lessons, and I believe that would not be a complete music education.

My experiences as a certified music educator in public schools for twenty years has also influenced my thinking. I am happy to say that although I have deepened my understanding and knowledge, the underlying hopefulness of my philosophy remains intact. I have always put a great deal of belief in the power of music education. As a student, I believed my music classes were very powerful and important to so many of the kids I knew. Now, as an adult, I still believe in the power of music and music education. I believe music is in every human, and every human deserves to have a great music educator in their life in order to help shape their musical identity. I believe people benefit from the communal experience of music making, such as in band, choir, or orchestra. I believe music can say what words cannot, and children need and understand the complex expression of and through music. I believe being a music educator is a special and

awesome calling. I feel extremely lucky to have the opportunity to help people learn music and learn about themselves. Although I often also feel tired and overworked, my hopes and beliefs for what music education can do for children has only grown. And, most recently, my experiences in the Master of Elementary Music Education program through Kansas State University, has really opened my mind to greater ways of educating children in music. I have been moved forward in my thinking through learning about music educators and philosophers and methodologies and technologies. It is motivating to know there are so many people who devote their lives to being music educators and developing music education methods, resources, and materials. The more I know, the more I appreciate all the music educators of the past and present. Together, we have and will always make a difference in the lives of people.

I do not believe any single philosopher of music has completely captured me, although I especially admire Eisner, Reimer, and Jorgensen. In my elementary music education classes, I have enjoyed learning about Dalcroze Eurythmics, Orff-Schulwerk, Kodaly methods, and the Gordon Music Learning Theory. As I have developed and used lessons that are based on them, I have greatly expanded my understanding of how children learn music. I have also learned a lot about the Suzuki method from the awesome Suzuki teacher my son took violin lessons from. All of these amazing teachers of music have helped refine my philosophy of how to teach children music.

I liked the stories of teaching art that Elliot Eisner shared in the article we read (Eisner, 1991). I really appreciate and agree with his belief that teaching is an art form and that learning requires artistic thought process. When I read Eisner's experience of being a poor student who was good at art, and how the arts were his calling, I felt he represented so many of our students. And in music, sometimes we are guilty of making kids feel not good enough for music because

they are poor students who just cannot focus enough to put the notes together. As a general elementary teacher, I have to be mindful to always welcome all students into their music education. It is very difficult because poor students often come into my room unhappy and already closed off. But, if I can give them some glimpses of music in a way that attracts them, it might just save them and get them through school. Music teachers often have a great opportunity to help train and inspire poor students to become disciplined and hardworking people.

David Elliot confirmed for me that the practice of making music is the foundation of a solid music education philosophy. I like a praxial music education because it is logical. It makes a lot of sense to develop a method based on the practices of music. His philosophy is “multidimensional” (Elliot, 2005, p.7). Furthermore, he explains, “the aims of music education depends on developing the musicianship and listenership of all music students, through engaging students in: performing-and-listening, improvising-and-listening, composing-and-listening, arranging-and-listening, conducting-and-listening, and listening to recordings and live performances. I emphasize that music making of all kinds...should be the center of the music curriculum” (Elliot, 2005, p.7). He also states that the praxial philosophy has the important values of self-growth and self-knowledge (Elliot, 2005, p.10). I do believe a lot of Elliot’s praxial philosophy lines up with what I think a secondary music education program looks like: students engaged in listening, performing, improvising, and composing. I agree that listening is the foundation to all acts of “musicing.” However, I feel that while achieving Elliot’s praxial method would make for a solid music program, it may still be missing the connections to the beauty of music and the way music expresses what we do not have words for. And, it sounds like students lock into a structure of practicing that may be a turn-off for students who are more interested in general exploration.

I love the energy of the “synergistic proposal” by Bennet Reimer (Reimer, 2003, p.38). I also enjoy his humor and his writing. His philosophy seems broader to me than Elliot’s praxial music education. My interpretation of Reimer is that he is saying that the practice of musicing is not enough. In his article for our class, he explains his view that music is multidimensional (as Elliot also claimed for himself). For Reimer, that multidimensionality is about the multiple ways people participate in and are affected by music. Music makes use of sounds to “make special” in a way only sounds can do (Reimer, 2003, p.38). I agree and feel that if more of school music helped children feel the unique and special qualities of music, then maybe relevancy would be less of a concern. As a student in high school band, I felt the amazing connection to the sounds of the instruments, and the shared experience with others, and we mostly played “school music.” I highly doubt I would have felt that if we were only doing cover versions of popular music. The beauty of the music spoke to me, and it had nothing to do with how popular the songs were outside of band class, or who was in band. I do believe the aesthetic value is a worthwhile investment in a music education. The piano, strings, voice, and traditional band instruments make incredibly beautiful sounds, which cannot be replicated electronically. The satisfaction of controlling that sound is what keeps a player working through any pain or fatigue. It is pure joy to make beautiful music through traditional instruments and the human voice. While I would have probably thrived in a praxial program, I know not all people fall in love with the beauty of playing a saxophone in a band. Reimer’s synergistic idea is to give students more reign to explore music, not just through practicing music. I like how Reimer is more of a generalist in music education. I think praxial is effective and good for some, but there are so many kids that we lose, and maybe being more general, and synergistic would appeal to more students.

Reading Estelle Jorgensen's writing helps me think creatively. I love her book, *Pictures of Music Education* (Jorgensen, 2011), not only because of the cool artwork, but also because of the vivid pictures she paints in my mind with her unique metaphors and models. I also greatly appreciate her worldly perspective on how and why people use and need music. She is a philosopher that covers all sides of an issue, and rarely officially lands on a conclusion. She is influential to me because she helps me think critically about what I am seeing, thinking, reading, and experiencing as a music teacher. Her writing always seems to be a tangled philosophical debate. At first, it is like trying to drink from a fire hydrant, but eventually, you realize how refreshing it is. Reading her helps me re-calibrate my thinking. One example of how her writing has impacted my philosophy is that I will forever think about her factory metaphor (Jorgensen, *Pictures of Music Education*, 2011, pp. 91-110). I do not want any music education program I am involved with to be based solely on numbers and machine-like precision. I am in the people business, not potato chips. The reason this metaphor is so striking is that sometimes it does feel like I am cranking out music students on a conveyor belt, and that is an uncomfortable feeling for me. Music education in public schools is generally efficient, and it is concerning to think about how efficiency may be dull the aesthetic value. I think this factory treatment of music could hurt our relevancy just as much as whether or not people feel the "school music" is what they like. Music education should be personal, and it should consist of meaningful interaction and progress toward meeting both student goals and music standards. Meeting goals and standards may sound like factory production, but when the goals are meaningful to the student and the standards are designed for both the teachers and students, then that is different than a factory where the goals and standards are decided by management driven by efficiency. Jorgensen also wrote a book called, *The Art of Teaching Music*, and the parts of that book that I read really spoke to me

because, like Eisner, she understands how teaching is an art. One quote from the book that I like is this: “In sum, we are happiest and most productive as teachers when we are true to ourselves, listen to our inner teachers, recognize our limitations, teach to our strengths, keep an open mind, and develop our art-craft” (Jorgensen, *The Art of Teaching Music*, 2008, p. 14). These are all very important goals for every teacher, especially in the field of music education.

In conclusion, I present to you a concise version of my philosophy of music education:

My philosophy of music education is that every child deserves a complete music education taught by highly qualified and certified music educators. I believe a complete music education requires the use of systematic methods of instruction which scaffold student knowledge, experience, and practice so that students may discover and refine their musical identity. Furthermore, I believe all children should have equal access to such music education programs, and therefore we must strengthen our public school system. I believe helping children find their musical voice is an awesome responsibility. A child and their musical voice are precious and beautiful and must be handled with care. I believe it is my duty and calling to keep learning and growing both as a musician and an educator so that I and my students can enjoy everything a musical life has to offer.

How My Philosophy Informs My Teaching

I believe the lessons I present in this paper are at least harmonious with my philosophy. I did not develop the lessons with the intent of them be a complete reflection of my philosophy, but I am sure they are my lessons, and if they are not aligned with my philosophy, then my philosophy must not be honest. So, let us take a critical look at comparing the lessons with my philosophy. I will use the concise version of my philosophy, and then add a reflection of my lesson after each statement.

My philosophy of music education is that every child deserves a complete music education taught by highly qualified and certified music educators. My lessons are for every child in my classes, not just select or private students. And, I am a highly qualified music educator, with a current license certified by the state of Kansas.

I believe a complete music education requires the use of systematic methods of instruction which scaffold student knowledge, experience, and practice so that students may discover and refine their musical identity. I am very fortunate to teach in a school that has a music curriculum developed by the teachers and supported with quality resources and materials. I love teaching at the elementary level because I have the students for six years, and I can see the impact of my lessons over the course of their elementary years. The lessons I present in this paper could be adapted for different grade levels. Both lessons in this paper allow students to create music, which is an important step in refining their musical identity.

Furthermore, I believe all children should have equal access to such music education programs, and therefore we must strengthen our public school system. The lessons in this paper require students have access to a variety of classroom music instruments, which are generally found in public school music classrooms.

I believe helping children find their musical voice is an awesome responsibility. A child and their musical voice are precious and beautiful and must be handled with care. In my lessons, I am not overly critical of student ideas. I tried to keep both lessons open to student creativity. I have learned that if I give too many parameters and expectations in the lessons, then I can easily inhibit the child's voice. That is not to say that I have low standards. Handling student creativity takes care, and I believe these lessons allow for that type of care.

I believe it is my duty and calling to keep learning and growing both as a musician and an educator so that I and my students can enjoy everything a musical life has to offer. These lessons were newly developed for this endeavor to learn more. Creating and executing these lessons is an example of my duty to keep learning and growing.

Chapter 2 - Lesson Plan(s)

Lesson Plan 1

Composing and performing a short musical motif in a third grade music classroom

I originally wrote this lesson for an assignment last summer. I made notes on changes to the original plan. The original plan is still good, and I want to retain the original plan, but show how I adapted for my reality this year.

Music Standards Being Addressed (National Association for Music Education, 2021):

MU:Cr1.1.3a Improvise rhythmic and melodic ideas, and describe connection to specific purpose and context (such as personal and social).

MU:Cr2.1.3b Use standard and/or iconic notation and/or recording technology to document personal rhythmic and melodic musical ideas.

MU:Cr3.1.3a Evaluate, refine, and document revisions to personal musical ideas, applying teacher-provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback.

MU:Cr3.2.3a Present the final version of personal created music to others, and describe connection to expressive intent.

MU:Pr5.1.3a - Apply teacher provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback to evaluate accuracy of ensemble performances.

MU:Pr5.1.3b Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities, and identified performance challenges.

MU:Pr6.1.3b Demonstrate performance decorum and audience etiquette appropriate for the context and venue.

Materials of Instruction:

- Book called *The Wind Blew*, by Pat Hutchins (1974).

I took pictures of each page, and used them to create an iMovie, which I recorded myself reading. Making an iMovie helps all students be able to see the pictures and it helps save the teacher's voice. I also added a title page over the pages where the kids would play, which indicated which part plays.

- Bank of instruments available for students to choose from; or sets of rhythm instruments at each station.
- 11 - 12 stations, with copies of individual book pages for each station: wind, umbrella, balloon, hat, kite, shirt, hanky, wig, letters, flag, scarves, newspapers.

**I made pictures of the specific item each station created their motif for. I also chose to have me represent the wind using a wind chime, which is why I had 11 stations.*

- Paper, markers, pencils for kid notation.
- Rubrics for self-evaluation.

Objective(s): Students will work in pairs or small groups to compose a short motif, using a variety of chosen instruments, which will be played for the class as part of a group performance of the story *The Wind Blew*, by Pat Hutchins (1974).

Lesson Sequence:

- **Engage:**

First, engage the students with a Dalcroze exercise: the teacher tells the story from the piano. The teacher reads and then plays a little music to match each scene.

Students listen to the story and move around as if being blown by the wind, in a way that matches the particular item being blown and matching the piano playing by the teacher.

The kids do not need to see the pictures for this first step. The teacher just goes to the piano with the book, reads each page, and improvises music for the kids to move around

to. *When I did this lesson for my demonstration video, I chose to not have the kids move as I improvised and read the story. I felt it would add too much time to start the project this way. The kids sat and listened.*

Next, ask the students to please sit quietly, and listen as you share the book. The teacher should make sure that students are able to see the book. I would either project using a document camera, or by scanning the book pages to project through the computer. *This is where I used the iMovie I made.*

Tell students that they will work in pairs (or small groups if large class) to compose a short bit of music to go with one page from the book. There are 12 pages that need music, and each pair will use instruments to figure out music.

Tell the students: “At first you will explore and improvise. Then, you will decide and practice. Then you will use some paper and markers to write down some way to remember your little song. After everyone has theirs written down and has some time to practice, we will perform the total book.”

- **Explore:**

First, the teacher needs to determine how to pair or group the kids.

When I did this lesson, I simply went down the rows, and assigned kids to stations, one per station first, then added a partner to some stations to give every student a part.

Once students are at their stations, they improvise and then plan their motif.

This could quickly get noisy, so have a pre-set signal so they know when to stop and listen for directions from you. I often have a signal of me playing a repeated chord on the piano to get their attention. I wait for silence, then give instructions.

When I did this lesson, I set up carts set with possible instruments. It saves time

and chaos to have the kids have their options already set and in front of them.

- **Explain:**

It is time for the kids to improvise and compose. Remind the kids that there are no wrong ideas. Walk around and assist. As groups start to get some ideas, give them paper and markers and pencils. Ask them to figure out a way to write down their idea, so that on another day they can remember how to play it. The teacher will keep the papers in the classroom. Give kids plenty of time to improvise and write it out. Some kids will need encouragement to spend more time, and others will struggle to get done in time. Before kids leave the first day (if your class periods are short like mine, this project will likely take several days), call the class to attention and have any groups that are ready, play their music for the class.

When I did this lesson for my teaching demonstration, I chose to not have the students write their compositions on paper. At this point in the semester, we had done that on another assignment, and it seemed too time consuming. I wanted to wrap this lesson up in 3-4 class periods, so the writing step was taken out this time.

- **Elaborate:**

This is where you have the kids practice putting the entire book and all the compositions together for their performance. Make sure the kids know the order of when their part goes (have the groups sit in order of the pages). Practice around the room a few times so they can do it without talking or laughing, or any other non-musical noises. In order for all the kids to participate in playing an instrument, the teacher would likely be the narrator of the book for the video performance.

Due to having the iMovie prepared in advance, I turned out the lights so the kids

could better focus on listening and watching the book. It also helped me to be able to cue because I was not trying to read and handle a book.

I had the students discuss ways to improve our performance after the first try. We performed the song a couple times to gain consistency and confidence.

- **Evaluate:**

First, have each group share their written music plan with the class. The teacher could also display these. You could put this step in during the practice phase, but it might cause some kids to then want to re-do theirs. That could be okay if you want to give more time, but it could also lead to everyone doing the same thing, which may not be good. So, I would probably put it after the performance. *I did not do this because we did not write our music down on paper.*

Next, pass out the rubric (see below) and writing utensil and ask kids to evaluate their compositions and performance. *I did not do this either because I felt our class discussions were good, and it seemed unnecessary.*


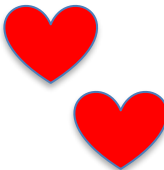
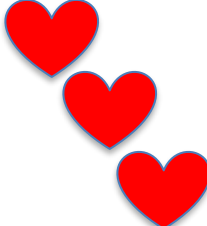






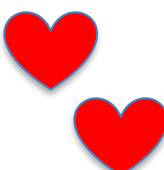



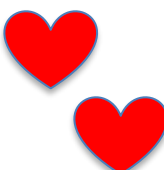


Assessment(s):

The teacher will assess students on active participation through observation. The teacher will also note completion of the composition and performance. Students that do not complete their part will be encouraged, and expected, to come in and work on it during recess or some other break in the day.

Teacher Evaluation: Every student should be evaluated for Participation, Cooperation, Improvisation, Writing, Performance, Self-Evaluation. I would give a + ✓ - for each.

Table 1

Student Self-Evaluation Rubric:

Improvising				
Practicing my part				
Writing the music on paper				
Performing				

My main goal for this lesson was to give the students a fun experience in playing the classroom instruments and creating a short bit of music. I think the kids enjoyed it and learned a little. They would have learned more if I would have had them write their music compositions, but that level seemed just too much at this point in the year. Sometimes it is best to know your limits and not to take something so far that the kids no longer think it is fun. The end of a project will determine what the kids remember about the experience. If it ends well, then they will learn that they enjoyed playing and creating music. If a project ends poorly, even if it had many great

components, then the kids will learn they did not like it. One instructional strategy that I used was to guide the students through failure leads to success. I allowed the students to experience a complete run through without stopping, and then I facilitated a class discussion on how they could improve it. The students had great ideas and comments, which they remembered and carried out for the next time. I facilitated the conversation, but the students took ownership of the performance. Rather than me giving all the directions and corrections (and probably having to repeat them), they helped each other, and figured out how to make it better. I allowed them to fail, so that they could figure out how to succeed. The only assessment I used was observational. Moving forward, I will always adjust to the needs of the class, and I noted some of the possibilities within the lesson plan. I believe this lesson expanded my thinking and enhanced my teaching practice because I have never before started a lesson this way. I chose a children's book off my shelf at home, and I improvised music on the piano to go with it. That was something I had never done before, and I grew from that. The students enjoyed me telling a story and improvising, and it was fun for them to create music for the book. I look forward to doing this again, with more books and grade levels. I can imagine even turning these books into performance pieces for programs.

Lesson Plan 2

Responding to Classical Music in Third Grade

Standards Being Addressed (National Association for Music Education, 2021):

MU:Re7.1.3a Demonstrate and describe how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, or purposes.

MU:Re7.2.3a Demonstrate and describe how a response to music can be informed by the structure, the use of the elements of music, and context (such as personal and social).

MU:Re8.1.3a Demonstrate and describe how the expressive qualities (such as dynamics and tempo) are used in performers' interpretations to reflect expressive intent.

MU:Cn10.0.3a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

MU:Cr2.1.3a Demonstrate selected musical ideas for a simple improvisation or composition to express intent, and describe connection to a specific purpose and context.

MU:Cr3.2.3a Present the final version of created music for others, and describe connection to expressive intent.

Materials of Instruction:

- Book: The Farewell Symphony by Anna Harwell Cadenza, illustrated by JoAnn E. Kitchel (2000)
- Recording of music: Symphony #45 in F Sharp Minor, (The Farewell Symphony), by Franz Joseph Haydn. CD came with the book (Cadenza & Kitchel, 2000).
- Paper and writing utensils.
- Basic music classroom instruments: wood blocks, triangles, xylophones, etc.

Lesson Sequence:

Entry Activity/Transition:

- As Ss enter the room, have the music playing.
- Ask students what instruments they heard.
- Ask Ss what genre of music they think it is.
- Invite students to pat beat and feel beat groupings while listening to excerpts from each movement of the symphony.

Activity #1 Objective: Students will be able to feel the beat groupings for each movement of the

symphony.

1. Tell the Ss that you are going to listen again, but this time they are to quietly tap the beat with their fingers and try to determine the strong beat/weak beat pattern. T plays the 1st movement and observes students.
2. When it appears that students have mostly figured it out, or have had enough time to, T shows the beat pattern with movement for Ss to all join in.
3. Repeat the process for each of the 4 movements.
4. This activity should only take about 5 minutes.

Assessment: The T should be observing the Ss and making sure they are actively participating and showing the correct beat patterns.

Transition: Say, “Great job. You all were doing a good job of listening and showing the beat patterns. Now you can relax and enjoy this book about this song.”

Activity #2 Objective: Students will be able to understand how Hadyn’s music expressed feelings and was a message to the audience.

1. Ask Ss to listen and watch the T-made video of reading of the book. The entire book, with the information at the end, is 18:17. I choose to not put clips of the music in the book because I knew that would make it even longer. It could easily be done and would make the listening to the story more interesting. I would not want the music to be in the background to the reading because I find that to be sort of overwhelming to listen to music and speaking at the same time. I do think short clips of the music between the pages of reading would excellent, but I have 20 minute class periods, and I did not want this to take more than one class period.

Assessment: Check for understanding by asking questions about what happened in the story.

“Why did the musicians want to leave?” “Why did the prince not let the families visit?” “Why didn’t the musicians just leave?” “Why did Hadyn write this symphony?” “Why did the musicians walk off stage during the performance?”

Transition: Say, “Now that we have heard this story, we are going to act out the final movement.”

Activity #3 Objective: Ss will demonstrate understanding of what happened in the final movement and show their ability to listen closely for musical cues and then act accordingly.

1. Tell Ss we are going to act out this story by first setting up as the orchestra.
2. Show students a picture of how the classical orchestra was seated, and which instruments were used.
3. Help students imagine that they are in an orchestra. “Where would the violins be?”

Figure out the sections and divide up the students into the sections.

The orchestra for the Farewell Symphony had: 1 Bassoon, 2 oboes, 2 horns, 1 cello, 2 violas, 8-10 violins, 1 double bass. If a class has more than 19 kids, have extra instruments on hand so all students have a part and seat in the orchestra.

4. Ask for a volunteers to be Hadyn and Tomassinni. T chooses.
5. Ask for a volunteer to be the prince. T chooses.
6. Give students little paper cut-outs of the instrument they represent.
7. Tell students that when it is time for them to leave, where they will go, and to be quiet in order to fit the mood of what really happened. They can also pretend to snuff out a candle. They can leave their instrument on their chair (so they aren’t playing with them offstage). It would be an added bit of fun to use flashlights to represent the candles, and have the lights turned down.

8. Go over the order of leaving. Tell students to watch for cue to leave.
9. Begin the Finale music and all act as if playing while listening. Due to the restlessness of young students, it may be a good idea to skip through some of the longer playing sections.
10. T cues students when to leave.

2:45 pause in music and switch to adagio,

4:12 pause in music and an oboe and horn leave, followed by the bassoon and other oboe soon after.

5:15 remaining horns leave.

5:50 double basses leave.

6:44 cellos leave.

7:15 violas and violins leave, leaving only Haydn and Tomassinni (2 violins) to play a haunting duet.

End of music: Haydn and Tomassinni quietly walk off.

The Prince pauses, thinks, understands, then claps, yells Bravo, and announces it is time for them to all go home.

Assessment: The T observes Ss and coaches as needed.

Transition: Say, “Thank you to everyone for your role in our acting out of something that really happened about 200 years ago. You did great, and that was fun!”

Activity #4 Objective: Ss will create a short musical phrase that expresses something they want to say.

1. Review what happened in the book. Briefly discuss how music can express something without using words.

2. Explain to Ss how they are going to work with a partner to create a short musical phrase to express something they want to say.
3. Give directions: students will first pair up, then be given paper and pencils to write down their ideas. They will agree on a statement and a feeling they want to express. They will then choose instruments to express their statement. They will then practice and decide what exactly to play. The final step will be to present.
4. T has students stand up/hand up/pair up/sit down.
5. Once pairs are settled and spread out, T delivers paper and pencils for them to write down their statement and instrument ideas.
6. Ss discuss and write. Once Ss have ideas written down, they may go choose instruments from the instrument bank.
7. T can determine the appropriate amount of time for students to work.
8. In my case, we finished and presented their short musical expressions during the next class period. For me, this activity took 2 class periods (total of 40 min.).
9. Pairs volunteer to play and everyone listens, then tries to guess what they were saying. I kept this very informal, with each group staying in place sitting on the floor where they were working.

Assessment: T observes participation, cooperation, effort, and creativity. T notes in gradebook Ss who are doing a poor job. I find most children do a great job. If one student in a class is uncooperative, make a note in the gradebook, and continue to encourage them.

Closure/follow-up: The Ss playing for each other, and guessing their statements, is the closing activity. The T may want to collect the papers to mark them for the gradebook. If time, the Ss returning to their seats and having a brief closing discussion to tie it all together

would be good. A good discussion point could be on how they chose instruments to fit their statement. I would avoid over analyzing what should have been a fun activity. I would not want to sour a fun musical experience with comments that may make a student feel like they did not do well. The point was not to have high standards on composing and performing, but rather to better understand why Haydn wrote his symphony, and to have a little experience in choosing sounds for expression.

Chapter 3 - Reflections

When I started the Master of Music Education Program three years ago, I started a challenging and rewarding journey. I feel that I have learned so much since I began, and I am excited to keep teaching elementary music.

The first learning curve was with technology. When I applied to the graduate school, I also completed a test to see if I was ready for graduate school. The one area that was of some concern was my understanding of technology. I was not surprised because I'm in my 40s, have been in the elementary music classroom for 20 years, and technology is something I would rather not have to use. But I felt strongly that I could not let that be the issue that stopped me from getting my master's degree. I am too young to act that old! As I mentioned in my abstract, I realized I needed to work on my comfort with music composition software, like Garage Band, when I was in Introduction to Graduate Studies in Music. Another class that pushed my technology comfort zone was Dr. Gurgel's when we had to make video lessons. That was before this last school year, and there were a lot of details to figure out and a lot of trial and error. Fortunately, I have become much better at making video lessons since that class. The pandemic gave me a lot of opportunity to get better. The many times I felt I had a lot to learn, regarding technology, I also felt it was worth the effort. Each experience of having to figure out the technology, ultimately improved my confidence and gave me another tool. I am so glad that I went through those challenges before this pandemic.

I do believe my thought processes have evolved because of the classes and professors in this program. I think differently about what my students need. I would say that prior to the master's classes, I was more focused on my students having good discipline and giving good programs. Now, I am much more focused on the creativity and feelings kids experience when in

my music classroom. I want the kids to embrace their musical voice. Because of the study on major methods of elementary music education, I have a much better understanding of what the methods can do and what I want to use. I like all four of the methods, and I am now understanding how I move through them. This understanding has been very helpful as I have been learning a new curriculum resource called Quaver. My school district purchased this for us due to the pandemic and requirements for us to teach virtually. As I have studied the Quaver resource, I have recognized the theories behind the lessons. This past school year has been so full of firsts, and so different than any of my prior years, that I honestly do not yet have a full perspective on all that we have been through. I do know that as I continuously created new lessons in order to meet the needs of this unusual situation, I had many ideas that I am fairly sure I would not have had prior to my graduate classes. And I think that is at least partly because my priority shifted from performance and discipline to creativity and enjoyment. That shift started before the pandemic restrictions forced many of the changes. Now, I know that as I plan to return my classes to “normal” I will have a different approach than I did before. Some of that is what I learned from the pandemic, but I think a lot of what I learned was because my mind had been opened from the classes.

One example of what I hope to do differently next year, when we are hopefully free of COVID-19 restrictions, such as wearing masks, social distancing, and no singing; is to incorporate more of the lessons and ideas I learned in Dr. Gurgel’s classes. I cannot wait to get the kids singing, dancing, and playing instruments again! I have always done those things, but after taking Dr. Gurgel’s “Seminar in Elementary Music Methodologies and Theories: Kodaly, Orff, Gordon, Dalcroze” class, I have really felt excited about using the resources and lesson ideas from the class. The “Together in Harmony” book, by Diane M. Lange (2005), has many

great lessons and pulls together Orff and Gordon, which makes learning and teaching fun. I have tried several of the lessons in the book, and they have been a lot of fun. I also have used the “Dalcroze Eurhythmics in Today’s Music Classroom” by Virginia Hoge Mead (1994), and have enjoyed the results. Starting class with a little Eurythmics activity, such as exploring movement, is instantly engaging. Last summer, I took Dr. Gurgel’s “Improvisation and Composition in the Elementary Curriculum” class and was inspired to use those concepts in my lessons for this project. I also just love the basic idea that kids should be free to create, and that it is my job to provide the opportunities to do that in a safe and fun music classroom. The book for that class, “Music Outside the Lines” by Maud Hickey (2012), also had many great ideas. The three books I mentioned above have been the most inspiring and useful to me, so far.

The books and readings from Dr. Rosine’s class, “Survey of Vocal Solos for the Adolescent Voice” have also been influential. After taking the class, I was not able to practice the things I had learned because one of the many COVID restrictions we had in our schools was to not have singing in elementary music classrooms. While I changed the focus from teaching kids to sing songs, to instead doing rhythmic or instrumental activities with songs, if the kids sang along, I admit that I did not stop them. “Finding Ophelia’s Voice, Opening Ophelia’s Heart” by Lynne Gackle (2011), was a great read, and full of helpful information about the developing voice. I also loved “The Private Voice Studio Handbook” by Joan Frey Boytim (2003, 2014). Even though I teach in a classroom setting, the idea of teaching privately is also very appealing, and I feel like this book is extremely smart and helpful for anyone wanting to teach private lessons, on any instrument.

My thought process has also been changed by Dr. Payne’s classes. I am glad I was able to take his “Research Methods in Music Education” class my first semester. After so many years

away from the college world, research has changed a lot, and I needed this class to understand how much research is out there, and how to find it. Creating the research project was very challenging, and although I never actually put my action research project into action, I feel that it was good work, and I learned a lot from that process. The book, “Introduction to Educational Research” (Mertler, 2019), will be a helpful resource if I find I need to carry out a research project in the future. I am not sure that I need to carry out the project I created, but I know I needed to learn how to develop and set up an action research project. These projects are how education moves forward and are important tools for making decisions. Most School Boards expect research behind the changes that teachers and administrators request. I found it all very fascinating, and it reminded me why the college and academia world is so engrossing. Like all of Dr. Payne’s classes, I felt like this could have easily been divided into two classes. I learned a lot, and it made me feel proud and academic. I feel the same about the “History and Philosophy of Music Education” class. The breadth of information we covered was enormous. The reason that level of learning has changed me is because it really expanded my range of what is possible. There was so much I did not know before, and it was exciting to take it all in. To have a sliver of understanding about our history is like opening the door of a dark room into a bright hallway. The light just comes flooding in, and it is so inspiring. I loved every bit of it, and I am grateful to have been able to soak so much in. Of course, remembering it is another story! I will have to go back and re-read some of the history book, “A History of American Music Education” (Mark & Gray, 2007). It is always important to remember and appreciate our history.

I am forever improved because of this master’s program. It took a lot for me to decide to enroll. I had never wanted to get a degree just to move over on the pay scale. I wanted a degree that was engaging and helpful to me as a music teacher. I knew I did not want a master’s in

administration or curriculum, as so many teachers get because those are what is most available. I am so happy to be a music teacher, and I wanted to honor what I love by getting a master's degree in my specialty. I was extremely happy to learn that K-State offers exactly what I wanted. I am proud of my summers of graduate school at Kansas State University, and I want to thank the amazing professors for their inspiration, wisdom, hard work, and example of awesomeness!

Thank you!

Chapter 4 - References

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