2009

Using Music with Read-Alouds

Michael James Bento
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USING MUSIC WITH READ-ALOUDS

A Project Report

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education

Master Teacher

by

Michael James Bento

May 2009
USING MUSIC WITH READ-ALOUDS

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The primary purpose of this project is to explore and expand the connection between music and picture book read-alouds. The literature review looks at the established educational value of the read-aloud as well as the use of music and how it has been used to help teach reading. Also, literature looking at student music preferences and the use of music as a tool for increasing intelligence is reviewed. Additionally, critical thinking skills and the subject specific area of music listening is examined. The process of the picture book selection and recorded music selection is explained and the project suggests music to be played as accompaniment with selected picture books. The end product is a brochure which lists musical suggestions for accompanying a list of 24 recommended picture books. A student study was conducted and introduced fifth and sixth grade subjects to music concepts through guided listening and several educational approaches. These subjects selected music accompaniment choices for three given read-alouds. Results of the student study gave insight into existing subject musical knowledge, the ability to reason and select music for a book match, the effectiveness of educational techniques and tools used in the study, and compared subject and researcher music choices.
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Lastly, I would like to thank my family, Lori, Avery, and Quincy Rose. Thank you for supporting me as I was gone to learn something new and spending more time staring at a computer screen than your cartwheels, swimming lessons and soccer camps. I love all three of you even more.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Music has a natural appeal to humans and is an accepted study and worthy pursuit unto itself. Plato once stated, “Music is a more potent instrument than any other for education and children should be taught music before anything else” (Towell, 1999, p. 288). Many music educators work to preserve this ideal through comprehensive music programs. At the same time, music has also been used to aid in the teaching of other subjects in K-12 schools. Many young children learn their ABC’s as a song long before they are acquainted with the shapes or sounds of individual letters (Langfit, 1994).

Hill-Clarke and Robinson (2004) suggest that music as a classroom subject has three basic functions, primary, secondary and music simply for music’s sake. Primary functions might include using music to teach specific academic skills such as word recognition, and phonemic awareness. Secondary use would focus on using music for transition activities as well as using background music for reading and writing activities. Music for its own sake includes the learning of notes, rhythms, composers and music production. Music teachers typically focus on teaching music for its own sake, yet some may struggle to balance the demands of teaching music with requests to use music class time in support non-music skills (Hansen & Bernstorf, 2002). The request of creating cross curricular thematic ties to classroom study units has been asked of the researcher specifically numerous times. Balkin (1999a) feels music educators should be accepting of these primary and secondary usage requests to support non-music skills. Balkin suggests
that music teachers adopt a broader, more altruistic philosophy, one that permits them to use their knowledge and talent where needed, whether its music, math, or reading.

Research has looked at a similarity between music learning and reading and some music skills are thought to parallel skills needed to be a successful reader. These include the skills of fluency, decoding, phonological and orthographic awareness (Hansen & Bernstorff, 2002). Additionally, applied to the teaching of reading, music has been used to make the reading process more accessible, interesting and effective for students.

Many classroom teachers, librarians and music specialists share books in a read-aloud, a planned, oral reading of a book. It is an accepted practice, a tried and true educational technique, and is done on a regular basis in homes, classrooms, and libraries. However in most educational settings, musical accompaniment is rarely included with a read-aloud. What effect might the addition of music to a read-aloud have on a book listening experience?

In the entertainment industry, music plays an important role. If one views a movie or television show, an accompanying, musical soundtrack is always added. This enhances the mood and creates a more complete sensory experience for the viewer. The film industry values this and honors best musical scores and songs yearly.

As it does in a film, would music enhance a read-aloud presentation? If there existed a list of pre-recorded music which fit a particular well loved and respected book on a one-to-one basis, would this be of help to a teacher trying to implement a read aloud with an accompanying soundtrack? In addition, is there a method that might be used to teach the process of selecting music for accompanying a reading to a student or an
interested educator? These are questions the researcher hoped this project would supply answers for.

Background

The initial idea for this project began in an effort to develop or expand the music and reading connection. The researcher of this project had worked for 26 years as a music specialist in three school districts, teaching in elementary, middle and high school settings. As a professional musician, the researcher also was a performer in numerous musical groups including symphony orchestras, percussion ensembles, jazz combos, rock, country western and steel drum bands. By utilizing the researcher's background knowledge and numerous years of experience teaching and playing music, combined with a new interest in the teacher/librarian and the teaching of reading, the project idea developed. It was hoped the expertise of the researcher could aide classroom teachers and librarians to develop another connection between books and music. Additionally, it was desired to couch this project in a product and process potentially useful to other educators of music, as well as teachers of literacy and library.

Refinement of the project idea developed along two specific lines: (a) to develop a guide or brochure for teachers to connect specific picture book read-alouds to pre-recorded musical accompaniments and (b) to develop and implement a student study to teach the process of listening to and selecting music for read-alouds. In an effort to use a triangulation model, this two tiered approach provided a more balanced perspective to learning about the process, gathering information from not only the researcher but student subjects as well. Additionally, student subjects would benefit from a constructivist,
student centered approach, developing listening skills, and awareness of subtleties in
music and books while taking an active, integral role within the study.

The intended outcome of the project had four aims: (a) create a guide/brochure for
educators with specific music matches for specific books (b) to explore the use of specific
educational and technological tools and methods while developing a process for use by
students and educators to aide in the selection of music for a book as well as examining
their effectiveness and potential (c) to gain insight into student opinions and knowledge
with regard to the study processes and music choices (d) to compare final music
selections for several specific books to researcher choices.

With the guide/brochure, educators would be able to take specific music to book
combinations and if desired, enhance their own read-aloud presentations. As time is one
of the things educators seem to have a limited supply of, it was hoped that a guide would
help teachers and librarians try out this idea quickly and efficiently. By providing
educators with a pre-selected matching of books and music, regardless of its subjectivity,
these teachers would have a place to start with minimal time and effort required on their
part. An additional outcome of the project would be to explore an online music source
and method for selecting and playing back music from this source.

The project literature review needed to look at several topics. This included
reading education with emphasis on the read-aloud, music education and music listening
in particular, brain research in relation to music learning, as well as various educational
learning strategies. As a result, the project would produce an educational product and
process that could potentially be of help to students, music specialists, classroom teachers, librarians and parents.

Justification

Conceptually, the student study was conceived to compliment and expand the overall project goal of working with the idea and process of adding music to a read-aloud. Specifically, it was an attempt to design a way to teach students how to select this music. Based on supplied instructional information and choices, as well as their own subjective opinions, the student subjects were asked to select a single piece of music to accompany a given read-aloud picture book. Additional goals included giving subjects an experience that would be of benefit to them while at the same time developing and testing a process other educators could use if desired.

Questions the study was designed to help answer included: (a) What crucial musical concepts should students be aware of when they are listening to, comparing, analyzing, and evaluating a given piece of music? (b) What is the best method to teach these musical concepts in relation to listening to music? (c) How can this study be couched in a solid and varied educational approach to maximize learning by students? (d) What tools (such as graphic organizers) would be necessary to support students through this process and how should these tools be designed? (e) Can this process be duplicated by an educator if they should want to try this process on their own? (f) How would student musical choices compare to the researcher’s choices for a given book?

With these questions in mind, goals for the project study became focused into three areas: (a) the use of general educational methods such as developing critical
thinking skills, cooperative learning structures, and graphic organizers, as well as the effectiveness of technology tools and the inclusion of elements of reading education (b) music education with emphasis on listening skills and focus on basic fundamentals including tempo, dynamics and expressiveness (c) specific project implementation goals including developing methods and tools to teach all these concepts.

In terms of educational content, the study was designed to provide a rich variety of experiences for the students through use of multiple educational approaches. This included opportunities to allow students to develop and work on higher level, critical thinking skills such as comparing, classifying, and predicting. To achieve this, the study incorporated many established teaching components including, teacher modeling, student metacognitive reflection, student and teacher led conversation and discussion, guided cueing, use of graphic organizers or scaffolding tools, and continued practice, all recommended steps in the development of thinking skills. Additionally, students were given many opportunities for individual reflection, opinion and expression.

Cooperative learning structures such as Think-Pair-Share were included to enhance student interaction and conversation. For some students this was a motivational tool and for others this was an opportunity to develop communication and social skills. In any case, a wider, more varied experience was a natural product of class discussion and teacher feedback, as well as the large and small group conversations which were structured throughout the process. The benefit of including multiple ways of participating included giving students a richer, more diverse experience.
From a reading instruction perspective, the project was designed to expose student subjects to several educator recommended and well respected picture books in a read-aloud format. The benefits of listening to a teacher read include modeled reading fluency and expressiveness. During and after the reading, the students were questioned about the plot, characters, illustrations, and setting of the books, in an effort to improve student inference and comprehension.

The use of current educational technology tools was also designed to be an important component to the project study. These included document camera and SMART Board™ presentations. The use of sound reproduction tools such as compact discs burned from iPod and iTunes™ downloads was central to the study.

As the literature review pointed out, music listening is an important and critical area of music education. Listening was also critical to the success and understanding of this project’s goals. As a result, the study was designed to focus on teaching students about specific music concepts from within the context of music listening. The concepts chosen for this project are some of the fundamentals of music theory and include tempo, dynamics, instrumentation and expressiveness among others. Through listening, it was intended for students to be exposed to numerous styles of music, a variety of instrumentation formats, as well as music from different cultures and countries. As Woody (2004) recommends, the listening lessons were not passive in design, but were focused on having students actively involved in mental processes and decisions.

In terms of project specific goals, the study was to serve as a vehicle to learn about the process of teaching how to select music for a read-aloud. This included training
students in this process, comparing the student responses to teacher selections, and offering a model for other educators to try this with their own students or for their own educational use with read-alouds.

Scope

The project guide/brochure identified a specific and manageable quantity of books for read-aloud selection: 19 pictures books aimed primarily for primary and intermediate grades as well as 5 books with appeal for intermediate and secondary use. These books were selected from a compiled list of suggestions from various local educators and cross referenced with the literature for broad-based acceptance and critical acclaim. The source for the specific musical selections was iTunes™, an accessible and wide ranging online collection of commercially available music.

The student study was confined to two classes of elementary school, intermediate aged, general music students (totaling 46), currently taught by the researcher. This student population was ethnically and culturally diverse and reflected the student population of the researcher’s K-6 school. More complete details of the subject population are included in the student study section of Chapter III. The study lasted for approximately a month with results focused on student selection of music for three of the 24 project books as well as student feedback, both written and oral, on the study.

The literature review for the project thoroughly examined such issues as the validity of using the read-aloud as a method of teaching reading as well as its use in various settings and grade levels. The value of music study with regard to brain development and the connection between music and reading was examined. The use of
music by other researchers and educators to enhance reading and specifically the read-aloud was researched. Additionally, the development of student critical thinking skills and music listening as a subject specific thinking skill were explored.

Limitations

Ideally, one outcome of the project would be the development of a music compilation compact disc (CD) to match the list of suggested read-alouds on the guide/brochure, copied and made available to all interested educators. This CD product would make the process very convenient for a teacher to implement music with a selected read-aloud; they would have the music selections in hand and available with no effort on their part. Unfortunately, copyright violations prohibit the purchase of an artist’s recordings and compiling them for free distribution. However, if a teacher acquires music legally, they may use it in their classroom for an educational purpose such as a classroom read-aloud (Simpson, 2005). Having this CD made available for checkout from the school library may offer a solution to this dilemma. The teacher may own the music and make a CD copy, sharing this with other teachers from within the school library. It may be also possible for a school to set up an iTunes™ account, purchase the songs and transfer to CD, keeping this housed as a school library checkout item. Simpson (2005) states, “You may make a single copy of a sound recording of copyrighted music (as long as the recording is owned by the school or an individual teacher) for the purpose of constructing ‘aural exercises’” (p. 101). Simpson goes on to say this derivative recording may be retained by the school or teacher. Though copyright legality issues are difficult to interpret, this idea looks to be acceptable.
As a result, the product of the project legally cannot be CDs of suggestions for book soundtracks, available to all. Instead, the project goal would need to be content providing teachers with a written guide of suggestions for musical accompaniment to be paired with books. The limitation with this product may be that many teachers may not have the time, money, equipment or desire to locate the suggested music to prepare this activity.

An additional important limitation to the guide/brochure is the bias of the researcher in the selection of the music for each book; music choices were subjective and colored by the influences of the researcher. The researcher’s musical background and experiences certainly create a preference for one music style over another, one music selection over another, even instrument choice preference. Another individual could be expected to select an entirely different set of music choices given the same book list.

Once the music is selected and purchased, it needs to be played through some kind of system such as a portable CD stereo, iPod, MP3, or some other device with a compatible playback system. Some educators may not have access to these.

The whole project assumes a teacher values and uses the read-aloud in their classroom, specifically the picture book read-aloud. Teachers who do not use the read-aloud format might have little use for this information as a result. Though many teachers use the read-aloud to some degree, the review of the literature seems to suggest reduced use of read-alouds may apply more to teachers of intermediate aged and older students.

The student study was limited in size and scope. Subjects were confined to two classes and for the most part, fifth and sixth grades. Although approximately 38% of the
subjects were from ethnically diverse backgrounds, both classes were limited to the same school. The subjects chosen were a convenience sample and already assigned to the researcher’s class schedule. They were not necessarily a representative sample of all schools within the researcher’s much larger school district, and not of the whole state. Subjects from other school populations might produce results that differ from this project’s. The study produced limited quantitative data but did provide insight into the process as well as student thought and understanding.

Definition of Terms

**Aesthetic Response** - Readers focus on what they are living through during the reading and respond to thoughts, ideas, and feelings that arise as a result (Albright, 2002).

**Ambient Music** - A music genre that is mainly instrumental, featuring electronics and inconsistent beat and intended to create a relaxing or peaceful atmosphere or mood (http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/ambient%20music).


**Docking** - The iPod Dock Connector is the interface used by most iPods to connect to computers and sync data back and forth. The Dock Connector is a small slot on the bottom of the iPod into which the included iPod cable fits. It is also the interface used by many iPod peripherals, such as docks, car kits, portable speakers, etc. (Costello, 2008).

**Efferent Response** - Readers focus on information to be remembered after the reading (Albright, 2002).

Mood - A distinctive emotional quality or character (http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mood).

Orthographic Awareness - 1. Of or pertaining to orthography, or right spelling; also, correct in spelling; as, orthographical rules; the letter was orthographic (http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Orthographic).

Phonemic Awareness - Sensitivity to and awareness of the fact that sounds make up spoken words; being able to discriminate between consonants and to sequence each small unit of sound (phoneme) in a word (Routman, 2003, p. A-14).

Phonemic Segmentation - Children break a word into its separate sounds, saying each sound as they tap out or count it. Then they write and read the sounds (http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/summerworkshop/valdes/edlite-slide025.html).

Picture books - Books defined by their format not their content and may be of any genre including poetry. They are unique because illustrations and text share the job of telling the story or teaching content. No other type of literature works in this manner (Jacobs & Tunnell, 2004, pg. 174).


Reading aloud - Teachers (or students) fluently read aloud excellent fiction and non-fiction to the class; hearing the material allows students to listen to ideas and vocabulary
they may not yet be ready to read on their own and introduces them to new authors and

**Scaffolding** - An instructional technique in which a teacher breaks complex tasks into
smaller component tasks, models the task, and creates links to students’ existing
knowledge. Scaffolding supports students in their learning until they are ready to pursue a
task independently (http://www.learnnc.org/reference/scaffolding).

**SMART Board** - A large, touch controlled screen that works with a projector and a

**Soundtrack** - The narrow band on one or both sides of a motion-picture film on which
sound is recorded. The sound recorded on a motion-picture film; audio portion of a film

**Vibroacoustic Chair** - A beanbag-type chair with internal speakers that allow a person
sitting in the chair to feel the vibrations of the music in his or her body (Carlson,
Hoffman, Gray & Thompson, 2004, ¶ 5).

**Whole Language Approach** - An activities based classroom in which children are
learning to read by reading, learning to write by writing and otherwise engaged in
meaning centered, integrated language arts activities (Slaughter, 1988).

A whole language approach requires that the instructional material be meaningful to the
child, that the language be treated as a meaningful message from author to reader, and
that the teacher’s role is to assist . . . In a whole language approach to reading and
writing, the units of language are sentences and story units (Harp, 1988).
The whole language approach helps children recognize whole words by sight and use the context of the sentence to figure out meaning (Flohr, 2006).

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This review of literature is divided into seven sections. The first section looks at the use of the read-aloud, and its validity and effectiveness as an aid to teaching reading in various grades. The second section explores the general connection between music and reading. The third section specifically focuses on what the literature says about enhancing the read-aloud with music. The fourth section explores what is written about the general educational areas of critical thinking skills and cooperative learning. The fifth section looks into the claims that studying music makes people smarter. The sixth section discusses research into what musical preferences children and adults exhibit. The last section looks at music listening specifically.

The Read-Aloud

The findings of the 1985 Commission on Reading state, “the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children” (Trelease, 2006, p. 3). In fact, because of the strong positive effects of oral reading to students, this commission recommended less emphasis on workbook activity and more emphasis on sustained silent reading as well as oral reading by the teacher. Furthermore, the Commission urged teachers to continue reading to students through all grades (Jacobs, Morrison, & Swinyard, 2000; Trelease, 2000).

Routman (1991) recommends that the practice of oral reading to children because of its positive effects on reading abilities and attitudes as well as saying it is one of the easiest and most inexpensive ways to help children learn to read. Routman (2003) also
feels that “students need to know not only that we read but how we read.” (p. 37). Jacobs and Tunnell (2004) stated that in all studies they reviewed, reading aloud seemed to be a must and that daily reading aloud from enjoyable trade books was the key that unlocked growth for many struggling readers.

Historically, reading aloud has a rich history. More than two thousand years ago Hebrew fathers were urged by the Talmud to take their children on their laps and read to them. Christian monastic life called for meals to be taken in silence “except for the spoken word of the monk designated to read aloud to the diners” (Trelease, 2006, p. 10).

There is a history of the read-aloud being used in the labor force as well. In the 1800’s when the cigar industry was blossoming, the Cuban workers who rolled the cigars by hand wanted to make the rolling process less monotonous. They came up with the idea of having a person read to them while they worked. These readers sat upon raised platforms in the middle of the rooms and read-aloud daily for four hours. This included reading from newspapers, novels, political authors, short stories, even from Shakespeare. This lasted until the 1930’s when cigar sales slumped due to the Great Depression. Factory owners declared the readings had to stop, a decision that apparently was met with great protest (Trelease, 2006).

It is suggested that reading aloud should begin at home. Trelease (2006) postulates what is happening when a parent reads aloud to their child and feels that three important things happen: (a) a pleasure connection is being made between the child and the book, (b) both parent and child are learning something from the book they’re sharing
(double learning), and (c) the adult is pouring sounds and syllables called words into the child’s ear.

Trelease (2006) further feels that regular conversation at home gives children basic vocabulary but reading to a child exposes them to rare words that will help them most when they go to school and into formal learning. Trelease cites a study by Hart and Risley (1996) which attempted to calculate the quantity of words children were exposed to from forty two families, in three different socio-economic classes, projected out over four years. The results showed meaningful differences among the forty two families:

The four year old from the professional family will have heard 45 million words, the four year old from the working class family will have heard 26 million and the welfare child only 13 million. All three children show up for kindergarten on the same day but one will have heard 32 million fewer words. . . . It’s not the toys in the house that make the difference in children’s lives; it’s the words in their heads. (p. 15)

Besides the home, the classroom is another setting which should focus on the read-aloud. Reading aloud, in all grades, has long been considered a critical factor in producing successful readers (Routman, 2003). What is being done in schools in this regard? Jacobs et al. (2000) did a study to examine how often students are read to and which teachers are doing so. A national sample of kindergarten through sixth grade teachers in the United States were asked to fill out a survey on their practices pertaining to how many times they read out loud to their students. The survey asked the subjects to indicate a scale measure, which best reflected about how many out of the last 10 school
days they had used each activity listed in their classrooms. These included reading aloud of picture books, textbooks, chapter books and informational books, among others. 1,874 teachers responded to the mailed questionnaire.

The study found a significant, linear relationship between teachers reading orally to students and grade level. "Teachers in the primary grades read more frequently to their students than teachers in the intermediate grades" (Jacobs et al., 2000, p. 184). It seems that as students advance through the elementary grade levels they begin to experience the read-aloud less frequently. Interestingly, the study's demographics component found that older teachers read less often to their students than younger teachers.

In drawing a conclusion, the authors stated that oral book reading does occur often in elementary classrooms and that although students of all ages benefit from this practice, not all students have access to teachers who read aloud in class. It is suggested that "teachers should be aware of their own practice and attend to the literacy needs of their students on a regular basis" (Jacobs et al., 2000, p. 191).

Does this trend of higher elementary grade levels equating to less read-aloud time continue beyond elementary school? Albright and Ariail (2005) conducted a survey among middle school teachers to find out the extent this group of teachers read-aloud to their students, what types of texts they use, and what reasons they give for reading aloud or not reading aloud. Although small in scope by being limited to one school district and getting responses from only 141 subjects, the results of this survey give a snapshot into middle school read-aloud practice.
Overall, 85.8% of the teachers in the study reported reading aloud to their students. The most common reason teachers gave for reading aloud was to model aspects of fluent reading. Teachers also specified that ensuring all students were exposed to the same information in a text as motivation for reading aloud. The types of texts most commonly read were textbooks and chapter books. Less than one fourth of the teachers noted using picture books, newspapers or magazines. There was also a lack of non-fiction chapter books read aloud. In summary the authors, “were encouraged to find that most teachers valued reading aloud to their students and allocated time to do so. However, we were concerned to see so little attention given to the aesthetic purposes of reading” (Albright & Ariail, 2005, p. 585). The authors suggest that middle school teachers explore other uses of the read-aloud including using award winning books, as well as picture books, many of which the authors say are quite sophisticated and appropriate for older children.

For the middle school student, the read-aloud, specifically picture book read-alouds, can be used to teach specific content area. Because of their short format, in-depth treatment, wide variety of topics, as well as their visual and content appeal, this book genre would seem ideal for any number of teacher uses. By combining a well planned reading with class discussions, a teacher can help students to draw both aesthetic and efferent responses. “Students in read-aloud groups learned as much content knowledge as students receiving regular instruction. This may have occurred because the read-loud sessions promoted higher level thinking and engagement . . .” (Albright, 2002, p. 426).
Routman (2003) cites Ivey and Broaddhus (2001) in saying that middle school students preferred independent reading and teacher read-alouds above most other activities (p. 97). Read-alouds have been successfully used with high school students as well. When asked by a colleague for ways to help low achieving, high school readers get excited about books, Blessing (2005) suggested read-alouds, pointing to boosts in reading comprehension, increased vocabularies and better writing skills. The author feels that students who are read to are more motivated to read to themselves, increasing the likelihood that they will one day become independent, lifelong readers. Blessing recommends some techniques to make a read-aloud more effective for older students. These include lowering the lights, allowing students to doodle while listening, class discussions about the readings, keeping journals and playing music to accompany the read-aloud [italics added]. With the preponderance of the young adult (YA) novel, the read aloud can also take the form of listening to a book on tape, CD or MP3 (Lesesne, 2006). Routman also recommends including picture books for older readers and chapter books for younger readers in the read-aloud format. The author feels that many of the older students may have the attitude that if it's not a chapter book it's not acceptable.

There are suggested teacher techniques to make most of the benefits of read-aloud experiences. One valuable aspect of the read-aloud activity is for students to get experience with decontextualized language, or language that requires them to make sense of ideas that are about something beyond the here and now. One approach to this end is a strategy called Text Talk. The authors suggest teachers start by selecting books that were intellectually challenging and might provide the grist for children to explore and use
language to explain ideas. They develop questioning strategies ahead of time and plan when to introduce these questions in the story. The pictures in the book are considered carefully and incorporated when deemed correct by the teacher. Children may also need help in bringing their own background knowledge to bear in appropriate ways and not in random personal anecdotes. Vocabulary acquisition and practice is considered important as well as developing suggestions for follow up questions to build meaning from the story (Beck & McKeown, 2001).

Others seem to believe in keeping the read-aloud simple and suggest focusing on the experience rather than the technique. Codell (2003) recommends: (a) love the book you’re reading, (b) make the read-aloud time special and cozy, (c) share the pictures while you read, (d) read with expression, (e) read aloud daily, (f) don’t over evaluate, (g) leave them asking for more.

Music and Reading - The Connection

In their article, Hill-Clarke and Robinson (2004) discuss the importance of teaching music for its own sake. For many people music is a part of their everyday life. Children naturally enjoy humming, singing, and listening to music. However, other educators and authors have confirmed the value of music to help in the process of teaching reading and of reaching literacy (Bernstorf, 2002; Calogero, 2002; Carlson, Hoffman, Gray, & Thompson, 2004; Fisher, 2001; Hansen & Bernstorf, 2002; Jalongo & Ribblet, 1997; Lamme, 1990; Paul, 2004; Towell, 2000). Paul (2004) stated that in addition to apparent cognitive benefits, the school climate encouraged cross-cultural
interactions and many music specialists and classroom teachers see the music-literature connection as an accessible, successful way to accomplish this.

Historically, the connection of music and reading may have some beginning in the storytelling of the traveling entertainers of medieval England and France, called jongleurs. Though they were not truly reading, these entertainers would often deliver their tales and stories with background music:

... arrayed in particolored costume, and with a harp or viol across his shoulders, he ambled on a gaily caparisoned mule from town to town and from castle to castle. His song was introduced and followed by feats of agility and legerdemain, and was accompanied with such crude music as he could command.

(Theatrehistory.com, 2002)

What has been done in schools with regard to making this connection between music and reading? The Whole Language approach incorporated music to a great extent when the teacher taught reading. Themes which crossed the whole curriculum were prevalent. To this end, Lamme (1990) suggested using children's picture books with musical content to provide, “an excellent resource through which children can learn to read and to enjoy reading . . . Enjoyment of literature is one of the main goals of a whole language curriculum” (p. 299). The author compiled a list of picture books with musical themes and topics for use by the classroom teacher, music and reading specialists.

Langfit (1994) suggested taking the familiarity of a well recognized tune and combined it with new words created by their students. Books with these new found lyrics
were created and added to the classroom library for students to read and sing over and over.

Balkin (1999b) developed an approach to teaching reading and writing called *Tune Up to Literacy: The Song Way to Learning Language*. The author composed songs about nouns, verbs, sentences, punctuation and many other terms and concepts. The educational goal was to explore concepts necessary for children in their development toward literacy using music. Balkin, a music specialist by profession, supported connecting music across the curriculum and suggested a justification for combining reading and music. The author felt teachers are trained to teach children and that music specialists should “... use the specialty and your talent to teach whatever (along with music) fundamental knowledge that children must possess in order to function successfully in school and life” (Balkin, 1999a, ¶ 4).

Harp (1988) spoke of the connection between singing and reading and felt that singing is a celebration of language. Harp noted the natural language of children as rhythmic and melodic and that they bring this affinity to the task of learning to read. The author felt combining singing and the use of songs to teach reading drew on this natural relationship. As an advocate for the whole language approach Harp suggested a step by step process of integrating singing with the meeting of the song lyrics in print.

Flohr (2006) suggested that children first learn a song then read the words, add instruments, body percussion or rhythmic accompaniment. Students can be asked to make predictions, create new lyrics, and recognize sequences to integrate the music/language
arts experience. Reading stories with music, singing songs and making the child aware of patterns are consistent with the whole language approach.

A program called Learning to Read Though the Arts (LTRTA) was established in New York City as a Title 1 program for students who had not learned to read through traditional means. The belief that students learn more by providing multi-sensory experiences including aural, visual, tactile and kinesthetic modalities, and by integrating the curriculum of arts specialists with classroom and reading teachers, the developmental needs of these students would be better met (Collett, 1991). It was felt that music teachers moved their students through all these modalities when engaging them in various musical activities. One of the suggested connections with music and reading was to explore different types of literature and poetry and to select music that parallels each piece of literature. Collett stated that students who participated in the program demonstrated an improved attitude toward reading and learning. Towell (1999) seems to agree that music can create a bridge to motivate some readers. “Music and rhyme motivate struggling readers. Music can be beneficial for hard to reach children who have difficulty learning through traditional methods” (p. 288).

A quantitative study by Carlson, Hoffman, Gray, and Thompson (2004), was designed to examine the effects of music and relaxation on reading performance. The authors refer to previous studies (Brady, Luborsky, & Kron, 1974; Brown, 1980) on how music and in particular rhythm, can have a calming and relaxing effect on the subjects. The authors mentioned studies that showed the introduction of slow external rhythms (50 - 60 beats per minute) allowed persons to slow their own heartbeats and induce a more
relaxed physiological state. They further cite research (Blanchard, 1979; Hepler & Kapke, 1996) which concluded that inducing a relaxed physical state would allow the brain to work more effectively. Additionally cited by Carlson et al., is research by Smith (2001) that concluded a relaxed setting was critical for learning to read.

To test their hypothesis that the introduction of slow, rhythmic music could induce a relaxation response in students resulting in improved academic performance, their study combined a vibroacoustic music chair with music that had a tempo of 50 - 60 beats per minute. A student would sit in the chair while completing reading based tasks. Thirteen urban, mid-western, third grade students with varying characteristics were used. The results of the study showed “a statistically significant positive impact for both sight-word recognition and comprehension” (Carlson et al., 2004, p. 248) and “in general, the use of the vibroacoustic music chair combined with the 50 - 60 beats per minute of music helped improve the student’s reading performance beyond expectation of the reading program alone” (p. 248).

Hansen and Bernstorf (2002) make the case that reading skills are enhanced when learning the skills used in music text and score reading. The authors sought a connection between orthographic awareness in reading and music students. Specifically they compared the similarity of using letters for learning language to music symbol reading as representations of musical sounds. Is there a connection to learning these two things? Additionally, does the learning of music note reading actually help text reading? The authors refer to the limited research that establishes firm correlations or causal effects between music reading and text reading, but emphasize the similarity of the two areas of
learning. Similarity between music and reading learning is also referred to by Jacobi-Karna (1995). The author emphasizes the close relationship between rhythmic texts and music. Steady beat and rhythm are naturally a part of poetry, rhymes and chants. Books can also have repetitive and/or additive texts and can be used to compare the musical concepts of sequence, refrain and tone color.

Jalongo and Ribblett (1997) offer parallels between mastering language and learning music by laying out common ground of success in both: enjoyment and immersing the child in the medium. They feel that whether learning language or music, the child is in need of competent, enthusiastic role models who take pleasure in story and song. They further suggest song picture books as a way to bolster a reader’s confidence and engage a child’s interest. The authors emphasize that these types of books, which are illustrated versions of song lyrics, can support emergent literacy and language.

Paul (2004) takes an opposite approach by looking at how the music teacher can incorporate literature to help with music instruction. The author chose historical, thematic and emotional areas as the basis for making connections between musical and literature selections. Paul gives numerous suggestions for activities and lessons to use in a music classroom. One example of this kind of pairing is listening to and discussing a recording of the music, *A Lincoln Portrait* (Copland, 1942), with a reading or sharing of the book, *Lincoln: A Photobiography* (Freedman, 1987).

Has music been used to help developing literacy skills for English language learners? Fisher (2001) discusses a study devised that attempted to quantify literacy improvement when the use of music in primary grade classrooms is implemented in
bilingual programs. All the 80 kindergarten subjects chosen in this study were urban elementary students who spoke Spanish at home and qualified for free lunch. These students were randomly assigned to four classroom teachers and stayed with their teacher for two years, through kindergarten and first grade. All four teachers planned together and aligned their curriculum but two of the teachers used music as an instructional material during literacy block and two did not.

Weekly classroom observations were done and reading achievement tests were administered with scores quantified and compared. The music rich classrooms showed higher scores on the Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM) (13.2 vs. 8.4) as well as improved scores on the Yopp-Singer Test for phoneme segmentation. The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) showed ten students reading at grade level in the music classes compared with only one student in the non-music classrooms.

What was done differently in these classrooms? In the music rich classrooms, activities included starting the day with singing songs, complementing word learning with singing and listening to a CD with the recently learned words included, and listening stations with books that came with song CDs. The findings of this study suggest that music can be used in an elementary classroom to benefit students' language development but that attention should be paid to the thematic and developmental needs of the curriculum when using music. The music these teachers used complimented the instruction, was part of their overall literacy effort and was planned and chosen with care.

Towell (1999) feels that music can motivate readers as well as help teach reading. The author suggests a collection of practical ideas to bring music and books together to
help in this regard. These include reading picture books made from songs, combining poetry with music, using instruments or sound effects and *using music to set the mood for selected stories* [italics added]. Towell and Hill-Clarke and Robinson (2004) cite Gardner (1985) making reference specifically to Gardner's concept of a musical intelligence, and say that some children will learn to read easier and better if music activities are included in the instructional program. Towell also cites a study by Rosenblatt (1978) that linked enhanced cognitive and affective responses to musical activities. The author also makes reference to Yopp (1998) and the use of songs to teach phonemic awareness.

**Enhancing the Read-aloud with Music**

What has been done in regard to combining music with the read-aloud? Towell (1999) suggests that music can reflect a mood or purpose for a story and makes some generalizations about music styles and how they might be applied. An example the author uses, combines baroque music to set the tone for the Caldecott winning picture book, *Owl Moon* (Yolen, 1998). Towell feels the baroque music intensifies the illustrations in the book and continues with musical suggestions for accompanying ocean, rainforest, and jazz themed books. Towell further makes reference to books and music written about Mozart combined with simultaneous listening of Mozart's own music. The author goes on to suggest, "Music may be used everyday, in some way, to motivate students to read or concentrate on their work. . . . such as playing classical background music . . . playing music to create certain moods" (p. 288). Calogero (2002) agrees that using music to be played in the background while reading a story can set a tone or reflect the mood of a
story. The author also states, “Music from other cultures or time periods can define a historical setting” (p. 23).

Lamme (1990) proposed several ways to use music to enhance other subjects including reading. The author suggests that some children enjoy listening to soft music while they write or work on math problems and that many books can be read to an appropriate musical background. Lamme further gives another example by describing how ragtime music was selected as a soundtrack for a read-aloud of the book *Ragtime Tumpie* (Schroeder & Fuchs, 1989). The author also states: “Combining music and good books brings books alive, enhancing children’s enjoyment of the arts and reading” (p. 299).

Flohr (2006) suggests that some musical books such as the Caldecott award-winning book *Zin, Zin, Zin! A Violin* (Moss, 1995), can be enriched with recordings of the musical instruments they illustrate in the text. McDonald, Fisher and Helzer (2002) agreed but shifted the emphasis slightly. They focused on teaching upper elementary and middle school students and compiled a list of activities for teaching about the specific musical genre, jazz. They made suggestions for pairing student read-alouds (several of which are picture books) with jazz style listening samples before, during and after the readings.

Is there cognitive benefit for a listener by adding a soundtrack to a book? Brown (1988) cites a study by Char and Meringoff (1982) which sought to compare the amount of learning from fiction when sound effects or music were added. One group of elementary students was played a recording of a strictly verbal narration of the story
while another group was played the same verbal narration but with added sound effects and music. Students were then interviewed and tested in several ways on story comprehension. The study results included, "... that sounds effects and music do provide children with helpful story information" (p. 42). Auditory sounds seemed to provide clues to the story's locale, and setting. These sounds also seemed to help students to derive story meaning. The author did mention two caveats in conclusion: (a) that children's repertoire of familiar sounds is limited and for the child to obtain meaning from a sound, they must be familiar with it, (b) sound effects and music are subtle elements. Direct questioning may be needed to find out what children know from sound and music inclusion.

Brown (1988) further states:

... it is advisable to provide diversity not only in the story content and genre, but also in the media used to present this fiction. In particular, our findings point to children learning useful information about stories from nonverbal sources, the very sources given low priority in most elementary curricula. Failure to acknowledge or cultivate such nonverbal learning may undermine important aspects of children's cognitive development. (p. 43)

Critical Thinking Skills and Cooperative Learning

Although thinking is complex phenomenon, two major kinds of thinking skills have been associated with classroom instruction: those essential for learning in general and those most useful for learning specific subjects (Beyer, 2008b). In terms of general learning, this process can be broken down into four essential thinking skills for students
to become effective learners: comparing, classifying, sequencing, and predicting. With regard to subjects, there are discipline specific thinking skills for learning any subject such as history, science or music. Regardless of whether its subject specific or thinking skills in general, it is suggested that the educator’s time is well spent to include this type of instruction. Beyer suggests, “... teaching the components of thinking skills ought to be an important goal of classroom instruction, especially at the K-12 levels” (p. 224).

This framework of thinking has been explained as consisting of three key stages: modeling, coaching and fading (Nickerson, 1989). Beyer (2008b) described the process using different, broader terminology, and thought of the steps as “introduction (in which modeling is only one effective technique that can be employed) guided practice (which may be scaffolded and later cued by any number of useful techniques), and transfer” (p. 225).

Beyer, (2008b) described the introduction step for teaching a thinking skill as explaining the steps in a thinking strategy and walking the students through one step at a time. Guided and continuing practice supports the development of these newly introduced thinking skills. One method often used employs scaffolding. Scaffolding can consist of a diagram or series of prompts which can be thought of as a step by step structure for applying a thinking skill. Graphic organizers, such as a thinking map, diagram, or chart, are useful tools in this regard. Continuing practice with teacher cueing and feedback but including gradual withdrawal of teacher support, is essential for developing proficiency in applying any thinking skill. Applying the newly acquired skill and transferring beyond the specific skill set taught, is the final step of thinking skill development.
Essential to the development of a new thinking skill is a solid teaching approach. Beyer (2008b) suggests three specific techniques that prove especially useful in making thinking skills explicit: modeling, metacognitive reflection, and thinking aloud. In brief terms, modeling explains and demonstrates the steps in a thinking strategy or procedure. Metacognitive reflection engages students in reflecting on, verbalizing, sharing with others, and analyzing. This can include a technique called “think-pair-share” (Beyer, 2008a, p. 197). Thinking aloud involves the subject speaking everything that occurs in his mind while performing a thinking task.

Think-Pair-Share is considered by Bromley and Modlo (1997) to be a structure or content-free series of steps or ways to organize social interaction in the classroom. This specific structure allows time for thinking, active listening and oral communication. It encourages students who have applied a thinking skill, to reflect on and tell a partner what mental steps they took to apply that skill. In essence, it is a tool for metacognitive reflection. Another description of the process for Think-Pair-Share is as follows:

Think-pair-share is a simple cooperative learning exercise. Two to three times during a lecture the instructor asks a question or poses a problem. Students spend a minute or two alone thinking about an answer or solution (think). Subsequently students pair up (pair) to discuss their answers with each other (share). (Rao & DiCarlo, 2000, p. 52)

As Rao and DiCarlo (2000) point out, Think-Pair-Share is also included under the educational umbrella of cooperative learning. In general terms, cooperative learning is "the instructional use of small groups so that students can work together to accomplish a
common purpose” (Bromley & Modlo, 1997, p. 21). Bromley and Modlo list student benefits of cooperative learning that include motivation, building effective communication skills and improved social skills.

Ketch (2005) argues that allowing student conversation within a structured cooperative learning strategy promotes comprehension and can encourage students to become reflective critical thinkers. “Hearing ideas discussed orally from another’s point of view increases understanding, memory, and monitoring of one’s own thinking. Ideas transition on the basis of the conversation. The oral process helps students clarify their thoughts” (p. 10). Additionally, Ketch feels that an individual’s comprehension is only based on personal knowledge and experiences, but with conversation, students expand their insights and further develop their thoughts.

Music and Brain Research: Does Music Study Make You Smarter?

Music educators Demorest and Morrison (2000) take an interesting and thought provoking view about music education advocacy when asking this question. They discuss some famous studies commonly referred to by music educators including, “The first series of studies documents a short term increase in performance on a spatial reasoning task after listening to Mozart, often referred to as the ‘Mozart effect’ ” (p. 33).

According to Demorest and Morrison (2000), the much publicized Mozart effect was based on two studies by Rausher, Shaw & Ky (1993) and Rausher, Shaw & Ky (1995) in which college age subjects were asked to take and retake a spatial reasoning test while some were listening to Mozart, some not. The group that listened to Mozart “improved significantly” (p. 34) from day one through day three, while the group that
listened to silence improved only from day two to day three. The authors claim that though these tests were designed to study the relationship of music structure to one narrow area of human intelligence, the results have been misinterpreted and overstated. Demorest and Morrison (2000) point out discrepancies explaining results (for example, some gains were attributed to the added music, yet gains in the non-music group were attributed to a learning curve) and include the point that several other studies attempting to replicate the Mozart effect research failed. They also state that even though the study is dubbed the Mozart effect, only a single composition by Mozart was used. Additionally, “No studies have tested whether or not the effect holds true for other works of Mozart or those of his contemporaries” (p. 34). They further believe, “We should not promote the relatively untested contention that only the works of single European composer possess some superior architecture that enhances general intelligence” (p. 34). Certainly, this view comes too late for the many consumers who have purchased the newer, commercial recordings of Mozart to play for their children, based on claims of intelligence gains.

Demorest and Morrison (2000) do put a positive spin on these studies and music education however. They point to the higher Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores that pre-college music (and other arts) students scored. A second finding was that higher SAT scores were scored by students who studied arts longer. They conclude that the back-to-basics mentality that “frill” subjects like music distract students from more important subjects is false:
... one piece of evidence that can be gleaned from the available data is that music participation does not interfere with academic progress. Students in music pull-out programs and those with greater years spent in arts education maintain a higher than average level of academic achievement. ... Whether or not music increases children's brain power, it clearly doesn't hurt it. (p. 39)

Hodges (2000) makes the case for the cognitive independence or uniqueness of music learning and that a certain inherent musical ability exists in humans. Hodges feels that music is one of the hallmarks of what it means to be human and believes that all people, in all times, and in all places have engaged in music behaviors. Hodges feels that humans are the only species where music, like language, is universal. The author feels that because of this human musical capacity to respond to and participate in music, music education should be available for all members of society and not for just the privileged or talented. Hodges discusses evidence of the existence of neural mechanisms that seem suited for processing musical information in babies. Ilari (2005) concurs and states, "Early childhood educators should not forget that music is a form of intelligence, and this is true from the beginning of life" (p. 658).

At the other end of life, Hodges (2000) cites an article by Golden (1994) about research on the brains of retired nuns. The article discussed the lives of nuns and how even as they progressed into their eighties and nineties, these women were learning new skills. This sometimes included learning a new musical instrument, a practice Hodge says is frequently advised by the neuroscientists.
Hodges (2000) also looks at neuromusical research literature (Parsons, Fox & Hodges, 1998) that seems to point to music not being a one sided or right brain operation but rather that musical processing seems to be spread throughout the brain. This processing seems to happen in widely diffuse areas of the brain that are multimodal and involve the auditory, visual, cognitive, affective, memory and motor systems. Interestingly, Hodges states, "Also, music reading activated an area on the right side of the brain parallel to an area on the left side activated during language reading" (p. 20).

Hodges (2000) touches on the human affective or emotional response to music. The author shares how music is used to reduce fear and anxiety in surgical and pain patients. Hodges states that hearing music can affect the biochemistry of the blood which in turn may cause affective changes. "... physicians are able to reduce drug dosages and speed up recovery times by using music in certain medical procedures. In other words music is not just a psychological distractor; rather it elicits actual physical changes in the system" (p. 21).

Much of current music education advocacy is based not only on how music itself affects the brain but how the use of music impacts learning in other areas. Does the use of music combined with other subjects make you smarter in some way? Wallace (1994) performed a series of experiments comparing recall of text when that text is heard with added music as a song or simply as speech. Essentially, Wallace prepared a spoken and a sung version of an American folk ballad, and the college undergraduate subjects were asked to recall in writing the words of the ballad. The percentage of the words recalled was quantified and the results indicated that music did indeed help in recall of verbatim
text, particularly in the initial phase of learning. Wallace concluded that hearing the
music with lyrics helped to provide an information-rich context which included rhythmic
information, length of line and intonation patterns. The melody can group the text into
melodic phrases as well as link textual phrases with similar melodic contours and help
with learning and recall.

A recent study by Verhallen, Bus and de Jong (2006) explored the concept of
adding a multimedia production to a storybook. Does the use of multimedia production
techniques (adding video, sounds, or music) have any learning advantage over storybook
presentations with static pictures? In this Dutch study, Verhallen et al. chose 60
kindergarten children from The Hague, all of whom were coded at risk and where from
families of immigrants. These families were classified as having low educational levels
and the children had little exposure to Dutch, the language of instruction. The subjects
were randomly assigned to groups and given several presentations of a storybook. Both
versions, the multimedia and static, had an identical text and voice and were presented on
a computer screen. The only difference was the type of stimulus accompanying the oral
text. The multimedia version had actions, video, music and sounds added, while static
presentations had text and pictures only. Tests to assess the effects of the intervention
were given with statistical analysis following. The results were summarized and stated,
“In a young group at risk for school failure the availability of new dimensions created by
presenting a story with rich images, music and sounds promotes story understanding” (p.
417).
Verhallen et al. (2006) postulate that nonverbal representations trigger questions about events within the story and can perhaps activate more inference skills. As a result, children understand more of the story, are better equipped to derive the meaning of unknown words and sentences, and are more able to extract this new knowledge from memory afterward. The authors further suggest that repeated encounters increased the differences between the static and multimedia presentations, with students showing gains in linguistic skills and understanding of implied story elements. The authors did include the caveat discussed by Leung and Pikulski (1990) that children with good language skills (unlike the subjects in this study) began to get bored by the third reading of a story.

Musical Preferences of Children and Parents

If music can be used to enhance understanding and learning, the area of student music preference may be potentially important information for educators. What do students prefer to listen to when given a choice? Though now somewhat dated, Greer, Dorow and Randall (1974) devised a study involving 136 nursery and elementary age students to test student preference for rock and non-rock music. The rock music was selected from then current, popular, top-twenty type songs. The non-rock music included selections of symphonic, classical piano and Broadway show tunes as well as white noise. The subjects were taught how to operate a “press and hold” (p. 287) keyboard and were allowed to chose what they listened to based on what key they pushed. After one minute of listening, the keyboard would relocate the sound and subjects would have to find the correct key to continue listening to their choice. Total listening time (or music
listening attention span), as well as time spent listening to either rock or non-rock selections, were tabulated.

Results of the Greer et al. (1974) study showed that general music students in the elementary grades will increasingly choose to listen to more rock music and less non-rock music with advancing age and/or grade level. Additionally, the music listening attention span (total listening time) increases uniformly and in a directionally predictable manner with advancement in grade level. The implication for music educators is that if music programs are to be influential in terms of expansion of students’ musical tastes, more needs to be known about what school-related variables influence taste. Considering this study was done in 1974, it would be interesting to see current student response to popular styles of music which have come into vogue since then including, rap, hip hop, electronic or world music.

Whether its rock or non-rock music, every musical selection has many variables within its structure, each of which may elicit a favorable or non favorable preference. These may include but are not limited to, performing medium, dynamic level, style or musical genre, performer, and tempo. What are student preferences within these variables? LeBlanc, Colman, McCrary, Sherrill and Malin (1988) chose to look at tempo (the speed at which a musical composition is played) preference by attempting to quantify the effect of four levels of tempo on listener preference and to measure this effect with listeners of six different age levels. LeBlanc et al. (1988) prepared a listening selection of 24 instrumental, traditional jazz selections with slow to fast tempi for 926 students ranging from third grade to college senior. They measured preferences for tempo
as well as preference for the overall style, traditional jazz music. Quantified results included the conclusion: “Music listeners from third grade through college level who participated in this study showed a strong and statistically significant preference for fast tempi . . . the faster the tempi, the greater their preference” (p. 166). It also seemed that listener’s age had an effect on overall preference with the youngest listeners (third grade) and oldest (college) having the highest preference for fast jazz.

The implications of this research for music educators include that more should be done to supply youngest and oldest students with music appreciation, listening type courses. They are, “quickest to accept a style of music that not is currently favored by popular culture” (LeBlanc et al., 1988, p. 167) as is the case with traditional jazz used in this study. “Yet, the design of many curricula tends to place music appreciation courses at the junior high level where students have the lowest overall preferences in this study” (p. 167).

Ilari (2005) shares the importance of the care givers in developing the innate musical ability in infants. The author feels that mothers, often the primary caretakers of their infants, play a crucial role as musical agents. Ilari’s study looked at 100 Canadian mothers who had infants between seven and ninth months. These mothers were interviewed on musical background, preferences, beliefs and use of music with their babies. The interview results indicated that these mothers did use music with their infants and it was primarily singing. Mother’s previous musical experiences and beliefs, including cultural and ethnic, influenced their musical choices and interactions. Language, occupation, and educational levels and were also factors and all these together
appeared to the author to affect the ways in which mothers and infants interacted musically in their everyday lives. Ilari feels that these interactions are very important during the early years of childhood and are critical for nurturing the innate musical intelligence we have.

As did Ilari (2005), de Vries (2007) notes the importance of parents in the role of nurturing their children’s musical development. de Vries examined a parent focus group who participated with their young children in music and storytelling sessions. The author wanted to note parent perceptions about the use of music in these storytelling sessions and find out what music activities these same parents took from the sessions and implemented at home. Through observations and interviews with an eight participant, all female care giver group, de Vries summarized perceptions: (a) music in storytelling sessions enhanced social interaction for children (b) music is embedded in storytelling and (c) sessions provided new ideas for music in the home and beyond. In essence, parents viewed the use of music with the storytelling as beneficial and some of the modeled activities were being implemented at home. The author felt the results should not be generalized because of the small size of the focus group, and only one storyteller involved.

Music Listening: A Subject Specific Thinking Skill

Peterson (2006) describes music listening as involving “the experience of music as it moves through time” (p. 19) and further uses the analogy of comparing a music listening experience to a travel experience. The author eloquently describes the listener’s journey being guided by the musical composer who determines the vehicle and route to
take the traveler/listener. The performers are the tour guides. As the journey progresses, the listener/traveler triggers connections with previous experiences and the repeat listener may reconstruct a similar path, revisit familiar landmarks, or construct a new journey by focusing on a different path through the soundscape.

For musicians, learning to listen is essential. Bundra (2006) states, “Whether composing, performing, conducting, or teaching music, listening is a critical component of all music activities” (p. 6). Peterson (2006) states, “... listening is really at the heart of all music activity” (p. 15). Woody (2004) says, “Some might even argue that listening is the most important music skill that students learn” (p. 32).

Some feel that music teachers are not devoting enough time to teaching music listening skills. Music educators face increasing pressures to test and assess in addition to concert and performance demands, hectic schedules, and limited training resources and materials. All this combined with a lack of consensus about the development of listening skills (making it more difficult to determine what to teach children when and how) critical listening skill development may have dropped in priority in some educational settings. Others disagree. Woody (2004) states that music teachers who strive to provide a broad range of experiences for their students, “... are usually careful to include music listening experiences among them” (p. 32). Both authors agree on one thing however, the importance of listening skills in the field of music education. Bundra feels that music listening is a fundamental dimension of all musical experience and therefore fundamental to music education. Woody agrees with this and states, “... most teachers agree that music listening involves skills that must be taught to children” (p. 32).
Beyer (2008b) clearly states that there are critical thinking skills most useful for learning specific subjects or disciplines. What does research tell us in regard to developing the subject specific thinking skills involved in music listening? Bundra (2006) cites several qualitative studies which attempted to gain insight into the state of music listening and music education. Among conclusions the author draws include that one’s musical background and instruction, influences the music listening experience. In essence how well you understand music influences how well you are able to listen to music. Additionally, the nature of the listening experience such as listening to live musical performance or recorded music seemed to affect the experience as well.

How and when do people, including children, listen to music? According to Woody (2004), there are few instances where music listening is the primary focus. Adults listen to music, accompanied by some other activity, such as getting dressed, doing housework, traveling somewhere, or talking with friends. Woody states that children too preferred music listening most for purposes of relaxing and while doing other tasks such as drawing or completing puzzles. It seems that idly sitting and listening to music is a rare occurrence for most of us.

With regard to children specifically and within an educational context, Woody (2004) cites a study (Boal-Palheiros and Hargraves, 2001) designed to investigate the differing functions of music listening at home compared to music listening at school. Woody states, "Upon interviewing elementary and middle school children researchers found that home listening was associated with enjoyment, emotional mood and social relationships. Music listening at school implied difficult and passive lessons" (p. 34).
Woody (2004) reviewed other studies and summarized factors that might be of influence to children’s music listening preferences. The author stated that children tend to prefer faster tempo music (agreeing with LeBlanc, Colman, McCrary, Sherrill and Malin, (1988)) and music with dynamic contrasts. Children were more apt to like a piece of music they were familiar with and that children’s “... ‘open-earedness’ (tolerance for a variety of musical styles) tends to decrease as they approach adolescence, then rebounds upon entering young adulthood” (p. 34-35).

With this knowledge, how should educators approach the task of teaching music listening? Woody (2004) makes several suggestions grounded in research, for the educator to consider and begins with including active listening experiences for younger children. “Older students can be assigned mental activities ... children cannot be expected to just passively listen” (p. 36). Woody also suggests incorporating other arts based activities. “Many teachers enjoy pairing children’s literature and musical recordings ... By playing a suitable piece of music while sharing the illustrated pages of the book ... children can gain a greater awareness of the expressiveness of sound” (p. 37). This last suggestion provides music education grounded support for the student study included in this project and indeed, the entire project topic.

Conclusion

Music is imbedded in our lives, enriches our minds and some feel there is an innate human ability and need for music. There is established agreement on the value of studying music for its own sake and as well as equally established views on using music to improve other areas of education.
Music preferences within groups of students look to be varied. Variables such as tempo, style, dynamic level, and familiarity appear to effect how well the music is liked. The age of listeners also seems to effect how well a music style is perceived. Additionally, a parent or caregiver’s role in nurturing the innate music inside a person is also important.

Several authors had interesting and somewhat opposing views when looking at the value of music education and brain research, including using music as a way to increase intelligence. Many music educators base their advocacy of music education or the claim that music makes students smarter in some way. Demorest and Morrison (2000) offer a perspective that much of this advocacy stance may be based on a very narrow degree of study result. Other authors point to studies that indicate music does help to activate and engage wide areas of the brain, can induce physical changes positively in the field of medicine, and can be used to improve learning in a variety of ways.

In terms of critically listening to music, the researcher looked at what the literature established in the development of critical thinking skills and in music listening importance. Several authors concurred that listening was indeed a very important and worthwhile music skill to develop. Some felt it was the most important skill to develop in music students. Using the methods and tools explained and established in critical thinking development and cooperative learning strategies, established approaches to teaching music listening skills can be developed. Methods such as guided cueing, continuing practice combined with tools such as graphic organizers, provide educators with an accepted approach to helping students become critical thinkers and in turn, critical
listeners. Cooperative learning strategies may be included to expand the student experience and interaction as well as provide variety in the learning process.

There seems to be ample and long established evidence verifying the importance and acceptance of the read-aloud for use as a tool in a reading development. Young readers benefit from listening to a teacher or parent read as a model of reading fluency in addition to hearing a larger range of vocabulary. Readers of all ages may enjoy and benefit from this experience even though it is seems to be more universally used at younger grades (and with younger teachers). The read-aloud is commonly used in many classrooms, for a variety of purposes, using a variety of literature genres and though there are techniques to improve comprehension and understanding, many simply feel the experience of listening to a shared book is essential to developing an interest in and love for reading.

With regard to the use of picture books, educators of all student levels are encouraged to share this genre with their students in a read-aloud. With the increased number and quality of picture books in recent years, the addition of more mature subject matter and topics, educators of all student levels can be encouraged to use more picture books with their students.

The educational connection of music and reading literacy in particular seems well established. Though some music educators may feel the conflict between using valuable music class time to tie into other curriculum needs, the literature demands that music be considered as a companion to reading education. Whether music is used as a motivational or relaxation tool, a memory aide, as a method to increase repetition and variety, a
learning styles strategy, or as a mood setting, there is ample literature that holds this connection in high regard. Simply put, music has been and should continue to be used as a way to help people learn to read.
CHAPTER III
PROCEDURES

The project had two overall procedural goals: (a) to develop a student study, creating educational tools and a process to teach students how to critically listen to and select music to accompany a read-aloud and (b) to create a teacher resource guide/brochure as well as develop methodology to select and match music with picture books. The procedures for developing the student study are discussed first in this chapter followed by the procedures for developing the guide/brochure.

Student Study

Method

All student subjects taking part in this study attended the same school, Sunrise Elementary in the Kent School District 415, of Washington State. The school’s most recent demographic profile (2008-2009) listed student population at 565 students, 51% female and 49% male. Approximately 27% received free and reduced lunches, English Language Learners students made up 18% of the population, Highly Capable students make up 14% and special education students total 6.5%. Table 1 shows the diversity percentages listed for the school.
Table 1

*Sunrise Elementary Ethnic Diversity (2008-2009)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian (includes Russian, Ukraine)</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Racial</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>(one student)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedically Impaired</td>
<td>(one student)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The subjects were a sample of convenience as all were students enrolled in the researcher’s current class load. Subjects were divided into two classes: a predominately fifth grade general music class (there were four fourth graders included in this group) of 17 students and a sixth grade general music class of 29 students.

The researcher presented the same methods, lessons and materials to both classes and chose to combine results into one large sample. The combined numbers from the two classes totaled 24 boys and 22 girls. These 46 students met for music class two to three days per week for a period of 45 minutes per session.
Both groups included students from two “Highly Capable” classes (16 total). The Highly Capable program is a grades 3-6, full time, self contained program aimed at not only providing basic core curriculum but also including an accelerated pace of learning, instruction requiring higher cognitive demand, and above level content learning goals. Students accepted into this program must score highly on the Cognitive Ability Test (CogAt) or the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT) (Kent School District 415, 2009). The remaining 30 subjects were all from the school’s non-specialized, normal classrooms with students representing a wide range of cognitive abilities and test scores.

Each subject’s musical background and experience was varied; none were currently enrolled in the schools district’s band or orchestra program, but some sixth graders had been involved in a district band/orchestra program in the previous year. Most students had several years of general music classes in the public school system and a few (less than ten) had taken private music lessons in the past as well.

The two classes were ethnically and culturally diverse and included several students from the school’s English Language Learner (ELL) classes. Also included in the group were a student with cerebral palsy who used a wheel chair for mobility and another student with achondroplasia, a form of dwarfism. Table 2 shows the subject profile groups in further detail.
Table 2

**Student Study Subject Profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Grade Students</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Grade Students</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Grade Students</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in Highly Capable Program</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedically Impaired</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian (includes Russian)</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjabi/Indian</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Racial</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the purpose of gaining an overall understanding of the student study steps, Figure 1 was designed. The individual steps described in Figure 1 are explained in detail in the pages that follow. Table 3 shows the sequence and timeline of the study phases.
Figure 1. Description and sequence of student study phases.

Phase 1
HSRC approval. District, parent and student permission forms approved and delivered.

Phase 2

Phase 3
Teach musical concepts. Guided practice with Student Response Form.

Phase 4
Holiday break and conference week. Study delayed two weeks.

Phase 5

Phase 6
Share results of practice book and music.

Phase 7
Read *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*. Subjects select and discuss music choices for this book.

Phase 8
Read *Click Clack Moo*. Subjects select and discuss music choices for this book.

Phase 9
Read *John Henry*. Think-Pair-Share model is used. Subjects select and discuss music choices for this book.

Phase 10
Read-aloud *Click Clack Moo* and *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*, with subject selected music to kindergartners as subjects observe.

Phase 11
Post study discussion. Study ends.
Table 3

Sequence and Timeline of Student Study Phases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Length of Phase</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>October 28 – October 30, 2008</td>
<td>3 Days</td>
<td>Central Washington University &amp; Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>November 13, 2008</td>
<td>1 ½ hours</td>
<td>Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>November 14 - 18, 2008</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4</td>
<td>November 19 - December 1, 2008</td>
<td>13 days</td>
<td>Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 5</td>
<td>December 2, 2008</td>
<td>1 ½ hours</td>
<td>Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 6</td>
<td>December 4, 2008</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 7</td>
<td>December 4, 2008</td>
<td>1 ½ hours</td>
<td>Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 8</td>
<td>December 5, 2008</td>
<td>1 ½ hours</td>
<td>Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 9</td>
<td>December 9, 2008</td>
<td>1 ½ hours</td>
<td>Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 10</td>
<td>December 16, 2008</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 11</td>
<td>December 11 - 16, 2008</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>Sunrise Elementary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After getting study approval and permission through the university’s Human Subjects Review Committee process, the researcher completed and delivered school district permission forms, parent permission letters, a student assent script, and classroom teacher notifications (see Appendices G, H, I, J, K). All student subjects were given some general information on the project goals including why adding music to a book read-aloud might be beneficial to the read-aloud presentation. This was brief but included
mention of the potential value of music to enhance expressiveness and mood or establish a setting or context. Movie and television soundtracks were discussed as well.

For purposes of demonstration, the researcher read to the subjects a portion of the book, *The Giving Tree* (Silverstein, 1964) without and then with an added musical background. This book was selected in part because it was included on the educator guide/brochure and also because the title was readily available for the researcher. The music piece selected by the researcher to accompany this book was, *Nagoya Marimbas* (Reich, 1994). At the conclusion of the reading there was a short discussion on the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness in some opinions) of the added soundtrack. This included the researcher's motivation for selecting that particular music for the book. Observation data indicated in both classes of subjects the majority of subjects expressed the opinion that the music improved the read-aloud experience.

In succeeding sessions, student subjects were introduced to the musical concepts deemed necessary by the researcher to make an analytical listening of a musical selection. All these concepts were originally considered when the researcher selected music for the teacher guide/brochure. Additionally, the researcher consulted other musicians for their opinion on music concepts to include.

These core concepts were musical expressiveness or mood, tempo, dynamics, as well as cultural, historical or traditional connotations associated with certain music. Additionally, consideration of potential instrumentation for fit with a story's plot, characters, mood or setting was introduced. Appropriate use of vocals (singing) as well as song length compared to a read-aloud length, were also discussed.
As each musical concept was introduced, subjects were given guided practice strategies by asking them to listen and respond to music examples illustrating that concept. Given a scaffolding tool designed by the researcher called a "Student Response Form" (Appendix D), subjects were asked to write their ideas about each musical piece. On these forms, subjects were guided with a series of specific questions about what to listen and look for within the musical selection. For example, after a discussion of musical mood, portions of seven pieces of music were played, each one an example of a potentially different mood (scary, light and humorous, mysterious, etc.). One example was the playing of the dark, threatening, main theme music from the movie *Jaws* (Williams, 1975).

On the Student Response Form, the subjects wrote down their affective response to each music sample and answered prompt questions which included: (a) How did the music make them feel or what mood did they feel the composer was trying to convey? (b) What were they picturing in their mind as they listened to this music? Responses were written individually and without conversation. For subject samples of Student Response Forms see Appendices L, M, N, O.

To simplify the music listening process, the researcher prepared two anthology CDs of music selections. The CDs were burned from iTunes™ purchases and the song order on the CDs matched the lesson order on the Student Response Form. All listening experiences used pre-recorded music and there were no live music performances.

After each lesson was completed, subjects handed in their response forms to the researcher who read and annotated them. A list of comments selected from these forms
was shared in the following session as a portion of the music from the previous class was replayed and the music concept reviewed. These comments were shared on the SMART Board™ interactive whiteboard in the music classroom. This allowed the subjects to see and hear feedback as well as compare their opinions to others in the study. All comments shared in these presentations remained anonymous as the subjects were not identified. Conversation and discussion about the listed comments was encouraged. The subjects seemed to enjoy this feedback and discussion and some subjects later commented it was their favorite portion of the study.

After the Student Response Forms were completed, the next step was to provide subjects with an opportunity to practice selecting a piece of music for a given picture book. The selected practice book was, *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive The Bus* (Willems, 2003). This title had also been included in the teacher guide/brochure resource and was readily available to the researcher.

As the book was read-aloud, the subjects were given a “Read-Aloud Guide” (see Appendix E), another scaffolding tool to help the subjects to identify the book’s main characters, themes, and settings as well as having cues to begin thinking about a musical style to accompany the book. Subjects filled these out while they were listening to the story as it was read and after the reading was completed.

The music selected by the researcher for match to the practice book, *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive The Bus* (Willems, 2003) was introduced next. The music was played on pre-burned CDs (with music purchased by the researcher from iTunes™) and only three music selections on them.
A third scaffolding tool, a graphic organizer or “Bubble Map” (see Appendix F), was introduced. This form was designed to cue the subjects and remind them of the musical content to be listening for. This tool gave them a specific place to write their thoughts on these concepts and how they relate to the picture book read-aloud. As the subjects listened to three different music choices, they filled in a separate Bubble Map for each.

After all three music samples were played, subjects were asked to rank them in order from their favorite fit for the book to their least favorite. Additionally, subjects were asked to write their comments on why they preferred a particular piece of music over the others relative to the book. The researcher collected all the forms, made note of subject comments and compiled the results.

There was a two week delay in the study due to holidays and conference week. Upon return to regular scheduling, the study was resumed and continued with the two, pre-selected picture book read-alouds to be used in the study, *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* (Martin, 1989) and *Click Clack Moo Cows That Type* (Cronin & Lewin, 2000), as well as their accompanying musical soundtrack options. These two books were included in the teacher guide/brochure and were written for a primary aged audience with simple themes, settings and vocabulary. Each read-aloud was timed and the length of the read-aloud was shared with the subjects for their reference and comparison to potential music accompaniment length.

For these two books, the subjects were given four, researcher selected, music choices to choose from. These music tracks included the researcher’s top selections as
well as other songs chosen by the researcher with potential match to the book. All were located through iTunes™.

The music choices were played from beginning to end unless time or subject restlessness became a factor. Subjects used the same scaffolding forms previously introduced, the Read-Aloud Guide and the listening guide Bubble Map, and again ranked and commented on their musical choices. This process was done individually and quiet, concentrated focus and behavior was expected, enforced and generally achieved.

At the end of each of the two class sessions, the subjects listed their names on the forms and the researcher collected all at the end of each class session. Additionally, the subjects were engaged in an informal “Defend or Deny” (as it came to be called) conversation and discussion on each music choice. The researcher would ask subjects to verbally share why they did or didn’t choose a particular piece of music. Though these conversations were cut short due to time restraints and tended to be dominated by the more verbally confident subjects, they were interesting, spirited and informative.

A third book, *John Henry* (Lester & Pinkney, 1994) was the last study read-aloud. This book was selected in part because of its older, intermediate aged student appeal and subject matter, as well as its cultural/historical setting. This book was also included on the teacher brochure resource.

For this segment of the study, a cooperative learning strategy, the Think-Pair-Share format, was used. Subjects filled out the read-aloud guides again individually and were encouraged to think about an appropriate musical accompaniment. They were then grouped (controlled by the researcher) into pairs and one or two groups of three. In these
pairs the subjects shared their initial thoughts on what music to listen for. They then listened to five musical choices and as a pair ranked and commented on their best fit to the book. The subjects were encouraged to do this by sharing opinions and using quiet conversation, consensus and compromise within their group.

After each class session, the researcher read all forms, noted insightful comments, and accumulated data on the votes for each musical selection. The final sessions included sharing results of all subject music selections as well as class discussions of the study’s strengths and weaknesses. Chapter IV discusses the results in more detail.

The researcher arranged for two kindergarten classes to hear one each of the two study read-alouds, Chicka Chicka Boom Boom (Martin, 1989) with the subject selected accompanying track, Coconut Talk (Iasos, 1991) and Click Clack Moo Cows That Type (Cronin & Lewin, 2000) with the accompanying subject selected music, Safe Harbor and Wild Hog in the Woods (Fink, 1992) used as a soundtrack. This took place during two of the music classes the project study subjects attended and was arranged to allow them to observe the music with book presentation firsthand. The researcher briefed the subjects on what to watch for as the kindergarteners listened to the book and the music was played and posed three questions for them to consider: (a) Were the kindergartners quiet and attentive? Or were they fidgety, with reactions to the music, possibly indicating they were distracted from the reading? (b) Did the music’s length match the book’s well? (c) Overall, do you think the music enhanced the presentation of the book?

As the books were read, the music was played on an iPod and a small docking system. After the kindergartners had heard the reading and departed, a discussion with
the subjects followed. The conversation included what they had observed and how they felt about the appropriateness of the music soundtrack ensued.

Teacher Guide/Brochure

The teacher guide/brochure was intended to be a match of selections of music to picture books, selected by the researcher, and made available for distribution to classroom teachers, librarians and music specialists. The first step to create the guide/brochure was the choosing of which books to use. The second step was the selection of music to accompany each book. For purposes of gaining an overall picture of the development of the guide/brochure see Figure 2. Table 4 shows the timeline for the guide/brochure.
Figure 2. Sequence and description for developing the Teacher Resource Guide/Brochure.

**Phase 1**

**Phase 2**
Consult literature for book recommendations. Compare to previous list of teacher and librarian books.

**Phase 3**
Select 24 book titles, 19 for primary and 5 for intermediate age students.

**Phase 4**
Read each book noting book mood, length, style, characters, etc.

**Phase 5**
Music selection begins. Match each book with music selections chosen from iTunes.

**Phase 6**
Compile music/book matches into a quarter-fold brochure.

**Phase 7**
Present and share guide/brochure with other educators.
Table 4

*Sequence of Guide/Brochure Phases*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Length of Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Summer and Fall, 2007</td>
<td>Two months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Spring, 2008</td>
<td>One month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>Spring, 2008</td>
<td>Two weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4</td>
<td>Spring, 2008</td>
<td>One month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 5</td>
<td>Spring, 2008</td>
<td>Two months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 6</td>
<td>Summer, 2008</td>
<td>One month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 7</td>
<td>Spring, 2009</td>
<td>Two weeks, and continuing until Spring 2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Book Selection*

For the read-aloud component, the researcher chose to focus on and select only picture books; they are typically shorter, have visual as well as content appeal, can be read-aloud completely in one class session, and can be used with primary, intermediate, and secondary grades. There are many suitable picture books available for the reader and teacher to use now. Two questions to answer first were: (a) How many picture books are reasonable to assemble for this teacher guide/brochure? (b) Which picture books should be used?

To answer the first question, 19 picture books were chosen for use with primary students, 5 for intermediate grade and secondary students, for a total of 24 books. Though
this total is somewhat arbitrary in number, the researcher felt that this seemed like
manageable number of books to locate, read, and find music for considering the scope of
this project. Books for use at the intermediate/secondary level were included because the
literature review indicated the value in continuing picture book read-alouds through
higher grade levels.

Which books should be selected? Using books that were established, well
regarded, student-tested and used over and over again by educators, seemed most
beneficial. The selection process was started by asking for help from a variety of
librarians. All Kent School District 415 (KSD) librarians (approximately 25), two
Highline School District 401 (HSD) librarians, two King County Library System
librarians and two librarians working in other nearby school districts were contacted.
Additionally, the request was posted on the Washington Library Media Association
(WLMA) listserv. Ten librarians from around Washington State responded to the WLMA
posting. The same information was requested from all classroom teachers in the
researcher's site school, Sunrise Elementary in KSD as well as all KSD general music
specialists (approximately 30). In each case, the request was worded as follows:

   Could you share with me a short list of picture books you may tend to read to
your students year after year? I am hoping many of you will have a favorite few
that have a timeless, universal sort of appeal.

From these individuals there was an accumulated list of 85 titles (see Appendix A). Some
titles were recommended more than once.
It was decided to cross reference these titles with picture book recommendations established from the literature. As shown in Table 5, several sources were selected.

Table 5

*Primary Picture Book Recommendation Lists*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Title</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Best Books for Children</em> (Barr &amp; Gillespie, 2006)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>100 Picture Books Everyone Should Know</em> (New York Public Library, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Past Children's Notable Lists</em> (American Library Association, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Boston Globe-Horn Book Awards Winners and Honor Books 1967- Present,</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Horn Book Magazine, 2008).</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>100 Best Books for Children</em> (Westland Public Library, 2006)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first source chosen was *Best Books for Children* (Barr & Gillespie, 2006). This is a comprehensive collection of recommended books for use with pre-school through grade six. The second and third lists were located online, on well respected library related sites. The fourth source list, *Boston Globe-Horn Book Awards Winners and Honor Books 1967- Present,* (Horn Book Magazine, 2008) came from Horn Book, a bi-monthly periodical about literature for children and adults. A fifth list was found on the Westland (Michigan) Library web site which listed the young children's picture book selections from Anita Silvey's, *100 Best Books for Children* (Westland Public Library, 2006). Silvey is a former editor of Horn Book and publisher at Houghton Mifflin. Lastly,
reference was made to Trelease's (2006) list of picture book recommendations for read-alouds found in this popular book.

To be included into the final group of 19 primary focused picture books, titles were chosen from the original librarian and educator recommended books in addition to having at least two other recommendations from these six additional resources. In other words, each of these picture books had at least three recommendations.

To find recommendations for the five intermediate/secondary picture book read-alouds, consultation of some of the previously mentioned book lists as well as new source lists (see Table 6) was explored.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intermediate/Secondary Picture Book Recommendation Lists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Children's Notable Lists (American Library Association, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture Books for High School (All Together Now, 2006).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Read-Aloud Handbook (Trelease, 2006)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One source list that was referred to was *All Together Now (ATN)* (All Together Now, 2006), an online, wiki site which was started as a librarian collaborative; librarians can use it as a resource but are also able to contribute to it. The site has numerous recommended book lists suggested by librarians. Using these three source lists, as well as referring to the original list of titles, three books that would apply well with older students were selected.
Included on the guide/brochure also were two books not on the originally suggested list: *Baseball Saved Us* (Mochizuki & Lee, 1993) and *Pink and Say* (Polacco, 1994). These were selected because they were recommended in at least two of these sources as having appeal for older students. Since most of the initial book list was suggested by educators of elementary age students, it was felt that adding two books to this list to accumulate a minimum of five books for intermediate/secondary use was acceptable.

In summary, the final list of 24 books was a collection of well loved and respected picture books; books which would be used again and again as favorite read-alouds with children of a variety of ages and by a variety of educators.

**Teacher Guide/Brochure**

**Music Selection**

The researcher started the music search by reading each book and noting impressions. These included book mood and style, characters, plot, cultural, traditional or historical setting, as well as possible instrumentation or music style accompaniment ideas. The approximate length of a read-aloud for each book was noted as well. The selection of accompanying music for each read-aloud book began with a search through the iTunes™ music files. Though there are other options for searching, purchasing and downloading music, iTunes™ was selected because it seemed the most well known, established, and available resource. One can even purchase gift cards for iTunes™ at a neighborhood grocery store. It is also compatible with an iPod, a ubiquitous and
commonly used commercial music listening device. The songs can be purchased cheaply ($0.99 per song) and downloaded quickly.

The process of selecting the music was at once interesting, tedious, time consuming, enlightening and required the researcher to take a creative, exploratory approach to locating a musical match. Each book created its own challenge. Some books were easier to find matching music for; books that suggested a particular culture or region of the world, suggested a corresponding world music selection. *Tikki Tikki Tembo* (Mosel & Lent, 1968) is based on a folk tale from China and suggested a Chinese folk music selection as accompaniment. The book, *The Mitten: A Ukrainian Folktale* (Brett, 1989) suggested music from Ukraine or Russia.

Conversely, some books were difficult to select for, being more generic in time and place. *Lily's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996) was one such book. Being about a girl mouse in school with a memorable purse and teacher, there was not much to establish a music connection. The researcher chose a search looking for music with “mouse” in the title. It was felt that the frantic movements of any mouse (including the mouse in the story) might be reflected in a piece of music with that word in the title. A piece of music was found in this manner, *Little Mouse Jumps* (Balakrishnan, n.d., track 7). This method of music search was more random, more time consuming and often frustrating for the researcher.

Rather than a place or culture, some books seemed to suggest a particular mood. The researcher noted descriptive adjectives of various book moods that ranged from, “sad,” or “funny,” to “mysterious,” or “light.” An example of a book that seemed to
express a mood was the picture book, *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs; As Told to Jon Scieszka* (Scieszka & Smith, 1989). Though the book was humorous, it also felt dark, mysterious and mildly evil in mood. The researcher felt finding the music to reflect these moods was necessary. The music and instrumentation of the group, Tin Hat Trio, is unusual and their song *Sand Dog Blues* (Tin Hat Trio, 2000, track 5) seemed to fit these descriptors well.

Some books seemed more inclined toward a particular style or musical genre. These musical styles included, acoustic, classical, folk, ambient, electronic, jazz, world, etc. and within those broad genres might be subdivisions. For example, in searching for a musical match for *Where the Wild Things Are* (Sendak, 1963), the researcher discovered a musical selection in the percussion sub genre of the classical music genre. Selecting the drumming and percussion music titled, *Rebonds-B* (Xenakis, 1987-88, disc 3, track 4) seemed to match the energy and abandon of Sendak’s story of wild monsters and a wild boy.

Several books suggested a particular era in time and music from that era to match. The picture book, *Baseball Saved Us* (Mochizuki & Lee, 1993) takes place in a Japanese internment camp during World War II. Though the researcher’s first reaction was to use Japanese music for this story, the characters are American and the story centers on the sport of baseball. The characters use baseball to help them cope with the indignities of the internment camps. It seemed appropriate to the researcher to select music from the World War II era. Much of that era’s music found on iTunes™ was upbeat and swing dance oriented yet the mood of this story was more somber. Choosing *Melancholy*
Lullaby (Heyman & Carter, 1939, track 11), a piece written during that era yet sounding a more solemn note, seemed a good fit.

For this project, instrumental, or non-vocal music was selected almost exclusively. The concern was that singing, vocals and lyrics would compete with the read-aloud for the student’s attention. However, some music with subtle vocals or singing was selected. An example of this is the music selected for the book, Sam and the Tigers: A New Telling of Little Black Sambo (Lester & Pinkney, 1996). Diphala, (Bethu U., 2004, track 2) was mostly African drumming but also had short sections of uplifting vocals, sung entirely in an African language. Another selection was entirely vocal; also sung in an African language by the South African group Ladysmith Black Mambazo, the tune Nomathemba (Ladysmith Black Mambazo, 2006, track 1) was selected for the African folk tale based book, Mabela the Clever (MacDonald, M. R., & Coffey, T., 2001). In both these cases, it was felt the musical selections would fit the book’s setting and because of the foreign language, the singing would not interfere or distract from a read-aloud in English.
CHAPTER IV
THE PROJECT
Student Study Results

The first book the subjects were read for the project was *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* (Martin, 1989). Four music choices were selected (by the researcher) for subjects to choose from as potential musical accompaniment. After listening to all four, the subjects were asked to select the music that was their favorite choice for a soundtrack to the book. Samples of subject responses and explanation of choices can be found in the appendices (see Appendices L, M, N, O). The song titles and results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Subject Votes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Chichicastanango</em> (Marimba Chapinlandia, 2007)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Coconut Talk</em> (Iasos, 1991)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kalimba Suite</em> (McFerrin, 2002)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Paradise Island</em> (Stensgaard, 2007)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second book the subjects were working with was *Click Clack Moo Cows That Type* (Cronin & Lewin, 2000). Four music choices were selected for possible pairing with this book. After listening to all four, the subjects were asked to select the music that was their favorite choice for a soundtrack to the book. Table 8 shows the outcome.
Table 8

*Click Clack Moo Cows That Type Music Selections Final Vote Tally*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Subject Votes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Cowboy Waltz</em> (Fox and Branch, 2001)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Jimmy Sutton</em> (Horse Flies and Roberts, 1999)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Reuben's Wah Wah</em> (Fleck and Trischka, 1992)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Safe Harbor and Wild Hog in the Woods</em> (Fink, 1992)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third and final read-aloud the subjects were working with was *John Henry* (Lester & Pinkney, 1994). For this segment the Think-Pair-Share teaching model was used and subjects were grouped into pairs. This educational model was used to encourage subject interaction and conversation, to provide variety in the presentation format as well as gain insight into subject’s view on the process and results. Five musical choices were presented by the researcher for subject pairs to choose a soundtrack. Table 9 shows the song titles and the subject selections.
Table 9

*John Henry Music Selections Final Vote Tally*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Subject Votes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Blues Wail</em> (Strange, 2008)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Hammer Ring</em> (Scott &amp; Group, 1994)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nine Pound Hammer</em> (McAdoo, 2005)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Swing the Hammer</em> (Kate &amp; Hollis, 2005)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Take This Hammer</em> (Tedesco, 2008)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Teacher Guide/Brochure

This project attempts to strengthen the well established connection between music and reading by creating a guide/brochure with examples of specific music for suggested use as background music for specific picture books. The 24 picture books selected for this project were nearly all suggested by working librarians, teachers or music specialists and then cross referenced with respected book lists and guides. Quite simply, these picture books are some of the best of the best.

The 24 books are listed in alphabetical order by title (in bold) with an accompanying graphic of the book’s cover. Color graphics of the book covers were chosen to add appeal and provide the educator with a quick, visual reference.

The book titles were grouped by suggested grade levels, with 19 listed under “Primary/Intermediate” grade level books and 5 under “Intermediate/Secondary.” Each section is alphabetized separately. The author (and the illustrator when a different person)
is listed above each book selection title as well as the book’s copyright date and publisher. Appendix A lists all 24 books selected alphabetically by author.

The suggestions for accompanying music are listed under each book title with the composer and copyright date listed first. The song title and the recording it can be found on, is listed next and lastly the record label information is also included. If there is more than one music suggestion per book title, the music is ordered by preference for musical fit with the book, with the researcher’s top suggestions listed first. Appendix B lists all song selections with book selections. Appendix B differs slightly from the brochure with multiple music selections are listed alphabetically under their corresponding book titles rather than in order of author preference.

For the cover of the brochure, a title and sub-title simply worded explains the information contained within. A brief description, clip art and mention of where all the music can be accessed, are also included. The brochure can be printed in color if desired. Appendix O displays the entire brochure in a reduced image of the original.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

This chapter is organized into two sections. The first section will present a discussion of the student study followed by conclusions and recommendations. The second half of the chapter will focus on the same areas for the teacher guide/brochure.

Student Study

Discussion

The student study was informative and in a number of ways answered questions about the process of selecting music for a picture book read-aloud. It provided insight into subject opinions on the process, the educational approaches used and gave light to pre-existing, subject musical knowledge and interests.

One of the positive outcomes of the study was the development of methods and tools for music educators to use when teaching listening skills. The use of these listening approaches can assist educators in the teaching of specific music concepts and can enhance student awareness of the range of music styles and formats. How can this be implemented?

Subject interest in learning more about world music styles was evident and indication of this was found in post study discussions. Several subjects stated they enjoyed listening to new and different types of music. However, when reading the Student Response Forms, it was evident was that some of the subject’s prior associations of music instrument and style origins were inaccurate. For example, when played a selection of music from Mexico, some subjects stated it was “Italian” and others said,
“French” or “German.” Upon hearing a selection of music from India, subject responses included speculation that the music originated as Native American or African.

Using the listening examples and graphic organizers (such as the Bubble Map) in this study, music teachers can structure listening lessons that instruct students about musical places of origin, styles and instrumentation. Specifically, using the listening guides from this study, teachers can help students focus their attention on what sounds and instruments they hear in listening samples and help them begin to make a hypothesis as to where they think the music originated from. Discussion of where the music actually originates, compared to the student speculations and reasons where they thought it came from, can help students become more aware of world music. Follow up lessons could culminate in a concert featuring music ensembles or instruments listened to in class, and would be a memorable enrichment for students. Additionally, combining the listening experiences of the student study in a music class with a world geographical unit in the classroom would be a possibility for collaboration across the curriculum.

The literature review indicated that for the most part, people listen to music while doing other things. To avoid unnatural, passive music listening lessons, educators are encouraged to provide music listening experiences that include some component of active involvement. The study design attempted to keep subjects involved mentally by the writing their thoughts and perceptions on the Bubble Maps as they listened. However, many subjects expressed their least favorite part of the study was all the writing required. By filling in the unchanging, static Bubble Maps, subjects did not have much freedom in
their choice of response to the music. One subject even commented she felt the amount of paper used for the study was wasteful.

In addition, though the study was designed to give subjects many chances to practice listening skills, the researcher could sense near the end of the study that their interest in the process was beginning to wane. Restlessness and lack of focus was apparent in some. As a result by the end of this study, subject discussion and comments on their Bubble Maps were not as detailed and informative. How might this have been avoided?

An obvious way to avoid this would be to mix these listening lessons with other activities in the course of a music class. Singing, instrument playing, dancing, music notation studies are all typically part of a music class lesson and help keep variety, pace, interest, and energy at a high level. Choosing one thing to focus on for an entire class session or lesson after lesson such as the listening exercises in this study (this was necessary to complete the study in a timely fashion) was not a typical way the researcher would recommend to plan and teach.

Another approach toward using these music listening exercises would be to allow students multiple ways of responding. For example, the teacher might ask all students to paint or draw their response to listening examples. The use of creative movement sessions in response to a listening piece may provide an outlet for some students, particularly those that respond to and learn best from kinesthetic movement. Creating a simple dramatic interpretation to a piece of music with a small group and presenting these to classmates may be another approach. Additional ideas include:
(a) Students could create an original musical accompaniment to a selected picture book, in a sense creating a “sound story,” or a story with added sound effects. (b) Students create an original piece of music in the style or mood of a listened to selection. Music that is tropical or percussive in style (as were pieces of music in the study) are possible examples. (c) Students create an original piece of music that portrays a specified mood. Students could create scary music, peaceful music, or quiet music using classroom instruments and vocal sounds. Giving students all these options as a choice to listen and respond to the music individually may be considered. This would allow the students many ways to experience listening and a greater probability for student understanding, enjoyment and participation would result.

Looking at the educational design, the study focused on incorporating several teaching strategies. Of particular interest was the use of scaffolding resources, the graphic organizers (Student Response Form, Read-Aloud Guide, Bubble Map) and their effectiveness in cueing subjects through the listening of the read-aloud and music samples. These were designed by the researcher in hopes they would help subjects think about the critical areas for music fit to book. Were these successful tools to help the subjects to think about what they were listening to?

For the most part they did seem to be helpful. In post study discussions, subjects were asked specifically if these documents helped their thought process. The subjects generally responded positively and indicated the thinking guides helped them to stay focused on what they were supposed to be listening for and thinking about. Some said the Bubble Map reminded them what to think about “without having to remember.” Another
subject said, “They told you what to do and keep focused.” This was the intent of the Bubble Map, to guide them to listen for the specific musical elements of tempo, dynamic range, overall mood, song length, and instrumentation and style formats. The Read-Aloud Guide focused subject attention on the book’s characters, mood, plot and setting.

Some subjects desired more allotted time and space on the forms simply to focus on comments. In fact, the comment sections were most enlightening to the researcher. They allowed the subject’s space to express their thoughts on the listening, providing insight for the researcher to understand their thinking.

Other subjects felt all the writing distracted them from actually listening to the book or music. This is noteworthy. Though the researcher encouraged the subjects to listen as much as possible and write after a book or music presentation, many wrote as they listened. The act of concentrating on what one is writing certainly must take away from the focus and understanding of whatever listening experience one is involved with.

How successful were the cooperative learning strategies used throughout the study? From the researcher’s perspective, the group discussions and conversation were very enlightening and provided insight into what the subjects were thinking at each step. Many subjects had very thoughtful reflections on the music and books they heard. Some subjects also indicated they enjoyed hearing what others thought. Additionally, from about the halfway point of the study, these discussions became less reliant on the more confident and talkative subjects as more and more subjects opened up and shared their thoughts and opinions. This was a natural process of including group discussion at every step of the study. The subjects became more comfortable with the format and
contributing their thoughts. It was also enlightening and enjoyable for the researcher to hear the subjects express themselves, something that the time allotted in a short general music class often prevents.

With regard to the specific cooperative learning strategy, Think-Pair-Share, the results were mixed. There was an increase in classroom management and behavior concerns after grouping. Even though the researcher selected and controlled the pairings, this negative change was apparent; the level of talk during music listening samples increased. Much of this was a natural product of partner interaction and discussion of what they were listening to, which was understandable, accepted, and appropriate. However, it appeared that some of the subjects were not listening as closely to the music and were using the time to socialize. From the researcher’s perspective, this was not acceptable.

Included as the last activity at the end of the study, subjects might also have been losing interest in the activities. This might have contributed to the noted increase. It might have been of benefit to try the Think-Pair-Share partnering strategy at the beginning of the study rather than the end. One thinks that the subjects who seemed to not be clear in their understanding of the music concepts may have been aided by conversation and discussion with a partner. This would have led to more understanding earlier for these subjects. Moving away from a partner to individual work seems like a logical progression, from guided to independent learning.

Subject opinion on the Think-Pair-Share partnering was mixed. Post study discussion and observation data indicated approximately a two thirds majority of subjects
felt positive about their interaction with a partner. Many appreciated sharing the task of writing their thoughts and coming to an evaluation of the music with their partner. Other pairs liked talking about the music together and felt they learned more by sharing opinions and information. “We could help each other” one subject stated simply.

However, approximately one third of the subjects didn’t like the partnering process. Their complaints included having to talk to their partner during the music listening, compromising their choice and opinion with another, or they simply preferred to work alone. One stated, “I don’t like to have to listen to my partner’s opinion.” The subjects could have been given the option of retaining their individual vote after a partner discussion. With individual vote choices instead of group decisions, more of these subjects may have been appeased.

The picture books used in the study were well received and listened to by the subjects. There was no negativity perceived by the researcher for sharing primary age focused books with intermediate age subjects. Several subjects responded that hearing the “new” books or hearing them read aloud “with expression” was their favorite part of the study.

The music reproduction tools including the iPod, the docking station, and the customized CDs, all worked well. There were no technological problems and all tools were portable and had good sound quality. The presentations using the document camera and SMART Board™ were appropriate choices and the capabilities of the each enhanced presentations.
How did subject’s music choices compare to the researcher’s choices for the three books? For the book, *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* (Martin, 1989), student opinion tied on two music choices, *Coconut Talk* (Iasos, 1991) and *Paradise Island* (Stensgaard, 2007) (see Table 7) as the favorite. The researcher recommended soundtrack was *Chichicastanango* (Marimba Chapinlandia, 2007), very clearly a third choice among the subjects.

In the comment sections of both graphic organizers, the Read-Aloud Guide and the Bubble Map, insight into subject thoughts on these selections was found. With the story of *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* (Martin, 1989) centering on the alphabet letters climbing and falling from a coconut tree, one subject stated, “Maybe a wooden instrument due to the tree.” *Paradise Island* (Stensgaard, 2007) used a wooden marimba as its main instrument voice and therefore was the music choice for this subject.

Subjects also thought the book setting was tropical, with one stating, “Maybe in Hawaii, California or Florida, somewhere tropical.” Another said, “Happy Hawaii music” when looking for a musical match. It is possible that some of these subjects were influenced by the titles of the songs, both of which suggest tropical themes and one specifically coconuts.

Other subjects were very clear on their choice. One felt the music in *Coconut Talk* (Iasos, 1991) was “jungleish” and therefore a perfect fit. Another said about *Paradise Island* (Stensgaard, 2007), “Just the instrument I was looking for... The tempo is not too fast, not too slow which matches the book great. The music instrument was really perfect.”
With regard to the researcher choice, *Chichicastanango* (Marimba Chapinlandia, 2007), most subject opinions differed from the researcher's (see Table 10). The researcher selected the music as it seemed to fit the upbeat, fun mood of the book. Additionally, the music was tropical and rather exotic in sound and feel; in the researcher’s opinion, a good fit to accompany the book.

Eighty percent of the subjects disagreed. One stated it wasn’t a good book fit because it “. . . makes you want to dance.” Another stated, “. . . there is some kind of ‘static’ in the background. Song is too ‘muffled.’” A number of others felt the song was too fast.

Table 10

**Music Choice Comparison: Chicka Chicka Boom Boom (Martin, 1989)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Music Selection(s)</th>
<th>Researcher Music Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Paradise Island</em> (Stensgaard, 2007)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second book in the study, *Click Clack Moo Cows That Type* (Cronin & Lewin, 2000) the subject top choice matched the teacher top choice, *Safe Harbor and Wild Hog in the Woods* (Fink, 1992) (see Table 11). One subject stated after hearing the book his musical choice should have, “Banjos maybe acoustic guitars. A typewriter or something that clicks. Some western or barn music . . .” This banjo featured selection worked to remind subjects (and the researcher) of the farm or country. One subject stated,
“I think this music’s instruments really sound like they are from a farm.” For this soundtrack to book match, both the researcher and the subjects were in agreement.

Table 11

Music Choice Comparison: *Click Clack Moo Cow That Type* (Cronin & Lewin, 2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Music Selection</th>
<th>Researcher Music Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Safe Harbor and Wild Hog in the Woods</em> (Fink, 1992)</td>
<td><em>Safe Harbor and Wild Hog in the Woods</em> (Fink, 1992)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*John Henry* (Lester & Pinkney, 1994) was the last read-aloud and subjects were asked to make their selection for a soundtrack with a partner. With pairs of subjects voting instead of individuals, the selection votes were closer (see Table 9) and split among three top choices. One of the researcher’s top soundtrack choices, *Hammer Ring* (Scott & Group, 1994) was almost completely rejected (see Table 9). This piece of music is a prison group work song with vocals and hammers pounding. Subjects indicated they didn’t like the singing and felt it would be distracting to the book read-aloud. Table 12 shows the comparison with the researcher choices ordered from strongest selection first.
Table 12

*Music Choice Comparison: John Henry (Lester & Pinkney, 1994)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Music Selection</th>
<th>Researcher Music Selection(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Blues Wail</em> (Strange, 2008)</td>
<td><em>Take This Hammer</em> (Tedesco, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Hammer Ring</em> (Scott &amp; Group, 1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Blues Wail</em> (Strange, 2008)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final step of reading two of the study books to kindergarten classes accompanied by the favorite, subject selected music, was a successful and informative step. The subjects observed two kindergartners reacting and moving to the music but for the most part were pleased with their music choices, especially with regard to the length of the song fitting the length of the book as well as matching moods between book and music. Overall, they felt their music choices enhanced the read-aloud.

**Student Study**

*Conclusions and Recommendations*

This study seems to provide no specific conclusions for comparing the researcher music choices versus the subject choices. The researcher choices were based on years of musical experience, knowledge and training. However, many subjects expressed strong, well thought out arguments, based on solid music and book perceptions for selecting their own musical choices. In fact some subject comments displayed an awareness of subtle mood changes within the book or the music that the researcher did not notice.
Overall, the subject's music choices were valid. They generally expressed sound reasoning for making a particular music choice; based on instruments they heard, styles they perceived, the match between length of song to book read-aloud, their explanations made sense to the researcher. Whether this was a result of the training they had in the study or some pre-learned knowledge and experience or a combination of both, is hard to tell. It would be of interest to ask another group of students to select music based on no training and guidance, and see how their thoughts and selections develop. Regardless, there is no doubt to the researcher that students can make intelligent, fitting musical choices.

The results of this study neither confirm nor deny the validity of adding a musical soundtrack to the read-aloud; there were no data to substantiate solid educational value such as documented reading gains. A quantitative study in an effort to test this possibility could be considered. Additionally, other questions come to mind: (a) How would subjects of other ages such as high school, college, or adults, compare to these subjects and their musical choices? (b) What music would students select completely on their own, with no teacher pre-selected options? These are potential questions that might provide fodder for future studies.

Music educators should consider the format and ideas in this study when designing listening lessons for their music classes. The graphic organizers proved to be valuable in helping subjects develop and write their thoughts on what they were hearing. The playing of many styles of music was interesting and informative to many subjects. The use of the Student Response Form was helpful to subjects and especially well
received were the sections dealing with musical mood and expressiveness. A similar series of lessons in music classes would be of benefit to intermediate age music students and expose those students to many music styles.

Subject's opinions indicated that the music enhanced the read-aloud, and a majority said they enjoyed the read-aloud experience more. Incorporating activities that students enjoy can help make learning successful. The success of the subjects in this study leads one to believe that if given a simple, solid process, other interested educators can learn how and what to listen for in music and select soundtracks for their classroom read-aloud just as successfully. Reading educators, librarians, and classroom teachers might consider the potential of this idea when designing their lessons. They now have a tested process for selecting and sharing music to accompany the read-aloud.

Teacher Guide/Brochure

Discussion

After evaluation of many articles of the existing literature, it is clear that well established and educationally solid research points to the importance of incorporating the read-aloud as a literacy tool at all grade levels. Reading aloud to students of all ages provides those students with exposure to a wider vocabulary, as well as providing the listener with good role models for how to read (Jacobs & Tunnell, 2004; Routman, 1991). Reading aloud can be used as a tool for teaching specific content areas (Albright, 2002), yet being read to can help create a close connection between the reader and listener, promote mutual learning for both, and can motivate students to pursue reading on their
own. As Trelease (2006) documents, reading aloud is the single most important activity a parent or teacher can do to develop a lifelong reader.

As music is generally regarded as an important, accepted course of study many music educators primarily teach music as for its own sake. Yet the strong connection between using music and reading instruction cannot be overlooked. Music was linked strongly to reading instruction during the Whole Language movement and cross curricular ties between music and many subjects were established and reinforced with reading and writing instruction being central in this connection. Teachers guided students to develop lyrics to songs, and created entire song books using the student's own words and pictures. These were included in classroom libraries and read, sung and used over and over again by the students (Flohr, 2006; Harp, 1988; Lamme, 1990). The connection between the lyric in song and the word in print was firm.

Other programs continued to establish the music and reading connection. These included programs such as Learning to Read Through the Arts (LTRTA) (Collett, 1991), which used the arts as a basis for reading instruction to help struggling readers, to Balkin's (Balkin, 1999b) curriculum which used songs to teach parts of speech.

Music has been used to motivate students, and to provide variety and repetition within reading programs. Correlations between learning to read abstract music symbols and reading letters, words and other building blocks of literacy have been established (though not conclusively researched). The use of published song picture books is also commonly and widely used to reinforce both music study and reading learning. Additionally, there is evidence that combining reading based tasks with music that has
50-60 beats per minute and a relaxing, comfortable environment, learning can be enhanced. (Carlsen et al., 2004).

The use of pre-recorded music to accompany a read-aloud has some established credibility as well. As used in the movie and television industry, the aural soundtrack enhances the sensory experience for the audience. Some educators recommend the use of background music to accompany a read-aloud. Using music in this way is seen as a tool to create a particular mood, establish a historical setting, or immerse the listener into a particular culture (Brown, 1988; Calogero, 2002; Flohr, 2006; Lamme, 1990; Towell, 1999). However, the practice of combining music with the read-aloud seems to be infrequent at best.

The aim of the guide/brochure is to provide interested teachers, librarians and music specialists with a starting point for using pre-recorded music as an accompaniment to these books. Using the terms described in Hill-Clarke and Robinson (2004), the use of music in this capacity is an example of using music as a secondary function or using music as background for reading activities. However, it seems the term secondary function diminishes the impact and importance others point to when the use of nonverbal information (such as music and sound effects) is included with reading activities. As Brown (1988) stated, “The more effectively a medium’s formal means are exploited in production, the more likely it would seem that children will absorb this distinctive story incarnation” (p. 43). Certainly, these guide/brochure song suggestions offer a way to open more avenues of “production” when delivering the read-aloud. The introduction of the aural soundtrack helps to provide clues to location, culture, setting and mood.
The resources and equipment combined with the lack of expertise may have been a deterrent to adding music to a read-aloud. With the purchase of a small amount of equipment (such as an iPod and a small portable docking/playing station), and an investment of time in learning how to select and download music from the internet, the educator can implement the soundtrack to their classroom read-aloud. Complete compact discs could also be purchased, and the selected tracks within the CD could be played on a standard boom box type music player.

The music recommendations for each picture book were accessed and chosen through iTunes™, a readily available and user friendly music purchase source. Each song selection was chosen based on the researcher’s attempt to match the mood, culture, historical setting, action or characters in each picture book’s storyline. Some of the picture books were matched with multiple music choices, some were a one-to-one match.

In iTunes™, one may listen to 30 seconds of each selection and get a sample section of the song without purchasing it. A drawback of finding music this way is one can only hear the song in its entirety after it has been purchased. Occasionally, this would pose a problem; sometimes the character of the song might change part way through, some songs speeded up, others introduced new instruments that didn’t fit the mood, setting or culture of the book. In that case, a new search was required. Though the purchase of the individual songs is relatively inexpensive, several times pieces of music were not used, wasting both time and money.

Many of the music selections were presented with their read-aloud in the researcher’s music classroom. The process was simply to “dock” the iPod into a small,
portable music station, start the music and begin the read-aloud. If the song was too short for the read-aloud, it can simply be programmed so the iPod will repeat the song over and over as necessary. The short delay in the music between repeats seemed hardly to be noticeable and most students said they were not distracted by this. An example of this was the delightful book, *Skippyjon Jones* (Schachner, 2003), about a cat who thinks he is a Mexican Chihuahua bandito. The suggested musical selection, *Clave Privada* (Los Patrulleros, 1999, track 3) was too short for the eventual try at the read-loud and though wonderfully appropriate, the song repeated three times before the read-loud was complete. In the opinion of the researcher, this tended to make the accompaniment too predictable and therefore not a good match for the book.

This music soundtrack to read-aloud was used with various classes from grades one through six. Though a small number of students (less than five) stated they thought the added music was distracting, overwhelmingly, the majority of the students expressed that the music added to the mood, setting or appeal of the story and gave specific, positive feedback on the musical selections.

Teacher Guide/Brochure

*Conclusions and Recommendations*

Certainly there is evidence of educational benefit to adding music to a read-aloud and music has been used in a limited way it seems. However, this is certainly the exception to the norm. Why hasn’t music been used more when reading books to children? Why is this educational activity missing its soundtrack?
The selection and the purchase of an appropriate music was more difficult, time-consuming and expensive in the past. One didn’t have fingertip access to online libraries of music to preview before selection. If a music selection was located, full compact discs were necessary to buy and before that, cassette tapes or vinyl albums. This typically involved a trip to a record store as well. There was also a very good chance the record store would not have the music one might be looking for, necessitating the ordering of it, requiring a delay in its use. Perhaps the teacher or librarian would give up at this point and feel it wasn’t worth the effort. If the music was purchased, the boom box CD player, the cassette player and the turntable were the means of playing music to listeners in years past and these were somewhat more difficult to operate and certainly less portable.

The relatively new technology of previewing and downloading music from an internet source opens access to new and old music from around the world. The process of learning how to search for and purchase music can be easily and quickly learned. This music can be searched for by genre, artist, composer, song or album titles. One is capable of purchasing individuals songs relatively inexpensively and having access to that music immediately in one’s own home. Music has never been more accessible.

The audio playback equipment (such as the iPod) is smaller and more portable, programmable to a certain extent and capable of storing literally thousands of songs. The playback of this music can be done on small, portable, great sounding systems that are relatively inexpensive and easily found for purchase.

Another contributing factor to the lack of a music soundtrack with a read-aloud must also be the lack of expertise most teachers and librarians have in this area. Many of
these educators are probably musically untrained and may lack the basics of knowledge to allow them to creatively find a musical accompaniment. Knowledge of musical instruments, styles, eras, and genres, really is a basic first step in making this search/match. Without this base of information, selecting music must be even more difficult and overwhelming.

The procedure used for selecting the music is an additional component to this project that would be important to share with educators. One intention of this project is that when distributing the guide/brochure, an accompanying demonstration and explanation of how to approach this process is to be shared with other educators. The sound producing tools such as an iPod, and a playback system should also be shared for those educators unfamiliar with them. Additionally, a partial or complete sharing of one to three of the read-alouds with the accompanying music should be presented. The teachers can then judge for themselves whether they think the music adds to the mood and quality of the read-aloud.

These sharing sessions could be done in several formats. A presentation to district librarians at a district-wide librarian meeting would be ideal. Certainly many of the librarians contacted in the initial stages of the project indicated they were interested in getting the final results of the music/book matches. This would also allow sharing of this project with secondary librarians.

A presentation at a Washington Library Media Association (WLMA) conference would also be appropriate. This would allow the information to reach beyond a local school district to a statewide level. If this is not available or possible, posting the
brochure on the WLMA listserv may be a good alternative. Online posting of the guide/brochure in a library or educational blog, wiki or web site would be a way to potentially reach an even larger audience of educators and librarians.

A sharing with music educators would be another appropriate presentation venue. Many music specialists in KSD contributed ideas for book titles for this project and may be interested in seeing the process and the resulting product for their own use. In KSD, monthly music staff meetings typically involve individual music staff members sharing ideas and activities, a potential sharing venue. A staff meeting in one’s own building would also be a good place to share this process and results with fellow colleagues. The guide/brochure is designed for duplication and could simply be mailed to educators and librarians in any number of locations.

The process of selecting the music is still challenging in most circumstances. Even with an extensive background and knowledge in music education and performing, one can spend many long hours searching for just the right music to book fit. It is easy to understand how another teacher might become frustrated and give up on the process. However, with practice the process can become easier and quicker. Combined with the realization that the “perfect” fit may not always be necessary, the teacher’s search time may be reduced. Often students seemed to be accepting and pleased to hear any music added to the read-aloud experience.

Selecting multiple cuts of music for a particular book, though more time-consuming, might be a further refinement of this project concept. iPods can hold a “play list” or an isolated group of selected songs. A play list might be developed for a single
book with two or more tracks picked out and played sequentially to perhaps match a changing mood of a book. An example of this type of book is *John Henry* (Lester, J., & Pinkney, J., 1994). This book starts with a light mood, filled with a humorous story line and pictures but ends on a sad, introspective note with John Henry’s eventual death. Different music selections that match this transition would truly complement the read-aloud. Another example is the book *Hooway for Wodney Wat* (Lester, H. & Munsinger, C. 1999). This picture book starts with the protagonist being bullied and ends with him being the hero. A playlist with multiple cuts of music that reflect both of these situations would be ideal.

Educators might also benefit from a list of selected and categorized music to have at their fingertips. If they were looking for a music match for a “light and humorous” book, they could refer to the suggestions in this list. For this project, the researcher had originally planned to select and list a variety of music which might fit in various “mood” categories, which could then be available for educators to use when trying to match books a corresponding mood. This would leave the ultimate music soundtrack in the hands of the read-aloud presenter and give this person more options. While a good idea, it was not practical for the scope of this project. Literally, hours were spent looking for the music matches for the 24 books chosen for the limits of this project. Additionally, the categorizing, simplifying and confining of music to adjective categories (such as light, dark, sad, happy, mysterious) is very subjective and probably not too practical. One person’s “sad” may be another’s “scary.” Music doesn’t always fit into nice, neat categories and may reflect several moods within a given song.
There is a need for an ongoing resource in this area. A monthly or yearly list, compiling music suggestions for popular read-aloud books that teachers and librarians could access easily. This information could be displayed in the form of a library oriented or educational web site, or an annual WLMA or ALA presentation. As an experienced musician and veteran music specialist with a recently added library endorsement, the researcher is uniquely qualified to bring an expertise to this idea. It would certainly be a helpful addition to the teacher resources for those that wanted to enhance their oral readings and add a soundtrack to new or favorite read-alouds. Perhaps this project should only be the beginning of this kind of resource.
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Cowboy Waltz, (n.d.). [Recorded by Fox & Branch]. On Bottlegger's blues [CD].
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Schuster Books for Young Readers.


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(1), 39-50.

Burlington, MA: Rounder Records.

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http://www.kent.k12.wa.us/KSD/IS/hicap/general_information.htm


Johannesburg, South Africa: Gallo Music International.


New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.


Mexico: MultiMusic.


http://www.westland.lib.mi.us/kids/books/lists/silvey_100_best.php


APPENDIX A

INITIAL LIST OF EDUCATOR SUGGESTED BOOK TITLES


Distributed by Random House.


APPENDIX B

PICTURE BOOK SELECTION LIST

Primary - Intermediate Level


**Intermediate-Secondary Level**


APPENDIX C

MUSIC SELECTIONS WITH BOOK TITLES

(Book titles in bold, with music soundtrack suggestions listed alphabetically under each)

**Primary - Intermediate:**


Xenakis, I. (1987-88). Rebonds-b [Recorded by Red Fish Blue Fish & Steven Schick].


Playasound.


Germany: Bella Musica. (1997)


Intermediate/Secondary Level


APPENDIX D

STUDENT RESPONSE FORM

1. Musical Mood

How does the music make you feel? Does the music have a sad feeling? Light, happy or upbeat? Dark and scary? Uplifting and inspiring? Mysterious? Heroic? Goofy? Sleepy? Funny? Does the music’s mood stay consistent for the whole length of the song? Avoid songs that might change mood and move away from the book mood.

Write your ideas about what mood each music sample shows. Can you describe a book scene or topic where this music might fit.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

2. Dynamic Level

Dynamics in music is how loud or quiet the music is. What is the mood of the book and does the music’s dynamic level match the mood of the book? Gentle books should probably have gentle, quiet music. Active books and stories should have music volumes that match. Avoid songs that might change dynamic level and move away from the book mood.

Write your ideas about what dynamic level each music sample shows. What kind of book story would go with each sample?
Tempo

Tempo means the speed of the song. Is it fast, mid-tempo or slow tempo? Tempo like mood or dynamic level, affects the feel of the music and the story it accompanies. Chase music in movies is fast and exciting. A battle scene or book might also call for a fast tempo. A sleepy or quiet book may call for music that is slower and more soothing.

Write your ideas about what tempo each music sample shows. Describe a scene from a movie or book this music might go with.

Cultural Setting

Some music will give clues to its location and be associated with a culture, country or even a region of that country. Often, this music may use special instruments, music scales or folk styles associated with their country or culture. African music is one example.

Write your ideas about what culture or country each music sample may come from.
Tradition Music

Other music might be associated with a tradition. Christmas, Hanukkah, and patriotic music are examples of this.

*Write your ideas about what tradition the following example might be associated with.*

1.

Historical Setting Music

Some music may remind one of a particular historical time. Songs from the American west, times of slavery or music from other past historical times are examples. A book about cowboys may go well with music from that time period. A book about castles and knights may go well with music associated with that time period.

*Write your ideas about when, what or where the following example might be associated with.*

1.

Appropriate Instruments for a Story

Some books and stories may call to mind certain instrument sounds or “colors.” For example, a story about an elephant or other large animal may suggest a low sounding instrument. A bird may suggest something high and light like a flute.

*Write your ideas about what type of character, animal or scene the following examples might be associated with.*
Vocals

Songs with singing or vocals may or may not work as a soundtrack to a book. If the vocals are in the same language the book is read out loud in, the vocals may be distracting. In general, avoid singing as a soundtrack selection.

However, if the vocals are quiet, or in another language and not understood by the book listeners, they may indeed enhance the story.

Write your thoughts about whether this music with vocals might or might not work as a book soundtrack. Write also your guess where the music comes from.

1.

2.

Song Length

In a perfect match the music would last exactly as long as the book read-aloud. So in general how long the read aloud is should be considered. With new technology one can program a song to repeat over several times if necessary so shorter songs can be used.
APPENDIX E

SAMPLE READ-ALOUD GUIDE

THE READ - ALOUD: CLICK CLACK MOO: COWS THAT TYPE

NAME

As you listen to this read-aloud book, note on this form your thoughts on the feeling or mood of the story, and keep in mind possible choices to soundtrack with it.

Describe the overall mood or feeling of this story:

Any historical, location or tradition important to this story? If so what is it?

Main character(s) of story? Any heroes? Any bad guys? List them here:

What is the main action or event that is happening in this story? Write it here:

Ideas for instruments or music styles that might go with this book? Tempo? Dynamics?
Use this thinking map to help you decide if the music will fit the book. Write in the bubbles.

Song title: **Nine Pound Hammer**
Mike McAdoo

- Mood?
- Dynamic level?
- Appropriate instruments for story?
- Vocals?
- Tempo?
- Song length?
- Read-aloud length?
- Traditional?
- Culture?
- Historical?
October 28, 2008

Michael Beato

Dear Mr. Beato,

Thank you for submitting an exemption request for your study, *Using Music with Read-Alouds*. The application as submitted was screened for exemption status according to the policies of CWU and the provisions of the applicable federal regulations. Your research was found to be subject to CWU oversight but exempt from federal regulation because it involves research conducted in an educational setting involving normal educational practices [see 45 CFR 46.101b(1)]. This certification is valid from October 28, 2008 to October 27, 2010 so long as the approved procedures are followed.

We have enclosed a stamped approved informed consent form. This form carrying the approval date should be considered the official form for your study. Please use this for all copies needed.

Your responsibilities with respect to keeping this office apprised of your progress include the following:

1. File a Project Modification Request form for HSRC approval before modifying your study in any way except formatting of documents (e.g. any change in recruitment, subjects, co-investigators, consent forms, any procedures). If there is a major change in purpose or protocol, you may be asked to submit a new application. Please call if you have questions.
2. File a Termination Report form with this office upon completion of your study.
3. Immediately contact the HSRC for further guidance should you encounter unanticipated problems with your research. Follow up with an Unanticipated Problems report may be required.
4. Provide a current contact address and phone number if either should change prior to termination of the study.

All of the HSRC forms are available on our website. Please refer to your HSRC study number (H08125) in all related future correspondence with this office. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to contact me.

I have appreciated working with you; may you have a productive research experience.

Sincerely,

Sandra M. Martinez
Human Protections Administrator
c: HSRC File
Dr. Leo D'Acquisto, HSRC Chair
Dr. Marvin Britto
Graduate Studies and Research

Human Subjects Review Committee Office
127

Please note:
Signature and personal information have been removed due to privacy concerns.
December 4, 2008

Mr. Michael Bento

Dear Mr. Bento,

Thank you for submitting a project modification request for your study, Using Music with Read-Alouds. The requested modification was to make a minor change in research procedures, specifically speaking with children in small groups in addition to individual interviews about their experiences in the music program. These modifications do not change the status of exemption from federal regulations for your study and are approved for the same approval period of the original application, October 28, 2008 to October 27, 2010.

If you encounter unanticipated adverse events with study participants or wish to modify your research procedures further, please consult the Human Subjects Review Committee (HSRC) for further guidance. If you need to consult further with the HSRC, please include your study approval number H08125.

Best wishes for a productive research experience.

Sincerely,

Sandra M. Martinez
Human Protections Administrator

cc: HSRC File
Dr. Leo D’Acquisto, HSRC Chair
Dr. Marwin Britto, Faculty Sponsor

Human Subjects Review Committee Office
400 East University Way
Ellensburg WA 98926-7401
Office: 509-963-3133
Black Hall 225-23
Fax: 509-963-2143
Website: www.cwu.edu/hsrc

Please note:
Signature and personal information have been removed due to privacy concerns
APPENDIX I

HSRC PARENT PERMISSION LETTER

PARENT PERMISSION LETTER

Project Title: USING MUSIC WITH READ-ALOUDS

Investigator: Michael Bento, Graduate Student CWU, General Music Specialist, Kent School District #415

SUNRISE ELEMENTARY

Date

Dear Students and Parents:

I will be doing a study that will focus on combining music and reading as part of my graduate work through Central Washington University. The study is intended to compare student ideas to teacher ideas in selecting music that best combines and matches to a selected read-aloud book. As part of the study I will teach a critical, creative thinking process to students in their approach to listening to and analyzing music. Students will use these skills and this process to creatively fit a musical selection as a “soundtrack” to a book that will be read-aloud to younger students by a teacher.

I will present this project to the students in two general music classes. These are the classes that take place during band and orchestra times, also called “Music Choice” general music classes. This will involve about 50 students, ranging in age from fourth to sixth grades within these two classes.

I won’t report on individual student choices, only choices groups of students select as well as their grade level. In other words, student participation will remain anonymous and their music grade will not be influenced. I anticipate the whole study will involve four to six music class sessions.

Parents can choose not to have their son or daughter included by contacting me. Students will not be treated any differently in class if they are not in the study and their music grade will not be affected in any way. Students who will not be participating in the study due to parental choice will be allowed to continue music study in Ms. Hartley’s music class for the duration of the study.

Thank you for your support and please call me at school or email me if you want to talk more about this. Thank you.

Michael Bento
Music Specialist
253 373-3799
michael.bento@kent.k12.wa.us
APPENDIX J

HSRC STUDENT SUBJECT ASSENT SCRIPT

ASSENT FOR MINOR SUBJECTS: Script to be read to students

Project Title: USING MUSIC WITH READ-ALOUDS

Investigator: Michael Bento, Graduate Student CWU, General Music Specialist, Kent
School District #415

I am doing a study for my college degree that will match music with book read-alouds;
sort of like creating a music background for a movie except in this case it is a music
background for a picture book. If you decide you want to be in this study, you will be
taught how to listen to and decide what music best fits the picture book I have selected.
This will take approximately four to six music class sessions.

There are some things that you should know about the study. Some children might get
tired of having to listen to and pick music several times. Some students may also feel that
they don’t really know how to make a selection well enough on their own. However, you
might also find this research activity is interesting, musically educational and fun.

Not everyone in this study will benefit. A benefit means that something good happens to
you because of the study. The most likely benefit to you for being in this study is that you
will learn more how to listen to and think about music you hear. You will also get to hear
music you may not get to hear otherwise. You will also get to listen to several, quality
picture books you may not be familiar with.

When I finish the study, I will write a report about the music that students select for a
read-aloud picture book and compare that to my music choices. This report will not
mention your names or that you were in this study.

You do not have to be in this study if you don’t want to be. If after we begin, you want to
stop, that’s okay too. Students can let me know of their choice by talking with me
privately and telling me they wish to not participate. Students who choose not to
participate can continue music study in Ms. Hartley’s class for the duration of the study.
Your music grade will not be affected by this choice.
APPENDIX K

HSRC DISTRICT APPROVAL LETTER

October 24, 2008

Human Subjects Review Committee
Central Washington University
400 E. University Way
Ellensburg, WA 98926-7401

To Whom It May Concern:

Michael Bento has requested permission to collect research data from students at Sunrise Elementary in the Kent School District, # 415. I have been informed of the purposes of the study and the nature of the research procedures. I have also been given an opportunity to ask questions of the researcher.

As a representative of Sunrise Elementary in the Kent School District # 415, I am authorized to grant permission to have the researcher recruit research participants from Sunrise Elementary. Michael Bento is also permitted to collect research data during school hours.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 253 373-7630.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Reuland
Principal
Sunrise Elementary
Kent School District #415

Please note:
The signature has been removed due to security concerns.
APPENDIX L

STUDENT RESPONSE FORM: SUBJECT SAMPLE

Student Response Form                      Student Name:

1. Musical Mood

How does the music make you feel? Does the music have a sad feeling? Light, happy or upbeat? Dark and scary? Uplifting and inspiring? Mysterious? Heroic? Goofy? Sleepy? Funny? Does the music's mood stay consistent for the whole length of the song? Avoid songs that might change mood and move away from the book mood.

Write your ideas about what mood each music sample shows. Can you describe a book scene or topic where this music might fit?

1. It is a upbeat kind of uplifting tune. It would go good in a cowboy book.
2. It is sort of scary and kind of mysterious. I would put it in a horror film. It is a little bit inspiring and also sleepy. It is a warm lamb's eye.
3. It is very scary. It is like it is mimicking a scene coming up on you and you are about to meet you!!!
4. It is kind of dark and yet it is mysterious. It would go good in an jungle story.
5. It is kind of funny and weird. It would fit in a country story.
6. It is kind of funny and weird. It would fit in a country story.
7. I am definitely mysterious, very... I am light and I am... I am... I am...

2. Dynamic Level

Dynamics in music is how loud or quiet the music is. What is the mood of the book and does the music's dynamic level match the mood of the book? Gentle books should probably have gentle, quiet music. Active books and stories should have music volumes that match. Avoid songs that might change dynamic level and move away from the book mood.

Write your ideas about what dynamic level each music sample shows. What kind of book story would go with each sample?

1. It's kind of medium-high in level of loudness. It would be a good tune for a sad-romance story.
2. Loud, but a little bit quiet. It would go good in a Spanish cartoon book.
3. It is loud and kind of medium. It would be good in a Italian-Happy book.
4. It is medium-high. It would fit well in a jungle story.
5. Kind of loud medium sound, but it is not too loud. It would be a good tune for the old song for an old TV show.

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APPENDIX M

STUDENT RESPONSE FORM: SUBJECT SAMPLE

Tempo

Tempo means the speed of the song. Is it fast, mid-tempo or slow tempo? Tempo like mood or dynamic level, affects the feel of the music and the story it accompanies. Chase music in movies is fast and exciting. A battle scene or book might also call for a fast tempo. A sleepy or quiet book may call for music that is slower and more soothing.

Write your ideas about what tempo each music sample shows. Describe a scene from a movie or book this music might go with.

1. Slow, sad like after a war and lots of people are dead
2. Very fast, happy, silly, country
3. Slow, sounds like spaghetti
4. Fast, happy, silly, country
5. 
6.

Cultural Setting

Some music will give clues to its location and be associated with a culture, country or even a region of that country. Often, this music may use special instruments, music scales or folk styles associated with their country or culture. African music is one example.

Write your ideas about what culture or country each music sample may come from.

1. Italian, SPAGHETTI
2. African
3. Sounds like Venice on the water ways
4. Ancient China
5. Scottish
6.

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Tradition Music

Other music might be associated with a tradition. Christmas, Hanukkah, and patriotic music are examples of this.

*Write your ideas about what tradition the following example might be associated with.*

1. Bright Christmas

Historical Setting Music

Some music may remind one of a particular historical time. Songs from the American west, times of slavery or music from other past historical times are examples. A book about cowboys may go well with music from that time period. A book about castles and knights may go well with music associated with that time period.

*Write your ideas about when, what or where the following example might be associated with.*

1. Castles and Knights

Appropriate Instruments for a Story

Some books and stories may call to mind certain instrument sounds or "colors." For example, a story about an elephant or other large animal may suggest a low sounding instrument. A bird may suggest something high and light like a flute.

*Write your ideas about what type of character, animal or scene the following examples might be associated with.*

1. Bambi
2. Dying animal
3. A little bug moving something
4. A meditation scene
5. [Blank]
Lester, J., Pinkney, J.

**John Henry**

*Take This Hammer,* [Recorded by Tommy Tedesco]. On *The Complete Twelve String Story* [CD]. Florida: Essential Media Group LLC. (2008)


Farris, C.K., Ssentpriet, C.

**My Brother Martin: A Sister Remembers Growing Up with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**


Polacco, P.

**Pink and Say**


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**Enhancing Read-Alouds with Music**

Suggestions for musical soundtracks to 24 respected picture books

suggested and compiled
by
Michael Bento

The following is a list of picture books for primary through secondary age children, with music suggestions to play as background accompaniment during a read-aloud.

All music selections can be accessed through iTunes™
Primary/Intermediate

Martin, B.
Chicka Chicka
Boom Boom
Chichicastenango. On Chapinlandia: Marimba
Music of Guatemala [CD].
Washington DC: Smithsonian Folkways
Recordings/Folkways Records. (2007)

Cronin, D.,
Lewin, B.
Click, Clack, Moo:
Cows That Type
Safe Harbor & Wild Hog in
the Woods. [Recorded
by C. Fink]. On Banjo
Haiku [CD]. Washington DC: Community
Music. (1992)
On Solo Banjo Works [CD]. Burlington, MA:
Rounder Records.

Freeman, D.
Corduroy
Cast Your Fate to the
Wind. Guaraldi, V.
(1989). On Greatest
Hits [CD]. San Francisco: Fantasy Records.
Kids Get the Blues [CD]. Montreal: LP
Creative.

Willems, M.
Don't Let the Pigeon
Drive the Bus
Trois Pièces Brèves: Allegro.
Ibert, J. (1930). [Recorded by
the New York Woodwind Quintet]. On
The Best of the New York Woodwind Quintet

Lionni, L.
Frederick
Minuet from String Quintet in
E major. Boccherini, L.
[Recorded by
Philharmonia Virtuosi].
On Greatest Hits for
String Quartet [CD]. Germany: Essay
Recordings. (1993)

Silverstein, S.
The Giving Tree
[Recorded by Bob Becker and
James Priess]. On Bob Becker,
Russ Hartenberger and
Steve Reich Ensemble: City Life-Proverb-
Nagoya Marimbas [CD]. New York:
Nonesuch Records Manufactured and
Marketed by Rhino Entertainment. (2005)
Yolen, J.,
Teague, M.
How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight?

Seuss, D.
The Lorax

MacDonald, M. R.,
Coffey, T.
Mabel the Clever

Lester, H.,
Munsinger, L.
Hooway for Wodney Wat

Brett, J.
The Mitten: A Ukrainian Folktale

Henkes, K.
Lily’s Purple Plastic Purse

Wood, A.,
Wood, D.
The Napping House
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Performer</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soliloquy for Bells</td>
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<td>Buckwalter, K.</td>
<td>[Recorded by A. Mace &amp; Ansis Hand Bell Ensemble and Estonian National Symphony]. On Vanuatu Handbell Sympho</td>
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<td>ny [CD].</td>
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<td>Scieszka, J.</td>
<td>The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs; As Told to Jon</td>
<td>Sendak, M.</td>
<td>New York: Angel Records</td>
<td>(2000)</td>
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<td>Scieszka</td>
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<td>Sand Dog Blues.</td>
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<td>Tin Hat Trio (2000).</td>
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<td>Lester, J.,</td>
<td>Sam and The Tigers: A New Telling of Little Black Sambo</td>
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<td>Pinkney, J.</td>
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<td>Schachner, J. B.</td>
<td>Black Sambo</td>
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<td>Lent, B.</td>
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