MUSICAL COLLABORATION IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM: 
EMPOWERING GENERALIST TEACHERS TO FOSTER 
CHILDREN’S MEANINGFUL MUSIC-MAKING

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"Just make it happen"
Abstract

This two-phased action research project investigates the effects of generalist-specialist teacher collaboration in a Sydney primary school in response to concerns raised in the National Review of School Music Education (2005). The researcher supported and resourced two teachers to teach music to their Stage 2 classes during two terms of 2012. Teacher and student behaviour was observed, to examine the effects of collaboration on the confidence and preparedness of classroom teachers and the musical experiences of students. The findings discuss visible changes in the autonomy and agency of teacher participants, in relation to resource development and sequencing of music lessons. This form of professional development was beneficial in assisting with resourcing, reporting and communicating, indicating the future possibility of further collaborative teaching in this field. Considerations including those of sustainability, teacher identity, interpretation and definitions of ‘meaningful music-making’ are discussed in the future recommendations for music teaching in Australia.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

In New South Wales (NSW) secondary schools, music is taught by teachers with at least an undergraduate music degree, in addition to training in curriculum and pedagogy. By contrast, in NSW primary schools, music is typically taught by generalist teachers who also are responsible for teaching all Key Learning Areas (KLAs), including English; Mathematics; Science and Technology; Creative Arts; Human Society and its Environment (HSIE); and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE).

Instruction in literacy and numeracy skills is allocated 45-55% of teaching time in primary school education settings and similar divisions across disciplines in teacher training are reflective of this. Literacy and numeracy pedagogy tends to dominate instruction in curriculum in the pre-service training of primary teachers, and as a result, on average, trainee teachers receive a total of only 23 hours of instruction on how to teach music in the primary school (Stevens, 2003), although many receive less. In a minority of primary schools – often independent – music is taught by specialists, who may have received postgraduate training in pedagogical techniques appropriate to primary education, although this is not always the case.

Primary school teachers are required to teach music as one of the four key subject areas within the NSW Creative Arts Syllabus (Board of Studies NSW, 2000a, 2010), along with Visual Arts, Drama and Dance. Together, these four subjects are allocated approximately 6-10% of the teaching time in primary school, which equates to a suggested 1.5 – 2.5% of teaching per week in each individual creative arts subject. For Music specifically, this syllabus states that primary school children will be provided with opportunities for Performing (including singing, playing and moving), Organising Sound and Listening as the key learning experiences. During these learning experiences, teachers are also required to ensure that students are learning about specific musical concepts, including duration, pitch, dynamics, tone colour and structure, as they develop their skills and musical awareness. Suggestions for repertoire choice are labelled as vocal music, instrumental music and student composition, and a broad range of repertoire reflecting stylistic and cultural diversity is advocated. If appropriately implemented, this curriculum creates a solid foundation for students as they enter the secondary school mandatory music programme, which builds on these learning experiences and conceptual development and
continues to explore a vast array of repertoire (Board of Studies NSW, 2003). The importance of a strong music education, incorporating compositional and performance experience in primary school, is therefore seen as important and yet there are many concerns for the quality and even the existence of music education in primary schools today (Pascoe et al., 2005).

**Significance of the Study**

**The state of music education in Australian primary schools**

The National Review of School Music Education (Pascoe et al., 2005) indicates that the state and quality of music education in schools is a problem of significance, with added funding, employment of specialist teachers and increased professional development of generalist teachers as just some of the recommendations. “Hours for pre-service teacher education for music have contracted radically in the last ten years and do not adequately prepare generalist primary teachers for teaching music in schools. Urgent action is needed to address this problem” (p. vi). These findings are in also in alignment with the research of Jeanneret (1995) who attributes levels of generalist teacher preparedness to levels of tertiary training and limited prior formal musical experiences in the generalist teacher’s life.

Furthermore, Pascoe et al. (2005) recommend that tertiary institutions devote more time to music education in order to “improve the standard of pre-service music education for all generalist classroom teachers” (p. xvi). More specifically, the review recommends “team-teaching between specialist music teachers and classroom teachers” as an effective way of improving music education in primary schools (p. xxv). Not only does the review provide suggestions for the improvement of generalist teacher preparedness to teach music, but this review also notes that if the positive collaboration between generalist and specialist primary teachers is a suggested solution, then an increased number of specialist music teachers is a necessity. Although Pascoe et al. described the reality of Australian school music education and offered recommendations to the Australian Government for increased funding and support for the improvement in music education in 2005, similar concerns remain seven years later.
Promoting meaningful music-making in the classroom

Recommended guidelines for student learning in the music classroom are also discussed in Pascoe et al. (2005). The review describes suggestions for learning focuses and key questions for teachers to ask themselves when reflecting on student experiences. In particular, these relate to student “opportunities to learn music through exploring and developing their musical ideas” and “creating music using their own ideas and experiences” (p. 86). This promotes the development of students’ aesthetic understanding of a wide range of repertoire through the teacher’s inclusion of creative and practical opportunities for students in the classroom.

In many cases where teachers lack confidence in their own musicality, planned classroom activities can fail to recognise children’s creativity as a starting point. Multiple bodies of research outline the innate musical creativity of children as observed in their daily activities and in the classroom (Glover, 2000; Marsh & Young, 2006). Many ideas and frameworks exist that unite children’s musicality with classroom activities and pedagogy (Wiggins, 2003, 2009, 2011), but such literature is not easily accessible or practical for a non-specialist teacher. Whilst classroom primary school teachers frequently explore innovation and imaginative teaching in other curriculum areas, this approach is often not taken when it comes to music education, due to teachers’ lack of familiarity with the subject and how to teach it creatively in the classroom (Wiggins & Wiggins, 2008).

Furthermore, Pascoe et al. (2005) provide recommended guidelines for teachers in the classroom. Key questions of a reflective nature are asked of teachers, concerning the inclusion of a “range of approaches” where one’s practice provides challenges for students (p. 100). Most importantly the role of all teachers, alongside the role of specialist music teachers, is described for each stage in this process of student learning. For example, in the middle childhood phase (Grade 3 to Grade 7), the role of all teachers is to “provide music opportunities that continue to challenge each student to explore and experiment with music ideas, extend their musical skills and understanding of musical processes” (p. 100). At this same stage, the role of specialist music teachers is to “ensure that music learning is engaging and meaningful for all students” (p. 100). Similarly, whilst the generalist teacher is encouraged to “work collaboratively with teachers with specialist knowledge and experience in music, [and] parents and community partners who can provide relevant musical experiences”, the specialist teacher functions here to “work collaboratively with
other teachers and providers of music learning for students” (p. 100). There are many implications for future classroom practice suggested here, most notably including the concept of collaboration between specialist music teachers and classroom teachers, in order to create engaging and meaningful musical experiences for students.

This notion of a specialist working collaboratively with generalist classroom teachers was discussed in the research of Hookey (1994), whose model of curriculum ‘in action’, or ‘Coaching In-service’, provided a significant framework for this study which contributes to an understanding of teacher and student experiences of music-making in a Sydney school. Hookey (1994) reflects on her experience which initially involved three specialist music teachers servicing over fifty schools. “The music resource teachers provided classroom demonstrations and follow-up materials, personalizing as much as possible under the constraints of time and teacher interest” (p. 40). Following the conclusion that this situation was unsatisfactory, a “consultative relationship” was established between the specialist and generalist teachers where “assistance was to be based on consultation with individual teachers” rather than “time-tabled classroom demonstrations” (p. 40). Hookey studied the ways in which a music specialist could contribute to the work of classroom teachers and found that “the ideas that both classroom teachers and music specialists bring to this consultation can be the basis for curriculum change” (p. 45).

Whilst Hookey (1994) did explore the notion of collaborative teaching, the generalist teachers in her study came from relatively developed musical backgrounds and felt reasonably confident in teaching music in their classrooms. The current study is particularly important as it explores the effect of specialist teachers working alongside generalists who lack musical experiences and confidence in music teaching in a NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) school, in an investigation of generalist primary teachers’ preparedness to teach music.

In a small-scale action research project, the researcher (as music specialist) aims to investigate the extent of teacher preparedness and the nature of students’ musical development in a Sydney primary school. The study investigates the training, attitudes and resources of generalist teachers in two classrooms within this school and promotes collaborative work between generalist and specialist teachers as a possible solution to the
difficulties surrounding the implementation of classroom music praxis as specified by the Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus (Board of Studies NSW, 2000a, 2000b).

**Research Questions**

This rationale concerning the potential benefits of generalist-specialist teacher collaboration leads to the following questions which provide the framework for addressing this research topic:

1. What are these generalist teachers’ attitudes towards children’s meaningful music-making?

2. What is the effect of specialist and generalist teacher collaboration on the confidence and preparedness of generalist teachers to teach music?

3. In what ways can an action research project involving collaborative teaching between generalist and specialist teachers enhance the classroom musical experiences of primary school children?

The first research question explores the attitudes that generalist teachers possess concerning meaningful music-making. The second question explores the extent to which specialist and generalist teacher collaboration effects generalist teacher confidence to teach music. The final question explores the experiences of students within the collaborative classroom environment. These research questions consider the experiences of all participants in the teaching of music lessons.

The following chapter provides a review of the literature concerning teacher preparedness and confidence to teach music, professional development and creative pedagogical frameworks that facilitate effective classroom music-making opportunities.
Definition of terms

For the purpose of this study, I have given these key terms the following definitions:

**Creative classroom environment:** a classroom where children are able to express themselves creatively through music.

**Empowering:** the notion of equipping generalist teachers with confidence, positive attitudes and resources for their future teaching practice.

**Generalist teachers:** teachers trained to teach all curriculum areas, as typically found in NSW primary schools.

**Meaningful:** (used in the context of classroom music-making) compelling, enriching, holistic, contextual, relevant and purposeful from the perspectives of teachers and students.

**Musical creativity:** the use of imagination in the teaching, learning, composition and performance of music, with scope for originality in the production of musical ideas.

**Music-making:** any act involving the interactions of performing, actively listening to and composing music.

**Primary classroom:** a Kindergarten to Year 6 school learning environment, with children aged 5-12 years.

**Specialist music teachers:** teachers who receive extensive training to teach only music.
Abbreviations

DEC – NSW Department of Education and Communities (formerly DET)

DET – NSW Department of Education and Training

EG – Elizabeth Gresser

ESL – English as Second Language

HSIE – Human Society and its Environment

KLA – Key Learning Area

LBOTE – Language Background Other Than English

NSW – New South Wales

PDHPE – Personal Development and Physical Education

S2A – Samantha’s class

S2B – Maree’s class

UK – United Kingdom
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Investigation into the role of teachers, including their confidence, skills and professional development, has found that the preparedness of generalist teachers influences the reality of music-making in the classroom (Hargreaves, 1992; Jeanneret, 1995; Russell-Bowie, 2009). Models for classroom music-making consider children’s innate musical processes (Campbell, 2010; Marsh, 2008; Wiggins, 2003, 2009, 2011) but teachers are not always equipped with knowledge and confidence to implement music-specific pedagogy (Russell-Bowie, 2010).

Teacher preparedness to teach music

Whilst there is substantial evidence supporting the importance of musically creative opportunities in the classroom, the reality of the situation is that the generalist classroom teachers who are required to teach music are often not sufficiently equipped to do so (Jeanneret, 1995; Russell-Bowie, 2003, 2009). In particular, issues of teacher confidence and attitudes towards teaching music in the classroom have a major impact on the fostering of a creative musical environment. Limited teacher training in music is a mitigating factor in levels of preparedness to implement music in the classroom (Stevens, 2003). The National Review of School Music Education (Pascoe et al., 2005) highlights the lack of quality music education in Australian schools and this classroom reality cannot be considered in isolation to that of current tertiary education (Stevens, 2003): the neglected state of music education in primary schools can be at least partially attributed to minimal teacher training in the subject area (Taylor, 1987).

Teaching music: teacher confidence, preparedness, skills and creative focus

The lack of teacher confidence and preparedness to teach music must be considered alongside teaching skills in music and perceptions of appropriate musical activities to teach. The consideration of these realities is directly linked to the subsequent lack of teacher focus on creative musical activities in the classroom. Multiple studies have been conducted in order to obtain insight into generalist teacher perspectives and attitudes in relation to their preparedness to teach music in the classroom (Crow, 2008; Jeanneret, 1995; Mills, 1989; Seddon & Biasutti, 2008). A substantial number of these studies are
from overseas and research into specific and current issues in Australian schools is yet to be pursued in greater depth. However, existing literature has presented the common finding that pre-service primary school teachers feel less confident to teach music than to teach any other subject (Jeanneret, 1995). Whilst there are varying causes of these confidence issues (Mills, 1989), they ultimately manifest themselves as continual hurdles to teacher preparedness to teach music.

There is a distinct correlation between the lack of teacher preparedness and the music skills of teachers. Hallam et al. (2009) conducted quantitative research, gathering information from trainee primary school teachers in the United Kingdom (UK), with significant results indicating that music was the subject that the majority of teachers felt least confident and least equipped to teach, and that these feelings were strongly linked to their insecurity concerning their personal musical skills. There was therefore an undeniable link between teachers’ lack of confidence in their own musical and instrumental abilities and their confidence, attitudes and abilities to teach music to their students.

As deficiencies in musical skills and training result in poor teacher preparedness and lack of confidence, these deficiencies in turn influence teacher perceptions of appropriate musical activities to teach. Russell-Bowie (2009) has conducted research in British, American and Australian school settings on the matter of teacher confidence and preparedness and its implications for classroom teaching. The lack of formal personal musical experiences in the life of the teachers studied played a large role in the extent to which teachers felt they could create musical experiences in the classroom (Crow, 2008; Russell-Bowie, 2009; Seddon & Biasutti, 2008). These studies refer to the creation of musical experiences in the classroom in a very broad sense. More specifically, and of even greater concern, is the ability of teachers to implement classroom music activities that are both effective and creative. According to Rogers, Hallam, Creech & Preti (2008) there is a direct link between lack of teacher training and teachers’ diminished confidence to teach the subject of music creatively in the classroom.

The lack of creative teacher focus in musical learning activities is also linked to lack of knowledge of the implementation of such activities and teacher attitudes concerning appropriate musical activities. Varying perceptions of educational creativity and musical creativity exist amongst teachers, which in turn influence their teaching practice (Crow,
Participants training at a UK college were studied to determine what teachers thought students would learn when working creatively, the problems that they might encounter, the role of teaching creatively and the problems teachers found with their own musical creativity. The results described the link between teachers’ perception of musically creative tasks, limited teacher music skills and the ability to implement lessons as a result. Such results clearly strengthen the correlation between the classroom reality and the confidence of teachers.

Further research in the UK has found that the attitude towards teaching music is heavily influenced by the perception of music as a “special subject” in the curriculum (Seddon & Biasutti, 2008). The majority of pre-service teachers do not learn integration techniques for the implementation of creative activities, which raises questions about tertiary pedagogies (Mills, 1989; Seddon & Biasutti, 2008). It is clear from the research of Barnes (2001) and Barrett and Veblen (2012) that qualified, prepared and confident teachers are needed to successfully implement the creative discipline of music in our primary schools.

The “Unbreakable Cycle”

The literature pertaining to teacher confidence issues raises a similar concern and fears for the vicious circle that is the foundation of the problem (Jeanneret, 1995; Jeanneret & Swainston, 2009). Teacher attitudes to music are heavily influenced by their own experiences (Crow, 2008; Russell-Bowie, 2009). Teachers who are not musically confident proceed to teach music inadequately in classrooms (Seddon & Biasutti, 2008) and therefore create a continuum of negative musical experiences for students who ultimately become teachers in this same unbreakable cycle (Jeanneret, 1995; Russell-Bowie, 2010).

This area of research quite clearly shows that measures need to be taken to “break” the cycle as it currently exists, which is undoubtedly no easy task within educational settings, as the literature discusses. Research conducted in multiple countries including Australia has shown the direct positive impact on teacher preparedness after completion of a substantial musical pedagogy component in their tertiary education (Jeanneret, 1995; Russell-Bowie, 2009). Such elements need to be expanded upon and secured in tertiary education so that teachers can start to break this cycle in their classrooms (Barnes, 2001; Russell-Bowie, 2009; Taylor, 1987).
Positive role of generalist teachers

There has been less research concerning the positive traits of teachers sometimes deemed “non-musical”, who have fewer of the personal musical experiences that are so consistently deemed essential to teaching music effectively (Crow, 2008; Russell-Bowie, 2009; Seddon & Biasutti, 2008). The implementation of creative musical activities in the classroom is dependent on teacher confidence but not necessarily on high levels of skill in music (Barnes, 2001). Barnes states that creative thinking is something to be applied across all educational disciplines and it requires imaginative thought, not always specific skill in a subject area such as music. Generalist teachers possess the capacity for human creativity and imaginative thought (Barnes, 2001) and their other attributes include the ability to integrate music across other disciplines in the curriculum (Jeanneret & Swainston, 2009). Furthermore, non-specialist teachers have the advantage of having a closer relationship with their students due to the greater regularity of their contact with students. Such positive attributes of the role of the generalist teacher provide the capacity for further integration of musical activities into entire school projects and connections with the wider community (Dogani, 2008; Jeanneret & Swainston, 2009). Research investigating a Victorian public school community and their experience of a Musica Viva program as an entire school project shows the capacity of generalist and specialist teachers to collectively plan musical activities (Jeanneret & Swainston, 2009).

Despite the various positive attributes of the classroom teacher, Jeanneret and De Graffenreid (2012) state that “there is also a need for generalist teachers to contextualize the knowledge of their students’ development with regard to music learning, as they do with mathematics, language, or social studies . . . what the generalist teacher brings to the methods course should also be valued by the teacher preparation faculty as much as teachers value what youngsters bring to the classroom” (p. 411). Essentially, this suggests aspects of the generalist teacher role that could be improved upon, through not only the development of teacher thinking in relation to music-making in the curriculum, but also through pedagogical training that acknowledges the individual traits and teaching styles that generalist teachers bring to the classroom.
Professional development

If the role of the generalist teacher is to be fully realised in the context of primary school music learning, there are many aspects of teacher development that must be considered. Barrett and Veblen (2012) make a strong case for the valuable exploration of a comprehensive approach to music teaching where generalist teachers foster connections between the various arts subjects, and also link music to other curriculum areas. Whilst the integration of learning is theoretically within the capabilities of generalist teachers, as they are responsible for the teaching of all subjects, there are aspects of this role that require certain training, as Barrett and Veblen also acknowledge that this “comprehensive music curriculum is characterised by breadth and depth of musical experience” (p. 361). Teachers not only require knowledge of musical content in their training, but also contextualised and practical instruction in classroom music pedagogy (Ballantyne, 2006). It is therefore apparent that the scope of the required professional development of generalist teachers is to be multi-faceted and highly comprehensive, if such teaching is to be expected of them.

There is a substantial amount of literature describing the various types of general teacher professional development, and their subsequent successes (Clark, 1992; Hargreaves, 1992; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992). Clark (1992) suggests that all successful professional development must “start with strengths, rather than focussing on weaknesses (which is a problem of much professional development)” (p. 79). Furthermore, Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) describe the three types of teacher professional development as knowledge and skill development, consideration of self-understanding and, finally, the importance of the contexts for professional development. Hargreaves and Fullan then suggest that “a prime purpose of professional development . . . should therefore be to help teachers articulate their voice as a way of constructing and reconstructing the purposes and priorities in their work, both individually and collectively” (p. 5). Numerous examples of effective professional development depict the positive nature of collegiality and collaboration between teachers, and the importance of teacher reflection throughout the process (Georgii-Hemming & Westvall, 2010; Hallam et al., 2009; Hookey, 1994; Joyce & Showers, 1988; Louden, 1992; Wiggins, 1994b).
Despite the research demonstrating the positive outcomes of professional development through teacher collaboration, Hargreaves (1992) raises the concern that such a “collaborative culture” may become what he describes as a state of “contrived collegiality” (p. 235). Potential downfalls such as this in collaborative professional development suggest that it must not be imposed on teachers, by outsiders, without focussing on the ultimate goal of teacher agency: that is, helping teachers to develop themselves (Raymond, Butt & Townsend, 1992; Thiessen, 1992).

**Identity and self-concept**

The personal nature of professional development is linked very closely to the concept of teacher identity. Positive professional development should ultimately encourage teachers to be active critics of their own teaching and such reflection should simultaneously foster awareness of resultant changes in teachers’ self-identity (Conkling, 2004). Hargreaves, Miell and Macdonald (2002) define self-concepts as “the different ways in which we see ourselves” in specific situations (p. 7), and self-identity as “the overall view that we have of ourselves in which these different self-concepts are integrated” (p. 9).

Dolloff (1999) asked pre-service music teachers to draw images of themselves as what they individually perceived to be ‘the ideal music teacher’. This reflective process resulted in a vast array of responses (e.g. teacher playing an instrument) that depicted the personal sense of teacher identity, indicating the inability to standardise concepts of “musical identity”. Similarly, generalist teachers have ways in which they identify themselves as teachers in their classrooms and this ‘lens’ not only influences how teachers perceive themselves, but also determines their subsequent actions (Wiggins, 2001). Furthermore, Wiggins and Wiggins (2008) found that whilst generalist teachers demonstrated innovative and student-centred learning activities when teaching other subjects, when teaching music they adopted a completely different, “prima donna” approach (p. 14) rather than the usual democratic one. Such an observation suggests that the way teachers view themselves as individuals, or as teachers in a given context, can dramatically influence their subsequent approaches. The concept of self-identity in the professional development of teachers is explored throughout pre-service education, as individuals experience the transition from student to teacher identity (Hargreaves, Purves, Welch & Marshall, 2007; Joseph & Heading, 2010). The view of oneself as an individual and more specifically, as a teacher, is
dynamic and ever-changing, dependent on the exposure to reflective and collaborative experiences (Hargreaves, Miell & Macdonald, 2002).

Whilst identity is an important consideration for the effective professional development of teachers, teachers must also consider their role in the shaping of the personal and musical identities of their students. The extent to which the school environment, including experiences inside and outside the classroom, can change and influence the developing identities of students demonstrates the importance of teacher awareness of self and others (Hargreaves & Marshall; 2003; Lamont, 2002; Welch, Purves, Hargreaves & Marshall, 2010). The need to develop such detailed awareness must be acknowledged in teacher training and professional development, and also form a constant consideration when teachers reflect on their own teaching practice, in order to facilitate awareness in striving towards the foundation of creative musical classrooms (Wiggins, 2001).

**Children’s meaningful music-making**

Other challenges to music teaching include the existence of misconceptions about musical creativity (Crow, 2008; Dogani, 2004). Literature pertaining to the differences between children’s own music-making and the music employed in the classroom repeatedly discusses the existing misconceptions about the nature of children’s music and their musical play (Harwood & Marsh, 2012; Marsh, 2008; Marsh & Young, 2006). Marsh’s (2008) observations present musical play as extremely complex in nature. Rather than being aimlessly exploratory, investigation shows that children’s own music is creative, purposeful and complex (Marsh & Young, 2006). Misconceptions about children’s music-making often shape classroom approaches where teachers are not necessarily focussed on or driven by the innate musical creativity which their students possess and bring to the classroom.

**Children’s musical creativity: starting with what they already know**

The understanding of children’s musical creativity requires observation and listening (Burnard, 2006; Glover, 2000; Marsh, 2008). Research consistently highlights adult ignorance concerning what children are capable of when left to their own devices and given creative ‘space’ (Burnard, 2006; Campbell, 2010; Glover, 2000; Marsh, 2008;
Upitis, 1992). Educators are encouraged to listen to children making music in order to gain deeper understanding of how they use music and what it means to them (Campbell, 2010). The meaning of creativity itself is something that Burnard (2006) stresses as context-dependent. By understanding individuals and their contexts, including community, family and social groups (Campbell, 1998), and with the conceptualisation of children as not only individual actors but social beings, it is possible for adults to understand how their musical creativity develops socially (Burnard, 2006).

Substantial research into classroom composition has endeavoured to create the case for connections between the musical contexts in and outside of school (Burnard, 2006; Glover & Young, 1999; Marsh, 2008; Wiggins, 2009). Children naturally generate musical ideas in a social context and this is a consideration for the classroom environment (Wiggins, 2011). Teacher facilitation of musical ownership, learner agency, responsibility and empowerment among students creates an environment of choice and potential creativity (Wiggins, 2011). This research portrays composition as an avenue for skill development (Glover, 2000; Wiggins, 2011) and gives evidence that performance, movement and composition are inseparable entities for children (Campbell, 2010; Glover, 2000; Marsh, 2008; Wiggins, 2011). Wiggins (2011) also suggests ‘scaffolding’ with minimal teacher intervention when children are composing socially. Rather than leading, generating ideas or directing students, the teacher ‘keeps track’ of the discussion and composition stages by assisting on an instrument in this classroom scenario. Children’s motivation for music-making and the nature of the compositions is heavily influenced by the context established by their teachers (Burnard, 2000; Marsh & Young, 2006).

Glover (2000) provides us with the following proposition: “If the music-making children do outside of school is ignored, it becomes a separate musical life. And if this happens, music in school loses its wider musical credibility” (p. 133). It is therefore important that a musically creative classroom environment promotes student imagination, expression, discussion and agency through the facilitation of musical activities that allow students to combine these musical worlds.

Classroom models and frames for musical creativity

Suggestions for task design recognise active music-making as an avenue for the fostering of musical skills (Campbell, 2004; Clennon, 2009; Glover, 2000; Glover & Young, 1999;
Major & Cottle, 2010; Saetre, 2011; Wiggins, 1994a, 2003, 2009, 2011). Leading research in the field of modelling creative classroom environments is found in Wiggins’s (1994a, 2003) investigations into children’s processes when undertaking creative musical tasks. These studies seek to provide strategies for the informed implementation of such processes. Wiggins (2003) claims that knowledge of students’ thinking, their progress and the nature of their understanding can be observed in analysis of their musical creativity. Underpinning this research is the principle that the nature and presentation of musical activities affects students’ observed work processes. Through informal class observations and extensive ethnographic research, Wiggins develops a theoretical frame for classroom activities, rather than a model to be necessarily applied universally. However, her most important findings concern children’s musical ideas as “holistic conceptions” of melodic and rhythmic phrases, with “purposeful invention” rather than pure exploration (Wiggins, 1994a, 2003, 2011). Consequently educators are encouraged to set tasks with “holistic” visions and to discuss with children the overall intent of their music-making before smaller details, in order to foster their “natural” processes of music-making (Wiggins, 2009, 2011).

Examples of task ideas for meaningful classroom music-making are provided by Glover (2000), Glover and Young (1999) and Wiggins (1994). Glover and Young (1999) encourage teachers to provide suggestions for stimuli – for example, studying the lyrics of an existing song as the impetus for students to then write their own – and to aim for integration with other key learning areas, such as writing a song connecting with story-writing. In a creative classroom environment, teachers can provide students with a theme or direction for a task, rather than imparting specific compositional skills, giving students opportunities for increased work quality, individuality and creativity.

Environmental and programming factors are crucial in a creative classroom, including time for students to listen to each other’s work, to reflect and to assume the role of critical listeners (Glover & Young, 1999). Furthermore, Glover (2000) stresses that high-quality composing and creative classrooms need consistent resourcing of time, materials, and periods of both aloneness and groupwork. Children need space to develop ideas, compose, rehearse, record, perform and reflect on their work which requires a certain amount of flexibility and facilitation in the teacher’s approach.
Teacher and student roles: instruction and facilitation

Multiple studies have investigated the teacher role in facilitating a creative classroom environment (Clennon, 2009; Saetre, 2011; Wiggins, 2011). Studies concerning the tensions between the contrasting teacher roles of instruction and facilitation have found that the role assumed by the teacher is dependent on teacher confidence and also dramatically influences the nature of music produced (Clennon, 2009; Saetre, 2011; Wiggins, 2011). Following Wiggins (1994), who discussed the importance of the facilitating teacher role, Clennon (2009) defines ‘instruction’ as characterised by information transmission, whilst ‘facilitation’ is non-directive and aims to generate conversation and empower learners. Clennon’s data was collected from a primary school in Lancashire, UK which aimed to provide students with music-making opportunities that included student interactions and decision-making, including methods of voting, auditioning and student conducting. Both bodies of research are united in their investigation of strategies for setting creative musical tasks. Saetre (2011) analysed the educational orientations displayed by teachers and traced these to their students’ musical outcomes. Such orientations were characterised as transmission, negotiation, facilitation and acceleration, showing similarities to the work of Clennon (2009). Recommendations concerning the most effective strategies included teachers’ adoption of more facilitative roles. These attributes tend towards the notions of student agency and self-direction, which are necessary components of a classroom environment in which creative tasks are successfully facilitated. Whilst it is ultimately the role of the teacher to provide a structure for children’s classroom music-making, it is necessary that the teacher role diminishes and students generate the musical motivation and material themselves. Hence student agency and teacher facilitation, rather than instruction, are linked very closely to musical creativity and creative task implementation (Clennon, 2009; Marsh & Young, 2006; Wiggins, 2011).

Conclusion

The model of curriculum in action as proposed by Hookey (1994), concerning generalist and specialist collaboration, may be a way to unite children’s creativity, meaningful musical activities and increased confidence in their teachers. The following chapter outlines the action research methodology used to explore the development of teacher confidence, resulting in enhanced music learning environment and experiences, for children in a Sydney primary school.
Chapter 3: Methodology

The Qualitative Paradigm

Bresler (1992) states that qualitative research tends towards “highly contextualised description of people and events” with “emphasis on interpretation of both emic issues (those of participants) and etic issues (those of the observer)” (p. 64). This research paradigm is therefore advantageous to this study, which concerns the experiences and perspectives of teachers, students and myself, as researcher, in a collaborative project.

The essential role of the researcher in this study is evident (Stake, 2010) as both an observer of, and a resource for, generalist primary teachers in the classroom. Furthermore, Stake (2010) specifies that the interpretative, experiential, situational and personal characteristics of qualitative research are essential to its success (p. 15). Similarly, within this study, the relationship between the teachers and myself was crucial to its implementation. The simultaneous collection, analysis and narrative-writing aims to convey an “holistic view of social phenomena” (Creswell, 2003, p. 182), accessible for researchers and practitioners, to respond to the issues raised in the study.

Research Design - Action Research

This project adopts an action research approach, a commonly-used design in educational research as an ideal mechanism to effect change through participation (Cain, 2008; Denscombe, 1998). Burns (2000) notes that “action research is the application of fact finding to practical problem-solving in a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it . . . involving the collaboration and co-operation of researchers, practitioners and laymen.” (p. 443). The problem concerning the preparedness of generalist teachers is diagnosed, with remedial action planned and implemented before reflection in a continuous cyclical process (Burns, 2000; Denscombe, 1998).

Sampling Methods

The school was approached on the basis of a long-standing affiliation between the school and the researcher. I had undertaken a teaching practicum in the school in 2010, during which I taught K-6 Music lessons and prepared students for assembly performances and concert items. As I was fulfilling the role of a music specialist, and providing classroom
teachers with relief teaching, the experience led me to consider the possibility of specialists working alongside generalists, rather than in isolation, in order to remedy the lack of music education in the school. I approached the principal with my proposal for the collaborative project and, as a main stakeholder in the research, he called for expressions of interest from staff members. In consultation with the principal, two Stage 2 teachers volunteered to participate in the study with their classes, the participants therefore comprising two teachers and 55 students aged 7-10 years. The sampling methods were therefore both purposive and opportunity based (Burns, 2000) due to my prior connection with the school, but also due to the diagnosis of a need to assist with the implementation of music lessons based on previous experiences in this school.

**Participants**

The volunteer teachers had varying degrees of teaching experience, training backgrounds, teaching styles and musical skills. Both teachers were teaching Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) classes during 2012, but had experience of teaching children aged 5 to 12. The students in this cohort consisted of many children with whom the researcher had associated in previous practice teaching and experiences in the school. The structure of the two classes in the study was similar, with a disproportionate ratio of male to female students, particularly in the Year 3 group. Both groups of students included many children from Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE) with many students struggling with basic literacy and numeracy skills. Students in the school come from Lebanese, Korean, Chinese, Indian, Maori and Macedonian backgrounds.

To situate these classes in the context of the broader school community, this Sydney school is classified as ‘disadvantaged’ by the Sydney University Compass programme due to both socio-economic and demographic characteristics. The school has been encouraging of music and has been engaging in other collaborative projects involving Sydney Conservatorium of Music students working with school children to make music. The school also has a history of affiliations with the Sydney Conservatorium of Music through practicum teaching placements and in-service training relationships. (This, however, does not directly involve the students who participated in the study). Table 3.1 outlines the specific details of the two classes participating in the project:
Table 3.1: Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Class 1 – S2A</th>
<th>Class 2 – S2B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher experience</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage/year</td>
<td>Stage 2 – Year 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Stage 2 – Year 3 &amp; 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student ages</td>
<td>8-10 years</td>
<td>7-10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender balance</td>
<td>11 female, 17 male</td>
<td>11 female, 16 male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of LBOTE students</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total students</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews

Prior to the commencement of the first phase of the study, semi-structured interviews (each 45 minutes) were conducted with the two teachers (Burns, 2000) to obtain information regarding their prior training and confidence to teach music. During the following week, the researcher observed one music lesson in each class (see Appendix G: Interview Protocol). At the conclusion of the study a second set of semi-structured interviews was conducted with the teachers to compare attitudes and confidence levels that appeared to change throughout the study. Semi-structured interviews were deemed the most appropriate form of interview based on Burns’s (2000) suggestions regarding the achievement of flexibility and a “more valid response from the informant’s perception of reality” (p. 424).

Lesson Observation, Field Notes and Document Collection

Additional data collection methods included descriptive field notes from observations, audio and visual recording of lessons, student worksheets and my reflections (Burns, 2000, p. 188). In every lesson taught by the classroom teachers in the study I recorded video footage of both the teacher in action and also student work processes. A separate audio recording was taken to ensure student speech was collected more accurately. During the lesson I took notes of particular dialogue between the teachers, students and myself, to aid my reflection on the lessons after their implementation.
Table 3.2 Data collection sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Teacher Interview</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Teacher Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28-02-12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Initial meeting with principal and teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8-03-12</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15-03-12*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29-03-12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26-04-12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3-05-12</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10-05-12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17-05-12** #</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24-05-12##</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31-05-12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7-06-12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14-06-12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28-06-12</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Initial observation before commencing collaboration

**The only time when the two classes ran concurrently, rather than at different times in the school day.

#Phase 2 stimulus started – S2B

##Phase 2 stimulus started – S2A

**Role of the Researcher**

Participating researchers must apply scrutiny to themselves as they would to others in the research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Awareness of the impact of my physical presence and my own perceptions as they influenced the research environment, and the need to remain “situationally responsive” in maintaining the relationship between myself, teachers and students in this study became apparently vital to its success. The fact that I
supported the teachers rather than physically implementing and teaching the lessons, allowed me to conduct detailed observations for further feedback. This also facilitated my attempt to remove issues of excessive levels of ownership in the implementation, a concern raised by Denscombe (1998). The potential for the researcher to become a “burden to practitioners” (Denscombe, 1998, p. 66) was a concern, particularly in the early stages where the benefits were not immediately apparent and instantly recognisable. I made every endeavour to put teachers’ needs and priorities at the forefront of all action taken. The fact that I had a level of rapport with the teacher and student participants at times was both a help and a hindrance in the study. However, establishing a clear vision of the aims of the collaboration, with awareness of the dynamics between teacher, students and researcher, proved to be vital in maintaining the honesty and integrity of the data collected and the results achieved.

**Analysis**

This study utilises “grounded theory” as discussed by Strauss and Corbin (2008), where “one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge” (p. 23). Ongoing evaluation occurred through constant analysis of lessons, which subsequently influenced the planning of lessons in the second phase of the study.

The first stage in analysis, open coding, involved a process of thoroughly examining, conceptualising and labelling the data according to emerging themes and organising these into categories (Cohen et al., 2007). During the second stage, axial coding, the data were re-constructed by making connections (subcategories) between these initial categories, based on context and conditions (Cohen et al., 2007). The final stage of coding, selective coding, involved the selection of core themes and categories and interrogation of the data. Patterns emerged, categories were continually revised and rearranged, before reaching the stage where “validating one’s theory against the data completes its grounding” (Cohen et al., 2007, p.133).

Furthermore, Cohen et al. (2007) discuss the concept of “theoretical sensitivity” as a personal quality of the researcher, described as “an awareness of the subtleties of meaning of data” (p. 41). Within this study, development of this sensitivity allowed the creation of a theory that is grounded in the data, as the researcher determined what was important and remained “faithful to phenomena” (p. 46).
Triangulation and the Narrative

Specifically, this study utilised methodological triangulation (within-methods) by employing the same intervention and data collection process with the two classes (Cohen et al., 2007). Between-methods triangulation, entailing different methods of data collection, was also used. Triangulation (using different sources of data for verification) but also member-checking (asking participants to check findings), rich descriptions in fieldwork, presentation of both negative and discrepant information, and prolonged time spent in the field, which were all undertaken within this study’s time restraints (Creswell, 2003). Field notes recording data from observation and interview material were used to supplement data from recorded sources (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) in order to verify data collected.

Ethical Considerations

The research design and data collection were approved by the University of Sydney’s Human Research Ethics Committee and in accordance with the current and accepted ethical principles governing research involving humans, this study has respect as its core operating principle. This was evident first in the use of the action research model, establishing participant needs as the priority. The study benefited music teaching practice in a school environment and the merit and integrity of the research was in its contribution to the knowledge and understanding of musical experiences in this school community. The privacy of all participants was respected and the outcomes were made known to all concerned with the project. My responsibility to my participants was understood and maintained in practice, for the benefit of all participants and the wider community.

Teacher participants volunteered their involvement with complete freedom of consent, ability to withdraw and in full understanding of the nature of the study. Participating children had parental written consent and were free to withdraw from the study at any time. The identities of the teacher and student participants have been concealed through the use of pseudonyms and the secure holding of data has been maintained. Considerable effort was made to ensure that interviews were conducted at times and locations that suited the teacher participants. Minimal disruption to the daily routine of the school was achieved by implementation of research during the regular scheduled music lessons in the classes nominated for study.
Nature of Programme and Collaboration

The study was undertaken within the school routine during Terms 1 and 2 (2012) and involved one day in the school every week. This included time for me to collaborate with the generalist teachers on the programme of music lessons, as well as time to see them implement the lessons in the classroom. The programme was sanctioned by the teachers who had the closest professional understanding of their students. I planned the lessons, and supported the teachers both inside and outside the lessons. The teachers and I had consultations about the activities to be implemented, before I clarified resources and a learning sequence, which I sent for the teachers’ consideration before the lesson. Further consultation occurred throughout the implementation of the lessons as we often evaluated and revised in action, and the teachers asked for my input, clarification or help throughout the course of the lesson. The teachers and I discussed the success of the lesson in order to plan the next one. The teachers took a more proactive role in the planning of the second phase sequence. I focused suggestions for the lessons around the concepts of student-centred pedagogy, creative activity, scaffolding and ideas suggested in the literature of Wiggins (2003, 2009 and 2011) and other contemporary pedagogical philosophies concerning the use of technology-based stimuli for student-learning (Webb, 2010). The ultimate aim was to provide students with musically enriching and educational experiences, whilst the teachers explored their own musical skills, teaching approaches and confidence levels with the support of the participant researcher.

Overview of Implementation Phases

Initial Observations

The initial observations of the lessons taught in the two classes showed very different teaching styles, student interactions, repertoire choices and music pedagogy focuses. Samantha’s class (S2A) was starting an introductory lesson on a song called ‘Fireflies’¹, during which the teacher walked the students through the lyrics in a sequential fashion, focussing on text differences between verses and choruses in the song structure, before practising the song through in sections. Class S2B was preparing for an assembly item to be performed the next day, using the song ‘Dem Bones’² as a demonstration of the content

¹ ‘Fireflies’: female vocal version based on original by Owl City
² ‘Dem Bones’ – http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnhJ3IkLQ7s
of the Unit of Work, ‘The Human Body’. This class was rehearsing the singing and
dancing components of the performance, and the details surrounding the skeleton prop to
be used throughout the song.

**Phase One**
The two classes were at different stages in their teaching programmes and choice of
repertoire, although both teachers commented on a shared focus for ultimate performance
opportunities at weekly assemblies as a way of “fitting music in”. Both teachers had
expressed a lack of confidence in their own musical skills in combination with a lack of
knowledge about the sequencing of musical activities and compelling ideas in terms of
repertoire choices. With this in mind, it was collaboratively decided that S2A would
continue using the “Fireflies” song. Given that the fundamental aim of the study was to
give the teachers a resource to help them in their future musical teaching, it seemed
practical and useful not only to use their ideas as a basis, but to keep the classes using
similar material, in order to encourage collaboration between the two generalist teachers,
rather than two isolated cases of collaboration between teacher and researcher. Therefore
the song ‘Fireflies’, as a contemporary popular song known by the students, was taken as a
springboard for future musical activities, as shown in Table 3.3.

**Phase Two**
In consultation with the teachers, it was decided that the students were ready to move onto
a new stimulus and learning sequence. The teachers and I agreed that, because of the large
percentage of students with language backgrounds other than English, the students
struggled with the literary focus in the first lesson sequence. It was therefore decided that
the subsequent lessons should remove this hurdle (by focussing on instrumental repertoire)
in order to observe the students’ music-making. We then labelled the lessons that came
after this point as constituting the second phase of the study, mainly due to a shift to new
repertoire. Throughout this section of the programming, the teachers contributed more
directly to the planning of lessons based on their experiences of the previous lessons,
further defining this phase as distinct from the first. Table 3.3 shows the stages of
collaboration and implementation in the two classrooms and the development of each stage
of study, as typified by the action research model.
Table 3.3: Sequences – Phase 1 and 2

- **Initial observations and teacher discussions determine need to encourage varied learning experiences and trajectory of lessons for the term**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASE ONE</th>
<th>Collaboratively planned activity sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stimulus</strong></td>
<td>Fireflies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher implementation</strong></td>
<td>Performance of the vocal version of “Fireflies”&lt;br&gt;Aural comparison of two versions&lt;br&gt;Students create own version of the song in groups and perform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Students produce song arrangements and give feedback on performances&lt;br&gt;Teachers discussed how students struggled with literacy and lyric focus in the first phase before deciding to implement phase two with a focus on instrumental music.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PHASE TWO**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stimulus</th>
<th>Collaboratively planned activity sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Various audio/video examples in three categories (see Appendix I)</td>
<td>Students to watch videos/listen to audio examples to discuss the relationship between image and sound (music as a story)&lt;br&gt;Discussion of graphic notation as a representation of sound&lt;br&gt;Students create soundscapes of a story of their choice and graphically notate it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher implementation</strong></td>
<td>Students learnt lyrics by rote (repeating from teacher)&lt;br&gt;Students compared differences between versions and reasons based on context&lt;br&gt;Students instructed to make their own versions by changing the lyrics of the song&lt;br&gt;Groups allocated by teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Students produce song arrangements and struggle with lyric-focus&lt;br&gt;Students perform compositions which are very rhythmically ‘groove-based’ with no notational aspect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Class S2A - Samantha**

- Students discussed the basic differences between the versions<br>- Students instructed to make their own version by changing instruments, rhythms, beats<br>- Groups allocated by teacher

**Class S2B - Maree**

- Students learnt to sing the song<br>- Students discussed the basic differences between the versions<br>- Students instructed to make their own version by changing instruments, rhythms, beats<br>- Groups allocated by teacher

**Class S2A - Samantha**

- Students discussed various musical excerpts and graphic notation video<br>- Groups allocated and students asked to compose their sound story (no notation)<br>- Teacher used *Naturally 7* as exemplar

**Class S2B - Maree**

- Students discussed various musical excerpts and graphic notation video<br>- Groups allocated and students asked to describe story before composing<br>- Further graphic notation instruction given – notation focus in group work

**Outcomes**

- Students perform compositions which are very rhythmically ‘groove-based’ with no notational aspect<br>- Students perform compositions which are focussed on graphic notation and less so on musical story
The collaboratively-planned music lessons were implemented by the teachers in their classrooms during the first two terms of 2012. The following chapter presents the findings of this action research project.
Chapter 4: Results

This chapter begins by discussing findings concerning teacher preparedness to teach music and the effect of the teacher collaboration on this. Furthermore, the ways in which the planned activities shaped student experiences through experimentation with different pedagogical approaches is discussed. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the teacher participants’ evolving attitudes towards meaningful music-making.

The effects of specialist-generalist teacher collaboration on the preparedness and confidence of primary school teachers

Teacher experience, training and confidence

As outlined in the literature review, the problem of generalist teachers’ confidence in teaching music can be linked to deficiencies in teacher training and minimal musical experiences in individual teachers’ lives (Russell-Bowie, 2009, 2010; Stevens, 2003; Mills, 1989). The teachers discussed these themes in great detail in their initial interviews, as they described their lack of musical preparation and directly related this to their subsequent perception of the subject. Both Samantha and Maree indicated the place of music in the curriculum, but described their lack of preparation to teach the subject:

Samantha: It’s hard, because music is part of our curriculum and we need to teach it, but if we haven’t been given the basics then we kind of make it up as we go along. And therefore I feel like I’m not giving enough for the children.

(Interview, 8th March)

Samantha here discussed her genuine concerns about her inability to provide substantial music education for her students in a continuum of limited musical experiences for both teachers and students. The reality of the “unbreakable cycle”, discussed in Chapter 2, in which students ultimately become teachers in the same system of limited musical education (Jeanneret, 1995; Jeanneret & Swainston, 2009; Russell-Bowie, 2003), was evident in the teachers’ descriptions of their own musical experiences and struggles, which in turn influenced their ability to teach the subject well. In the following quote, Maree described her need for both personal music knowledge and implementation ideas:
Guidance. “Where do I start? What do I do? How can I do it? Or if I do this, what’s next? Where do I go from here?” So, basically, guidance, some ideas, suggestions, you know, and maybe some skill in some areas . . . A lot of the stuff is just little, basic knowledge points, that I really don’t understand or don’t have, or I really wouldn’t have thought of, not being musically inclined. (Interview, 8th March)

Much of the literature discusses the confidence that generalist teachers possess in relation to their own musical skills and how this influences their ability to teach music (Ballantyne, 2006; Barrett & Veblen, 2012). The teachers in this study however initially identified lack of knowledge as a major impediment, rather than a specific problem of confidence:

Samantha: I don’t think you would look at confidence there, you would have to look at – would I even know where to start if I wanted to teach a series of lessons? So, as much as I would love to, I wouldn’t know the first thing to start teaching them about music, or instruments, or symbols or musical notes to put a series together. It’s not confidence. I’m happy to get up and do it. I just wouldn’t know where to start . . . It’s a lack of knowledge, of knowing where to start to go do this. (Interview, 8th March)

Samantha and Maree discussed their preparedness to teach music in relation to their lack of confidence in their own musical skills, but not a lack of confidence in their general teaching abilities. Once this was ascertained from the teachers, the future collaboration aimed to deal with these factors.

Participants offered a range of reasons to explain their lack of preparedness to teach music, with the most commonly discussed being resourcing and generation of activity ideas. Maree commented that the initial resourcing of activity ideas was the most difficult part of the process in her experience of teaching music, owing to her lack of knowledge in this area:

Having you get the resources, that’s a confidence level . . . That’s what I appreciated. In your head you had ideas, but in my head it would be a blank idea. I don’t know where I’m going. I don’t know what goes with this. (Interview, 28th June)

Maree discussed the sense of security she felt when assisted in the initial resourcing for the activities (O’Toole, 2005). For her, receiving specialist guidance in resource selection provided her with a confidence boost from the sense of direction this established. In addition to this, the sequencing of musical activities was something that both teachers
appreciated in the collaboration. Whilst this was noted as part of their role in other subject
areas, this task proved more difficult in music as they were less familiar with the material.
Maree struggled with developing and sustaining music lessons:

> I do a lot of that in other subjects, with different teachers . . . [I]t’s just that
> music is, if it’s not your forte, it’s harder, because you tend to leave it out or
> you tend to do the basics . . . like singing, YouTube or CD . . . and not very
> often. Not taking it to the next level, with instruments or free expression . . .
> [B]ecause music is one of those subjects . . . let’s be real, that people don’t
> always do because a) I don’t feel comfortable with it, b) there’s no time, c)
> they don’t have the resources as noted by the instruments we have. And it’s
> the skill you have . . . knowing how to teach it.  

(Interview, 8th March)

This perception that music teaching is far removed from the teaching and sequencing of
other subjects helps to explain why teachers approach music teaching so differently in their
classrooms (Wiggins & Wiggins, 2008). Maree taught music in a way that she felt was ‘basic’, as she was not comfortable with being more adventurous with the subject matter.
Her statement reflects the findings of Jeanneret and De Graffenreid (2012) who described
the “need for generalist teachers to contextualise the knowledge of their students’
development with regard to music learning, as they do with mathematics, language, or
social studies” (p.411).

In consideration of the issues faced by teachers, the subsequent specialist-generalist teacher
collaboration focused on providing the teachers with the physical resources they required
in order to feel more comfortable with teaching music. I was often referred to as an
“interactive resource” in the classroom. Samantha described how having a music specialist
in the classroom made her feel more comfortable experimenting with the direction she
would take lessons or discussions. She also described the training provided by the
specialist as being a beneficial resource due to the physical presence of the support, which
she felt allowed her to overcome some of her preconceived fears about teaching music:

Samantha: It was good having you there because I can discuss it with you, with an
expert, whereas if I was given a book and I had to read it and I was just
following . . . what am I really learning? . . . [H]aving you in the classroom
was good because we had the lesson, we went with it, but if we wanted, if I
had any clarifications I could ask you “do you think that would work?” But
you can’t really ask a book those questions.  

(Interview, 28th June)
Further to this, Samantha referred to music as a specialised subject, which in turn made her feel less confident to teach it than other subjects:

Samantha: I think teachers think it is specialised and that they are fearful of teaching the wrong thing when they are not trained themselves.

EG: But there’s not a fear of that when you’re teaching say, Maths?

Samantha: No, because you can teach yourself that. Whereas if I went to teach them the notes for instance. I mean, I remember what I learnt in Year 7 but I couldn’t go beyond that. Maths is in their everyday curriculum that we have to teach. I teach it inside out every year for every stage.

(Interview, 28th June)

This confirms Seddon and Biasutti’s (2008) assertion that the view of music as a specialist subject is at the root of the problem of teacher confidence to teach it. In the literature, Music is discussed as the subject which pre-service teachers feel least prepared to teach (Jeanneret, 1995), most commonly due to its perceived specialist nature (Seddon & Biasutti, 2008). The teachers in this study, after 7 and 25 years respectively in the profession, still faced these hurdles to teaching classroom music. It was apparent in discussion with these teachers that research often talks of the problems faced when teaching music, but there is much less focus on what it is that they do need to prepare themselves (Stevens-Ballenger, Jeanneret & Forrest, 2010).

This perception and fear in approaching music shaped the varying ways in which the teachers used me as a resource. Whilst Samantha was more comfortable with assurance through every step of the lesson, Maree was more willing to take the lesson in directions that we had not previously discussed. It was sometimes unclear as to whether this was as a result of Maree not understanding the sequence and purpose discussed, or whether she wanted to assert her individuality on the material. She clearly felt the need for both autonomy and guidance:

Maree: You weren’t always the basis of the lesson . . . You didn’t always need to be there. But you were my resource, if I needed guidance . . . When we were doing the group work, that’s when I needed a bit more of your support in there . . . to help me [and] the groups, because you had an idea of where we were taking it. So when I saw what you were doing, it was easier for me to then guide the groups.

(Interview, 28th June)

This could be linked to the different experience levels of the teachers and their experience with collaboration (Benn, 2011). Samantha, as a more recently trained teacher, mentioned
her participation in many collaborative staff projects throughout her career to date, which could explain her willingness to collaborate for music lessons. Maree, as a much more experienced teacher, with further developed practice, was more interested in instructing the lessons herself as she saw appropriate, but appreciated my assistance when the students were composing, a less familiar activity in her classroom.

In addition, the teachers indicated their individual struggles, given the standard professional development and training they had received. It therefore became apparent that the issue of confidence as described in the literature is complex. Whilst the need for improved tertiary training and professional development are raised as the solutions to the problem (Stevens, 2003; Stevens-Ballenger et al., 2010; Taylor, 1987), discussion with these teachers provided deeper insight as to how this could be improved to suit their needs:

Samantha: I need knowledge. I need to be taught or trained. And when I say trained I don’t think a one- day course does it. Because music is such a wide variety. I think you need a follow up. Someone to guide you through music. But you need to know how to do it with the kids . . . (Interview, 8th March)

These findings support the consistent discussion that training in specific music pedagogy is something that teachers understand to be vital to the effective and confident implementation of the subject (Barrett & Veblen, 2012). Furthermore, these findings support Ballantyne’s (2006) assertion that instruction in both pedagogy and music skill is needed for generalist teachers to teach music most effectively.

The classroom reality: time and integration

The National Review of School Music Education (Pascoe et al., 2005) discusses the time pressures placed on primary school teachers to cover all areas of the curriculum. In NSW, Music is just one of four Creative Arts subjects and both teachers expressed their struggle with “fitting music in”. The majority of their time was spent improving students’ literacy skills as many of their students do not speak English as their first language. Due to this, when coupled with doubt in their ability to teach music, music tended to be towards the bottom of the priority list. Samantha described the pressures she faced and how she attempted to include music in her teaching:
It is very hard to find a window of opportunity to teach music. Which is bad because I know it is part of our curriculum and we need to teach it, and I try to. Mostly if we have an assembly item we often relate it back to music. Nothing extravagant . . . if you are not comfortable then you can’t teach 30 kids to do it. I can’t say to pull out the instruments and start playing if I don’t have the ear [for it]. (Interview, 8th March)

Similarly, Maree noted the issue of time management as a significant pressure and reason for music losing its place in the “crowded curriculum”:

Maree: The reality is . . . What do I need to drop? . . . Where can I fit it in? When can I fit it in? So, you know, what is it that we’re missing out on that I need to put in here . . . So it is time . . . But if you have it set every week, that’s your time, that’s fine. (Interview, 8th March)

Although the time constraints were discussed frequently by both teachers as an impediment to their consistent inclusion of music in the classroom, it was clear that the creation of a routine for music might make this a more feasible prospect. To some extent, the lessons timetabled for the research project fulfilled this function.

Whilst both Samantha and Maree discussed the issue of time as a negative influence on their ability to implement music in their classrooms, the advantage of subject integration for primary school teachers was not discussed positively by the teachers. Samantha and Maree could have included music in their classrooms by integrating it with other subjects (Barnes, 2001; Jeanneret & Swainston, 2009) but they did not fully capitalise on their capabilities that facilitate this, including their detailed knowledge of their students, as they were not sufficiently trained to do so. Whilst Maree did use the Phase One material as a literacy activity, it was ultimately at the expense of the musical learning, as the activity was lyric-focused. Ideal integration can achieve multiple outcomes but integration needs to be taught in more depth so that teachers can implement its principles most effectively (Barrett & Veblen, 2012; O’Toole, 2005; Russell-Bowie, 2010).

**Resourcing of musical activities**

Cross-curricular integration of music at times influenced the types of resources that the teachers used in their classrooms. For example, in the initial observation stage Maree was concluding a performance-based activity on the Human Body, where students sang the song with actions to demonstrate their knowledge. However, technological sources were also influential in determining repertoire for the classroom, as Maree explained:
It’s easier to find something if you don’t have it, on YouTube. . . To source something, right now. You need to find something, you want something, you can go source it. The problem is that it’s not always the most appropriate version. You have to find the right version.

YouTube was something that both teachers felt comfortable with as it was easily accessible in their classrooms with Smartboards. Hence their growing use of YouTube influenced the direction for the lessons in the study. This raises questions about levels of teacher comfort and confidence in selecting appropriate resources for the classroom. Furthermore, the availability of a resource such as YouTube does not necessarily equate to acquiring the most appropriately-designed materials and activities for primary school music education. The teachers commented that YouTube allowed them to source something promptly to “match what they were doing in class”, suggesting that YouTube does affect the ability to programme in a cross-curricular way. However, the teachers did not indicate their use of any other Smartboard-related technologies designed for primary school music lessons (e.g. Musica Viva in Schools Smartboard materials). What is therefore pertinent to this discussion is the recognition that YouTube as a resource is a beneficial and accessible starting point for primary school teachers, but these teachers have not yet fully engaged with how to best utilise it, to maximise depth in musical learning. Despite the described “ease” of YouTube for resource selection, there are concerns for the depth of musical experience in such practice:

Teachers should be careful when integrating the arts with other curriculum areas that this integration has an integrity and validity that does not demean the arts. . . . This superficial correlation of activities does no justice to the wealth and depth of artistic experiences (Russell-Bowie, 2010, p. 112).

**Teacher identity, “inclination”, and the notion of talent**

How teachers teach music or talk about music can be linked to their conceptualization of the subject and their perception of themselves as professionals (Hallam et. al., 2009). When Maree was asked to describe why many generalist teachers have concerns about teaching music she suggested a link between musical “inclination” and ability to teach music:

They’re [generalist teachers] not necessarily musically talented, therefore it’s hard to do, it becomes impractical or it’s not a practical thing to do in the classroom. . . . And it’s how talented or supportive is the teacher . . . If
they’re not inclined to it, if they don’t think that’s their talent or if that’s their enthusiasm, then forget it. It goes by the wayside.  
(Interview, 8th March)

The ‘lens’ through which these teachers viewed their practice was influenced by their self-concept, the way in which they saw themselves in association with a context (Hargreaves, Meill & Macdonald, 2002). Both teachers had terms or identity markers with which they labelled themselves in discussion. These were not used in front of students, but in teacher collaboration they would frequently make reference to these when speaking of themselves. Maree stated, “I’m not really musically inclined or talented. Music is not my forte. I am not musically inclined, in any way, shape or form. Doesn’t mean I don’t enjoy it, I’m just not good at it. I’m not that talented.” (Interview, 8th March). Samantha used descriptors such as “with my limited musical knowledge” (Interview, 8th March) and “[o]ur musical talents are very limited” (Interview, 28th June).

These associations of the musical “self” influenced how these teachers viewed the subject of music itself and how their perceptions of the need for musical talent affected their approach to the teaching of music (Wiggins & Wiggins, 2008). The teachers consistently referred to these labels in the initial stages of the study, clearly indicating that they did not perceive themselves as having a teacher identity that encompassed the musical talent they considered imperative for effectiveness as a music teacher. However, over the course of the study their references to limited musical knowledge or talent decreased, indicating that this self-concept and teacher identity was changing. These findings support Hargreaves, Miell and Macdonald’s (2002) assertion that an individual’s concept of self may be dependent on their reflective or collaborative experiences.

Further reasons for this were discussed in the interviews, with Samantha reflecting on how the jointly-planned approach to teaching music was less threatening than most teachers often find music to be:

I think a lot of teachers in the field that are not musically trained don’t tend to do a lot of music with their class because they feel threatened by it, they don’t feel like they’re teaching their students the right content. But having you there was good because we brought in music in a different approach. You really didn’t need to know a lot of musical background, so therefore it
didn’t make teaching music very daunting. Because you didn’t need to know all the jargon or the lingo.  

The way that Samantha refers to the implementation in a collective sense – “we brought in music”– indicates her sense of ownership of the collaborative process. It is possible that my presence created a kind of “support identity” that bolstered Samantha’s musical self and empowered her to think of herself as having a musical teacher identity. It is notable that both teachers’ reference to their “non-musical” self-identification declined as the study progressed.

**Development of agency and autonomy**

Understanding how teachers identified themselves musically became a crucial step in this collaborative research process. In determining how to improve the teachers’ confidence a detailed awareness of their needs and experiences was required, just as any successful professional development “must start with strengths, rather than focussing on weaknesses” (Clark, 1992).

Samantha grew in confidence in teaching music, as the pedagogical approach was not as ‘specialised’ as she had anticipated. Developing lessons that removed the focus from teacher skill was an aid to Samantha’s feelings of competence:

Samantha: [I]n the beginning I was feeling quite threatened by the thing, because, with my limited music knowledge, I’m still very limited, but I think I got comfortable because I realised I didn’t need to know that much about music to teach music and they still gained a lot out of it and they still enjoyed it, and what they came up with was just still as beneficial then.

EG: Do you think that might have been because there was less focus on you? The way we taught and approached these lessons, using different stimuli, different resources and how the kids responded to those, essentially, the kids were doing their thing and we were supporting them. It wasn’t you going “this is a crotchet”…

Samantha: I didn’t have to feel like “Am I going to say the right word, am I going to call this the right thing?” And I think you calmed me down. You kind of said to me “no, no, this is good, what they’re coming up with is good.” And then when I heard that from you I thought “okay this is good, because you think it’s good.” You’re the music expert so it must be good. So, having you there, and clarifying that this is right, this is the road we’re taking on, this is what should be happening, I’m thinking “okay then”. (Interview, 28th June)
Samantha’s increased levels of confidence and independence can be linked to the nature of the professional development which aimed to avoid “contrived collegiality” (Hargreaves et al., 2002, p. 235) in order to encourage a supportive environment where she felt she could develop her teaching practice. Rather than imposing something foreign on Samantha’s classroom for a short period, and making a brief and superficial attempt at collaboration, she felt involved and personally part of an authentic sense of collegiality over the two terms.

Whilst Samantha appreciated support throughout the lesson sequence to check that the teaching strategies and progress were appropriate, her dependency on this did diminish in the second phase of the study. On one occasion Samantha came to me and suggested (with great enthusiasm mid-lesson) that we show the students a DVD of the group ‘Naturally 7’\(^3\) to give them an idea of what music they could make with limited resources. Samantha proceeded to describe the music in great detail using the video as an exemplar, whilst telling the students she had seen the ensemble in a recent live performance in Australia. The students were enthralled and Samantha demonstrated great confidence in her delivery of musical material as she was familiar with the artists and their repertoire and could speak of her experience. Samantha exhibited another aspect of her musical self here, which she had not previously connected to the classroom context. Samantha does possess a musical self but had not felt that this part of her identity could link to the classroom world. This conflict is of particular interest as specialist music educators and researchers continue to struggle with the divide between the musical worlds of children’s social and school settings (Marsh, 2008; Campbell, 2010). This discovery on Samantha’s behalf was a positive recognition of what she could bring to the classroom without the assistance of a music specialist.

Maree also demonstrated her development of agency and autonomy during the study, in relation to her experience and familiarity with graphic notation. She had discussed some exposure to graphic notation in her tertiary training, although this was not extensive. It was Maree’s interest to explore this further that influenced the incorporation of the notational

\(^3\) Naturally 7 – a contemporary a cappella ensemble that construct complete ‘orchestrations’ using only vocalised sounds to imitate instruments in their performances.
aspect into the second phase of the study, and then determined the kind of notational forms and compositions that her students produced.

The fact that both teachers felt that they could build upon my resources or teaching sequence is an indication of some steps towards the development of their autonomy and agency. Although their divergences were not always as I had envisaged, these trends and their demonstrations of self-evaluation and reflective practice, indicate their confidence and development in their capacity and empowerment to teach music. By using their strengths, including individual teaching styles, student rapport and personal experiences, the teachers were able to experiment with teaching music, in a way that they could (in theory) implement in the absence of the specialist (Clark, 1992; Conkling, 2004; Theissen, 1992; Raymond, Butt & Townsend, 1992).
The effects of specialist-generalist teacher collaboration on the musical experiences of students

Defining what constitutes effective pedagogy

Through continual experimentation with new roles and responsibilities, I encouraged the teachers to empower the students by starting with their responses to music as the stimulus to all subsequent learning. The teachers responded considerably well to this transition, advocated by Wiggins (2011), Saetre (2011) and Clennon (2009), from instructional teaching to a facilitative role. Just as Saetre (2011) describes different teaching practices as transmission, negotiation, facilitation and acceleration, along a continuum of student involvement, the teachers showed some movement away from transmission and instructional teaching towards facilitation of student learning and starting with student knowledge. This was as a result of their using open-ended questions to encourage student feedback and response to new music (Wiggins, 2011). In comparison to initial lessons, where there were very few student responses, the following dialogue depicts this changing focus in the learning context:

Samantha: Okay, who can tell me what they thought about that one?
Elsie: It’s calming.
Samantha: Was it always calming?
Elsie: No. It sounds like you were jumping off a cliff.
Harriet: I felt like I was free.
Danita: I felt memories. Like I was trying to remember things.
EG: What was it that made you feel like that?
Danita: The sounds. It also felt like a funeral.
Samantha: Which part of it made you feel like it was a funeral?
Danita: The end. It was scary! (Lesson, 31st May)

This dialogue shows Samantha developing her questioning techniques to extract deeper responses from the students. After I modelled the kind of probing needed to encourage student responses, Samantha took over and continued this in the discussion. Starting with what the students experienced in the music ultimately produced more insightful responses. Samantha also encouraged students to give feedback on the compositions of their peers. This kind of interaction became more commonplace throughout the lessons, whereas the initial lessons involved more instructing from the teacher and minimal student response, as students simply performed songs as an ensemble.
This new exploration of roles and responsibilities can be linked to the teachers’ developing views regarding pedagogy. The way the teachers interpreted and taught the lessons sometimes resulted in approaches that were different from what I anticipated. Both teachers allocated groups for activities and designated certain students as leaders. Similarly, both teachers instructed that instruments could not be distributed until the group had decided what the music was. As discussed in the literature on how children best make music, learning in self-chosen friendship groups and the inseparable relationship between the physical instrument, experimentation and the composition process, are crucial pedagogical considerations (Wiggins, 2011; Glover, 2000; Glover & Young, 1999; Green, 2002). It was difficult at times to convey these ideas in a collaborative way to the teachers, but I made comments regularly concerning these notions, in discussions during and after lessons.

Essentially, familiar approaches that related to maintaining classroom management were the ones with which the teachers felt most comfortable. Maree had 25 years of experience, demonstrating effective classroom management across all curriculum areas, whereas Samantha was still developing her teaching practice and was more willing to experiment and collaborate as a result. The fact that these teachers controlled certain aspects of the learning sequence can be attributed to their teaching approach in other subject areas and management concerns. Although one could term these approaches impediments to students’ creative development, they are understandable as these teachers are used to teaching in a structured, teacher-centred manner.

One instance of Maree’s task interpretation saw her focus on forms of notation through demonstration. I entered the class after her demonstration and the students were clapping contrasting rhythms together and Maree was directing the various layers:

Beautiful . . . That’s exactly the type of thing we need to be doing . . . Your hands were the instruments. You had a different beat to everybody else, Katie. You had the steady beat. Michael had a totally different one and it gave me a sense of fastness and happiness. Sophie had a slower beat, but that was good because it fit (sic) in with them. And you too Callum, that was brilliant. The way you put your clapping together . . . that’s how your music should be. So long as it fits with your story. (Lesson, 31st May)
Maree’s increased confidence in her ability to direct and instruct her students in specific music skills and notation is demonstrated here. This development in her confidence and agency is an extremely positive step for her, but raises concerns for the musical environment and scaffolding for the student (Wiggins, 2011). In the context of music teaching, more recent ideas concerning effective pedagogy involve less control, instruction and fewer impositions on children’s natural music-making (Glover, 2000; Harwood & Marsh, 2012; Marsh & Young, 2006).

The instruction that Maree gave her students shaped the sorts of compositions they produced in this second phase of the study. As Maree focussed on the need for an accurate score and a performance of layers of “beats” that “lined up”, the students in S2B produced work of this nature, rather than more free, exploratory, non-notated or complex writing which an alternative task establishment may have produced (Wiggins, 2011).

In a later analysis of her pedagogical experimentation, Maree stated that she would seek more structure in the teaching and learning sequence in comparison to what was collaboratively developed in the study:

Maree: I’d probably not necessarily do it exactly the same way. I’d be more structured . . . Because then I’d have a ‘this is my starting point’ . . . . Instead of just the free rein. . . The more structure they get, kids especially, the easier it is for them. Once you’ve got that basic structure, then you can take that structure away . . . And say, right, now do your own. . .

(Interview, 28th June)

Maree apparently desired structure to bolster her own confidence, as a scaffold for her own music learning as a teacher, but this is in some sense antithetical to what is believed most effective musical pedagogy. Her control enables her musical agency, as it builds on structures with which she is most familiar in her teaching practice, but this is at the expense of developing the musical agency of students.

Maree provided further insight into her knowledge of different learning processes that could be applied in her classroom. She discussed her awareness of the learning needs of students, but also, her individual musical learning needs as a teacher:
Maree: It also depends on the individual learners. Who learns from complex point of view and who learns from the simple point of view to the complex? . . . So, you gotta (sic) cater somehow . . . . It’s also the teacher. Where does the teacher teach from, where does the teacher learn from? Is it easier for the teacher to start from simple because the teacher is learning at the same time? (Interview, 28th June)

The last part of this dialogue demonstrates that the way music is taught in these contexts is determined almost entirely by individual teachers and how they feel most comfortable in teaching the subject. They do ultimately care about their students and what they achieve, but in a subject like music they are concerned about their inadequacies rather than capitalising on their positive attributes (Barnes, 2001).

**Developing literacy skills and language through music**

The children in the study came from various cultural backgrounds, with 74% of child participants defined as ESL learners. As discussed earlier, the school staff focused the majority of their time on improving the students’ literacy skills. As these students experienced language difficulties, musical discussion was initially very limited because it was difficult to prompt in-depth responses from them. The development of literacy and language skills through music, and issues of student engagement, repertoire and ownership are discussed in this section.

The teachers in the study used the musical context to develop their students’ literacy and language skills. This involved cross-curricular integration in order to focus student skill and growth (Jeanneret & Swainston, 2009). In the following excerpt Maree led the class in a discussion that allowed students to share their experiences of the music and their imaginations after listening to an audio example of the main theme from the recent *Alice in Wonderland* film (see Appendix I). Although these outcomes were not originally anticipated, as a result of teacher interpretation of the tasks, music lessons were able to provide students with a different avenue for the development of self-expression using the English language. In the initial observations, these students gave very short responses such as ‘It was sad’ or ‘It was happy’ with no further depth.
Here Maree framed a listening task for a wide scope of student responses. A stimulus that invited responses gave them an opportunity to describe their reactions, without pressure, and they were much more articulate as a result:

Maree: What do you hear? What do you see in your mind when you hear it? You can even shut your eyes. What is it that you see in your head?

*Students listen to excerpt, with some students doing galloping actions (Maree smiles).*

Maree: I’m just going to stop it there. Now what did you feel?

Xanthe: I felt like I was lost in the empty world and I can’t see anything and I’m wondering where is everyone?

Maree: Wow. I like your description. It made me feel what you felt, with you . . .

Callum: I felt like I was on a horse.

Maree: Yes, as soon as you did it, I thought yeah, there could be horses.

Callum: And throwing spears!

Maree: I want you to respect the person’s thoughts, feelings and ideas. Because everyone is different. You think about how you react to someone’s opinion, because there’s no right or wrong answer here. It’s about what you feel.

(Lesson, 24th May)

Music and literacy development occurred differently in compositions across the two phases. The original collaboratively planned sequence for Phase 1 was to culminate in students’ creation of versions of the song ‘Fireflies’. This was to be an open-ended task, where students could vary the material from the original however they chose. Maree decided to instruct her students that this would specifically involve changing and re-writing the lyrics to the song, whereas Samantha instructed her class to vary other musical elements, possibly including lyrics.

Student responses to this activity in the two classes varied accordingly. The students had been very excited in the weeks leading up to the task, and had asked my advice on their ideas in the playground. However, the specific lyric re-construction focus in Maree’s teaching came as a surprise to the students and led to work that highlighted their contrasting levels of literacy (examples shown in Figures 4.1 and 4.2).
What these written examples do not show is the place of these lyrics in the students’ performances. The students whose work is shown in Figure 4.2 struggled to write their lyrics and then struggled to read them in their performance, and found it very difficult to sing them, or play instruments at the same time. Nevertheless, the students had an opportunity to develop literacy skills in the context of another subject area (Music), which produced meaningful outcomes for the students in extra-musical areas. However, the anticipated planned sequence required students to make arrangements with much more freedom and no focus on lyric-writing, indicating a shift from musical to literacy outcomes during the implementation phase of this task.

**Figure 4.1 Composition ‘Fireflies 1’ (S2B)**

![Image of handwritten lyrics]

**Figure 4.2 Composition ‘Fireflies 2’ (S2B)**

![Image of handwritten lyrics]

(Lesson, 10th May)

This shift occurred in the teachers’ task interpretation, which in turn influenced the responses of their students. When Samantha implemented the task, she indicated to her students (S2A) that they could change anything they wanted about the song, which may or
may not have included changing the lyrics of the original. Samantha’s students (S2A) responded differently to the arrangement task, and although they were not instructed specifically to do so, many students changed key words within the overall lyric structure (see Figure 4.3). They were more selective in how they did this (compare Figure 4.3 to the original lyrics in Appendix H). This different level of student response in lyric-writing may be explained by the fact that Samantha’s class (S2A) contains far fewer ESL students than Maree’s class (S2B) but may also be attributed to Samantha’s instructions which included a musical reference. Not only did S2A students grasp the lyric-writing quite successfully, but they then explored the musical elements of their song versions in more depth than S2B students, as they were less inhibited by the established literacy focus. Issues concerning the depth of subject-specific results when implemented in an integrated manner were evident in this part of Phase 1 (Russell-Bowie, 2010).

**Figure 4.3 Composition ‘fireflies’ (S2A)**

You would not believe your eyes if

to thousand lightning flies lit up the sky

would as I rather sleep
dance

cause they fill the burning air and

leave tall elips everywhere, think me

tired but I well just stand and dance

I like to make my self cry that

planet mars turns slowly its hard
to think but ill rather stay awake

when im sleep and everything is

always as it seems.

(Lesson, 17th May)

The direction in which the second phase activities were taken, with Maree’s graphic notational focus, showed some steps towards the integration of literacy outcomes and more specifically musical outcomes in the one activity. As shown in Figure 4.4, this group described their soundscape before ultimately notating it musically. Whilst not all student compositions reflected the concurrent grasp and demonstration of these aspects, they show the capacity for musical tasks to encompass multiple student outcomes and experiences.
with teacher collaboration. Furthermore, when students could notate their compositions using images, free from the stress of writing lyrics in English, they were more engaged in musical learning. Students could demonstrate their compositional expertise symbolically in a medium that did not require competence in English (Upitis, 1992).

Figure 4.4 ‘Walking through the forest’ – student description and notation (S2B)

(Lesson, 7th June)
Maintaining student engagement: appropriate repertoire and ownership of learning

Although there were varying interpretations of resources and programming, it was observed that most students engaged consistently throughout the programmed lessons. Choosing repertoire that was age-appropriate was a concern for the teachers within the study. Maree discussed in great detail her experiences of repertoire choice and its link to the negative responses of students:

> The culture out there is that kids are getting younger and younger to hear all those [popular songs] and love and enjoy and actually buy and sing along to all those songs, they think that’s where it should be. So when you come to do a song that’s a school-age song . . . they go ‘boring’ . . . And I went ‘hang on a minute, well it’s actually related to the unit of work we’re doing... I want to link stuff up. So I know it’s age-appropriate, the way it should be. (Interview 8th March)

The selection of repertoire was an important way to maintain student engagement throughout the collaboration, particularly when considering resources at the start of each phase. Two important points arose: developing recognition that not all contemporary music is altogether inappropriate for teaching purposes (e.g. “Fireflies”) and the realisation that students’ repertoire choices may not always be predictable in nature (as discussed by Maree). Students responded to a range of repertoire (see Appendix G and Appendix H) and were generally engaged by a visual element (YouTube video) regardless of the style of music being played. They responded well to being able to discuss not only what they heard, but what they saw (Webb, 2012).

Listening to existing compositions generated student enthusiasm and provided scope to create their own. Students took to the set tasks with great imagination and passion. Further evidence of student work in Phase 2 is seen at Figure 4.5. Students were given the opportunity to express their musical ideas and communicate them to others in a way that is not always offered in music lessons (Jeanneret & Swainston, 2009) and that had not been a previous part of their classroom music experiences.

The group working on the composition notated at Figure 4.5 (Phase 2) was one of the more determined, self-motivated and vocal groups in the study. The students in this group were observed spending considerable time meticulously notating their composition. Katie and Amelia watched Gavin play his drum pattern over and over again, whilst they notated it bit
by bit. Katie said “Do it again! Do it again! I’ve got it! I’ve got it!” repeatedly and the group rejoiced when they finally “got it”. It was evident that allowing students the creative scope to produce their own work fostered ownership of their learning and helped maintain their engagement (Board of Studies NSW, 2000).

**Figure 4.5 Student composition ‘The War of Fairys’ (sic) (S2B)**

(Lesson, 7th June)

The student responses in S2A in the second phase were different from those of S2B and did not result in the production of graphic notation scores. This is because Samantha did not focus on this in her task establishment, but rather decided to inspire her students with the ‘Naturally 7’ exemplar. This resulted in students producing ‘groove-based’ compositions that were all ultimately very similar, with layering beats using different instruments, rather than focussing on a story to be mapped as a soundscape (as was originally intended). This demonstrates the extent to which student output is linked to teacher input. Also, the fact that the groups were all working in the same room resulted in students sharing ideas as they had no choice but to listen to the work of their peers on adjacent tables.
Meaningful music-making: creative and performance space

There were many concerns voiced by students during lessons on issues such as noise, instrument choices and group allocations. The classroom facilities were not ideal for the group work. Neither teachers nor students were accustomed to having five or six groups working on different pieces in the same room. Many students complained about the noise and their inability to hear their peers talk and to hear their music. Furthermore, many students felt their instrument selections were limited by the resources available. Whilst the researcher was initially frustrated at the fact that students were only allowed to get instruments when “they were ready to”, it ultimately became a logistical solution so that students could share the available instruments. Children’s compositional processes are linked to their exploration with instruments and the greater range of resources (including pitched instruments) may have shaped more varied compositions (Wiggins, 2011). Students were also concerned about the fact that their teachers allocated their groups in which they would do their music-making. In listening to the collective student voice, it was apparent that results may have been very different if they had chosen friendship groups, as advocated by Green (2008) and Wiggins (2011).

The tension around the ultimate purpose of music in the classroom was apparent. Maree linked her inclusion of music to the availability of a performance opportunity:

Maree:   Well, again, it depends on whatever else we have to do. But yeah, if I feel like it, and even if I have a purpose for it, like an [assembly] item, I could feel it was okay to do that because the kids have already had a go at playing the instruments.     (Interview, 28th June)

This indicates the teacher’s perception of the need to present a finished product demonstrating children’s musical talent, although such a presentation is not necessarily indicative of what the syllabus outlines as good musical education (Board of Studies NSW, 2000). There is a discrepancy between the purpose of musical activities as outlined in the syllabus and the interpretation of these guidelines by teachers. These teachers undeniably possess knowledge and preconceived understandings about children and how they learn. However, their understandings do not necessarily adhere to current music education orthodoxies and research concerning best practice.
Attitudes concerning meaningful music-making

This study was also concerned with the definitions of meaningful music-making. The data provides various definitions from participants at different stages of the study. At the beginning, teachers assigned the following definitions to the term, prior to any collaboration or implementation:

Samantha: Well something that either the students or the teacher is going to take away with them and understand. Something they’ll be able to implement later on or relate. (Interview, 8th March)

Maree: Making music, or using music, or creating music for a purpose, basically. Not just for the sake of doing it, but for a particular purpose. (Interview, 8th March)

At the conclusion of the study, after two terms of collaboration and music teaching, their definitions were different:

Samantha: I think meaningful music-making is giving the students a go and getting them to get as much as they can get out of it, with your support, no matter how much you know about music... it comes down to them, making them feel like they’re achieving something. And it doesn’t need to be a masterpiece or whatever they come up with, but they’ve just been exposed to the music. (Interview, 28th June)

Maree: What makes it personal and interesting to the children... anything that creates passion, inspiration, fun, you know, it’s the feelings inside that make it important, meaningful, as well as the performing, the listening, the movement. It’s all part of it, what they actually get out of it... Because what I notice now, with this meaningful stuff, is that even getting feelings out of it, when they were discussing what they felt, what they thought about, what their memories were, that was meaningful. (Interview, 28th June)

The reconsidered definitions could be attributed to the collaborative musical experiences that fostered a deeper awareness of the need for student responses to music and the subsequent observations of student engagement.

The following section further analyses the factors that contributed to the teacher participants’ changing perspectives and opinions.
Experimenting with new roles and responsibilities

New musical interactions between teachers and students in the lessons were evident throughout the study. The lessons progressed from being more teacher-focused, to more student-centred as encouraged by the specialist and based on research into effective pedagogical frameworks (Glover, 2000; Glover & Young 1999; Wiggins, 1994a, 2011). Samantha described her changed attitude to teaching music as a direct result of how she experienced the subject in the collaborative lessons:

Samantha: To tell you the truth, if you hadn’t come, I wouldn’t have gotten to that depth. And you made music look a lot easier than what I was facing in the beginning.
EG: To what in particular are you referring? What made music easier?
Samantha: Just the activities we came up with and at first I was thinking I’m not sure how much they’re going to get out of that. But watching them, they really did enjoy it . . . it just shows you don’t really need to know a lot about music in general, well they don’t need to know a lot about music . . . like composing that music strip, we just showed them some examples and sent them away and then the end product was to their standards and they got a lot out of it. (Interview, 28th June)

Samantha came to the realisation that the implementation of music in her classroom wasn’t completely dependent on knowledge of music terminology or technical skill. Rather, what was crucial was her recognition of how to best establish a task for her students, for them to interact with music and ultimately demonstrate their own musical ability. Yet again, Samantha discussed “the activities we came up with”, indicating the level of ownership she felt in the teaching. Experiencing music collaboratively gave Samantha the space to reflect on her new role in a realisation of what was meaningful for her students.

Samantha: I think they also had the vision of music being spectacular and that. And it just made me realise that it’s just kids’ music and they can come up with that and that’s good for them. (Interview, 28th June)

Furthermore Samantha discussed her realisation, as a result of the encouragement of reflective practice concerning roles, that her fear of music was something that she held and not her students (Clennon, 2009, Conkling, 2004; Saetre, 2011; Wiggins, 2011):

It just makes you realise that, to kids, no matter what you do it’s going to be meaningful because it’s fun and it’s going to be different and hands on, and exposing them to music and it’s something they connect with. So I think
that my biggest thing is to not be so fearful and just have a go and it doesn’t really matter because the kids don’t really know, do they? They don’t know any better! I think the fearness (sic) is coming from within me to them. But when I was teaching them and just going with the flow (especially all that Naturally 7 stuff) when I brought that in, they could relate to it.

(Interview, 28th June)

It is particularly interesting that Samantha discussed not only how she could “relate to” the Naturally 7 repertoire, but that her students could too. Her familiarity with the repertoire not only empowered her to teach it, but her enthusiasm also affected the impact of this music on her students, by creating enthusiasm in this classroom.

**Conclusion**

These results demonstrate that the action research project involving collaborative teaching brought numerous benefits for teacher preparedness, by providing support and reassurance to teachers in lesson sequencing and pedagogical experimentation. Their subsequent, changing levels of confidence and self-awareness assisted them to improve the musical experiences of their students. Furthermore, these developments provided the stimulus for a change in attitudes concerning children’s meaningful music-making. There were, however, limitations in these areas of the action research project, the implications of which will be discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

This study examined the potential for collaborative teaching between generalist and specialist teachers to improve the confidence and preparedness of primary school teachers when teaching music. The study also investigated the effects of collaborative teaching on the musical engagement and meaningful music-making of primary school children. The potential for collaboration to encourage guided resource development, through understanding how current teaching praxis is shaped by teacher identity, was discussed. In addition, the effects of this kind of specialist-generalist teacher collaboration on the development of teacher attitudes toward meaningful music-making were considered.

The collaboration took the form of an action research project, conducted by the researcher as music specialist, in conjunction with two generalist classroom teachers. During the study, interview data was collected from the two teacher participants, and collaboratively-planned lessons were video recorded during their implementation by the teachers. The interview data was used to explore and analyse the teachers’ perspectives and experiences of teaching music at various stages of the study, whilst the lesson observations provided a sequential opportunity to analyse teacher development and student participation and responses to the various stimuli in the study’s two phases. Analysis of data sought to generate findings that could be applied more broadly to primary school music education, and these will be discussed below.

Questions of Sustainability: the researcher and ‘the researched’

The findings demonstrate the potential of collaboration between specialists and generalists to assist primary school teachers in implementing classroom music. More specifically, the collaboration model showed the potential to improve teacher confidence through resource development and the encouragement of reflective practice. Furthermore, the collaboratively-planned programme promoted sustained student engagement by encouraging student-centred, rather than teacher-focused, learning although this was implemented to varying degrees. Whilst the results showed improvements in teacher preparedness, to the extent of developing agency and autonomy, consideration of the
researcher’s crucial role as the “agent” in the process leads to concern as to the sustainability of the programme in the absence of the researcher.

Given that the physical presence of the researcher influenced not only the content of the music lessons but their consistent implementation, questions arise concerning the extent to which the environment of reflective practice and student engagement were associated with the physical presence of the researcher in the school. Although the collaboration attempted to avoid “contrived collegiality” (Hargreaves et al., 2002, p. 235) by developing a programme that evolved according to the specific needs of students and teachers, it was not comprehensive or complete given the time constraints on the research. Sustainability is dependent on further resource development, the willingness of individual primary school teachers to include music in their classrooms and the development of sufficient confidence to continue teaching music without the support of a music specialist.

The current NSW syllabus (Board of Studies NSW, 2000a, 2000b) and developing national curriculum (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2012) present hurdles for consistency of interpretation by teachers. Whilst guidelines for what students might learn and what teachers might teach for certain outcomes are given, they are quite general and open to interpretation even by a music specialist. The abstract nature of the learning experiences, outcomes and limited practical implementation strategies – e.g. scope and sequence outlines from previous syllabi - (NSW Department of Education, 1984) present further difficulties for primary school teachers who do not have the time and knowledge to interpret such a document. Further analysis of these interpretative difficulties would assist curriculum advisors to create accessible documents for generalist teachers.

The collaborative implementation of a context-specific and evolving programme proved to be effective in giving the teachers ownership of the practical directions in which they could take further classroom lessons. Furthermore, collaboration between the two teacher participants in this study may assist the sustainability of newly-established teaching practices in the researcher’s absence.
Implications for Future Training and Professional Development

The collaborative nature of the study showed the possibilities surrounding the development of new forms of consultancy in the professional development of teachers. As indicated in the literature (Hookey, 1994; Jeanneret, 1995; Joyce & Showers, 1988; Russell-Bowie, 2009; Stevens, 2003) and as this study demonstrated, the role of the tertiary institution in the initial musical development of primary school teachers is an ongoing concern. The action research collaboration provided the teachers with an opportunity to trial resourcing and sequencing musical activities in an integrated manner that moved the musical focus from teachers to students, but offered very limited broader support for the teachers in terms of their more abstract roles and responsibilities (e.g. assessing and reporting). Tertiary institutions need to consider their responsibility to support all aspects of the primary school teacher’s role, possibly including the “deconstruction” of music as a specialist subject. All pre-service teachers should be encouraged to think of music as achievable, even by those who lack confidence in their own musical skill. Future development of tertiary courses could train pre-service teachers with more practical resources for teaching music in ways that best cater for students’ “natural” music-making interactions, where teachers understand the benefits of music-making as distinct from polished performances.

Similarly, further research into the existing forms of in-service professional development would assist educational bodies to determine what kinds of consultancy benefit students and teachers. The personalised nature of the collaboration in this study may not be the most practical way to provide sustainable and consistent in-service professional development to teachers, as it depends on the availability of music specialists and their relationship with teachers in the school. However, we might conclude that in-service professional development may work best when it is offered over an extended period, with positive collaborative relationships that provide impetus and enthusiasm for continuing such implementation.
The Issue of Empowerment: breaking “the unbreakable cycle”

The collaborative implementation of this specific music programme showed how such action can effect changes in attitudes towards music teaching and see its increased inclusion in the classroom. The researcher does not claim that this intervention has definitively broken the “unbreakable cycle” (Jeanneret, 1995) nor influenced the culture of music education throughout the school. However, there are strong indications that such collaboration may be the impetus for further improvements of music teaching in schools, through consistent encouragement and the collaborative resourcing of classrooms.

The results do, however, call for a consideration of this kind of empowerment of generalist teachers as a way to improve the state of primary-school music education (Pascoe et al., 2005). The study does not give a clear indication of whether the empowerment of generalist teachers necessarily empowers the learner (Clennon, 2009; Wiggins, 2011). Further research is needed on how generalist teachers can best utilise their role to foster both their students’ musical creativity and skill development. Difficulties balancing the various outcomes in this process of empowerment were evident during this study and undoubtedly in wider music educational settings (Barnes, 2001). If the empowerment of generalist teachers is focused more on the achievement of integrated outcomes, including literacy and performances to showcase student talent, then music educators need to consider other, possible limitations that might emerge in the role of the generalist teacher and their teaching praxis.

Aiming for Best Practice

The limitations experienced in the study – time constraints and disagreements concerning desired outcomes due to pre-existing teaching praxis – are an opportunity to discuss the future configuration of primary school music education settings. Although the study is an example of collaborative action in one primary school, Pascoe et al. (2005) raise collaborative action as a recommendation to improve the future of music education across the country. Based on this situational trial, there are strong indications that a two-stream music pedagogy in primary schools may be the most effective system. This would entail generalist and specialist teachers working side by side in classrooms, with different
responsibilities: the generalist responsible for the integration of music with other learning areas and the specialist responsible for the fostering of music-specific development. Generalist teachers need much more training in how to implement music through integration with other curriculum areas, or with other Creative Arts subjects, and preparation which thoroughly equips them with confidence in their abilities, not heightened awareness of their weaknesses (Jeanneret & De Graffenried, 2012; Barnes, 2001).

Within the constraints of this study, the researcher concludes that particular caution must also be taken to avoid over-stretching generalist teachers and their abilities. Thus whilst future development may seek to capitalise on the positive potential of the generalist to teach music in an integrated fashion, one must be cautious to not place specialist expectations on them. Barrett and Veblen (2012) conclude that a “comprehensive music curriculum is characterised by breadth and depth of experience” (p. 361) and, within this, the crucial role of the specialist music teacher must be understood: to provide consultancy to encourage generalists through integration, but also to take responsibility (with subject specific knowledge) for certain aspects of children’s musical development. Teachers, be they generalist or specialist-trained, will inevitably teach to achieve the student outcomes that they personally associate with their teaching practice and management techniques.

In conclusion, more research into how best to utilise generalist teachers and music specialists may be the most effective way to improve teaching practice, musical approaches and the musical experiences of children in the future. It can be seen, however, that the collaboration of the specialist and generalist teacher can positively change the disposition of the generalist teacher toward implementing music in the classroom, as expressed by one of the generalist teacher participants in this project:

> Just observing my kids and how much fun they had and just them hanging for you to come every Thursday, even now. “Thursday! It’s music time!” It makes me realise that this is just as important as Maths and English in their curriculum. I think I just have to get my head around it and organise a few more lessons so they can benefit. (Interview, 28th June)
References


Appendix A: Ethics Approval Letter

Ref: MFIHW

16 November 2011

Dr James Renwick
Sydney Conservatorium of Music
The University of Sydney
Email: james.renwick@sydney.edu.au

Dear Dr Renwick

Thank you for your correspondence dated 15 November 2011 addressing comments made to you by the Executive Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

On 16 November 2011 the Chair of the HREC considered this information and approved your protocol entitled “Musical Creativity in the Primary Classroom: Empowering generalist teachers to foster children’s meaningful music-making”.

Details of the approval are as follows:

Protocol No.: 14269
Approval Date: 16 November 2011
First Annual Report Due: 30 November 2012
Authorised Personnel: Dr James Renwick
Ms Elizabeth Gresser

Documents Approved:

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HREC approval is valid for four (4) years from the approval date stated in this letter and is granted pending the following conditions being met:

Special Condition/s of Approval
- Letter of approval from the school principal and any other necessary approval (eg NSW Dept of Education and Training) shall be provided to the HREC before research commences.

Condition/s of Approval
• Continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans.

• Provision of an annual report on this research to the Human Research Ethics Committee from the approval date and at the completion of the study. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of ethics approval for the project.

• All serious and unexpected adverse events should be reported to the HREC within 72 hours.

• All unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.

• Any changes to the protocol including changes to research personnel must be approved by the HREC by submitting a Modification Form before the research project can proceed.

Chief Investigator / Supervisor’s responsibilities:

1. You must retain copies of all signed Consent Forms (if applicable) and provide these to the HREC on request.

2. It is your responsibility to provide a copy of this letter to any internal/external granting agencies if requested.

Please do not hesitate to contact Research Integrity (Human Ethics) should you require further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely

Dr Margaret Faedo
Manager, Human Ethics
On behalf of the HREC

cc: Elizabeth Gresser egre4015@uni.sydney.edu.au

This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council’s (NHMRC) National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), NHMRC and Universities Australia Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007) and the CPMP/ICH Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice.
MUSICAL CREATIVITY IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM:
Empowering generalist teachers to foster children’s meaningful music-making

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT – TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

(1) What is the study about?

You are invited to participate in a study of the musical experiences of children in the primary school classroom. The study aims to explore the effect of generalist and specialist trained teachers working collaboratively to produce student-centred music lessons for students.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Elizabeth Gresser and will form the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Music (Music Education) Honours at the University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr James Renwick, Chair of Music Education, Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

(3) What does the study involve?

The majority of the study will take place during the time allocated for you to teach music lessons to your class during Terms 1 and 2 of 2012. You will be required to participate in an interview at the commencement of the study where you will be asked questions regarding your teacher training and your confidence in teaching music to your students. Audio recordings will be taken during the interview to verify data collected from the researcher’s observations and fieldnotes. At least one initial music lesson in your class will be observed to inform the researcher of the students’ for which future lessons will be designed and negotiated, given your consent.

Over the course of 8-10 weeks, you would be required to teach one music lesson to your class that would be negotiated and developed collaboratively between you and the researcher. Audio/visual recordings will be used during music lessons to document students’ learning, to clarify researcher observations of student interactions and to inform the content of future lessons to best suit both the needs of students and teachers.

The lessons will involve student-centred activities, focussed on innovative and creative music learning in a programme which you will approve and sanction as appropriate to your students, given your experience as a professional teacher and knowledge of your class.

You will be required to participate in an interview at the conclusion of the study where you will be asked questions regarding your experiences of the study, your perceptions of meaningful music-making and your preparedness to teach music lessons in the future. Audio/visual recordings will be taken during the interview.

There are no potential risks to which you might be exposed if you were to take part in this study. If you wish to participate in this study, you are required to return the consent form to the school office.
(4) How much time will the study take?

The study will be mostly conducted during the music lessons in your normal school day. This will occur during Terms 1 and 2 of 2012 for approximately one lesson per week for 8-10 weeks. Approximately half an hour during this same school day per week (at a suitable time decided through negotiation with the school) will be required to discuss the content of the next lesson to be implemented in the study.

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent and - if you do consent - you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with The University of Sydney.

You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, the audio and visual recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

If you take part in a focus group and wish to withdraw, as this is a group discussion it will not be possible to exclude individual data once the session has commenced.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants.

A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

We cannot and do not guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from the study. However, the collaborative teaching with a music specialist may potentially provide you with ideas for teaching music as a tool for further professional development.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

You are free to tell other people about the study if you wish to do so.

(9) What if I require further information about the study or my involvement in it?

Should you require further information at any stage, please contact the researcher, Elizabeth Greisser on 0430 044 971, egreisser@sydney.edu.au or Dr James Remwick, Chair of Music Education, Sydney Conservatorium of Music on +61 2 9351 1334, jremwick@sydney.edu.au.

(10) What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact The Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on +61 2 9302 8176 (Telephone); +61 2 9302 8177 (Facsimile) or heman.ethics@sydney.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep.
MUSICAL CREATIVITY IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM:
Empowering generalist teachers to foster children’s meaningful music-making

PARENTAL (OR CAREGIVER) INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is the study about?
You are invited to permit your child to participate in a study of the musical experiences of children in the primary school classroom. When they are trained, some primary-school teachers learn to teach all subjects, while others specialise on teaching music. The study will look at what happens when those two groups join up to share their knowledge and teach even better.

Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because their class teacher has agreed to take part in the project which requires the participant of their students.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?
The study is being conducted by Elizabeth Gresser and will form the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Music (Music Education) Honours at the University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr James Renwick, Chair of Music Education, Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

(3) What does the study involve?
The study will take place in the time allocated during the school day for music lessons at your child’s school during Terms 1 and 2 of 2012. The lessons will involve student-centred activities, focused on creative music learning appropriate to your needs. Audio/visual recordings will be taken of student activities during music lessons to document students’ learning and to verify observations of student participation/interaction made by the researcher. This information will be used to inform the researcher of student and teacher needs to be considered when planning subsequent lessons in the project.

As the study progresses, your child will be asked if they would like to participate in a focus group discussion (group interview) where they will be asked to answer questions about their musical experiences during the study. i.e. What were some of your experiences during the music lessons this term? This will take approximately half an hour in a group setting at school.

There are no potential risks to which your child might be exposed if they were to take part in this study.

If you do wish for your child to participate in this study, you are required to return the consent form to the school office.
(4) How much time will the study take?

The study will be conducted during your child’s music lessons in the normal school day. This will occur during Terms 1 and 2 of 2012 for approximately one lesson per week for 8-10 weeks. Approximately half an hour will also be allocated during this same day towards the conclusion of the study for a group discussion where your child may be required to answer some questions about the project.

(5) Can my child withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to consent your child.

Your decision whether or not to permit your child to participate will not prejudice you or your child’s future relations with The University of Sydney. If you decide to permit your child to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue your child’s participation at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

Your child may stop the interview at any time if they do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

If your child takes part in a focus group and wishes to withdraw, as this is a group discussion it will not be possible to exclude individual data once the session has commenced.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants.

A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

We cannot and do not guarantee or promise that your child will receive any benefits from the study, however, given that the study is designed to create meaningful and creative musical experiences for your child, there may be potential benefits of musical growth.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

You are free to tell other people about the study if you wish to do so.

(9) What if I require further information about the study or my child’s involvement?

Should you require further information at any stage, please contact the researcher, Elizabeth Gresser on 0450 044 971, egresser@sydney.edu.au or Dr James Renwick, Chair of Music Education, Sydney Conservatorium of Music on +61 2 9351 1334, jrenwick@sydney.edu.au.

(10) What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact The Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on +61 2 8627 8176 (Telephone), +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile) or hethics@sydney.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM – TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

I, ........................................................[PRINT NAME], give consent to my participation in the research project.

PRIMARY MUSICAL CREATIVITY

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher(s).

3. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent.

4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential. I understand that any research data gathered from the results of the study may be published however no information about me will be used in any way that is identifiable.

5. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher(s) or the University of Sydney now or in the future.

6. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio and visual recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

I understand that I can stop my participation in the focus group at any time if I do not wish to continue; however as it is a group discussion it will not be possible to exclude individual data to that point.
7. I consent to:

- Audio-recording  YES ☐ NO ☐
- Video-recording  YES ☐ NO ☐
- Receiving Feedback  YES ☐ NO ☐

If you answered YES to the “Receiving Feedback” question, please provide your details i.e. mailing address, email address.

Feedback Option

Address: ________________________________

Email: ________________________________

Signature

Please PRINT name

Date
PARENTAL/CAREGIVER CONSENT FORM – STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

I, .......................................................................................................................... [PRINT NAME], agree to permit
.......................................................................................................................... [PRINT CHILD’S NAME], who is aged ........ years,
to participate in the research project.

PRIMARY MUSICAL CREATIVITY

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved for my child’s participation in the project have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I have read the Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my child’s involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

3. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent to my child’s participation.

4. I understand that my child’s involvement is strictly confidential. I understand that research data gathered from the results of the study may be published however no information about my child nor I will be used in any way that is identifiable.

5. I understand that I can withdraw my child from the study at any time without prejudice to my or my child’s relationship with the researcher/s or the University of Sydney now or in the future.

6. I understand that the interview can be stopped at any time if my child or I do not wish the interview to continue. The audio-visual recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.
I understand that my child can withdraw from participation in the focus group at any time if my child or I do not wish for discussions to continue. However, as it is a group discussion it will not be possible to exclude individual data to that point.

7. I consent to:
   - Audio-recording       YES ☐       NO ☐
   - Video-recording       YES ☐       NO ☐
   - Receiving Feedback    YES ☐       NO ☐

If you answered YES to the “Receiving Feedback” question, please provide your details i.e. mailing address, email address.

Feedback Option

Address: __________________________________________
__________________________________________________

Email: ____________________________________________

..............................................................
Signature of Parent/Caregiver

..............................................................
Please PRINT name

..............................................................
Date
Appendix D: Recruitment Letter

Dear Principal,

I am writing to request your permission to undertake a research study entitled Musical Creativity in the Primary Classroom: Empowering generalist teachers to foster children’s meaningful music-making in your school. This study will investigate the effect of generalist and music specialist teachers working collaboratively to create student-centred musical experiences in the classroom. Through interviews and collaborative implementation of music lessons with two teachers and their classes at your school, this study will attempt to provide an insight into the preparedness and confidence of generalist teachers to teach music. This study is being conducted by Elizabeth Gresser and will form the basis for the degree Bachelor of Music (Music Education) Honours at the University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr James Renwick.

In order to collect data, two classroom teachers from your school will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview at both the commencement (Term 1, 2012) and conclusion of the study, which will be recorded with a digital voice recorder. The interview will take place at the venue of the participants’ choosing and will last approximately 45 minutes per interview. During Terms 1 and 2, 2012, the study would involve initial observation of at least one music lesson in the two teachers’ classes, followed by the cooperative implementation of one music lesson per week for approximately 8 weeks. Finally, a small discussion on the same day per week with the teachers regarding the following lesson will be requested of participating teachers. Student activities will be observed and recorded in music lessons and group discussions with student participants at the study’s conclusion will be the extent of disruption to students’ daily routine.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and staff from your school are under no obligation to participate. If your school staff do consent they may withdraw at any time. Any decision not to participate will in no way prejudice your school’s educational relationship to the researcher. All aspects of this study, including results will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants.

If you wish to gain more information about this study, or have any concerns, please contact me on (+61) 9351 1334. Thank you for your time and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Dr James Renwick
Appendix E: SERAP Approval

Miss Elizabeth Gresser
8G/49 Carlton Crescent
SUMMER HILL NSW 2130

Dear Miss Gresser

SERAP Number 2011204

I refer to your application to conduct a research project in New South Wales government schools entitled Musical Creativity in the Primary Classroom: Empowering Generalist Teachers to Foster Children’s Meaningful Music-Making. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved. You may now contact the Principals of the nominated schools to seek their participation. You should include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to schools.

This approval will remain valid until 30-11-2012.

No researchers or research assistants have been screened to interact with or observe children for the purposes of this research.

I draw your attention to the following requirements for all researchers in New South Wales government schools:

- School Principals have the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time. The approval of the Principal for the specific method of gathering information for the school must also be sought.
- The privacy of the school and the students is to be protected.
- The participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school’s convenience.
- Any proposal to publish the outcomes of the study should be discussed with the Research Approvals Officer before publication proceeds.

When your study is completed please forward your report marked to Manager, Schooling Research, Department of Education and Training, Locked Bag 53, Darlington, NSW 2010.

Yours sincerely

Dr Robert Stevens
R/Senior Manager
Student Engagement and Program Evaluation
29 November 2011
Appendix F: Principal

Dr James Renwick
Lecturer in Music Education
Sydney Conservatorium of Music
RE: Research Study by Elizabeth Gresser

Dear Dr Renwick,

I am very happy to allow Elizabeth to carry out this research study at ___________

Elizabeth was an outstanding practicum student here in 2010 and I know that her association with generalist teachers and the music lessons she proposes to deliver collaboratively with teachers will benefit the students and have a more sustainable impact on the teachers and their ability to provide quality music education for our students.

I look forward to cooperating with Elizabeth through this project in 2012.

Yours sincerely

Principal
19 December, 2011
Appendix G: Interview Protocol

MUSICAL CREATIVITY IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM:
Empowering generalist teachers to foster children’s meaningful music-making

*Semi-structured Interview Questions:*

**Teacher Participant Interviews:**

*At beginning of study:*
- What teacher training have you received in order to teach primary school music?
- How do you teach music to your current class?
- What are your students’ attitudes towards music at school?
- How prepared, confident and equipped do you see yourself to foster children’s musical skills?
- What do you think meaningful music-making is?

*At conclusion of study:*
- What are your thoughts on the collaborative project with a specialist-trained teacher?
- Did you make any observations of your students throughout the project that you would like to discuss?
- Did your levels of preparedness and confidence change throughout the project?
- Would you say you were now better equipped to develop creative music skills in your classroom?
- How would you describe meaningful music-making?
Appendix H: Phase 1 Resources

25th April, 2012

Hi Samantha and Maree,

I hope this email finds you both well! I can't believe it's the start of another term - but here we go... After the last lessons we had last term the classes are at slightly different points, but both going very well. S2A has the Fireflies song pretty much done, whereas S2B is probably half way through having the song learnt (as they started a week later of course). Based on this, I propose the following for tomorrow. Let me know what you think.

Sam
1. Start with watching the Owl City youtube clip of the original song - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psuRGfAaju4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psuRGfAaju4)
2. Discuss and list the similarities and differences between this version and the version learnt in class. (Considering musical differences - perhaps in a table? *differences might touch on things like voice, instruments, tempo, rhythms etc.)*
3. More specifically, the difference in lyrics/structure - note difference after second chorus in the original:

   You would not believe your eyes
   If ten million fireflies
   'Cause they'd fill the open air
   And leave teardrops everywhere
   You'd think me rude
   But I would just stand and stare

   I'd like to make myself believe
   That planet Earth turns slowly
   It's hard to say that I'd rather stay
   Awake when I'm asleep
   'Cause everything is never as it seems

   'Cause I'd get a thousand hugs
   From ten thousand lightning bugs
   As they tried to teach me how to dance
   A foxtrot above my head
   A sock hop beneath my bed
   A disco ball is just hanging by a thread

   I'd like to make myself believe
   That planet Earth turns slowly
   It's hard to say that I'd rather stay
   Awake when I'm asleep
   'Cause everything is never as it seems
   When I fall asleep

   Leave my door open just a crack (Please take me away from here)
   'Cause I feel like such an insomniac (Please take me away from here)
   Why do I tire of counting sheep (Please take me away from here)
   When I'm far too tired to fall asleep

To ten million fireflies
I'm weird 'cause I hate goodbyes
I got misty eyes as they said farewell
But I'll know where several are
If my dreams get real bizarre
'Cause I saved a few and I keep them in a jar

I'd like to make myself believe
That planet Earth turns slowly
It's hard to say that I'd rather stay
Awake when I'm asleep
'Cause everything is never as it seems
When I fall asleep

I'd like to make myself believe
That planet Earth turns slowly
It's hard to say that I'd rather stay
Awake when I'm asleep
'Cause everything is never as it seems
When I fall asleep

I'd like to make myself believe
That planet earth turns slowly
It's hard to say that I'd rather stay
Awake when I'm asleep
Because my dreams are bursting at the seams

4. Student discussion on what they see in the clip too and how what they see relates to what they hear.
5. Quick warm up to prepare to sing the original! Remember breathing!
6. Sing the original
7. Recap of how you might change a song if you were going to make a version.
8. Get in groups - start making own version to show the class.

Maree
1. Continue teaching/learning the lyrics to the version from last term in the same way you were doing it
2. Perhaps we can talk about how to sing well as a class and do some warm ups like the other class (I can help!)
3. Sing the song in sections etc.
4. (Depending how we go for time) Listen to the original version from Owl City: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psuRGfAaju4 (students will probably want to sing along!)
5. Discuss with students what they see and hear & how the two versions of the song are similar and different (perhaps even in a table on the board?)
6. For example, the lyrics and structure are even different after the second chorus (*see lyrics above)
7. Discuss the activity (for next time most likely) so they can start thinking. What kind of things can we think about changing when we do our own version of a song? In groups, students will do a small activity experimenting with their own version to show the class.

Let me know what you think - it looks like a lot, but I've just written down the sequence as it might work. Any issues, questions etc just drop me a line.

Looking forward to seeing you tomorrow!

See you soon,
Elizabeth
Appendix I: Phase 2 Resources

15th May, 2012

Dear Maree,

I hope this email finds you well. Here are some ideas for the sequence of the next few lessons of Phase 2! Let me know what you think. I was thinking that rather than separating the idea of composing and then working out how to write it (graphic notation), I thought we should set up the task with that in mind – which is why I’ve included some cool musical examples from Youtube that have graphic notation/animations while the music is playing.

Lesson 1:

· Introduction – discuss the idea that all music tells a story (with or without words). You can link it to the imaginative nature of Fireflies.
· Music can tell a story, convey an emotion/feeling or take us to a certain place and different people will hear different meanings from the same music
· Listening/watching- time probably won’t let us use all of these resources but here is my list: (ones marked with * are the priorities)

· Videos to WATCH:
  Watch and then discuss what you see and what you hear? Does the music tell a story or take you to a place? What? Where? And how/why does the music do that? (Analytical discussion – instruments, dynamics – loud/soft, building etc)

*Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupinu – Bapa
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l76eMzXTp-k&feature=fvser

*Carnegie Hall Site – Dvorak Symphony Movement 2
http://listeningadventures.carnegiehall.org/nws/high/Fmovement2_final.html
Carnegie Hall Site - Dvorak Symphony Movement 1
http://listeningadventures.carnegiehall.org/nws/high/Fmovement1_final.html

*Steve Reich - City Life - 1 Check it out
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYca8EJlz0g

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDEVOO0mRYM&feature=related

*Tan Dun – Paper Concerto
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kH_mDODlIs&feature=related

*Fantasia-The Nutcracker Suite
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxBJYSU3RJ8&feature=related
The Sorcerer's Apprentice [HD] (VHS Version)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSTWy25hRiu&feature=related

Fantasia - Night on Bald Mountain HD
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYSbxRiUgOo

· Listening:
Get the students to LISTEN (not watch) these ones (just minimise the clip) and get them to think about what they hear and what they think the music is telling them (and why?)

*Alice in Wonderland Soundtrack-Alice's Theme
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5VcWD2Li7U

*Concerto De Aranjuez Adagio - Joaquin Rodrigo
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9DOtuPLqNI

MORNING (PEER GYNT), DE GRIEG
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gH1JMdWpJ54

Fennesz - Black Sea
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6MFrYeCt_E&feature=related

· Notation ideas:
Discuss the idea of ‘writing down’ music that we make. There are many different ways to write down what we hear. Watch these examples and discuss with the class.

Albéniz, Asturias (Leyenda), guitar solo, James Edwards (animation)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvF8XWr17nw&feature=relmfu

Bach, Cello suite 1, 1st mvt. (“caterpillar” animation)
Uploaded by musanim on Oct 17, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITqv3ey3h50

· Setting up the task for the next lesson/s
In groups, students will choose a story, place or idea and will write 30 seconds (?) of music that they will graphically notate and perform for the class.

How does this sound?? The task needs to be set up really clearly with lots of examples which will probably take a whole lesson to discuss using as many of the resources as we can get through.

Let me know what you think!
Many thanks, Elizabeth