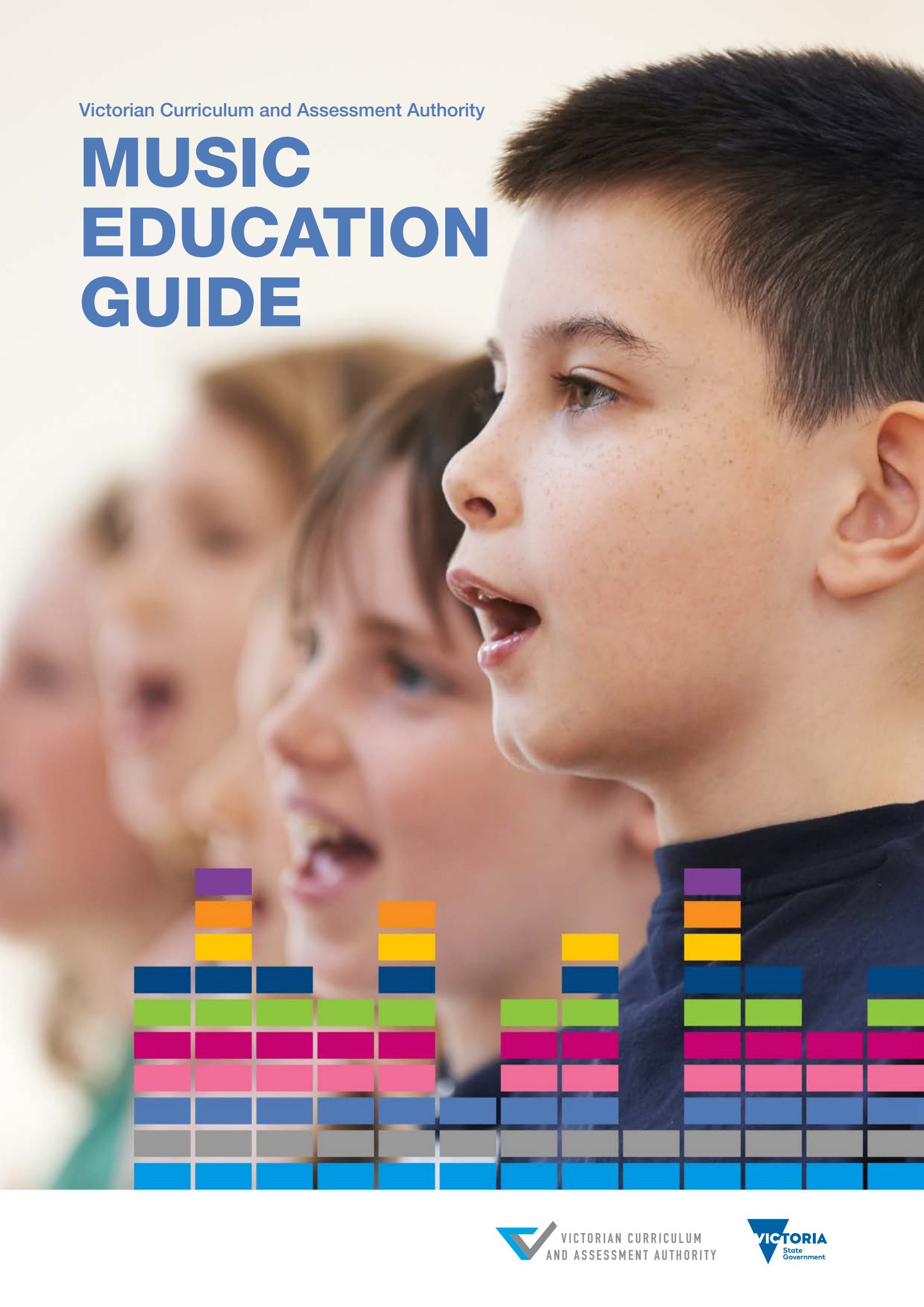


Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

MUSIC EDUCATION GUIDE



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About this guide



Overview

Enjoying, learning about and making music are activities that are open to every human being. People of all ages, cultures and abilities are able to experience and create music. The music people enjoy, learn about and make is as diverse as every human being.

This guide embraces diversity. It shares some of the many ways of experiencing, creating and learning about music, and highlights the qualities that effective and sustainable music learning programs have in common.

The guide offers:

- starting places for planning and teaching
- examples of high-quality music learning programs
- ideas for developing existing music learning programs
- information about music
- ideas to connect a music learning program across your school and with your community
- information about music education methods
- case studies of a range of successful programs to draw ideas from
- links to partners, resources and professional learning opportunities.

The guide provides users with a way forward – to inspire others, to plan, to take action and to implement change. The music learning programs that have helped to inform this guide all exist because people had a vision for them, created them and worked to sustain them.

It is hoped that this guide will give you the impetus and confidence to create or strengthen the music learning program in your school.

This guide caters to different school situations and program types: generalist and specialist teachers; primary and secondary schools; metropolitan and rural schools; in-the-classroom and outside-of-the-classroom, instrumental learning and programs integrated with the community.



Where to begin?

Every person has a wealth of knowledge and experience of music to draw upon, regardless of formal training. Whether it be family singalongs on long road trips, the Top 100 on the car radio, dancing at the school formal, singing ‘Happy Birthday’ or memories of a grandparent humming traditional songs – each person has their own relationship with music.

This guide invites you to select or reject ideas based on how they might fit with the interests and experience of the students, school and team you are working with.

Finding out what kind of music appreciation and experience already exists within the school community can offer fertile ground. A student activity to find out what kind of music the other teachers, students and parents like to listen to can start the conversation. It needn’t feel serious – a straw poll of how many students like to sing in the shower is a light-hearted way to get the ball rolling.

It is important to understand the existing state of music learning and experience in your school community and to audit for possible connection points and opportunities, such as where instrumental learning hasn’t yet been connected with the whole-of-school concert or with classroom teaching.

It is also hugely important that the teachers involved in the process of developing and implementing a music learning program are deeply familiar with the Victorian Curriculum F–10: Music, which aims to develop students’:

- confidence to be creative, innovative, thoughtful, skilful and informed musicians
- skills to listen, improvise, compose, interpret, perform, and respond with intent and purpose
- aesthetic knowledge and respect for music and music practices across global communities, cultures and musical traditions
- understanding of music as an aural art form, its relationship with other arts forms and contributions to cultures and societies.

Familiarisation will include understanding how the Music curriculum is structured and using the continuum to understand how the content descriptions and associated achievement standards enable teachers to plan, monitor, assess and report on the learning achievement of every student.

The Music curriculum includes an achievement standard at Foundation, and then provides achievement standards at two-level bands. For students whose learning is below Foundation standard, teachers can refer to the Towards Foundation Levels A to D Music curriculum. Additional advice on how to create teaching and learning programs drawing on the structure of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 is available in the Revised Curriculum Planning and Reporting Guidelines.

These two familiarisation activities – one designed to become deeply familiar with the curriculum and the other to understand the state of play for music learning at your school – will guide your next steps.

Share your findings. Involve others, especially the school leadership team in mapping out a plan for what a high-quality, sustainable music learning program could look like in the school.

Creating a new program, extending a fledgling program, moving a successful program to the next level or refocusing a program that might seem to be broken can be daunting.

Remember that some of the most successful music learning programs began small, with passionate people and grew as others became inspired by the benefits.



Victorian Curriculum F–10 Music

victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/the-arts/music/introduction/rationale-and-aims



Revised Curriculum Planning and Reporting Guidelines

www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/viccurric/RevisedF-10CurriculumPlanningReportingGuidelines.pdf

Music Victoria

Find a list of the benefits of high-quality music education and evaluate how each is delivered or could be delivered through the program at your school. For example, start with this list from Music Victoria's 'Music In Schools' Statement:

... Decades of studies reach the common conclusion that music education improves brain function and development in those undertaking regular instruction. Among many other skills, students are shown to develop greater:

- coordination, rhythm and listening skills relating to reading the music and playing the instrument accordingly
- confidence, expressive and social skills derived from performing with and in front of others
- problem solving, literacy and mathematical skills associated with the visualisation of numbers and proportions
- creative skills associated with creating, playing, listening to and experiencing music
- language skills, particularly when learning languages relying on tonal communication (i.e. Asian and South-East Asian languages)
- a developed understanding of the cultural and emotional significance of certain types of music and their impacts on other societies and eras.

Activity

5 minutes: Think of examples from your music experiences that reflect this list of benefits.

30 minutes: Look at the list of benefits music education offers to students and link examples from your school or another program you're aware of to each of the points.

2 hours or more: Use curriculum-planning time to identify how the music learning program at your school does or could deliver the benefits identified in the Music Victoria list.

Action steps

- Make sure the school community knows how the program is delivering these benefits.
- Identify how the music learning program could be structured, or which learning activities could be included to build student confidence or cooperation and literacy skills.
- Include a timeline and decide on how you'll monitor progress.

Making a difference

Successful music learning programs share certain factors.

Teachers are influential. Allowing your students insight into your musical life is important. Sharing how music is part of your life is one way that teachers can make students aware of the possibilities for a 'life in music'. Researchers consistently report that the passion, enthusiasm and authenticity demonstrated by the teacher is the engaging factor rather than their actual musical expertise.

A great music teacher isn't someone who necessarily has all the answers. Excellent music teaching can occur in an 'all learning together' environment in which both teachers and students explore and learn something new. Teachers don't always have to be the 'expert'. Having a healthy curiosity to find out and a willingness delve into the many resources and links this guide shares can be the start of a high-quality music experience for you and your students.

Planning is just as important as commitment. If the people delivering the music program have no interest in what they are teaching, then the experience for students will be lacklustre.

Think about

How do you describe your musical life? How would your students describe your musical life? How would they describe their musical life? How can you and your students share your musical lives?

When and how do you let students and families know about opportunities for making or listening to music in the community and beyond?

What new music have you discovered this year? Who have you told about your discovery?

What would be the chart-topper in your school's Top 100? How many styles and genres might be on the list?

Reading

Townsend, A (2011) *Introduction to Effective Music Teaching: Artistry and Attitude*. Boulder, Guildford, Lanham and New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Chapter 7, 'Forming your personal philosophy of music education: What do you believe is important in teaching and learning music?', addresses teacher identity and looks at the need for teachers to convey their love of music to students.

'The lens of pedagogy' in *The qualities of quality: Understanding excellence in arts education* (Eds. Seidel, S, Tishman, S, Winner, E, et al.) Boston: Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2009., (pp. 34-7) discusses authenticity.

Welch, G, & McPherson, G (2012) *Introduction and Commentary: Music Education and the Role of Music in People's Lives*. In (Eds. Welch, G, & McPherson, G), *The Oxford Handbook of Music Education, Volume 1*: Oxford University Press.

Take a collaborative approach

The case studies in this guide illustrate the impact an individual can have in instigating, driving or growing a successful music learning program. However, no truly sustainable program can thrive on the energy, expertise and enthusiasm of one person working alone. At some point, others need to get involved and support the program. Take a collaborative approach.

The strong support of a school and wider community can seem like a chicken-and-egg proposition: music learning programs with kudos, and a reputation for success that extends outside the school, seem to naturally attract support. Parents who value music enrol their children at those schools, music organisations seek out partnerships with those schools and funding may be easier to attract when your school has glowing reports and enthusiastic students.

These schools didn't start out with an impressive or enviable reputation. At some point, dedicated people converted others from appreciative (or reluctant) bystanders to supportive team members. The paths were no doubt varied and winding, but they have some factors in common:

A shared vision. Tell people what you intend to create and why. Share the value of music and the enjoyment and engagement of students with parents, other teachers and, especially, your school leadership team. Ask students for statements advocating why they like doing music and want it supported. Present reports about how learning and the school reputation benefit from having a strong music program. Share, share, share ...

An open invitation. From the outside it may look as though you have it all worked out, or others may not want to step on your toes by 'interfering'. Inviting participation from others and letting them know the difference they can make everyone know that it's not a one-person show. Consider the roles others could take and communicate them. Ask for ideas and input so that others can have a sense of ownership of the program.

Education and engagement. The people driving the vision for a strong, dynamic music learning program in these schools took every opportunity to build the whole school community's knowledge about the characteristics of a high-quality music learning program. They took opportunities to involve everybody in experiences of creating and performing music knowing that personal experience of the excitement and satisfaction of creating and performing music is a very effective way to communicate the benefits of music education.

Organisation. If you are meeting regularly – even for just 15 minutes once a fortnight – it is easy to keep up the momentum and monitor areas where the program may be flagging. One teacher meets with her principal about the music program every week and credits that with the ongoing commitment and understanding of the leadership team to everything from scheduling of concert practice to budgeting.

Ideas to get things started, or do something different ...

Original Bell

Instead of using imported pop music as the 'school bell', make and record a composition.

All-in Assembly

Start every school assembly with whole-of-school singing. You can begin with songs that are well known and easy to learn and work up to more difficult songs as the home/classroom teachers gain confidence to lead and teach the melodies and lyrics.

Field Recordings

Take students outside to do 'deep listening' and make field recordings of their local environment. The recordings can become a stimulus for composition of rhythms, soundscape instrumental melodies, harmonies or story-telling songs.

World Rhythm Safari

Start a project with students to gather recordings of and learn traditional drumming rhythms from around the world. India, Polynesia, Africa, the Middle East, Australia, China and Japan all have hugely diverse traditional rhythms in different time signatures.

Rainstorm

Use body percussion, shakers, drums and found objects to create the sound of a rainstorm in the classroom. Begin with the wind and first patter of raindrops and then build to a crescendo of booms, symbol clashes of thunder and drumming rain beats.

Bird Calls

Listen to recordings of bird calls from around the world. See if you and the students can collaboratively create a form of notation for the calls.

Artist in Your School

Watch the Creative Victoria Great Partnerships videos to get ideas for your own extended music project with a creative artist in your school.

Sound Walk Project

With older students, map an interesting path around the school grounds or neighbourhood. Set moods or create scene or story ideas for particular locations. Set each student a composition task to create a short piece of music for one particular location. You could link the recordings with directions or spoken word and create a complete 'soundwalk' for parents, community members or other students to enjoy on their personal listening devices.

Loops Collaboration

In small groups of five or six, get students to one by one record (lay down) a loop (guitar, bass, vocals and percussion). Each progressive loop must work with the previous recording to create a cohesive collaborative composition.

Song Exploder – For Secondary Students

Begin listening to the podcast 'Song Exploder', a series of interviews and recording samples that show how popular artists created their songs. Use this to stimulate a discussion and creation of a catalogue of 'methods' that artists can use to create original recordings.



Creative Victoria Great Partnerships

creative.vic.gov.au/great-partnerships



Song Exploder

songexploder.net

Film Score Mood Board

Select some appropriate scenes from films that include moments of suspense, humour, romance, action and sadness. Ask the students to watch and listen to the segments and notice the dynamics, form and instrumentation and how they affect the emotion of the piece. List on 'mood boards' elements that contribute to the emotional effect created by the music, for example, suspense board might say 'rising pitch', quavering strings etc. Have students see if they can use the 'formula' from their boards to write their own music for short movie scenes.

Busk, Entertain, Get Festive

Research as many possible avenues for public performance opportunities. Choose a few opportunities such as playing at a local community venue throughout each term and one or two 'big ones' such as a community festival to aim for.

Echo Circle Song

In a circle on the floor establish a stable rhythm by getting everyone to pat their legs with their hands. Begin by singing a single note and get the students to echo it. Go around the circle with each student singing a single note and being echoed. Progress to two-, three- and four-note melodies. See how far the exercise can go before the echo/memory game becomes too difficult and breaks down.

Make Your Own Instruments

Ask students to gather found or discarded materials that could become parts of a musical instrument. Put together sections (strings, woodwind, percussion) and then build your own orchestra. Explore other artists who use found objects to make music.

Poetry to Ballad

Ask students to select poetry that they find interesting and set it to music. What genre does the writing lend itself to?

Interval Slider Harmonies

Working in sections, begin by singing a single note all together. Ask one section of students to slide up two whole notes to a third above. Play with the slider to see how certain combinations are discordant or harmonious. Once the students are comfortable working with two notes, divide the group into three and add a second harmony. The students themselves could take turns 'conducting' or choosing the intervals.

CASE STUDY NO. 1

The gigging school – Ballarat High School

The vibe in the Performing Arts Centre at Ballarat High School is electric. Even though school isn't yet back from the Christmas break, there is a buzz of activity, with a touring performer visiting the school and a workshop presenter going through his presentation slides and teachers popping in and out of the room where Damien Woods, Head of Performing Arts, is speaking passionately about his favourite topic: music.

With music we are fighting for time – they (the students) have got other school work and sport. So we make sure that the time that we've got with them is interesting, exciting and creative. We leave every one of them with a love of music.

The school has an extensive music learning program that is wholeheartedly supported by the leadership team – and it has impressive facilities including a new recording studio in the large performing arts complex. Yet, Damien says that the program has only really taken off in the last 15 years, and that the facilities have really followed the growth of the program, not the other way around.

What is the key to the success of the music learning program? Damien says there's no template, but a number of factors have contributed to the program's success.

The first is that they get kids to play and perform right from the start. Year 7 students are performing in front of other classes within two weeks of being introduced to classroom music, says Damien.

Music in the school is deeply linked with the 'real world' of music. The students perform gigs at school and at local venues, at festivals, and the annual concert, which

runs for four nights and usually sells out. Ballarat High School bands are invited to play at the annual Ballarat Jazz Club and the Andersons Mill Festival.

It has to be creative – it has to get kids energised and get the kids introduced to music in the century we're in. The kids gig up to 30 or 40 times a term. Music is a performing art.

The second factor is that the program is only as strong as the team that delivers it. Damien is at pains to emphasise that the program is supported by a team of teachers who are equal to him in their involvement and decision-making ability.

I'm Head of Performing Arts by title only. We all work together. There are no hidden agendas. Everyone has a say.

The third factor is, not surprisingly, collaboration. The program at Ballarat High is never competitive. Music is seen as a collaborative activity that works best when people are enjoying creating and playing together. Students are encouraged to experiment, to change instruments and to explore. They play keyboards, drums and guitars and are encouraged to sing with microphones regardless of previous singing or songwriting experience. Everyone is welcome.

Although the school doesn't have a strings program, the students who do play stringed instruments also play in the band and are made to feel welcome. The team environment gives students the confidence to ask for support in their own musical creations.

Kids will say, 'Hey, I wrote a song. Can we perform it?' And the other kids will jump right behind it and support them.

Ballarat High School decided on a pedagogical approach for their music learning program that focuses on leaving students with a life-long love of music. Students are encouraged to compose, right from the start – rather than approaching music through theory. Of course, the program does provide theoretical learning opportunities, particularly when students pursue specific instrumental learning paths.



There's nothing wrong with theory books, but that's not the approach we take.

Parental support for the music learning program is another key factor, says Damien. The commitment of performing a lot of gigs on weekends makes the involvement of parents essential. And because the parents can see the benefits to their children, they get behind it and support the program.

Communication with parents is the biggest key. If we've ever had an issue – we go to them with possible solutions. The really cool thing is how many parents contact you after the kids have gone. Parents from five and six years ago are still catching up.

When asked where the drive for the program comes from, Damien is candid. The drive comes from the Performing Arts team, but he says that the school is blessed with a leadership team that is 100 per cent behind the program.

He emphasises that he and the team are always available to talk to teachers who want to grow the music program in their school. At the last Festival, each of the five schools from the area performed and finished with a piece of music they had written and performed together. He is also keen to support VET programs and Certificate II, III and IV in Music Performance.

If every school in Victoria could be an outstanding music school, it would be my dream come true. You don't always have to move forwards – you can sometimes move sideways and that's okay.

Planning your music learning program



Creating a vision

Designing and sharing a vision for music at your school gives your teachers, students and parents a unified set of values, and goals that offer ways to participate and feel a sense of ownership.

Your school's teaching and learning program must provide music learning opportunities for all students – this is the classroom music learning program – based on the Victorian Curriculum F–10. This is separate to any optional learning opportunities for specific instruments.

Any great vision statement for a music learning program will be as unique as the school, but will share some common elements:

- a strong statement about the importance of music for your school
- a practical structure that outlines how the music program works
- a description of ensembles, bands and performance opportunities
- opportunities for broader school community involvement (parents, businesses, community groups or clubs).

Here are two examples of a **strong statement** about the music learning program:

Our high school offers students an extensive music program with opportunities for composition, performance and exposure to the technology used in contemporary music making and recording. Our school is building a reputation for excellence in contemporary music practice.

Music is an integral part of life at our primary school. Every child has the opportunity to connect with music from their first year of school. Our F–6 Music learning program forms an essential part of the curriculum and is delivered by specialist music teachers as well as being supported in the students' home classrooms through regular singing, music for maths and exploring topics through song.

The practical description of your **structure**, or how your music program works, needn't be long or complex. A description of the music learning program might include:

- where the music learning program fits into the whole school plan
- how the classroom program delivers curriculum
- methodologies that are used (Kodály, Orff, Musical Futures, for example)
- what instrumental music learning opportunities are offered, and whether these are optional
- how classroom music learning programs and instrumental music learning connect
- opportunities for performance or to play with groups (ensembles, choirs, bands, school concerts, gigs)
- how to enrol, fee structures, how to acquire an instrument
- tips for how parents can support the program.

Singing and playing with others, and having presentation opportunities, including performances and sharing recorded work, not only make a music learning program come alive, but are fundamental requirements of the curriculum. Offering meaningful ways for students to enjoy music with others is essential for a music learning program to be embedded within the school community and to be supported outside school. Music is a purposeful activity as well as being pleasurable, and playing in bands and ensembles, singing in choirs, and recording and publishing music, gives students goals to work toward and valuable feedback to bolster their efforts.

Planning your program

When planning your program, consider how students might best enjoy playing – at a local festival, busking at a market, in a formal ensemble concert or playing live music for the school musical or play. The school band or drumming group might play at community events such as festivals, markets or local sports. The more connected your classroom music learning program is with instrumental music and other school activities, the more it is viewed as an integral part of school life.

Parental support can help take a music learning program from being good to being outstanding. Inviting parents to participate in meaningful ways in the music learning program and involving them in their children's music learning opens up many benefits:

- Parents can be powerful supporters for the music learning program being prioritised in school planning.
- Parents encourage and support students to continue music learning at home.
- Parents support a program in practical ways – driving children to performances, buying tickets to concerts, raising money for instruments.

Let parents know how they can get involved through your school website or newsletter. Invite them to contribute to the development and resourcing of the program – for their kids and for the school.

Look at who your allies might be in supporting the creation or growth of a cohesive music program. Talk with those people about what kinds of experiences they see are possible – ask for ideas. Discuss how ambitious the project could be and what might be achievable and in what timeframe.

Or, just begin in your own classroom by singing with your students or listening to and responding to music. As Paul Kelly wrote in one of his most popular songs: 'from little things, big things grow ...'.



The learning environment

Music making can happen anywhere – in the regular classroom, in a specialist music room, in sophisticated performing-arts buildings or under a tree in the schoolyard.

What makes the environment ideal for learning has as much to do with the enthusiasm and focus of the group as it has to do with the equipment or the physical space. The factors that create a focused and positive learning environment include:

- enthusiastic, dedicated and passionate teachers
- a sense of order and organisation (in both the space and lesson structure)
- lesson plans that accommodate the diverse needs and interests of students
- teachers and schools who find ways to engage with others (partner businesses, parent support, collegial support)
- students having a choice and a voice whenever possible and appropriate
- an inviting, attractive learning space
- access to and knowledge of technology for making music and running the music learning program, including tablets, apps, recording and editing software and hardware.

The quality and number of instruments, equipment and technology in a room is certainly not the defining factor in how engaging a music learning program can be. Having said that, if your school has the capacity to create a dedicated space with quality instruments – whether it be in a music room or a music corner – then making that space inspiring, practical and workable can help give students the focus they need. Many well-regarded music learning programs have started with a focus on singing, movement and body percussion, and gradually built their resource base.

Consider these ideas:

- creating zones in the classroom space for listening, recording, performing and composing
- positioning permanent instruments for ease of access
- creating enough space to sit in a circle for body percussion or for small groups of students to work in clusters
- making sure that during instrumental music lessons no one else will need to access the space or interrupt
- displaying inspiring examples of student work, such as photographs from performances and educational music posters and other material up on the wall
- locating recording, editing and music technology equipment in an area that has been soundproofed as much as possible.

Interestingly, researchers have found that students working in groups on music tasks (when they are not recording) are not particularly bothered by noise as long as the task is one that holds their attention.

Creating a stimulating learning environment for music is as much about the relationship between teacher and student, as it is about the one between students and the room set up. If students know that they are about to move into learning a new skill or gain a new understanding that they can immediately put into practice, they are more likely to settle quickly and be ready to learn.

Make sure there is enough time for students to apply and understand what they have learnt. Don't be afraid to spread learning opportunities over several lessons if this is the time required for students to achieve satisfying outcomes.

Think about

Take a look at the music learning spaces in your school:

What messages do they give to students and others about the music program?

What is important?

What is valued?

How do people know what happens in the space?

How well are the spaces organised as resources for delivery of the intended learning program?

Curriculum planning

High-quality, sustainable music learning programs include:

- opportunities for students to sing, play, create and perform music
- opportunities for students to develop an appreciation and understanding of music, through active involvement as creators and performers of, and listeners to, music from a diverse range of styles, traditions, and cultures
- contemporary pedagogy, including links to other learning opportunities, such as a resilience-building program, to provide breadth, depth and balance, including:
 - a clear sense of progression
 - student voice by placing music-making within the wider context of students' lives and by acknowledging students' existing musical identity
- musical genres to which students can relate as a starting point
- a highly interactive and practical-based approach with a strong emphasis on aural development
- opportunities for students (and teachers) to develop new skills and perform
- a clear allocation of class time within the whole-school teaching and learning plan and that this time allocation focuses on explicit teaching of music (noting that time allocation is a school-based decision)
- a diversity of music repertoire and musical styles
- extra-curricular activities and opportunities that extend students' musical experiences across a range of styles to meet their diverse needs and cater for their interests
- an understanding of the diverse pathways students can take to continue studying music after the compulsory years
- opportunities for school groups to perform in the wider community and with community music groups
- classroom and instrumental learning activities that integrate listening, performing and composing.

These programs are:

- aligned with the whole-school teaching and learning plan
- developed using the Victorian Curriculum F–10: Music
- delivered in learning environments that foster student engagement
- documented at all levels – school, learning area, year level cohort and unit sequence of lessons
- structured around the core activities of listening, composing and performing
- reviewed and refined on a regular basis
- known and celebrated by the school community
- reflective of the interests and cultures of the school community.

In planning your program, ensure it:

- demonstrates sequenced learning across all levels
- provides open-ended guided tasks for students of different abilities to engage in and develop
- delivers mandated curriculum as well as co-curricular activities
- identifies connections between music learning programs and other learning areas and capabilities such as the Personal and Social Capability, Digital Technologies, other Arts disciplines, and English (particularly the Literacy strand)
- offers post-compulsory pathways
- uses digital tools, instruments and methods to create, perform, store, publish and/or distribute music. Technologies may also be used for planning, research, assessment, reporting, communicating and program administration
- draws on high-quality, contemporary research.



Curriculum Planning Resource website

curriculumplanning.vcaa.vic.edu.au/

Getting your plan started

The best approach to planning the future of your music learning program is to document the present. What does the program look like now? Write a description of the current program with the following in mind.

Vision

Is there a common documented vision? Seek input from parents and students as well as school leadership and specialist and instrumental teachers. How does the vision for music correlate with the school's values, vision and ethos? How do members of the school community support each other in achieving their goals or realising this vision?

Plan

Is there a five-year music learning program plan that includes measurable goals and timelines to review and update it?

People

Who currently drives, leads and supports the music learning program? Who else might be involved to strengthen it and ensure succession planning?

Resources

Document the roles, goals, learning spaces, equipment, technology, performance spaces and plans to build resources.

Curriculum delivery

Map the music learning program

(classroom and instrumental components) against the curriculum and explicitly identify where content descriptions and achievement standards are addressed using curriculum mapping templates.

Performance and presentation

Make a list of opportunities identifying when students can share their work, including playing and singing as a social activity, publishing recordings and concerts.

Pedagogy

Are specific music methodologies used? How are learning approaches or instructional models that operate across the school implemented in Music?

Assessment

How do students evaluate their own progress and get feedback on their development? What assessment strategies do teachers use? How is the idea of a learning continuum shared and promoted through the program?

Evaluation

What are the questions that need to be asked of the program? When, how and by whom will they be asked? How will responses be documented? Who will read the report?



Music: Curriculum Mapping Templates

www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/foundation10/viccurriculum/music/musiccmt.aspx

Sequential and developmental programs

There is no single blueprint for an effective music learning program.

It is essential to recognise that there are many ways of shaping sequential music teaching programs that offer rounded, complete and satisfying music-learning outcomes for students.

Success can look very different, especially in diverse settings. Yet music learning does need to follow a logical and stepwise progression of skill and knowledge acquisition.

Playing Bach or Hendrix requires understanding of concepts such as pitch and rhythm.

A high-quality music learning program will take a sequential and developmentally appropriate approach. However, in order to avoid the potential pitfalls of your music program becoming narrow and rigid, there are some important questions to consider:

- Where is the individual learner starting from? What do they already know?
- What outcome are you aiming for?

Some students will learn particular musical skills and knowledge more easily than others. Their musical understanding develops at varying rates. For example:

- Some students find it challenging to listen, or to know what to listen for.
- Some students may require additional support when learning about and practising dexterity, particularly when learning to play with independence between their right and left hands
- Some will welcome the process of imagining and combining sounds in a variety of ways, while for others this may be challenging.

Create open-ended, guided tasks that allow students with different abilities and needs to build on their previous musical knowledge. This helps to avoid a sequential program from becoming didactic.

The benefits of sequential learning are that, as a teacher, you know where the students are in terms of their knowledge and skill levels. You can map and see progress, and move on to new learning goals once certain milestones are met.



Planning

Music curriculum-mapping templates have been developed to support teachers to identify where content descriptions and achievement standards are being explicitly addressed within the school's teaching and learning program.

Use the curriculum-mapping templates on the VCAA website:

- Document learning activities that connect the content descriptions within a level.
- How are tasks adapted to cater for the different student needs in the school, a class or an ensemble?

Think about

Refer to your curriculum mapping for the Present and Perform content description, and consider:

- How can presentation and performance skills be developed as part of the music learning program?



Music: Curriculum Mapping Templates

www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/foundation10/viccurriculum/music/musiccmt.aspx

Find ways to collaborate

One of the great advantages of teaching music is that it is essentially a collaborative activity. Some people like to play an instrument by themselves for relaxation, to practice in the privacy of their bedrooms, or to perform solo. However, music creation, performance and certainly presentation usually happens with others. Audiences are essential participants in music education – peers, local community and online audiences will respond and motivate your students.

Structuring, planning, creating and strengthening your music learning program can be a fantastic opportunity to collaborate. Identify networks to link you, your school and your students to the broader Victorian, Australian and worldwide music-making community.

Join a network

Join (or start) a local music education network. Visit the web pages of some of the major music education organisations in Victoria, Australia and overseas. Find out which ones offer member benefits such as professional learning, access to online resources and conference discounts. Becoming part of the Australian network of teachers who are passionate about music can connect you to a supportive community and help you to find other schools, teachers, programs and learning tools to share and learn from.

Visit the locals

Make a list of music groups, organisations, businesses and other schools that have strong music learning programs within your local area. Invite them to your concerts as an initial way of meeting, and then explore other ways to collaborate if the relationship sparks some ideas.

Apply for Artist in School funding

Creative Victoria has a long-running grants program for schools to partner with an individual artist. Find a musician, composer or local sound artist who might be interested in working on a project with your students. It's a great way of expanding skills, exploring new ways of making music and kick-starting longer-term music projects at your school.

Find a hero

A number of schools with highly regarded music learning programs offer support for schools developing their programs. With a little research you can take advantage of peer support and mentoring from another teacher or school leader, who can offer inspiration and on-the-ground coaching. Seek out the Musical Futures Champion Schools in Victoria that run training and professional learning sessions.

Get inspiration

Research and make a list of your own inspirational videos to show in the classroom to students. Find out about performances that are happening in your area and let the families in your school know about them so that you can share experiences of music out in the community. Successful musicians listen to, attend and view others work all the time – it informs and feeds your own musical and teaching practice.

Sign up for professional learning

Professional learning makes a huge difference for music teachers. Practical skills and knowledge about approaches, techniques, and using particular software, instruments or technical equipment can re-invigorate your teaching, expand music-making in the classroom and challenge you and your school to further excellence.



Creative Victoria

creative.vic.gov.au



Musical Futures Champion Schools

www.musicalfuturesaustralia.org

Think about

Are there opportunities for students to work with professional or community members?

CASE STUDY NO. 2

Drumming at the heart – Wangaratta West Primary School

Wangaratta West Primary School's music specialist, Georgina Wills, is upfront about how important music is in school life and supports her views with a quote from Richard Gill, AO, conductor and music education advocate: 'Social inclusion, communal behaviours, cooperation, ensemble skills, teamwork and sharing creative ideas all become part of a serious music education.'

While the school clearly takes its music learning program seriously, there is a lively element at the heart of the program, which focuses on African drumming, and the program doesn't stop at the school gates.

When Georgina started the program in 2009 she couldn't have imagined how much of an impact African drumming would have, not just in the music classroom, but also in the lives of others in the community. The drumming students at the school now participate in a program called HeartBeat – one-on-one drumming with adults who have an acquired brain injury. The innovative and unique program has been presented at international conferences on neuro-rehab and Georgina regularly gives presentations at Charles Sturt University to its occupational therapy students.

Back in 2009, though, Georgina was standing in the music room when the idea for a drumming program came to her.

I was just standing in the music room – we had a few miscellaneous drums, bongos, a kid's drum, a couple of djembes. I didn't know how to play – I knew you could make a bass sound and a tone sound, but nothing else about how to play – but after I had the idea,

I spent the summer on the internet researching. I ended up contacting African Drumming in St Kilda and asked them to teach me how to teach kids.

The program at school began with Georgina bringing together the most capable rhythm students in the school – those who could repeat and maintain a rhythm while she played something different.

The next year was spent establishing a modest drumming program in the school, while Georgina developed her own confidence in playing drums and teaching the students how to play them.

The following year, a request from a personal contact led to the event that would change the impact of drumming in the school. A good friend, who is an occupational therapist, asked if the students would come and play for the North East Health neuro-support group, which is a support group for people who have had a brain injury or a stroke.

I said we could play, but I'd rather we get people involved too – they can have a go. So we ran a little drum circle – the kids were on one side of the circle and the adults on the other. I asked them to look up and see someone across the circle and

find someone who was playing on the same number beat as them. You just choose a number between one and eight and play on that number and suddenly there was this beautiful moment when the kids and the adults connected with one another.

Following the success of the drum circle, Georgina met with a neuroscientist and the occupational therapist from the Community Care Centre at North East Health to discuss running a pilot program over a number of weeks.

We could see the value right there in that moment – the impact it could have on the rehab of the clients.

Georgina didn't want to commit the students to something ongoing straight away so she agreed to a pilot of six weeks – meeting in the music room for one hour every Monday. Each adult was partnered with a member of the school's senior drumming group. Georgina facilitated the drum circle, leading warm-up activities in which only the occupational therapist and physiotherapy clients get their hands on the drums, then moving on to maintaining a beat, and beginning to alternate their right and left hands (if the adults were able to do this).



The results were very positive and the students were enthusiastic about keeping the program going once they could see the positive impact for their adult partners.

It was amazing how instinctive the kids were about altering the way they played to match the client. We didn't say whether or not they could only play with one hand. We didn't say what the disability was. One girl was playing drums with a man who couldn't speak, but she found ways to communicate with him. Another man was quite depressed came in – he had really lost his purpose. He was playing drums with a lovely boy, who, with no prompting whatsoever, worked with him in a way that was so encouraging. If the student saw that the client was struggling, he would stop and break it down, and play on that fella's drum with him. The student was really good at engaging him in conversation. They formed this lovely bond. The adult made a huge improvement over the six-week period.

Georgina maintains, though, that the biggest impact of the program was on the students. Halfway through the pilot program she asked them how they thought it was going. They said they had never realised that they could use their skills to teach adults.

You have to see and you have to be there – the occupational therapist and physio would say that it's improving the memory of each patient, their ability to process information, their coordination, their trunk control. And also in communication – I think when people have had a stroke or a brain injury it becomes really isolating for them because they go from being a capable person in the community to someone who feels at a loss. The program has helped connect people back to the community and makes them feel good about themselves.

The program has certainly created a purpose and a connection for the music students at the school to share their skills with the community and it has honed the school's commitment to the music learning program more broadly. In 2012, the school received a specialisation grant of \$100,000 for music, which has allowed Georgina to teach music exclusively.

Until then I always had to do something else – spend a couple of days doing generalist teaching in the classroom. The grant money wasn't used to pay my wage, but because it was about establishing us as a specialist music school it definitely changed the focus.

The money enabled Wangaratta West Primary School to purchase resources that it would otherwise not have had access to. They bought a class set of iPad Acid Pro software (which lets them loop a sound sequence), more instruments for the classroom, and, of course, a new set of African drums.

Resourcing music learning programs

All music learning programs will require a wide range of resources to engage students and meet their individual learning needs. Resourcing music learning programs can involve as many complex decisions and as much careful planning as deciding on the methodologies that teachers will use in the classroom. The resources that might be needed for the music program at your school will probably include people, teaching and performance spaces, instruments, playback and recording equipment, digital hardware, software and peripherals and both sheet and recorded music.

Whether you are beginning, developing or refocusing a program, having a planned approach to monitoring how resources are being used in the program, and identifying potential resources that would be a great fit with the aims and direction of the program, is important. Mapping resources against your music program vision statement and curriculum plan is one way to start. Inviting all members of the teaching team, along with parents and students, to contribute ideas is one way of staying up to date about the resources available for music education.

Think about

What's on your resource wish list? Do you have a plan to turn the wishes into reality? Who might be able to help? Evaluate the potential of resources, for example:

- Consider how potential resources will be used, such as to assist students to: listen, compose, perform, record, distribute, collaborate, rehearse, build technique or develop aural skills.
- How will this resource allow students to enjoy their music learning experiences and develop their musical understanding?
- Does this resource broaden the range of music traditions and styles from different cultural and social contexts that can be incorporated into the music program?
- Will the resource assist students to become capable and confident users of digital technologies?
- Who is the resource for? Some may assist the teacher, others may be used by students.

Succession planning

When parents talk about music learning programs for their children a common lament can be heard: the school had a fantastic music program until a particular teacher left.

If the program at your school is only as strong as the most committed or passionate teacher, then the program is vulnerable.

As your school builds its program, or begins to grow and strengthen it, some cornerstone actions and habits that will help ensure the longevity of the program can be instigated. Even if you only undertake a few of the following actions, it will help to future-proof your music learning program against budget changes, changes in school leadership and unexpected staffing unavailability. All these need to be considered in relation to a manageable workload.

- Find a co-leader. There should be at least two people who ‘get’ the program, are passionate about it, know how it works and have had some experience in leading.
- Write your music learning program into your school’s vision and mission statement.
- Develop a five-year music learning program plan, and renew the five-year plan at least a year before it runs out.
- One way to do this is to meet regularly with and involve the school leadership team in the program.
- Set measurable, pragmatic goals for your music learning program, and evaluate against them each year. Goals could include a high student satisfaction rating (your evaluation plan would include a survey method), an increase in the number of school enrolments, ongoing partnerships with the local community, and, of course, student progression in music learning measured against the curriculum.



Music in context



Overview

This section explores how music connects with other areas of learning, with individual and cultural expression, with home and community life and with commercial industries. The context of music should be at the forefront of program planning, to ensure that student learning will be meaningful beyond the classroom.

Music in everyday life

Learning for young people and adults is enhanced when it is connected to an outcome 'out there' in the world, or to a practical purpose. All learners like to see their newfound knowledge or skills in action and how they are part of something bigger.

Remember that music already exists in the lives of students, irrespective of their musical training or knowledge, and in the lives of your fellow teachers and the wider school community, as well as in your life. Every person has a grounding in music that offers a rich point of connection or field for exploration – their enjoyment of music in everyday life.

Most families listen to some kind of music, even if it is just on the car stereo when driving. In fact, music is often unavoidable: shopping malls play music at volume; it features in movie soundtracks, on phone ringtones, and is used to introduce the TV news. Many families have a culture of music that is part of their heritage or from special occasions and gatherings: footy songs, childhood songs and rhymes, birthday and party songs and other cultural songs and music that go with important occasions families mark throughout the year.

This personal and cultural connection to music offers a wonderful way to inspire, involve and ultimately invest students and other teachers in their participation in music at your school.

As a phenomenon, it is fascinating to explore and try to understand how and why we make and listen to music. The following questions may be used in a short survey to stimulate interest in a music learning program. They may also be used to link learning in music to other areas of the curriculum, such as Intercultural Capability, or History and Geography. It could be the beginning of a classroom inquiry, the stimulus for a piece of writing, or the starting point for a music-based project at your school:

- What is the earliest song or piece of music you remember hearing?
- What song or piece of music will always be special to you?
- Why is the song important to you? Is it because of a special memory, because it has an important message, or because it triggers an emotion?
- Why is music important to you?
- Why has music always been part of every human culture, nation and community?
- What role does music play in everyday life?
- What is music useful for?

You are able to connect music at your school with other curriculum areas and with how your students and fellow teachers enjoy music at home, at social or sporting events, and in their community. This will help establish the music learning program as a meaningful part of students' lives rather than as an isolated activity that happens only within a classroom or teaching studio.

Think about

How can music learning programs recognise and celebrate students' personal and cultural connections to music? What does or could work at your school?

Is music part of the student wellbeing program at your school?

How might the answers to the survey questions about music in everyday life inform your teaching?

What activities or events could celebrate the music of the community?

Australian music

Australia's unique and continuing tradition of music making begins with the music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Today, Australian music includes the traditional and contemporary music of the First Peoples and the broad, eclectic and dynamic musical culture driven by the practice and expression of the Australian community. The spectrum of cultural backgrounds of Australians contributes to the diversity of music that is part of everyday life in Australia and provides a rich and ever-changing range of choice for listening, performing and inspiring composers.

It is easier than ever to access music from almost anywhere in the world. Listening and sharing platforms offer the instant gratification of being able to enjoy music almost everywhere and at anytime.

Think about

Where is Australian music in your school's music learning program? Does your school have an approach to using work by Australian composers and performers in units of work? Is there an understanding or agreement about programming Australian music for concerts or opportunities for musicians who live or work locally?

How does your school share its contributions to Australia's musical culture with the wider community?

Explore some options for strengthening the place of Australian music in your program. How could you and your students use social media to connect with composers and performers or to distribute student work? Could your school performance program feature concerts featuring school and community musicians?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have made and performed traditional music in this land for countless generations and continue to make both traditional and contemporary music. The traditional music of the indigenous nations of Australia has been part of social, cultural and ceremonial life for over 60,000 years.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music is embedded in culture, law, ceremony, geography and connection to land. Aside from special ceremonial music and songs for welcome or thanks, there are countless songs that impart deep knowledge of the stories, history and significance of places, which form a vast body of understanding of Australia itself. The Victorian Curriculum F–10 includes language learning opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal Languages.

It is important when introducing traditional Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander music to students that the breadth and depth of that musical culture is acknowledged and to do this with local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who have authority to represent their community. The Victorian Aboriginal community-preferred model for imparting Koorie cultural knowledge is to start locally before looking further afield. For government schools, information about how to connect with the Koorie community in your area is provided in the Department of Education and Training's Koorie Cross-Curriculum Protocols. Also be aware that if a teacher is an Aboriginal person, but comes from a different cultural group, they should seek permission from the Traditional Owners of the country on which the school stands to teach their own material. This is a matter of respect for the Traditional Owners.



Koorie Cross-curriculum Protocols

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/multicultural/Pages/koorieculture.aspx

Songlines is Victoria's peak Aboriginal music body, a not-for-profit organisation with links to many indigenous organisations and artists.

Contemporary indigenous music offers a way to introduce musical style and form as well as storytelling, politics and social comment. Contemporary indigenous music can be played to students with the confidence that it has been created to share. If a task or unit will require students to actively develop or produce a replica of a Koorie, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultural expression, consultation with the Koorie, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community that owns the cultural expression is required.

If you are unsure about the need to consult, or are seeking advice on appropriate local Koorie community organisations, contact Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAEAI). All schools can also access VAEAI's advice on working with Koorie communities, including their own Protocols for Koorie Education in Victorian Primary and Secondary Schools.

Music from many cultures

There are a multitude of music styles and traditions within the Australia cultural landscape. If students learn about how these styles and traditions are incorporated into music-making across the community, they will be able to draw on a rich palette of instruments, sounds, melodies and rhythms.

Contemporary Australian music

Contemporary Australian music is a vast, rich and ever-changing offering. It includes country music, rhythm and blues (R'n'B), rap, street, soul, jazz, contemporary orchestral and art music, rock and pop, metal and the subgenres of metal, indie, folk and fusions of all of the above. This list is just some of the dynamic and continually evolving array of music styles heard across Australia everyday. Music Australia is a great source of information on contemporary Australian music.

Think about

Students can undertake learning activities that track the influences and sources of an artist's sound. Following the 'influence' trail could lead a long way back into musical history, cover interesting geographic and cultural terrains, and veer sideways into other contemporary artists and genre.

In your school's music learning program, how can you use music chosen by your students to embed tasks that develop students' listening and responding skills? How does the learning program introduce the idea of music styles or allow students to explore the work of other composers as inspiration for their compositions?



Songlines

songlines.net.au



Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.

www.vaeai.org.au



Music Australia

musicaustralia.org.au/discover/music-in-community/

Project-based music learning

Project-based music learning can be excellent for exploring a topic in depth – not just learning about music, but using music as an explorative tool for an inquiry unit about almost anything – another culture, mathematical concepts, local history.

The driving forces behind a music project can be diverse. Perhaps your school feels that the music students are ready for a challenge or you would like to introduce fresh ideas to the program or grow the skills of the teaching staff.

The best way to understand what might be available through project-based music learning is to look at a few examples. Here are three examples of project-based music learning.

Blackburn High School

Blackburn High School undertook a project for their Year 9 music students called *A Moment's Notice*. Steve Sedergreen, an accomplished jazz musician, had recently returned from a tour of the Northern Territory, doing workshops with indigenous students in the Tiwi Islands. At Blackburn, he worked with the students, exploring a concept called 'deep listening' – using an awareness of the environment and surroundings to stimulate improvised music and eventually composition. The students created a suite of works, which they performed with a Tiwi Islander group. A video about the project is available on the Blackburn High School website.

Mallacoota P–12 College

In 2014 Mallacoota P–12 College began a music project with two local musicians, Padma Newsome and Nick Fischer. The project was developed by the school's Arts Committee in collaboration with the school's music teachers and both artists, and centred on Gabo Island. *Gabo Granite Rock* gave students opportunities to gather field recordings, create compositions in situ and write original music and perform music inspired by the environment of Gabo Island.

Watsonia Primary School

Watsonia Primary School partnered with artists from Musica Viva for a project called 'Message of the Jungle Drum'. Using music as an exploratory tool and as the learning stimulus, the school devoted an entire year to a whole-of-school enquiry about jungles, tribes and elders. They began with a full day of professional learning for the teachers, designed to let them experience enquiry-based learning by collaboratively creating a chant, then a rhythm and eventually melodies. This experience allowed the teachers to see how music learning in the classroom can be linked to learning in mathematics, history, geography, visual arts and the capabilities. Back at school, the project culminated in a whole-school performance of stories and songs composed by the teachers and students.



Blackburn High School

www.blackburnhs.vic.edu.au/innovative-creative-project-expands-students-musical-minds/



Mallacoota P–12 College

www.mallp12.vic.edu.au/

Think about

What are the opportunities for project-based music making at your school?
How are theme-based learning projects developed? Who puts the 'music view' in planning meetings?

Do you have a story about a music project to share? Where and how could that happen?

Performance opportunities

The music learning program for your school is the starting point for making music performances part of the school and community culture.

Performances are an opportunity for students to learn, and to celebrate learning. There is no single formula that will guarantee a successful school concert, or a list of 'must-have' performance events or types of ensembles that will be found in every successful music learning program. Establishing a set of guidelines that provide a structure for planning performance events is beneficial. The guidelines needs to reflect the overall music plan at the school. In turn, it provides answers about the 'why' and 'what' for having a performance program, the type and number of events and ensembles, and from there, answers to questions about when, where and for whom performances should happen.

Ideas for beginning, building or rethinking a performance calendar might come from answers to the following questions:

- How does the music program fit into the whole school plan?
- What instrumental music programs are currently offered and how do these deliver curriculum?
- How do classroom and instrumental music programs connect?
- How does the music program use digital technologies?
- What opportunities are there for performances, or for students to play with groups – for example, ensembles, choirs, bands, school concerts, gigs?
- How do students enrol? What is the fee structure? How can students acquire an instrument?
- How can parents support the program?

Example 1

A regional primary school takes this approach to their guidelines for performance opportunities:

- Students must have input into music events, including content, set-up and running of events.
- Students should be allowed to perform when they want to and are ready to, both formally and informally – for example, at a concert/event or during lunchtimes.
- Students should be encouraged to take charge and learn how to put on a performance, with teacher guidance, including learning about lighting, sound and staging.
- Students should be at the centre of music education and teachers should take into consideration every child's right to learn music, their interest in musical styles, instruments and the fact that all students learn differently. There is more than one way to effectively teach music to students and this should always be considered when planning for student performances.
- Performance opportunities can be used to deliver a range of curriculum content, such as learning about collaboration in the Personal and Social Capability.

At this school, ensembles can rehearse and perform throughout the year, or be formed for special projects and events. Ensembles and performances include:

- acoustic solo, duo, trio performances, involving (but not limited to) guitars, vocals, piano, drums and bass
- rock bands, both large and small, ranging from three to 10 members, and involving (but not limited to) guitars, vocals, bass, drums and horns and brass
- instrumental ensembles that perform for special Performing Arts concerts
- performances at the Southern Metropolitan Region Battle of the Bands

- eisteddfods with instrumental and rock band sections
- local performances in and out of school – for example local community events, busking, awards nights, special event concerts for parents and community members, lunchtime concerts, school productions and talent shows
- performances for local community groups and organisations.
- Students who are aspiring to be professionals can be playing, singing, acting, dancing, composing and arranging in multiple contexts.
- At the same time, the program should include opportunities to celebrate all levels of student learning and achievement, including those students who just want to sing in a non-auditioned choir show once a year.

Example 2

At a medium-sized metropolitan P–12 school, the approach to planning performances is based on these guidelines:

- There should be a major event every term.
- Every student learning an instrument is part of an ensemble (including guitarists and pianists on tuned percussion).
- Every student experiences solo, ensemble and theatre performances.
- The broadest range of quality art-music across many genres will be featured in every concert program. Students play music that is both complex and ‘catchy’, music that the music team consider valuable (connoisseurship).

To support this approach, the school performance program features some ensembles that run throughout the year and others that rehearse only for particular events. These groups include a Year 3–8 choir and a Year 9–12 choir, junior string, wind, percussion and guitar ensembles, and a senior orchestra, stage band and rock club. All students learning an instrument through the school perform at an instrument-based soiree every term, and the ensembles perform each term. The school presents three musicals each year (Years 3–8, Years 9–12 and F–Year 2), and a Presentation Evening for Year 6–VCE.



Instrumental and ensemble music

The music learning program provides the starting point for designing, maintaining, expanding or reviewing instrumental and ensemble music components of the school's teaching and learning plan. As with other curriculum delivery questions, there is no 'right' way to design and run instrumental and ensemble music learning. These opportunities should reflect each school's vision, philosophy and resources. Often, in the eyes of the wider community, instrumental and ensemble learning is the music program so it is important to make distinctions between the music learning program for all students and any optional learning opportunities. Like any other intentional music learning experience, instrumental and ensemble music learning should be planned using the curriculum. Instrumental and ensemble music learning will be most exciting, engaging and satisfying for students when they are working toward a purposeful outcome – achievable goals and playing together and for others. Instrumental and ensemble learning can happen using a range of teaching methodologies.

Successful instrumental and ensemble music learning will include:

- listening, to learn about the sound of the instrument, how it is used in different styles and genres of music and its role in different ensembles, and to develop students' aural skills, including recognition and the ability to manipulate elements of music in performance, including pitch accuracy and intonation, dynamics, rhythmic accuracy and feel
- opportunities to explore, experiment, compose, improvise, arrange and reimagine to create new music
- opportunities for students input into the way music is interpreted to express the intended meaning
- lots of opportunities to perform in formal and informal contexts.

Instrumental teachers can work closely with other teachers to coordinate and emphasise current learning themes and goals. The instrumental teacher or teachers should participate in the planning of the overall school music learning program.



Deepdene Primary School

The music teachers at Deepdene Primary School think that all students should have the opportunity to learn an instrument. These are some of the reasons they think these opportunities are important:

- It has the dual benefit of stimulating the brain and calming the body at the same time.
- Children who learn music become more engaged, which results in them feeling much better within themselves.
- It complements other curriculum areas when students are learning to read music notation and to decipher rhythms.
- Learning a musical instrument develops a child's fine and gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination and, in the case of piano and drum kit, crossing the midline (bilateral coordination).
- It can also assist in social, emotional and academic development, literacy, numeracy, coordination and leadership, inquisitiveness, curiosity, imagination, creativity, human connection, confidence, diplomacy, awareness of self, discipline, teamwork, ways of managing performance anxiety, and insightfulness in terms of self-assessment.
- Instrumental music encourages perseverance, and teaches that hard work can be rewarded by an excellent exam result or a polished performance.
- Students who participate in the instrumental music program learn about taking responsibility for themselves, their instrument, their learning and progress.
- Learning an instrument promotes logical, sequential thinking, and is a close relative of mathematics.
- It is fun and enjoyable, improves overall learning and teaches life skills.

Think about

As you read the Deepdene Primary School teachers' list of benefits that instrumental music learning can provide, think about how each of these skills can be taught through instrumental music learning and the types of activities that will give students opportunities to practise and develop these skills.

How are students who are learning an instrument encouraged to think of themselves as musicians?

CASE STUDY NO. 3

The principal goes on tour – Balwyn High School

Bernadette Clayton is apologetic that the other teachers from the music learning program can't talk right now. They are getting ready to go on a European tour with the school choir and jazz combo. Everyone is busy preparing – even the school's principal, Deborah Harman.

When quizzed about whether it is unusual for the principal to go on tour with the students, Bernadette doesn't hesitate.

She comes to everything – every music concert. In fact, our principal comes to 100 per cent of all music events, whether they are public concerts or not. We have a principal who has a strong belief in music education in public schools.

The music learning program at Balwyn High School wasn't initiated under Deborah Harman's leadership. It started many years earlier with an equally committed and visionary principal, Gil Newitt. He realised the importance of music and pushed it within the region and the area, gradually building the program up. It has had strong support from every principal since. Bernadette is at pains to emphasise the support, commitment and dedication of all the music staff, who work with the students to achieve the highest standards.

A couple of years ago, a case for further staffing for music was presented and the request met. The school prioritised seeking funding for music facilities and in the year 2000 built a dedicated music centre with rehearsal spaces, a suite of instrumental rooms and music technology labs.

Balwyn High School isn't afraid to think outside the box in seeking

to support their music learning program, either. An innovative partnership with Yamaha sees the company sponsor keyboards for the technology lab and other instruments. In exchange, Yamaha runs a specialised instrumental and ensemble program from the school – gaining access to facilities for teaching on a weekend and during times the rooms would otherwise be unused. This further affirms the calibre of the school's music learning program that 'doesn't shut down at four o'clock'. Yamaha values being connected to Balwyn High because as the younger students develop, Yamaha gets to see the results borne out in performance through the many ensembles and choirs available to students. It is clearly a win-win situation.

What makes the biggest difference to the music program at Balwyn High? Bernadette Clayton credits, among other reasons, the commitment of the principal. They have weekly meetings about the music learning program. The principal constantly encourages the students, talking to them about their music learning and performances. Professional learning for teachers in delivering learning opportunities based on the Kodály method is a priority, giving teachers a depth of knowledge and skills that allows them to really lead.

We like that it is very grounded. Students have to learn, listen and sing. Singing is a big thing for us here and it transfers to instrumental skills. All of our Year 7 teachers have done the Kodály course that runs for about five or six weeks – not just the specialist music teachers.

How does this support translate into results? Just look at the alumni of music students at Balwyn High.

It's not just The Cat Empire and violinist Cameron Hill but in 2014, Sarah McKenzie came third in the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition in New York. Every year we have an alumni orchestra that comes back to play for our events. Our music students are passionate and keen to always strive to do their very best, whether it be in the training/beginner ensembles or the senior groups. There is certainly a culture at Balwyn High School that it is cool to achieve and do your best.

You could ask the principal what she thinks of the alumni orchestra, but the likelihood might be that she's too busy packing to go on tour.

Understanding music



The elements of music

Music is learned through developing skills and knowledge associated with the elements of music. Musical ideas are conceived, organised and shaped by aspects and combinations of pitch, duration, expression, tone colour (timbre), texture, and form and structure.

In the Victorian Curriculum F–10, these are referred to as the ‘elements of music’.

This section provides a range of resources designed to assist teachers of music. It covers the elements of music as well as providing advice on notation and music technology.

Instructions

The world is full of music. As you listen to each of the following examples, think about:

- what questions you would ask the composer or the performer about this music, or their life in music?
- how you would describe the music?
- what examples you would recommend?

Focus first on what the example is illustrating, then listen for how the example uses other elements of music. Ask your students the same questions. The following recordings can be accessed from a range of sources. Publication details are provided as a guide.

Pitch

Pitch has three facets:
pitch, melody and harmony.

Pitch

Pitch describes how high or low a sound is:



Ideas for learning about pitch

Sirens

Get students to begin all together, singing on one lower register note and then slide (glissando) their way up giving their attention to staying in unison to the highest note that they can comfortably reach. During the exercise, play with the sliding scale, stopping students at a particular note to find its pitch on the piano or keyboard. Stop some students at a particular lower note asking them to hold that note (and take staggered breaths) and then allow the other half of the class to slide up to different intervals above the note – such as a second, a third, a fifth and a seventh. Ask students to notice which intervals work in harmony.

Parrot phrases

This is a call and response game. Sit the students in a circle and ask each one to sing a very short combination of notes (no more than five or seven notes). The notes could be arranged in a melody or be random intervals. Then the other students sing that melodic pattern back together. Work your way around the circle until students are comfortable experimenting with melodies, then ask students across the circle to see if they can come up with a second melody that might work as a harmony with the first.

Drone

Play a single note on a tone generator or drone instrument such as keyboard with sustain. Give students melodic percussion instruments such a glockenspiel and allow them to compose either short melodies or repeated harmony notes to go over the drone.

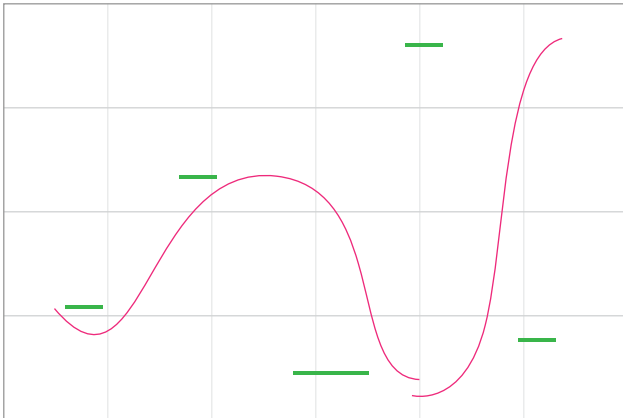
Activity

Not all instruments can play melodies. Experiment or research to create lists of ‘tuned’ instruments (those that can play melodies) and ‘untuned’ instruments (those that are unable to produce specific pitch/es).

Melody

Melodies are usually made up of sounds of similar pitch combined with several leaps in pitch. You can think about melody as an exaggeration of the highs and lows we use expressively in speech.

Melody occurs when sounds of different pitch and length (duration) are combined:



Listen

Examples of melody

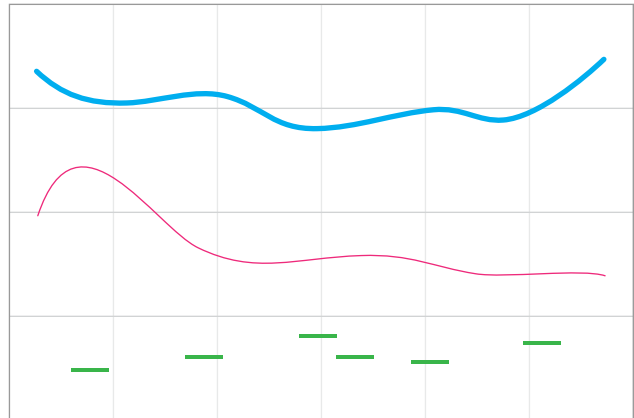
Traditional (Irish folk), flute melody: 'Danny Boy', performed by James Galway, James Galway and the Chieftains, *Celebrating 70: A Collection of Personal Favourites*, Sony Music Entertainment, 2009

Contemporary (pop), vocal melody: 'Someone Like You', written by Adele and Dan Wilson, performed by Adele (vocals) and Dan Wilson (piano) on the original recording, *Adele21*, XL, 2011

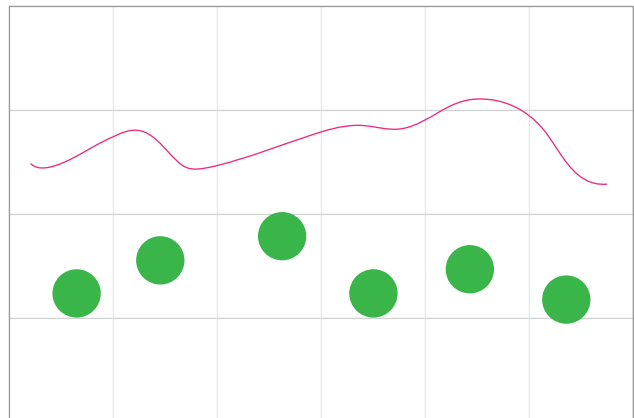
Harmony

Harmony is the overlay of pitched sounds.

This can take a number of forms. It may be the overlaying of two melodies:



Or it could be a melody with chords (two or more notes of different pitch) or a mixture of the two.



Examples of harmony

Classical (baroque), string harmonies: 'Pachelbel's Canon', performed by Stringsplace String Quartet, Stringsplace Live channel

Contemporary (country/folk), vocal unison and harmonies: 'My Silver Lining', written and performed by First Aid Kit (Klara and Johanna Söderberg), from *Stay Gold*, Jagadamba, 2014

Duration

Duration includes the elements and concepts of beat, rhythm, accent and metre.

Ideas for learning about beat and rhythm

Ask students to find their pulse on their wrists. Give each student a small percussive instrument and take turns seeing if they can play along to the beat of their heart.

Students stand in a circle, each holding a small percussive instrument (tambourine, triangle, click sticks). With the metronome start a slow walking beat that everyone can keep with their feet. Walk/stomp the beat together and turn off the metronome. A minute or so later start the metronome again to

see if everyone is now walking faster. This is the tendency to get faster, not slower. While they are walking to the metronome beat invite students to intuitively play short percussive passages of rhythm that work with the beat.

Conduct an activity using free 'beats per minute' software to see if particular genres of music all sit within the same beats-per-minute range. Try measuring the beats per minute for country music, rap, pop and folk.

Beat

Beat is the regular underlying pulse of a piece of music, like a heartbeat.



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



Beat can only be varied with a **faster tempo** (speed) ...



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



or **slower tempo** (speed).



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



Duration

Rhythm

Rhythm consists of long sounds combined with silences in patterns.



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



Here is another example of **rhythm**.



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



Listen

Examples of rhythm

Contemporary (experimental), clapping rhythm: 'Clapping Music', written by Steve Reich, arranged and performed by Santi Carcasona

Traditional (Polynesian), drumming rhythm: 'Otea', traditional Polynesian music from Tahiti, performed by Amadinda Percussion Group



Clapping Music

www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2-GP6LV8DM



Otea

www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-zH73bGrrY

Duration

Accent

An **accented** note is louder than other notes. Groups of **beats** are defined by accented notes or longer silences.



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



Rhythms also have accented notes.



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



Metre

Metre is the organisation of beats into groups. Often the accenting of the first note in a group of beats determines the metre.

For example: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



Here is another example of **metre**.

1 2 3 1 2 3



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



Duration

Metre

Here is another example of **metre**.

1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



Usually these groupings are separated by a line, with the accent usually falling on the first beat, unless otherwise marked.



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



The **beat** and **metre** are often 'felt' when a **rhythm** is superimposed over it. Often people will 'keep' the **beat** with their foot while playing a **rhythm**. Like this:



[View and hear video on the VCAA website](#)



Listen

Examples of metre

20th century (country/folk), 3/4 time (count three beats per bar): 'Annie's Song', written and performed by John Denver

19th century (wartime/march), 2/4 time (count two beats per bar): 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home', unattributed writer, performed by the United States Military Academy Band



Annie's Song

www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNOTF-znQyw



When Johnny Comes Marching Home

www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPyObG9b40E

Expression

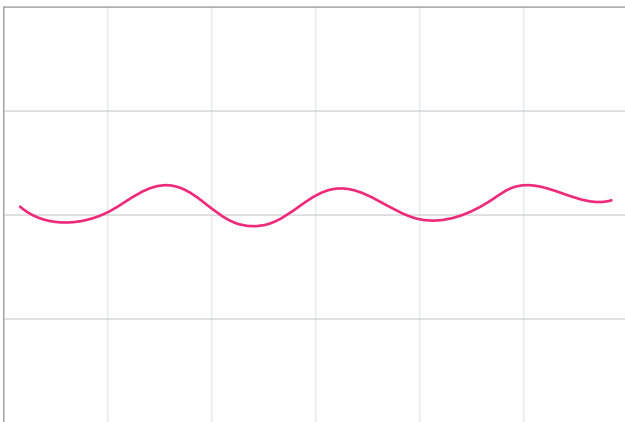
Expression includes: tempo, dynamics and articulation.

These features of music are called 'expressive' features because without them, music can sound robotic and flat. The use of expressive techniques is important for bringing a piece of music to life.

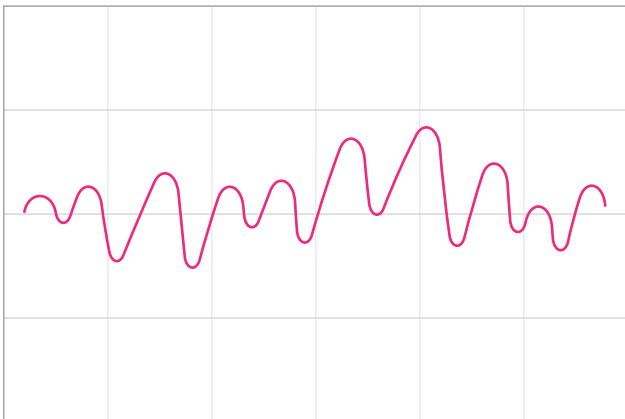
Tempo

Tempo is the speed of a piece of music. Often the tempo is understood from the underlying pace of the beat. A fast beat indicates the music has a fast tempo and a slow beat or slow inferred beat indicates a slow tempo.

Slower



Faster

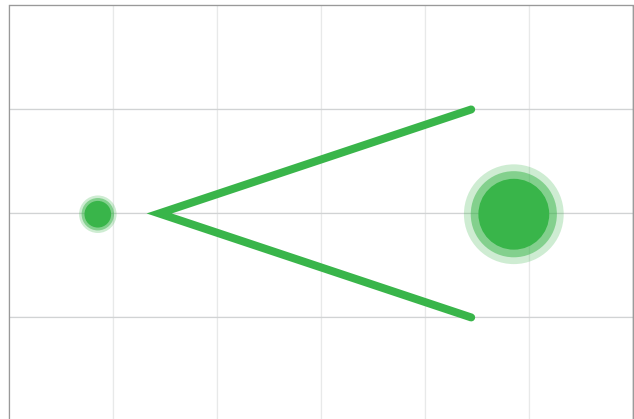


Some music does not have a beat, but we can sense the tempo of the music. Sometimes this can be assumed from a change in musical pitch. For example, in musically emulating the feel of a car or a plane accelerating, the inclination of a composer might be to gradually raise the pitch of the sound to indicate that the movement is getting faster.

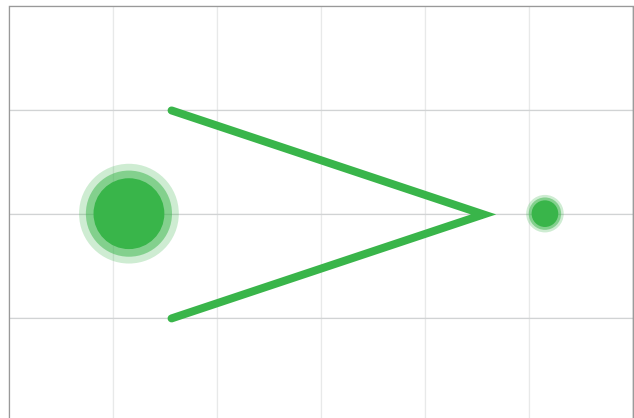
Dynamics

Dynamics are the loudness and softness of music and can dramatically impact on our emotional responses. For example, loud sounds can make us frightened, or excited. Softer sounds can be soothing, or they can sometimes make us feel sad. Our responses depend on a range of factors including where we are and how we feel at a particular time and our experiences of hearing different types of sounds.

Getting louder (crescendo)



Getting softer (diminuendo)



Articulation

Articulation in music is like the fine-tuning of expressiveness. Musicians need to consider how they will perform every note and how each note connects expressively to those before and after it. Microtiming, the amount of dynamic on a particular note, the way a note is 'attacked' and allowed to play out or 'decay', the shortness or length of a note, and the shaping of a group of notes, are all important aspects of articulation.

Tone colour (timbre)

Every sound has a distinctive tone or timbre. The sound of a trumpet is different to the sound of a marimba or shakuhachi. The sound of an acoustic guitar is very different to the sound of an electric guitar.

The voice is every person's unique instrument, just as we have unique fingerprints and DNA. Our hearing for difference in tone of voices is so honed that we can distinguish who is speaking on the phone.

Tone colour is affected by:

- the materials an instrument is made from
- the structure of the instrument
- the way the instrument is played.

The sound a listener hears is also impacted by the sound environment in which the instrument is played and the individual listener's perception of it.

Each distinctive sound has its own sound wave structure. Unique sounds can be altered in many DAWs (digital audio workstations) by drawing a different shape or coding a shape.

Activities

Ask students to research the sounds of two different instruments, such as, trumpet and marimba, shakuhachi and flute, acoustic and electric guitars. Prompt them to create an infographic about the instruments, including identifying the qualities of sound (high, low, mellow, screechy, piercing, eerie, woody), the materials used to make the instrument, different versions and where/when they might be found. Students share their findings and discuss their opinions about the qualities of sound.

Ask students to experiment to identify and document three diverse sounds that an instrument can make. For example, a drum might produce 'metal', 'wooden' and 'skin' sounds. Students create a visual image of each sound. This could use colour, shape, line or texture but needs to 'describe' the sound rather than the instrument. Students then describe what their thinking was that led to the images they created for each sound.

Useful websites



Indonesian Gamelan Bali and Beyond

www.balibeyond.com/performances.html



Australian didgeridoo

www.ididj.com.au



Orchestral instruments

www.mso.com.au

Use the MSO Learn app to explore the instruments in a symphony orchestra and more.



Soundscapes

www.hearingjaarajaara2013.wordpress.com/page/2/

Ros Bandt is an Australian sound artist. This site takes the listener to natural and man-made sounds and a combination of the two.

Texture

The texture of a piece of music is its overall feel or sound quality and is determined by the combination of all other elements of music. Some music has an overall feeling of thinness or thickness. The sound of a solo recorder is different to that of a full orchestra. The texture of music can be heavy or light, even though it may be thick. This may depend, for example, on whether layers of sound have a higher or lower pitch. Texture can be rough or smooth. The overlay of tone colours in addition to the articulation of sounds affects texture. For example plucking the notes on a violin (*pizzicato*) creates a different texture to bowing the notes (*arco*). Texture also involves the way harmonies are structured (see the element of Pitch). Most music has changing textural effects throughout.

Examples

Australian fusion band **Visions of a Nomad** combine a range of textures in their music, drawing on an eclectic mix of instruments and styles. Listen to 'Mirabooka'.

The Girl with the Flaxen Hair, by Claude Debussy, is largely melodic or counter-melodic with chords, but sustains a smooth and flowing feel throughout. Search for Duncan Gifford's interpretation (*The Essential Piano*, ABC, 2009).

Hans Zimmer chose a range of unusual instruments to create a textural feel of both the past and intrigue in his 'Theme from Sherlock Holmes: Discombobulate', (Watertower Music, 2009)

Ideas for learning about texture

Lower primary

Antonio Vivaldi creates a vivid feeling of shivering in 'Winter' from his *Four Seasons*. Ask students to compare the texture from the first movement of 'Winter' with the second. What techniques have been used on strings to create the different textural effects in each section? How do the feelings evoked in each movement differ? Encourage students to draw visual images to represent different aspects of winter they envisage for each movement.

Students create their own musical expression of 'cold'. They then create a contrasting piece evoking 'heat'. They may wish to listen to Steve Reich's 'The Desert Music' for inspiration, or David Bridie's 'Wires'.

Upper primary

Dawn Mantras by Ross Edwards was written for the global dawn vigil held to celebrate the arrival of the new millennium. It is full of symbolism in its use of ancient and modern sounds representing our Indigenous inhabitants, European inhabitants and the relatively new influences of Asia in particular. The feature sounds are produced with air – our life source.

Students research the use of language in the piece. They talk about how the instruments are interwoven to create unique textures, including depth and height of pitch and the overlaying feel of combined instruments. They draw, write about or record their ideas about the symbolism used in the piece.

Students compare the texture in Edvard Grieg's 'In the Hall of the Mountain King' interpreted by the Hallé Orchestra (*The Classic Experience*, 2009) with Apocalyptica's texture when interpreting the same piece.



Dawn Mantras

www.rossedwards.com/dawn-mantras-1999/



Mirabooka

www.visionsofanomad.com/visions-of-a-nomad



In the Hall of the Mountain King (by Apocalyptica)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=zf2aIVKp1OY

Secondary

Students describe the differences vocal tone colours make to the texture of 'Oh Sister', a homage to a sister by post-hardcore Australian band Storm the Sky.

Ask students to listen to the theme music from *Newsroom* by Thomas Newman. What is the intention of the texture in this theme? What impact does the composer wish it to have on the audience? Ask students to compare this music to other news themes and talk about what such themes have in common. They can explore or research how each of the elements of music is used and record the similarities and differences (type in 'news themes' on YouTube). They can use an e-portfolio to record their findings as a profile of 'news themes' based on their research, addressing each element of music.

Students then create their own news theme based on the profiles they have created and perform their work with an actual news program. They may use a digital audio workstation (DAW) to compose their work and synch it directly to a news program or perform an acoustic composition live with a news introduction program in the background. Listen to Australian composer Burkhard Dallwitz's 'Underground Storm' from the film *The Truman Show*.

The texture of the music alters in different parts. Ask students to describe the changes between sections. As they look at the images, ask students to write about or discuss in groups what they think is happening. Share ideas with other groups in the class and look for common features in the responses. Play a completely different piece of music with the imagery, for example, The Atlantics' 'Bombora' (*100 Greatest Australian Singles of the '60s*, Warner, 2015) and ask students to comment on the difference it makes to what they feel the images are expressing.



Oh Sister

www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfG19oRYVZ0



Newsroom

www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5TxEix6mdU



Form and structure

The element of form explores the overall structure of pieces of music and the parts within these broader structures, such as repetition and variation.

Some pieces of music conform to specific structures including binary form (A-B), where, two sections have differing themes or motifs, ternary form (A-B-A), sonata form or song form, but composers take many diversions from established structures in their work.

The music from different cultures also has established musical forms. For example, in Northern Indian classical music the raga (an Indian mode or scale) may initially be elaborated upon quite slowly and lead into an extensive improvisational passage which is usually much faster. The range of musical forms is enormous and constantly evolving; these are just a few examples.

Song form

Some songs just have a verse and a chorus. Usually the melody of verses is the same, but the lyrics change. The chorus has the same lyrics and melody. But many contemporary songs also have a pre-chorus, and/or a pre-verse and a bridge that is often different to all other parts of the song. It is often the climax of the song. Songs also have codas, which are small endings often drawing on the chorus.

Examples of song form

Music Count Us In songs and their lyric sheets include the breakdown of these sections. They can be accessed when you register at the Music Count Us In website.

- ‘Everyone’s Waiting’ by Missy Higgins
- ‘An Arrow’ by Sarah Blasko from the album *I Awake*.

Both these songs use ‘mms’ and ‘oohs’ to great effect in the bridge.

Variations on themes

A theme is established and then embellished in a range of ways. Often a piece pays homage to the work of another composer.

- ‘Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis’, by Ralph Vaughan Williams performed by the BBC Symphony Orchestra.
- ‘Piano Variations on a Theme’, by Robert Schumann performed by Clara Schumann.



Everyone’s Waiting

www.youtube.com/watch?v=LiFKGbH4NzE



Music Count Us In

musicaustralia.org.au/program/countusin/

Symphonic form

Symphonies often have four movements. The first movement has a fast tempo, the second a slow tempo, the third is often a dance form or scherzo (suggesting a joke) and the fourth is often a rondo (meaning round and round or back to the original theme). Within each movement there are further structures.

Examples of symphonic form

'Symphonia Eluvium' by Elena Kats-Chernin. Performed by the Queensland Symphony Orchestra

This symphony was developed in response to the Queensland floods of 2011. The composer's notes describe the form of the work:

I had begun composing a symphony about Brisbane, commissioned by the Brisbane Festival, when in January 2011 the tragedy of the Queensland floods struck. I decided to completely rethink the concept and start from scratch. The symphony became my response to the enormously devastating event that cost lives and destroyed so much, but also united people in so many ways. The symphony's four movements were inspired by: the emotional turbulence and noise of the floods, the aftermath, the stories of the survivors, the incredible efforts from people around the country, including the Mud Army, coming to help and clean up, remembering the dead, reflecting on what had happened, and the powerful optimism that soon emerged to rebuild and move on.

© Elena Kats-Chernin, used with permission

Ideas for learning about form

Primary

Use a range of shaped cards (circles, triangles, squares) or picture cards relating to different phrases in songs students sing and ask students to place down the correct cards for each different phrase they hear and the same card for repeating phrases. For example with Heads and Shoulders Knees and Toes, students would use a different card for each phrase. They might like to point out how the first line differs from the second. Different movements or use of different body percussion or non-melodic percussion for each line by different groups of students also helps them listen for and respond to the structure.

Secondary

Students listen to parts of Gustav Holst's 'The Planets', which is in 'suite' form because a series of pieces are united by a common theme. Students listen to Jupiter and are told it is one of the planets in the solar system but not told which one. They draw the planet they think it might be as they listen and describe why they think this. Students compose three short soundscapes about different aspects of space to create a suite. Or different groups may each create a piece to go towards the class Space Suite. Soundscapes could be about black holes, aliens, stars, meteorites or the Pillars of Creation.

Just take a look at images from the Hubble telescope for some inspiration.



Symphony 41 (Jupiter) (4th movement) by WA Mozart performed by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra

www.youtube.com/watch?v=prvBEXbnDR0



Read more about musical form

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musical_form



See images of the planets

hubblesite.org/gallery/

Musicals

Musicals also have a distinctive form, beginning with an instrumental overture that combines features from the songs that will follow. Songs include upbeat ensemble pieces, ballads and, often, humorous or character pieces. Depending on the age of students and their interests, compare the structure of the sequencing of pieces in a range of musicals.

Musicals have their roots in music hall and opera. Students can read up on these different forms and perhaps create their own musical themes.

Kate Miller-Heidke's operatic libretto *The Rabbits* is based on the book of the same name by Australian authors John Marsden and Shaun Tan. Watch the song 'Where?' from this opera and talk about its structure. How is the shaping of this piece similar to or different from songs and arias in other theatrical musical scenarios and how is its form conducive to a theatrical production?

Talk about 'builds' in such ballads and ask students to write a ballad for a theatrical production based on their knowledge of this form.

Secondary

Famous sitar player Ravi Shankar collaborated with George Harrison from The Beatles on the piece 'Prabhujee', written by Ravi Shankar. Students can compare the form of this piece and also the fusion of cultures in its structure with the more traditional form of Indian classical music used by Ustad Amjad Ali Khan on sarod. Listen to his *Raga Bageshri (Sarod)*.

'Family', by Icelandic singer Björk, has an interesting form. Ask students to describe the use of melodic repetition and the variation in accompaniment and how this impacts on their perception of the form of the piece. What is being expressed in this piece and how does Björk go about achieving her intended meaning? How do Andrew Thomas Huang's visuals impact on the meaning?



Where?

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZL7v4YFowSE



Family

www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAXvkbOzK6E



Musical theatre

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musical_theatre

Notation

Music notation is a graphic way of representing sounds and silences. Musicians use notation to write (make a record of) their ideas, to read music and to communicate with other musicians. There are many forms of notation, and musicians are continually adapting notation conventions. The choice of which notation to use is usually linked to the style, genre or cultural tradition of the music that will be written.

Music technology

Digital technologies provide an evolving range of resources that can be used to access and share music and for all aspects of music-making. Musicians' interest in technology is long-standing but always pragmatic. Whether the technology involves instrument-making or ways of recording and distributing music or any of the options available through the digital world, the technologies provide a means to an end – not an end in itself. In music learning programs the same situation applies. For example, digital technologies in the form of apps, games, programs and instruments can be used to explore and play, record, notate, compose, practise, perform, connect with other musicians, research and distribute, comment on and receive feedback about music. The intended learning outcomes, the learning context and pedagogies will all influence decisions about when and how to use digital technologies in a music learning program.

As with any resources it is worth asking around and checking with other teachers who are regularly using digital technology in their music program as to the pros and cons of any resource before your school invests in specific technologies.

Think about

How important is notation to music making?

What are the advantages to a musician in being able to read and write music notation? Just how accurate is notation? Can notation tell the whole story about how a piece of music should sound?

Do you give the same answers to the questions above as a musician and as a music educator? Ask students to respond to the questions; hold a class debate; create a chart showing advantages and disadvantages of using notation or different notation systems.

CASE STUDY NO. 4

The whole school sings – Melbourne High School

Steven Bowler has an infectious energy when he speaks about Melbourne High School's massed singing program, but also humbly points out that the program started well before he arrived at the school.

It's been part of the timetable for ages. The Year 9 and 10 students learn songs every Tuesday, and we do all styles from Purcell to country and western, acid rock – we're even learning a heavy metal number.

I think it really builds character. It feels like they are part of something bigger – something important.

Steven says that the group singing, which has been a school tradition for many years, gives the boys a real sense of cohesion: 'It's a sense of being part of something big. When I see boys out and about who are ex-Melbourne High School – when they get together they burst into songs that they remember from class time.'

Educationally, Steven says, the singing fills a gap. Some boys come to the school with no prior music education and singing offers them a way into music that is inclusive and a great way to participate in music without having to know how to play an instrument.

Singing really levels the playing field.

Steven is emphatic that the school singing program has gained the school kudos. This program is bolstered by opportunities for instrumental learning, with around 360 students across the school learning musical instruments.

The students gain plenty of performance opportunities for their singing and playing prowess with between eight and 10 concerts per year, and the big night – the end of school Speech Night when all 1400 boys sing together for their community.

Detailed planning to integrate classroom music with the school instrumental program and performance opportunities is the key to keeping the music program strong.

It has to dovetail with instrumental and classroom music. That way the boys are bringing the skills with them to other opportunities like the school symphony orchestra. Because of this program we've got substantial numbers of students doing music at VCE level and in instrumental, which builds our support from parents and the region.

Steven says that the benefits to the school are enormous.

Approaches to learning



Overview

This section offers ideas and a sense of the variety, depth and level of exploration that can be brought to a music learning program at any level – whole-school, curriculum area, at each year level – or with units or sequences of lessons. Making decisions about the structure of a music learning program is a complex matter. Learning is a continuous and sequential process, enabling the acquisition, development and revisiting of skills and knowledge with increasing depth and complexity.

The case studies in this guide demonstrate that high-quality music learning programs are diverse in their approach and scope. Each of the case-study schools has used a unique set of questions to guide their thinking and make decisions about their music learning program. The common thread is that all of the programs take into account the whole-school curriculum plan, long- and short-term aims and goals, the learning environment and resourcing.

Talk to people about the creation or development of a comprehensive and cohesive music learning program to explore what might be possible. To get things started, you could begin singing in the classroom and listening and responding to music. As Paul Kelly wrote in one of his most popular songs: ‘From little things. big things grow ...’.

Julia Reid puts it this way in her chapter on ‘Shower Singing and Other Essentials’ in *Education in the Arts – teaching and learning in the contemporary curriculum*, (1st edition, 2000):

‘Four principles inform my teaching practice – actually, they inform my life:

- encouraging and celebrating the self-directed learner
- modelling the creative process
- regular, allocated time for reflection.

And the most vital principle:

- bringing the person to the classroom, not just the teacher.’

Think about

When planning or evaluating the approach to music learning at your school, ask the following question. How do the approaches to learning used in the classroom/studio/rehearsal/performance space ensure that the approaches used to provide learning opportunities will:

- engage students
- build on what the students know and can do
- encourage self-directed learning that continue across a lifetime
- enable the acquisition, development and revisiting of skills and knowledge with increasing depth and complexity
- integrate listening, composing and performing
- celebrate achievements?



Victorian Curriculum F-10

www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/foundation10/viccurriculum/curriculumplanning.aspx



DET Quality Music Education Framework

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/arts/Pages/QMEF.aspx

Methodologies and programs

While there are many approaches to learning and teaching music, there are some established methodologies and programs that are recognised as effective for music teaching. Each can be used exclusively or in an eclectic mix to meet the needs of a particular music learning program.

Singing

Singing is fundamental to music and music education. It must be part of the music learning program. Singing doesn't just make people happy and calm, yet energised. It increases their confidence and allows them to internalise and express music ideas. Singing in music education can involve singing familiar and unfamiliar songs, rhymes and chants; it can be a way of exploring music styles and cultures; a student might sing an idea for an instrumental composition or sing a part that will be played on another instrument to work out 'how it goes' or to share ideas about how it could be shaped in a performance. There are many 'methods' of teaching singing for different purposes and with different styles and techniques.

The Singing Classroom

The Singing Classroom offers a range of easy, entry-level activities for teachers with little or no musical background to be able to incorporate singing and music into the everyday classroom.

The program was developed and launched in 2012 by the Australian organisation aMuse (the Association of Music Educators)

in response to the National Review of School Music Education, which found that music must be continuous, sequential and developmental for students to benefit.

The Singing Classroom is intended to be accessible to generalist teachers to get them singing and teaching music relatively quickly. Professional learning for teachers ranges from short sessions (1½ to two hours) through to a full day and are provided to a group of teachers in their school. There is a flat rate per session rather than a cost per teacher.

The Singing Classroom approach to music teaching is to use simple songs and chants to introduce concepts of rhythm, pitch, melody, dynamics (loud and soft) and build toward students creating music using improvisation and composition. The 'learning in and learning through' approach to music explored in The Singing Classroom demonstrates how music can be integrated with other learning such as mathematics and literacy as well as being experienced in its own right.



The Singing Classroom

www.musicalfuturesaustralia.org/singing-classroom.html

Kodály method

The Kodály method is a sequenced music teaching system for students and children, from very young (kinder aged) through to older teenage (in high school) and adults. The method employs listening, singing, moving (walking, marching, dance movement), rhythm symbols and hand signs. The intention is to make music accessible to all young people (no instruments are required – only the voice) and to assist in deepening the experiential understanding of concepts such as pitch, rhythm and pattern.

This method was developed by Zoltan Kodály in Hungary in the early 20th century in response to what he saw as a poor quality and inadequate music education for young people, whom he believed each had a right to music in their education. The method was successful and quickly spread to over half the schools in Hungary and then to the international community by the 1950s.

The Kodály method is based on the following:

- Everyone is capable of and has the right to music literacy and skills.
- Singing is the foundation for musical learning.
- A sequential approach is essential and should follow a child's natural learning development.
- Using good quality music is important (traditional folk music is frequently used).
- Visual as well as kinetic (physical movement) cues and associations assist learning.
- Play and games are part of the method and help children engage.

Teachers and school leaders interested in implementing the Kodály method at their school will need to undertake professional learning. The qualifications are the Australian Kodály Award, which qualifies teaching for early childhood, and the Australian Kodály Certificate, which qualifies the teacher in an area of specialisation (Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary or 'Colourstrings'). The whole curriculum for professional learning, and a list of course providers and fee information, is available for download from the Kodály Music Education Institute website.

Orff method

The Orff method (sometimes referred to as the Orff Schulwerk method) uses play as a way of engaging students in their music learning. The primary instruments used, however, are percussive. Rhythm is viewed as the basis for musical learning, and is supported by dance, other physical movement, drama, chanting and singing.

Orff introduces musical concepts through already known and familiar starting points, such as nursery rhymes and stories. By exploring the subject matter of the story, chant or rhyme, and through a series of open-ended questions, a skilled Orff practitioner can lead students from a familiar narrative-based concept into a musical one. There are some good video examples of Orff teachers making this transition with students, from something easy and familiar, to learning new musical concepts and then eventually (in the same lesson) to composition and performance.

The Orff method is based on the following:

- Just as every child can learn language through exposure, every child can learn music.
- Music learning is 'child centred' and play based.
- Students feel comfortable to play and explore. They do not feel judged.
- Students enjoy the experience of group collaboration and cohesion.
- All concepts are learned by 'doing'. Experiential learning is paramount.
- There is no set sequence for learning; rather some principles, models and processes that teachers can use to guide and advance the organisation of musical ideas.
- Rhythm, melody and improvisation form the basis for musical exploration, experience and understanding.

For teachers and school leaders interested in implementing the Orff method in their music program, there are a series of professional development courses, which incur a fee.



Kodály method

www.kodaly.org.au

Kodály Music Education Institute website provides a list of course providers.



Orff method

www.ancos.org.au/

More information about Orff training for practitioners can be found at the Victorian Orff Schulwerk Association.

Teachers can undertake training at Level 1 through to Level 4. Each level course is a minimum of 36 hours face-to-face instruction, preferably over six days. A Certificate of Accreditation will be issued to course participants who have attended the full training course and completed assessment tasks.

Musical Futures

Musical Futures is an approach to teaching and learning music developed in the United Kingdom by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, in association with Youth Music and the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

It has been designed as a series of models and approaches for secondary students, but can be modified to suit a primary setting. The program aims to engage young people between the ages of 11 and 18 years in making music in groups informally, using the real-life learning practices of popular musicians. It involves students working in friendship groups, in a self-directed way, on a series of musical tasks with performance outcomes.

Musical Futures is based on the following:

- Music learning works best for young people when they are involved in making the music themselves.
- The practice of real-world musicians and the way that popular musicians learn offers a way to deeply engage young people in music-making.
- Music learning is student-driven. Music-making is most successful when the drive and motivation is coming from the music-makers themselves (students).
- That music-making is a social activity involving collaboration with others.
- The creation of music is purposeful in that it directly feeds into performance, recording and publishing.
- Music technology is embedded in the learning. Contemporary practices and programs used for recording, mixing, mastering and notation are integral to the music-making.

A 2010 study by the Australian Society for Music Education researched outcomes from a pilot of Musical Futures in seven Victorian Schools. The findings showed that teachers and students had very positive experiences of the program, with teachers reporting that the program had a powerful impact on confidence, pedagogy and professional satisfaction and students experiencing better engagement, social learning and development of musical knowledge and skills.

Teachers and school leaders interested in exploring Musical Futures can find out more by contacting Musical Futures Australia, which offers introductory one-day sessions for teachers, as well as more intensive training courses in regional areas of Victoria and Melbourne. Fees may be incurred.



Musical Future Australia

www.musicalfuturesaustralia.org/

CASE STUDY NO. 5

A deeper music – Hampton Park Secondary College

A conversation about the music learning program at Hampton Park Secondary College is a little like looking at an orchestral score: there are many parts and each has its important voice, but all are lending themselves to a unified whole – the score, the plan, the music.

Planning is at the core and is the driver of the school's music learning program, and is something that is constantly evolving through a cycle of program design, implementation, testing and evaluation of the learning process.

A highly structured, highly planned approach like this may lead one to think that the focus of the music learning program is on theoretical knowledge and mastery of classical music techniques, but this school focuses on learning driven by students, and what students are interested in is the music they like to listen to – rock, pop, indie.

This autonomy for musical learning to be driven by students is really important in a school of 1250 students, including students from over 65 different cultures. Students come from Afghani, Indian, Islander, New Zealand and Sudanese backgrounds – and across all of those cultures it is clear that the families value music.

Cultural boundaries blend easily in the music classroom. Kids form new social groups based on expertise and musical skills, in addition to friendship groups.

Musical Futures is used extensively in the Hampton Park music program, a program focused on enabling young people to choose and create the kind of music they want to make.

The Leading Music Teacher says of the program:

Kids know where to find the songs they want, where to find the chords or charts, where the resources are to learn the song. There is a real focus on independent learning, working at a task for an extended period of time but within a given process.

Some big thinking is going on at the school at the moment about that process – a framework that allows for a great deal of autonomy for the students to pursue and drive their own learning. In a way, the structure is creating a space for freedom in the music program.

A complete redesign is happening. We are working with a consultant to look at the curriculum design process. It's a learning-by-design approach. Teachers begin by interrogating the standard and identifying the key skills, knowledge and understandings relevant to our students. They work backwards from there in order to create the most effective and cohesive learning sequence.

Our approach to curriculum implementation has three distinct components:

1. A Curriculum Map – outlining the relevant Victorian Curriculum F–10: Music content descriptions and achievement standards, big ideas, enduring understandings, essential questions, skills and knowledge, and formative and summative assessment.

2. The Common Assessment Task (CAT) – a three-tiered assessment specifying for students what is required of them in order demonstrate their learning at a C, B or A level. The structure of the summative assessment is based on Bloom’s Taxonomy and allows students to demonstrate their understanding at the Applying (level C), Analysing (level B) and Evaluating/Creating levels (level A); and, the accompanying Instructional Rubric.

3. Learning sequence – this outlines the various instructional practices, learning opportunities and resources teachers will deliver and students will access in order to learn and master the skills, as outlined in the Curriculum Map, and which will be assessed in the Common Assessment Task. It sounds complex, but what does it look like in the classroom? It looks as diverse as the cultures the students come from.

We want to see multiple approaches to interpreting that curriculum. The learning has to be relevant and meaningful to real life – to life-long learning. Being a musician means acknowledging what you do and don’t know, taking risks, building confidence, exploring through lots of different types of repertoire, and being engaged from bottom to top.

