

**GUIDED COMPOSITION:
AN INTEGRATED, OUTCOMES-
BASED MUSIC CURRICULUM FOR
GRADE 8**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature:

Date:

SYNOPSIS

GUIDED COMPOSITION: AN INTEGRATED, OUTCOMES-BASED MUSIC CURRICULUM FOR GRADE 8

This study involves the research and documentation to develop an integrated, outcomes-based curriculum for music education in Grade 8 in South Africa by using **guided composition** as a teaching method. Directives from the new national curriculum, i.e. Curriculum 2005, the current Western Cape Education Department's syllabus for Music and the British National Music Curriculum are considered and applied.

Composition is a medium that assists learners in exploring sound in an approach that emphasizes discovery through processes of creative thinking when organizing sound. Music as an art form cannot be mastered through discussion and performance alone. This study focuses on how composition helps learners to explore and discover through problem-solving activities when learning to think in sound and to manipulate the language of music.

General perspectives on music education curricula are researched to determine an acceptable theoretical proficiency level for Grade 8. The praxial music educational approach of David Elliott is used as a philosophical foundation for developing the composition program curriculum. **Actively making music, developing musicianship and developing creativity** in music education form the backbone of this author's approach and hence an accountable basis for a curriculum.

Fundamental issues in developing a curriculum are examined, the crux being *how we learn*. **Cognitive apprenticeship** and **reflective thinking** as praxial techniques focussing on **integrated** and **holistic** learning are proposed as a methodology for a music education curriculum, in this case composition.

A curriculum for guided composition is designed and set out in four stages according to the four stages of curriculum development as proposed by David Elliott. Orientation, preparation and planning, teaching and learning and evaluation and assessment are addressed.

The composition program is evaluated and methods to evaluate a music program are described.

This composition program attempts to **situate** and **activate** musical learning by proposing teaching and learning skills through which learners can activate and catalyze their creativity. When learning and experiencing music in a **situated, authentic** and **practical** way, as through composition, lifelong involvement, musical skills and continued enjoyment and accountability for the subject can be stimulated and established.

SINOPSIS

BEGELEIDE KOMPOSISIE: 'N GEÏNTEGREERDE, UITKOMSGEBASEERDE MUSIEK KURRIKULUM VIR GRAAD 8

Hierdie studie behels die navorsing en dokumentasie van die ontwikkeling van 'n geïntegreerde, uitkomsgebaseerde kurrikulum vir musiekopvoeding in Graad 8 in Suid-Afrika deur **begeleide komposisie** as 'n onderrigmetode te gebruik. Riglyne uit die nuwe nasionale kurrikulum, nl. Kurrikulum 2005, die huidige Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement se sillabus vir musiek en die Britse Nasionale Musiekkurrikulum word ondersoek en toegepas.

Komposisie is 'n medium wat hom by uitstek daartoe verleen om op ontdekkende wyse, deur middel van kreatiewe prosesse, klank te eksploreer wanneer dit georganiseer word. Musiek as kunsvorm kan nie bemeester word deur blote besprekings oor musiek en voordrag alleen nie. Hierdie studie ondersoek hoe komposisie leerders kan help om te eksploreer en te ontdek deur middel van probleemoplossingsaktiwiteite wanneer hulle leer om in klank te dink en die taal van musiek te manipuleer.

Breë perspektiewe op musiekopvoedkundige kurrikula word ondersoek om 'n aanvaarde vlak van teoretiese bevoegdheid vir leerders in Graad 8 te bepaal. Die praktiese musiekopvoedkundige benadering van David Elliott is die vertrekpunt om as filosofiese basis vir die ontwikkeling van hierdie komposisieprogram te dien. **Aktiewe musisering**, die **ontwikkeling van musiseerderskap** en die **stimulering van kreatiwiteit** in musiekopvoeding vorm die ruggraat van hierdie outeur se benadering en derhalwe 'n besinde basis vir 'n kurrikulum.

Fundamentele aangeleenthede in die ontwikkeling van 'n kurrikulum word ondersoek, waar die kruks lê in *hoe ons leer*. **Kognitiewe vakleerlingskap** en **reflektiewe denke** is

praksiële tegnieke wat fokus op **geïntegreerde** en **holistiese** leer en word voorgestel as 'n metodologie vir 'n musiekopvoedkundige kurrikulum, in hierdie geval komposisie.

'n Kurrikulum vir begeleide komposisie word ontwerp en word voorgestel in vier fases volgens die vier fases van kurrikulum-ontwikkeling van David Elliott nl. oriëntasie, voorbereiding en beplanning, onderrig en leer en evaluasie en assessering.

Die komposisieprogram word geëvalueer en metodes van kurrikulum-evaluering word beskryf.

Die komposisieprogram poog om musikale leer te **situeer** en te **aktiveer** deur onderrig- en leervaardighede voor te stel waardeur leerders hul kreatiwiteit kan aktiveer en kataliseer. Wanneer musiek in 'n **gesitueerde** en **outentiek praktiese** wyse geleer en ervaar word, soos deur komposisie, kan lewenslange leer, musikale vaardighede, voortgehoue genot van musiek en regverdiging van die vak gestimuleer en gevestig word.

Opgedra aan my ma vir jarelange aanmoediging
om musieklesse te neem en verder te studeer.

Dedicated to my mother for many years of encouragement
to take music lessons and to continue studying.

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INDEX**PAGE****CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION**

1.1	ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM	1
1.2	AIM OF THE STUDY	3
	1.2.1 Rationale	3
1.3	THE STUDY DOMAIN	8
1.4	CONCLUSION	9

**CHAPTER 2
GENERAL PERSPECTIVES ON MUSIC EDUCATION
FOR GRADE 8 (12-13 YEAR OLDS)**

2.1	THE CURRENT WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT MUSIC SYLLABUS	11
2.2	CURRICULUM 2005: OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION	13
	2.2.1 Defining outcomes-based education	13
	2.2.2 Background	13
	2.2.3 The new skills educators would have to acquire to implement outcomes-based education	14
	2.2.4 The role of learners in outcomes-based education	15
	2.2.5 Curriculum 2005	16
2.3	THE KEY STAGES: UNITED KINGDOM	16
	2.3.1 Program of study	17
	2.3.2 Performing and composing	18
	2.3.3 Attainment targets	20
2.4	SUMMARY	20

**CHAPTER 3
THE PRAXIAL MUSIC EDUCATION APPROACH BY DAVID ELLIOTT**

3.1	THE CONCEPT: PRAXIAL	21
3.2	THE PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE PRAXIAL PHILOSOPHY	22
3.3	MUSICING	23
	3.3.1 Orientation	23
	3.3.2 Consciousness, knowledge and thought	23

3.3.3	Musicianship	24
3.3.4	The procedural essence of musicianship	24
3.3.5	Formal music knowledge	26
3.3.6	Informal music knowledge	27
3.3.7	Impressionistic music knowledge	27
3.3.8	Supervisory music knowledge	28
3.4	CREATIVITY	28
3.4.1	A new way to think about creativity	30
3.4.2	A sociocultural approach to creativity	31
3.4.3	Fostering creativity	33
3.4.4	Creativity and educational curricula	37
3.4.5	Conclusion	38
3.5	SUMMARY	38

CHAPTER 4

FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES IN DEVELOPING A COMPOSITION PROGRAM

4.1	TOWARDS MUSICIANSHIP: HOW WE LEARN	40
4.1.1	Introduction	40
4.1.2	Cognitive apprenticeship	40
4.1.3	Reflection	42
4.1.4	Practicum	43
4.2	MUSICAL LITERACY	43
4.3	MULTICULTURAL APPROACHES	47
4.3.1	Teaching method	49
4.3.2	Teaching perspective	50
4.3.3	The teacher	50
4.3.4	Language and culture	51
4.3.5	Cultural intermixing and acculturation	52
4.3.6	Own culture	52
4.3.7	Prejudice	53
4.4	SUMMARY	54

CHAPTER 5

DESIGNING A COMPOSITION PROGRAM IN FOUR STAGES

5.1	STAGE ONE: ORIENTATION	55
5.1.1	Aims	56
5.1.2	Knowledge	58
5.1.3	The learners	59
5.1.4	Teaching-learning processes	60

5.1.5	Teachers	62
5.1.6	Evaluation	63
5.1.7	Learning context	66
5.2	STAGE TWO: PREPARATION AND PLANNING	67
5.2.1	Selecting the types of music that will be practiced	69
5.2.2	Selecting the musical practices and the musical challenges	69
5.2.3	Components of musicianship	73
5.2.4	Teaching-learning goals	73
5.2.5	Teaching-learning strategies	75
5.2.6	Reflect on alternative sequences to achieve teaching-learning goals	78
5.2.7	Decide how to assess and evaluate learners' developing musicianship	80
5.3	STAGE THREE: TEACHING AND LEARNING	81
5.3.1	Introduction	81
5.3.2	Implementation and broad structuring of the composition approach	82
5.3.2.1	Introduction	82
5.3.2.2	A matter of skill	85
5.3.2.3	Guided composition	86
5.3.2.4	Structuring and ordering the guided composition method in stages	86
5.3.3	Lesson units: a matter of building skills	92
5.3.3.1	Composing with new notes	93
5.3.3.2	Composing with new rhythms	95
5.3.3.3	Composing with new concepts	97
5.3.3.4	Composing in tonal patterns	99
5.3.3.5	Composing with harmonies	102
5.3.3.6	Composing in different musical styles	108
5.3.3.7	Songwriting	109
5.3.3.8	Projects	112
5.3.3.9	Free composition and other techniques	114
5.3.3.10	Composition and technology	121
5.4	SUMMARY	125

CHAPTER 6

STAGE FOUR: EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF LEARNER COMPOSITIONS

6.1	WHY MEASURE AND EVALUATE?	126
6.2	DEFINITIONS	128
6.3	MUSICAL ACHIEVEMENT	129
6.4	EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT	129

6.4.1	A praxial view	129
6.4.2	Assessment defined	130
6.5	ASSESSING COMPOSITIONS	132
6.5.1	What does assessing a composition entail?	132
6.5.2	How does one assess the composing process?	132
6.6	MEDIA OF ASSESSMENT	133
6.6.1	Observation	133
6.6.2	Portfolios	134
6.6.3	Audio and video tapes	135
6.6.4	Self, peer and teacher assessment	136
6.7	THE PROCESS OF ASSESSMENT	137
6.7.1	Continuous assessment: formative and summative evaluation	137
6.7.2	Outcomes of continuous assessment	139
6.7.3	Reports	140
6.7.4	Grading projects	141
6.8	DEVELOPING AN ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR COMPOSITION	144
6.8.1	Critique	144
6.8.2	Criterion reference cards	146
6.8.3	Rubrics	148
6.9	SUMMARY	151

CHAPTER 7

EVALUATION OF THE COMPOSITION PROGRAM

7.1	INTRODUCTION	152
7.2	FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AS DATA-GATHERING TECHNIQUE	157
7.3	THE STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE	159
7.4	RESULTS OF THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION	161
7.4.1	Introduction	161
7.4.2	Current problems in subject music education	161
7.4.3	The composition program	163
7.4.4	Potential problems and shortcomings	166
7.4.5	General remarks	166
7.5	ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA	167
7.6	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	168
7.7	SURVEY-QUESTIONNAIRE TO LEARNERS	170
7.7.1	Introduction	170
7.7.2	Survey methodology	170
7.7.3	Biographical profile of the survey group	170
7.7.4	Findings	172
7.7.5	Summary	172
7.8	OBSERVATION LOG OF LEARNER COMPOSITIONS COMPARED TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CURRENT WCED CURRICULUM	173

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Under the present system and curriculum of music education in South Africa, specifically with reference to the Western Cape, the secondary-school music teacher is confronted with many dilemmas:

- *Grade 8 pupils wishing to start music with little or no musical background.* The current Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Music Syllabus (1995) states that learners must achieve a Grade 2 practical level for the Grade 8 year. This implies that learners could begin studying an instrument at the commencement of that year and reach a Grade 2 level by the end of that year. The theory and history of music requirements are generally easily achieved.
- *Varying musical backgrounds and abilities.* Beginners and advanced pupils are generally in the same class. They attend both theory and history of music classes together, regardless of their practical level.
- *Varying facilities and opportunities for practicing musical instruments at home.* Piano pupils mostly have their own pianos at home, but it is not uncommon to have pupils sharing symphonic instruments. Music centres often share instruments and percussion instruments such as tympani, xylophones, etc., are never allowed to be taken to pupils' homes. In schools with boarding establishments it is also common for pupils to have to practise in the music department and leave their instruments there.

- *Limited time allocation on the school timetable to allow for much individual attention.* Most secondary schools work on an eight- to ten-day cycle. This often results in pupils having lessons far apart on the time table, sharing lessons with different instrumentalists, and having to be self reliant and self disciplined in their approach to the subject.
- *Limited classroom, instrument and practising facilities.* Few music departments boast more than two or three teaching studios and perhaps one additional singing/theory/orchestra room. The rooms are small, originally intended for individual instruction. Few music departments have practice rooms for pupils to practise individually.
- *An extensive curriculum comprising of four components.* Practical, aural, theory and general music knowledge all comprise the subject and have to be accommodated on the timetable. The current WCED music syllabus states that one period per week/cycle is to be allocated to the History of Music module. Harmony/Theory would also need one period per week/cycle and Aural and Practical would ideally require two periods per week/cycle. The total is therefore five periods per week/cycle. This is not always possible in the teaching situation.
- *A non-integrated approach to music education.* This results in a compartmentalized subject for most pupils. The above timetable and module layout clearly shows the separation especially of Theory, Aural and History.
- *Teenage beginners, after an enthusiastic start, discontinue with music.* This is possibly due, amongst other causes, to the monotony and rigidity of conventional theory classes. It is notable that most secondary school music departments have an extraordinary number of eager Grade Eights, fewer in Grade Nine and even less for the senior secondary phase. The number of Grade Twelves finishing every year testifies to this tendency.

- *The especial desire of the older beginner to make music and to create music.* This can often not be accommodated due to a too academic and theoretical approach towards subject music in the secondary school. It is often heard from prospective music pupils that they only want to learn to *play* the instrument and not take subject music.

1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to develop a curriculum for composition as a means to teach music creatively, contextually and interactively through building musical and theoretical skills.

1.2.1 Rationale

“Could we not spend some of our energies in teaching to make things happen? Is this not a question worth considering?” Marshall McLuhan has written: “We are entering a new age of education that is programmed for *discovery* rather than *instruction*” (Schafer, 1975:10).

Consider the general aims of music education (Hauptfleisch, 1991: 62):

To provide all learners with:

- an optimal *experience of sound* as the essence of music;
- opportunities to *develop* their inherent musical potential;
- *motivation, knowledge and skills* to establish a life long active participation in music;
- the ability to *apply* musical knowledge and skills to new musical experiences, and
- to *develop* an increasing insight and appreciation for the music heritage and backgrounds of their own and other cultures.

A number of aims are apparent: experience, skills, knowledge, application, development and insight. The question arises: How can music be taught in order to achieve these aims maximally? A further question arises: Could there be a single teaching technique in which these aims converge? A method has thus to be created to allow a learner to make music, create music, develop in music, but still acquire theoretical knowledge of music.

It is proposed that guided composition would be a feasible solution.

Composition, by its very nature, lies in the creative sphere of music making. A definition of composition could be the process of creating new musical structures notationally, orally, electronically, naturally or by any other means.

Why composition? The following statements are corroborated with quotations from relevant literature.

- Elliott (1995:40) identifies *five forms of musicing*¹: performance, improvisation, composition, arrangement, and conducting. In composition all five of these forms converge: a learner can improvise, can notate the improvisation, can perform the composition, can arrange it and can orchestrate and conduct it.

Composition therefore allows the educator to integrate the subject music components²:

SOUND	THEORY	PERFORMANCE
Create	knowledge	solo
Listen	general music knowledge	ensemble/orchestra
Emotion	musical literacy	technique/skill
Aural	harmony	sight reading/quick studies

¹ *Musicing* is a term coined by Elliott to indicate **music making**. It is a contraction of the words “music” and “making”.

² Components of subject music as currently outlined in the WCED music syllabus.

- *Composition facilitates the application and use of musical knowledge.* Kratus (1994:38) explains that it is during the process of composing that learners are actively involved in solving musical problems of syntax, structure, unity and variety, individuality and universality. When learners compose, they exhibit their understanding of how music works.
- *Composition demands creativity and innovation.* Paynter (1992:10) states that creativity should be at the heart of all the affective areas of the curriculum. It involves imagination, origination and invention and goes beyond that to include interpretation and personalized imitation. Creative activities such as composition is especially important as ‘a way of coming to know’ through independent, innovative responses to ideas and to the means of expression. Paynter concludes that therefore it differs substantially from received knowledge and from skills acquired through rule-directed learning.
- *The learner understands music from a holistic perspective.* Regelski (1981:126) reasons that music should be perceived and experienced in its total or unified whole. Any emphasis should always move from the whole to any part. In other words, music should be studied in some kind of authentic musical context. The holistic, authentic and situated context of music learning is an issue that Elliott addresses repeatedly in his writings.
- *Composition situates musical literacy and communication.* The learner therefore develops greater appreciation for musical notation as a *means to* and not an *obstruction to* musicing. Swanwick (1994:153) explains that the purpose of notation is its potential for communicating certain details of performance that would easily be lost in aural transmission. He (1994:154) adds that notational ‘literacy’ is thought to be essential and thus notation is often central to music instruction and is frequently the starting point. Ultimately, the value of music making and creating lies in the *activity*, not in the knowledge about or medium towards it.

- *The learner reinforces theoretical knowledge.* Moses (1970: 95) relates the story of how one of his students in a creative music class tried to compose a piece. He describes the student's search for an own idiom, and how he found ideas for writing music which were of his time and milieu and relevant to him. He concludes:

“In the process, the young man had to learn how to record on paper the form and structure, the content and substance of his ideas, the signs and symbols through which any interpreter could grasp what he had in mind when he composed the music. In writing the solo for the B♭ tenor saxophone the composer had to learn about its range, its various tone qualities, and its limitations. Thus, composing set up the machinery for a music-growth which pushed the student far ahead of his group.”

- *The learner works interactively with peers in groups in accomplishing own and group compositions.* Paynter (1992:27) says group activities are a useful way of generating ideas, for example by brainstorming. They also allow for the creation of complex and interesting textures of instruments and voices that the group can experiment with. Kratus (1994:30) states that a positive social environment in a class also enhances the creative and interactive compositional process through discussion whereby learners learn composition from each other.
- Composition allows learners to *experience alternative music systems* by which other cultures' musical traditions are understood and appreciated through experience and application. Feldstein (in Wiggins, 1990:Foreword) supports this view by stating that the compositional process is one of the best ways for learners to begin to understand, perform, and develop sensitivity for all styles of music. When so many diverse styles are interacting with their daily lives, learners must be trained to make value judgments. Experiencing the creative compositional process will help prepare learners to make these judgments.
- The learning system moves from *sound to notation* and is thus based on a holistic learning principle described by Dargie (1995:22) as the music → technique → terminology principle. He remarks that this is “the reverse of the Western system;

and it has different results. It makes people musicians for life. It makes music a people's art". Regelski (1981:126) supports this notion of using creativity and an Action Learning teaching approach, similar to the praxial³ methodology of Elliott, for lifelong benefit. He states that composition is useful in teaching the most basic aspects of music 'theory' and particularly useful in providing a basis for "lifelong interest and involvement in music".

Regelski (1981:171) gives ten reasons for using composition activities:

- "To teach all aspects of *music 'theory'* that any non-musician would ever have to know.
- To involve students from a creative, manipulative, inductive point of view in those aspects of *standard musical notation* that can be of use to them in life.
- To generate melodies, melody segments, and songs that are susceptible to promoting *further learning* through performance, analysis, and revision.
- To produce *tangible sound products* that serve as evidence to parents, administrators, and students of classroom learning, and also serve the teacher in evaluating the success of his or her teaching.
- To provide *skills in musical creation* that can be applied out of school or after graduation from school.
- To *personalize, individualize, and humanize music instruction*.

³ The praxial philosophy of music education is a shorthand term developed by David Elliott and discussed in his book, *Music Matters*, to describe his *practical* approach to music education. He highlights the importance of music as a particular form of *action* that is purposeful and situated as the basis of his music education philosophy. Refer to Chapter 3.1 in this document for a fuller description.

- To *produce materials* for singing and other performance that otherwise might not be available to the teacher for financial or practical reasons.
- To provide the *opportunity for youngsters studying instruments to play their own tunes, and learn such skills as transposition for their instruments.*
- To provide the *opportunity for student pianists, guitarists, and accordionists to accompany songs* written by the class, or their own songs, with an accompaniment already worked out at home or by the teacher.
- To use in singing activities. *Most singing activities can be applied to songs written by the children.”*

Jackie Wiggins (1990:3) in her book *Composition in the Classroom* answers the question “Why compose?” as follows:

“First, children are innately creative. They take tremendous pride in and derive great pleasure from their own creations, and you can capitalize on this self-motivation. Second, composing helps students develop a pride in their own musicality: this also motivates further learning. Third, composition is an excellent means of teaching and reinforcing musical concepts, and fourth, your analysis of your students’ work serves to evaluate student comprehension of these concepts”.

1.3 THE STUDY DOMAIN

Guided composition as developed and applied in this research is aimed at:

- 1.3.1 The subject music program in the senior phase.
- 1.3.2 The older beginner.
- 1.3.3 Being used as a one-year program.

1.3.4 Being used as an extensive, integrated, outcomes-based working program (curriculum) that envelopes the four subject music components: performance, theory, general music knowledge and aural.

1.4 CONCLUSION

This study henceforth aims to address the following course of research and documentation of a composing program striving for an integrated, holistic and practical curriculum in music education:

Chapter 2 sets out to view the **general perspectives** on music education curricula for Grade 8 learners to ascertain the level of theoretical proficiency generally required from educational bodies, in this case the current WCED, the future Curriculum 2005 and a reflection on the curriculum as set out by the United Kingdom. A comparison between generally accepted curricular goals and the achievements as displayed in a composition could then later be made when evaluating the composition program.

Chapter 3 considers the **praxial music educational approach of Elliott** as a philosophical foundation for the compositional program approach in this research. The basis of music making, musicianship and creativity as philosophical and accountable basis for a curriculum is addressed.

Chapter 4 expounds the fundamental issues in developing a compositional program. The pivotal educational point is *how we learn*. Cognitive apprenticeship, reflective thinking and music literacy are all situated in a multicultural setting and are articulated as fundamental issues in developing any music educational program.

Chapter 5 deals with the **design** of a composition program. It is set out in four stages based on the four stages of curriculum development as proposed by Elliott.

- Stage one deals with the orientation phase: the essence of the curriculum viz. aims, knowledge, learners, teaching-learning processes, teachers, evaluation and learning context.
- Stage two involves the preparation and planning phase where concrete decisions about the content, material order and evaluation of learning are made.
- Stage three considers teaching and learning, the heart of the curriculum. At this point the compositional program's implementation and broad structuring is described. Lesson Units based on the premise of "building skills" are set out in increasingly complex lesson units showing typical assignments.
- Stage four is addressed in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6 examines the fourth stage in curriculum development by Elliott, viz. **evaluation** and **assessment** of learner compositions. A praxial view on evaluation and assessment is described and the process of assessing and developing assessment tools for composition evaluation is presented.

Chapter 7 deals with the evaluation of the composition program as a curriculum. Educational **program evaluation** is addressed and methods to evaluate the music program are described. Three methods are employed:

- **Expertise-oriented approach** relying on the professional judgment of colleagues and other experts through focus group discussion and structured questionnaire: a qualitative method.
- **Survey questionnaire** for learners assessing instructional material, processes and functioning including affective: a quantitative approach.
- **Objectives-oriented approach:** The accomplishments of learners are focussed on and compared to the objectives of curricular goals.

Conclusions and recommendations are then stated.

CHAPTER 2

GENERAL PERSPECTIVES ON MUSIC EDUCATION CURRICULA FOR GRADE 8 (12-13 YEAR OLDS)

This chapter views the current Western Cape Education Department's Music syllabus, as well as the future Curriculum 2005 curriculum and the present United Kingdom music curriculum to ascertain the general theoretical proficiency expected by these various examining bodies.

2.1.1 THE CURRENT WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (WCED) MUSIC SYLLABUS

The current Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Music Syllabus for Grade 8 is the Interim Syllabus implemented in January 1995.

The General Aims of the syllabus for music ordinary grade, Grade 8, are set out as follows:

- a) To broaden and enrich the pupil's general musical background, by developing his¹ musical knowledge through the various disciplines of music;
- b) To help the pupil to develop specific skills in each of the components of music, by means of his knowledge and understanding of music;
- c) To lead the pupil to develop and aesthetic appreciation of music with the aid of his acquired knowledge, comprehension and skills.

¹ Exact extract from the WCED syllabus.

The syllabus is structured into four modules (teaching units). “The four modules in both standards [Standard 6 and 7] are compulsory and are to be presented concurrently” (WCED interim syllabus, 1995:4). These modules are:

- 1) Performance,
- 2) Aural Training,
- 3) Theory of Music and
- 4) History of Music, Form and Knowledge of Instruments.

Of relevance in this research is the Theory of Music module which is summarized below:

Learning content:

1. Rudiments: Staff notation, all note values and rests, pitches in the bass and treble clefs, ledger lines, transcription.
2. Time signatures: All simple time signatures, correct grouping.
3. Scales and key signatures: Notation of all major and harmonic or melodic minor scales.
4. Intervals: Visual recognition and notation of all simple intervals and their inversions.
5. Triads: Visual recognition and notation of major and minor triads in root position.
6. Four-part writing: Primary triads in root positions in four parts in major and minor keys. Perfect and imperfect cadences in major and minor keys.

Evaluation (WCED interim syllabus, 1995:16):

“The pupil’s knowledge, comprehension and proficiency with regard to the learning content should be continuously evaluated informally as well as through testing/examining in writing and/or orally, aurally with the aid of guided listening and aurally and/or visually with the aid of scores/sheet music.”

2.2 CURRICULUM 2005: OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION

2.2.1 Defining outcomes-based education

Outcomes are clearly formulated consequences of learning. These consequences can include knowledge, skills, concepts and values. Outcomes are therefore also statements that focus our attention on learner activities and demonstrations of learning. Educational principles underlying outcomes-based education are:

- a focus on learning and the learner;
- the application of knowledge, skills and attitudes of the learner and
- lifelong learning and development of all people.

In contrast our current syllabi and teaching methods tend to focus on:

- what the teacher does;
- content.

“With Curriculum 2005 the outcome is the main issue and planning is geared towards a specific outcome. Planning takes place around specific skills that are cross-curricular in nature. You would plan your Specific Outcomes with other teachers in your learning area. The learner can also participate in the planning of the learning material” (Music Educators Workshop, Parow, 1997).

2.2.2 Background

For many years educators have yearned for an education system which would satisfy the *needs of all* South Africans. In this quest, educators have developed a system that would provide in these needs. A paraphrase (WCED 1998:1) from The South African Schools Act states that the aim of a national school system is to:

“Provide education of a progressively high standard to all learners and to thereby lay a firm foundation for the development of all peoples’ talents and abilities,

advance the democratic transformation of the community, reduce racism and sexism and other forms of discrimination and intolerance, eradicate poverty and contribute to the economic prosperity of the community, and protect our diversity of cultures and languages...”

The challenge now is to face the change, the transformation from an education system that we have known for many years. This is indeed a formidable task facing educators:

“The task of transformation is greater than restructuring the systems and structures which sustain any society. It requires a fundamental shift in attitudes, in the way people react to one another and their environment, and in the way resources are deployed to achieve society’s goals” (WCED 1998:1).

2.2.3 The new skills educators would have to acquire to implement outcomes-based education

The WCED, in circular 0049/97:3, identify the following “new” skills teachers would have to acquire to enable them to implement outcomes-based education:

✧ Teachers will

- act as mediators for learning;
- apply learning centered approaches;
- plan a variety of learning experiences wherein learners can participate;
- guide learners in the application of various learning methods, e.g. making notes, research, memorizing, cooperative learning and learning by doing;
- have to understand how to use information and lead learners in applying information;
- assist learners in problem solving and making decisions;
- apply, teach and develop effective communication and socializing skills;
- organize and facilitate group work and manage classrooms with interactive teaching and learning in mind;
- implement differentiated teaching and teaching strategies to provide for learner differences and for special teaching needs;
- assess learners by applying a variety of assessment criteria and instruments;

- write accountable reports on the assessment of the learners, their progress and possible remedial steps;
- re-plan to enable unsuccessful learners to progress;
- practice democracy and non-discrimination in classrooms;
- create a supportive and cherishing classroom atmosphere to advance a caring community.

For some teachers an outcomes-based approach will be something radically new. However, there are many teachers who have basically been using this approach. The problem solving and authentic approach in the current Mathematics syllabus, as well as the interactive and communicative language teaching approach offer the perfect foundation for an outcomes-based approach. Other learning areas should now expand in this way (WCED1997:5).

In the same circular (1997:5) the WCED states that schools should already employ some of the fundamental classroom processes that promote interactive teaching and learning, the basis of outcomes-based education.

These processes include:

- problem solving;
- research and exploration;
- decision making;
- creative and critical thinking;
- group interaction;
- communication.

2.2.4 The role of learners in outcomes-based education

*

Learners will be involved in their education as *active* participants because learning activities accentuate the application of knowledge in *practical, authentic contexts* that are

also applicable outside the classroom. They will also be involved in activities such as assessment of themselves and peers.

2.2.5 Curriculum 2005

Curriculum 2005 consists of 12 critical outcomes applicable to all seven learning areas. Each learning area has its own set of Specific Outcomes. The learning area, Arts and Culture, the relevant learning area in this research, has 8 Specific Outcomes:

1. Apply knowledge, techniques and skills to create and be critically involved in arts and culture processes and products.
2. Use the creative processes of arts and culture to develop and apply social and interactive skills.
3. Reflect on and engage critically with arts experience and work.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the origins, functions and dynamic nature of culture.
5. Experience and analyze the role of the mass media in popular culture and its impact on multiple forms of communication and expression in the arts.
6. Use art skills and cultural expressions to make an economic contribution to self and society.
7. Demonstrate an ability to access creative arts and cultural processes to develop self esteem and promote healing.
8. Acknowledge, understand and promote historically marginalized arts and cultural forms and practices.

2.3 THE KEY STAGES: UNITED KINGDOM

The National Curriculum of the United Kingdom is discussed here due to the advanced nature of the curriculum with regard to compositional activities. The National

Curriculum clearly sets out programs of study and attainment targets. Assessment is also articulated in detail.

The Music syllabus for schools in the United Kingdom is set out in the Department for Education's National Curriculum document (1995:v). The National Curriculum is organized on the basis of four **key stages**, which are broadly as follows:

	PUPILS' AGES	YEAR GROUPS
KEY STAGE 1	5-7	1-2
KEY STAGE 2	7-11	3-6
KEY STAGE 3	11-14	7-9
KEY STAGE 4	14-16	10-11

“For each subject and for each key stage, **programs of study** set out what pupils should be taught and **attainment targets** set out the expected standards of pupils' performance. For music, **end of key stage descriptions** set out the standard of performance expected of the majority of pupils at the end of each key stage” (Dept. for Education, 1995:V).

For this research, Key Stage 3 (11-14 year olds) is relevant.

The National Curriculum for Music (1995:6) for Key Stage 3 states:

2.3.1 Program of study

Pupils' understanding and enjoyment of music should be developed through activities that bring together requirements from both **Performing and Composing** and **Listening and Appraising** wherever possible.

- Pupils should be given opportunities to:
 - a) use sounds and respond to music individually, in pairs, in groups and as a class;
 - b) make appropriate use of it [sound] to explore, create and record.

- When performing, composing, listening and appraising, pupils should be taught to listen with understanding and identify the development of musical ideas, investigating, internalizing and discriminating within and between the musical elements of:
 - a) pitch various scales and modes, e.g. major, minor, ragas;
 - b) duration syncopation; rhythm;
 - c) dynamics subtle differences in volume, e.g. balance of different parts;
 - d) tempo subtle differences in speed, e.g. rubato;
 - e) timbre different ways timbre is changed, e.g. by mute, bowing/plucking, electronically; different qualities, e.g. vocal and instrumental tone colour;
 - f) texture density and transparency of instrumentation; polyphony; harmony;
 - g) structure forms based on single ideas, e.g. riff; forms based on alternating ideas e.g. rondo, ternary; forms based on developmental ideas, variation, improvisation.

- The repertoire chosen for performing and listening should extend pupils' musical experience and knowledge, and develop their appreciation of the richness of our diverse cultural heritage. It should include music in a variety of styles:
 - a) from the European 'classical' tradition, from its earliest roots to the present day;
 - b) from folk and popular music;
 - c) from the countries and regions of the British Isles;
 - d) from cultures across the world;
 - e) by well known composers and performers, past and present.

2.3.2 Performing and composing

- Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- a) control sounds made by the voice and a range of tuned and untuned instruments;
 - b) perform with others, and develop awareness of audience, venue and occasion;
 - c) compose in response to a variety of stimuli, and explore a range of resources, e.g. voices, instruments, sounds from the environment;
 - d) communicate musical ideas to others;
 - e) listen to, and develop understanding of, music from different times and places, applying knowledge to their own work;
 - f) respond to, and evaluate, live performances and recorded music, including their own and others' compositions and performances.
- Pupils should be taught to:
 - a) sing and play a variety of music, developing control of subtle changes within all elements and the ability to interpret the intended effect;
 - b) sing and play music by ear, from memory and from various forms of notation, including conventional staff notation and chord symbols;
 - c) take part in group performances (vocal, instrumental and mixed), developing an awareness of style and a sense of ensemble;
 - d) plan, rehearse, direct and present performances;
 - e) improvise and arrange in a variety of styles;
 - f) select and combine resources and develop musical ideas within musical structures;
 - g) use sounds and conventions to achieve a variety of styles and/or an intended effect, e.g. compose music for a special occasion;
 - h) refine and complete compositions using notation(s), including conventional staff notation and recording equipment, where appropriate.

2.3.3 Attainment targets

Of relevance in this research is the attainment target for composing:

Attainment Target 1: Performing and Composing

“Pupils perform an individual part with confidence and control, and interpret the mood of effect of the music. They show awareness of other performers and fit their own part within the whole. They develop musical ideas within structures, using different textures, including harmony, and exploit the musical elements and a variety of resources. They compose music for specific purposes and use notation(s) and, where appropriate, information technology, to explore, develop and revise musical ideas.”

2.4 SUMMARY

It is apparent that although the various examining bodies endorse different curricula, a general level of proficiency in skills and understandings form the basis of any curriculum. It is noticeable that the Outcomes-Based Education document of the WCED clearly states its emphasis on a practical, situated, hands-on learning situation for learners, which forms the backbone of this study. The National Curriculum of the United Kingdom also mentions quite clearly the importance of multicultural approaches and the diversity of musical styles that need to be employed in the teaching situation: a situation very similar to that of South Africa.

With this in mind, this research is aimed at building upon these general theory proficiency levels and praxial methodologies in a culturally diverse context to attain a standard of musical and creative expertise through the medium of composition.

CHAPTER 3

THE PRAXIAL MUSIC EDUCATION APPROACH BY DAVID ELLIOTT

This chapter sets out to summarize the **praxial** music education philosophy by Elliott to indicate the applicability of his philosophy to South African circumstances. As such it forms a philosophical foundation for an outcomes-based music educational approach. The focus of the philosophy is on **active music making**, musicianship and creativity as a philosophical and educationally accountable basis for the compositional program.

3.1 THE CONCEPT: PRAXIAL

The word **praxis** is derived from the word **prasso**, which means “to do” or “to act purposefully.” Elliott (1995:14) explains his praxial philosophy by focussing on the importance of action, by acting purposefully in certain situated contexts. Praxiality underlines the importance that “music ought to be understood in relation to the meanings and values evidenced in actual music making and music listening in specific cultural contexts” (Elliott, 1995:14). Alperson (1991:233) supports this view and describes the praxial view of art as a way to understand art “in terms of the variety of meaning and values evidenced in actual practice in particular cultures”. As long ago as 1964 the idea of praxiality is supported by Hutchinson & Young (1964:74) when they state that “the developing personality can be fostered by a curriculum of *activity*; it can be killed by a curriculum of *passivity*”.

3.2 THE PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE PRAXIAL PHILOSOPHY

Elliott, in his book *Music Matters*, expands his theories on the praxial approach to music education and the practical implications for the curriculum. He (1995:39) rejects other approaches, notably the aesthetic approach to music education on the basis that “what music is, at root, is a human activity” (Elliott, 1995:39). This forms the foundation of the praxial educational approach. When the phenomenon music is thus considered, it is immediately apparent that what we are confronted with is more than a piece of music, a composition, an improvisation, a performance or simply a “work” in the aesthetic sense. We are in fact confronted with the outcome of a specific intentional human activity. Music is therefore not simply a collection of objects – it is fundamentally something people *do*.

It thus implies that:

- If music is a form of human activity, it involves at least three dimensions, i.e. a doer or maker, the product he or she makes, and the activity whereby he or she makes the product. This takes place within the framework of a specific situational context. Music is therefore a four dimensional concept: a doer, some kind of doing, something done, and the complete context in which doers do what they do.
- **Musicing** (a contraction of the words “music” and “making” coined by Elliott) always implies another kind of doing called “music listening” because music makers always listen to what they do. Thus “music is a multidimensional human phenomenon involving two interlocking forms of intentional human activity: music making and music listening” (Elliott, 1995:42). Elliott calls this interlocking relationship a *musical practice*.
- A human practice in the larger sense is a shared human endeavour: something a group of people organizes toward some kind of goal. Music is a practice with many

subpractices, specialities, and fields. It thus follows that music is a diverse human practice. “Each musical practice pivots on the shared understandings and efforts of musicians who are practitioners of that practice” (Elliott, 1995:43).

3.3 MUSICING

3.3.1 Orientation

Musicing reminds us that the acts of performing, improvising and creating music through singing and playing instruments lie at the heart of MUSIC as a diverse human practice. Two questions arise: ‘What is the nature of musicing?’ and ‘What does it mean to be a music maker?’ The key word is **intention**. The conclusion can be made that musicing is therefore an intentional human action. To make music is to have intended changes of musical sound in mind. In turn, this means that to make music is to act thoughtfully and knowingly. In review, music making involves the following ingredients in combination:

- a singular music maker, or several music makers;
- some kind of knowledge;
- the sounds that music makers make and act upon;
- instruments;
- actions;
- a musical product;
- the context in which music makers interpret, perform or compose.

3.3.2 Consciousness, knowledge and thought

Csikszentmihalyi¹, as referred to by Elliott (1995:52), maps consciousness in terms of three integrated subsystems: attention, awareness and memory. Awareness consists in

¹ Csikszentmihalyi, M. 1990. *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York: Harper and Row. Chapter 2 explains the “anatomy of consciousness”.

three capacities: cognition, emotion and volition (or intention). Cognition includes the widest possible sense in which humans comprehend verbal and nonverbal stimuli. Elliott (1995:52) highlights three themes: Firstly, that attention, awareness, and memory interact. Secondly, that every aspect of consciousness depends on attention. Thirdly, that thinking and knowing are not one-dimensional phenomena. The point is made, including contemporary theories by Gardner², Sternberg³ and Ryle⁴ that it is accepted to think about thinking as sets of knowing-how (procedural knowledge) and knowing-that (formal knowledge.) The recognition of **actions** and **procedures**, not only words and symbols, are acceptable forms of intelligence and cognition.

3.3.3 Musicianship

Elliott (1995:55) identifies musicianship as essentially a *procedural* knowledge. Four kinds of knowing are included in this concept: formal knowledge, informal knowledge, impressionistic music knowledge, and supervisory music knowledge. Musicianship is therefore a form of practical knowledge, or reflective⁵ practice.

3.3.4 The procedural essence of Musicianship

Musical thinking and knowing are present in our actions. That means that our music knowledge is manifested in our actions. A performer or composer's musical understanding is exhibited in the quality of his/her product and in the quality of the actions of performing or composing. When a person has a working knowledge of a domain, he or she has a procedural knowledge of how something works. This by implication means also a conceptual knowledge of a subject. However, concepts need not be verbal. A concept could be manifested in words, in images or in practical actions. Verbal concepts and principles are important in learning to produce music and these concepts can be seen, in essence, as the product of musical thinking, knowing and

² Gardner, H. 1983.

³ Sternberg, R.J. 1988. *The Triarchic Mind: A New Theory of Human Intelligence*. New York: Viking.

⁴ Ryle, G. 1949. *The Concept of Mind*. New York: Penguin Books.

understanding. Practical concepts develop just as verbal concepts develop and this explains to a certain extent why practical examples and models, demonstrations, etc. are so successful in teaching and learning. In fact, practical concepts can never fully be verbalized. Many practical concepts are far too complex to be explained other than demonstrating and involving a learner in a cognitive apprenticeship.

Elliott (1995:59) identifies four dimensions of the procedural essence of musicianship and the kind of thinking-knowing it involves:

1. The actions of performers and improvisers are *cultural actions*. Performers make music within the practices of a certain culture. Ordinary efforts and movements become artistic as a performer attempts to perform musical works of a particular cultural practice.
2. Performing requires people to make *personal judgments in action*. In the action of performing a piece the player constantly reflects, adjusts, judges and evaluates his/her thinking-in-action based on sets of practical understandings.
3. Performances are *prepared, informed or practiced*. This can be seen as “drafts” for a final production. Musicianship enables a performer to produce a performance and not merely a collection of tones and rhythms.
4. Performers think *inductively* and *deductively* during a performance. This means that “a person’s performance of a given composition is a robust representation of his or her level of musical understanding of that work and the musical practice of which it is a piece.”

⁵ Reflection is the process that underlies the ability of learners to compare their own performance, at both micro and macro levels, to the performance of an expert. Refer to Chapter 4.1.3 for a detailed definition.

3.3.5 Formal music knowledge

Formal knowledge is in essence all knowledge of a verbal, conceptual, descriptive or theoretical nature. In music, performers mainly rely on a thinking-in-action approach supplemented by formal background knowledge. The relationship between verbal and procedural knowledge can vary considerably between individuals. Some learners will grasp concepts instinctively during demonstrations without verbal explanations; others need verbalization before completely understanding concepts. Music is sufficiently complex that most musicians must consult sources of formal knowledge. Formal knowledge such as style, history, form, harmony, etc. forms reference material which the performer or composer consults during thinking-in-action music making. Elliott (1995: 61) states that the question is not whether educators should make use of formal musical knowledge but *when* and *how*. Jordan-DeCarbo (1997:34) supports this view in an article on a Sound-to-Symbol approach on learning music where she claims that we (music teachers) find ourselves short of our major objectives – to have trained learners to be musically sensitive and literate. She claims that the fault lies in the sequence of learning, knowing *when* to teach. She expands this statement on the sequence of learning by referring to Mursell's⁶ theory that musicianship depends on musical content being taught in a cyclical sequence in which the experience of sound precedes notation.

The praxial music philosophy maintains that all verbal conceptualization and formal knowledge should be filtered in parenthetically and contextually during active music making. Musical problems should be solved as they emerge. Elliott (1995:61) is very clear on the matter of notation: he maintains that notation and the knowledge of encoding and decoding musical sound patterns in staff notation, are not equivalent to musicianship. Music literacy should be taught and learned parenthetically and contextually as a coding system within the larger process of musical problem solving through active music making.

⁶ Mursell believed that musicianship depended on musical content being taught in a cyclical sequence in which the experience of sound occurs before notation. Mursell, J.L. 1943. *Music in American Schools*. Morristown, New Jersey: Silver Burdett. p. 123

To summarize, the acquisition of formal music knowledge is a necessary, but secondary goal of music education.

3.3.6 Informal music knowledge

Informal music knowledge is often loosely referred to as “experience”. However, in music it could be explained in this way: informal music knowledge involves critical reflection-in-action, which in turn means to make musical judgments and that in turn means to have an understanding of a certain musical practice or tradition.

Critical reflection-in-action is essential in music making as making music does not only depend on actions, routines or behaviours, but involves the critical selection and exploration of all forms of musical knowing.

Elliott (1995:64) states that informal music knowledge originates from two sources: a person’s individual interpretations of the formal knowledge of a musical practice (if such is available) and also one’s own musical reflecting-in-action. The process is one of reflection - (thinking, judging, evaluating) - in-action while actively making music and being faced with problem solving and making critical judgments within the parameters of a musical practice or tradition. Informal music knowledge is thus a *situated* knowledge; it is knowledge that arises from genuine, authentic musical situations in which a learner is faced with the real problems of music making.

3.3.7 Impressionistic musical knowledge

“Intuition” may be the closest definition of “impressionistic” knowledge. Basically, impressionistic knowledge is a feel, or intuition of how to achieve a particular kind of making or doing.

Musicians acquire a feel, or an affective sense, while doing, making and reflecting in specific musical situations. Elliott (1995:65) explains that to develop musicianship is, in

part, to advance a learner's feel for or affective awareness of important aspects in musical situations. He continues by explaining that musicianship involves educated or knowledgeable feelings of music making and the nature of musical works within definite music cultures.

Impressionistic music knowledge is also situated musical knowledge and arises from the interaction with authentic musical situations and authentic musical practices.

3.3.8 Supervisory music knowledge

Elliott (1995:66) describes supervisory knowledge as metaknowledge or metacognition. This is a form of music knowledge which arises from the ability to regulate, adjust, oversee, monitor, balance, etc. one's musical thinking-in-action both at the moment of performance or doing but also over the long term development of one's musical development.

Supervisory knowledge is also a situated form of musical knowledge. It develops in educational contexts of musical actions, interactions, and transactions with authentic musical challenges. It develops from verbal and non-verbal interaction with peers, teachers and the self.

3.4 CREATIVITY

This research supplements the writings of Elliott on creativity by referring to relevant research material on this topic.

In an overview on writings on creativity, it is immediately apparent that a distinction must be made between "creativity" and "spontaneous originality." Several authors

address this issue, notably Elliott (1995), Gardner (1983), Bereiter & Scardamalia (1993) and Regelski (1997).

The study of creativity has a relatively short history and many writers on the topic identify J.P. Guilford's 1950 paper⁷ on creativity as a landmark publication in this area of study. Our view today about creativity has been influenced to a large extent by the psychological theories of creativity since the 1950's. Perspectives on creativity have changed in the past two decades from focussing on the intellectual and personality traits of creative individuals to situating creative performance in its complex social and cultural contexts. The intellectual psychological approaches of the early 1950's to 1970's have now broadened to include the social, cultural and communal aspects of creative performance.

The term *creativity* is generally associated with newness, originality, innovation, imagination, etc. Originality, in terms of musical creativity, is however only one component of the complete creative product in the complete sense of the word. Which brings one to a study of creative product, the latter being a requirement of creativity. Elliott (1995:216) explains creating as a particular kind of activity that results in tangible products or achievements that are considered valuable, useful, or exceptional in some way. To expand: creativity demands a *creator*, and a *creation* and it is this product which is evaluated to ascertain the value of creativity.

A further implicit characteristic of a creative product is that it should be significant within a specific domain or field. The task of evaluation involves the comparison of the originality and significance of a new composition's various relevant dimensions (structure, expression, design, etc.) in accordance with works from the same practice. Elliott (1995:219) explains that in the domain of MUSIC the words *creative* and *creating* apply to achievements of musical composing, improvising, and arranging that are original and significant within the context of a particular musical practice.

⁷ Guilford, J.P. 1950. "Creativity," *American Psychologist*, Volume 5, pp. 444-454.

What then is spontaneous originality? In Elliott's view (1995:221) this involves the natural reaction of children to stimuli from their environment in unusual, spontaneous, expressive and often original ways. It is often assumed that children just are naturally "creative". Therefore, children's efforts, which are often viewed as creative, are in fact merely products that arise from children's innocence and lack of knowledge. Spontaneous originality has no bearing on accepted domains of creative practice. Unfortunately, especially in the field of music education, it has often been accepted that creativity is personified by the twentieth century compositional techniques, free form compositions, soundscapes, etc. propagated by authors such as George Self and John Paynter⁸, which children attempt. However, Elliott (1995:221) concludes that the creativity of their product depends on the musical originality and significance of their achievements.

The conclusion can be drawn that the difference between creativity and spontaneous originality lies in the fact that truly creative people do not just respond spontaneously to external stimuli from their environment. In fact, true creativity demands the achievement of specific types of creative products **within certain accepted domains** through *intentional, directed* efforts.

3.4.1 A new way to think about creativity

Bereiter & Scardamalia (1993:122) approach the conflicts facing creative studies by not trying to explain originality, but by focussing on how some people become expert at it so that they can fairly regularly, almost on demand, create outstanding work surpassing that of their peers. They maintain that the problem is not trying to explain the nature of originality, but to explain how some people become good at it. The answer according to them lies in **expertise**. The very process of expertise is the continual reinvestment of

⁸ Both these authors have propagated experiential work in exploring sound, silence and notation in general music class. George Self, the author of *New Sounds in Class* 1968. London: Universal Edition, investigates graphics, new symbols, new textures, sound maps, etc. Similarly, John Paynter, author of *Sound and Silence* 1970 England: Cambridge University Press and *Sound and Structure* 1992 England: Cambridge University Press explores creative use of sound and silence, contemporary use of notation, sound mapping, etc.

mental resources into the constitutive problems of one's field, in this case composition, and is an inherently creative process. Also, the link between creativity and expertise is problem-solving. Problem-solving is a goal-directed activity in which new ways and paths to a goal have to be discovered. An obvious way in which problem-solving enters into creativity is as a constraint: to solve problems new paths, new approaches and new perspectives have to be found, all within certain parameters. This approach is later elucidated when **guided composition** as a compositional program is put forward in Chapter 5.

3.4.2 A socio-cultural approach to creativity

McCarthy (1997:10) proposes that partnering concepts of creativity and community is highly valuable because of its relevancy to the potential role of music in today's schools. Many recent writings notably by Feldman, Csikszentmihalyi & Gardner (1994)⁹, Elliott (1995) and Schön (1987) underline the relevance of community and culture in learning processes and the stimulation of creativity. There are many studies that focus on the social and cultural dimensions of creativity and creative performance, notably studies by ethnomusicologists and more specifically the psychologist Csikszentmihalyi and the cognitive psychologist Gardner (1983). McCarthy (1997:10) refers to Csikszentmihalyi who proposed a comprehensive systems view of creativity that involves three forces: society (field), culture (domain) and the individual. Csikszentmihalyi maintains that we cannot study creativity by isolating individuals and their works from the social and historical milieu in which their actions are carried out. McCarthy sums up the implications of this view for nurturing creativity in the music classroom:

1. creativity results from interaction among the three systems, and not just from an individual phenomenon;
2. social agreement is a necessary part of creative action, that is, a peer group is needed to evaluate;
3. and the individual's role is to produce some variation in or bring novelty to the information inherited from the culture.

⁹ Feldman, D.H., Csikszentmihalyi M. & Gardner H. (eds.) 1994. *Changing the World: A Framework for the study of Creativity*. Westport: Praeger.

As is apparent in many writings on the music learning process in different cultures it becomes imperative to realize the influence of the community and the culture in training young musicians. For example the Sivuyile tribal group of the Transkei in South Africa acquire musical skills by watching, listening and imitating in a process of trial and error as related by Nguza (1993:33). Children are encouraged to just join in and sing without being instructed to sing a certain part. They are allowed that freedom whereby skills for improvisation may be developed and the sense of creativity is encouraged.

Dargie (1995: 21) working with the Xhosa people in the Eastern Cape describes the learning process for a Xhosa child. He (1995:21) relates:

“The process of becoming a Xhosa musician begins perhaps as early as the time when, in its mother’s womb, the unborn feels the rhythmic movements of her body as she moves with the song, feels the sounds of the song in her body. Certainly this process moves forward strongly when the child is carried, snug in its blanket, on the back of the mother or another woman or girl, as the carrier moves with the dance or claps as she sings. I have seen a Xhosa mother teaching her baby, not yet old enough to walk by himself, little songs. As soon as he began to imitate her, she would no longer sing with him, but put in an answering part. It was education and a most loving form of play at the same time.”

McCarthy (1997:12) mentions the study of Benjamin Brinner¹⁰ on Javanese ‘gamelan’ musicians and the interaction among the members of various ‘gamelan’ ensembles. In teaching them the basic skills of music making and instilling the sound ideals and music practices of the culture it thereby frees them to be creative to improvise and compose.

McCarthy (1997:13) refers to studies from other African cultures relating how children develop musically and socially by participation in communal activities. The polyrhythmic experiences of Venda children have been described as exercises of ‘individuality in community’. The Venda children, in learning the cross rhythms, enter the communal music making process and each participant becomes a co-creator. McCarthy (1997:13) concludes that the locus of creativity in this context is in the interactivity of communal

¹⁰ Brinner, B. 1995. *Knowing Music, Making Music: Javanese gamelan and the Theory of Musical Competence and Interaction*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

values and shared performance. Individual creativity can only be realized through other music makers.

Christopher Waterman¹¹ also notes, on the practices of the Yoruba in Southwest Nigeria, how children over six could completely imitate various genres of Yoruba popular music.

Most cultures outside Western cultures have in common the ability to integrate musical and creative performance in the community life. This allows for individual and group creative efforts, using acquired basic skills to demonstrate creativity and also uses music as a means of portraying social values, social interaction and rewards, involving the audience as participants and thus removing the boundaries between creator (composer), performer and audience.

3.4.3 Fostering creativity

The practical implications for the music educator are obvious. Creativity is, in all views, a goal-directed, intentional, problem-solving activity within a certain socio-cultural domain to achieve original and new results within certain constraints. Nurturing and directing problem-solving activities through experience within a particular domain can foster creativity so that the signs of promising and unpromising paths within that domain become clearer. The process of developing creativity is simply the process of acquiring expertise directed towards creative goals. How can teachers assist in the pursuit of fostering and nurturing creativity? Bereiter & Scardamalia (1993:147-150) suggest:

- *Conceptual understanding* of creativity may help. Educators must assist learners in this regard to understand the nature of creativity to free them from thinking of creativity, which by implication is the creative product, as a free-spirited, “different” type of originality as often induced by pop psychology. Understanding the creative process as one of skill building, application of known and tried methods in new ways, and therefore also the evaluation of the product, would seem essential.

¹¹ Waterman, C.A. in: Wilson, F.R. & Roehmann, F.L. (eds.) 1990. *The Junior Fuji stars of Agbowo: Popular Music and Yoruba Children. Music and Child Development*. St. Louis: MO: MMB Music, Inc., pp. 82-83.

- *Promisingness* can be studied explicitly: which approach to solving a problem holds the most promise? Educators once again need to assist learners in identifying paths that would lead to answers or solutions. Explore designs, theories or phenomena that hold possible development, broadening or promise.
- *Teach design*: most creative work is **design**, broadly conceived. Music composition in particular is very obviously a creative product based on design. Bereiter & Scardamalia (1993:149) point out that designs typically emerge through a series of drafts or versions. The music teacher evaluates and judges paths of promisingness when assessing learner compositions and then suggests other options or possibilities to enhance and/or develop the design or material.
- *Promote cooperative creativity*. Group composition is in fact an ideal forum for **cooperative creativity**. Children join in a discussion on how to achieve a certain sound ideal by suggesting possible instruments, orchestrations, notations, etc. thereby learning from one another and from the process.

Another important aspect of the nurturing and fostering of the creative process is to create an **environment** in which young musicians feel comfortable while expressing new ideas, exploring new material and new sounds before judgment or criticism is passed on their work. Kaschub (1997b:27) describes this environment as one in which all ideas are accepted without judgment. This kind of creative and open environment may be accomplished by modeling the exploration process in relation to current pieces.

Kaschub (1997b:27) employs Webster's terms **divergent** and **convergent thinking**¹² in explaining the exercising of the musical imagination. Divergent thinking involves the exploration of many possible solutions to musical problems during the creative process.

¹² The process of originating material and selecting material represents what Webster calls "divergent" and "convergent" thinking. 1987. "Conceptual Bases for Creative Thinking in Music", in Webster, P. J. Craig Peery, Irene W. Peery & Thomas W. Draper (eds.) *Music and Child Development*. New York: Springer-Verlag, p. 162.

Convergent thought is the process of sifting through all possible solutions or options considered during divergent thinking. In convergent thought, ideas converge and thoughts may assume new organizational patterns. It is the spiraling forward and backward through convergent and divergent thinking that forms the basis of the creative process during composition.

Elliott (1995:234) sums up principles for the development and nurturing of musical creativity as follows:

- Enabling and promoting musical creativity depends on *enabling and promoting musicianship* thus engaging learners in authentic musical problems and projects, progressive learning tasks and situated, authentic musical problem-solving.
- The development of musical creativity requires a *receptive environment* that encourages risk taking and the constructive evaluation of learners' efforts to achieve creative results.
- Musical "*opportunity finding*" ought to be highlighted by involving learners in formulating worthwhile musical projects. This means encouraging learners to research and select innovative musical works to perform as solo's or in ensembles; generate multiple approaches to interpretive, improvisational or compositional problems; generate designs for compositions and/or arrangements.
- Learners should be encouraged to *evaluate* performances and compositions for their excellence and creativity in all relevant dimensions.
- Musical creativity requires *sustained periods of time* for students to generate, select, rework and edit their performances, improvisations, interpretations, compositions or arrangements.

- *Avoid undermining learners' motivation and enjoyment by taking over while they work at producing creative musical results.*

Yet another author, Marsh (1970:3) identifies the following implications for fostering musical creativity in children:

- Creative musical expression may take many forms.
- The **process** of responding creatively in music may be more significant than a completed composition.
- All children can be helped to grow in their ability to be musically creative.
- The emotional climate of the classroom should cause children to feel free to respond musically in varied and original ways.
- The physical environment should contain music materials and equipment that students may explore and with which they may create.
- Students need to succeed in their creative musical endeavours; success is often realized in the performance of that which is created.

This author agrees entirely with those above on the manner in which to establish a suitable climate for creative activities. Experience has shown that teenagers are particularly self-conscious and easily daunted when expected to put forward their own ideas.

3.4.4 Creativity and educational curricula

From a child's schooling one can expect the most basic of mental skills. Several authors have reflected on the tendency of modern day schooling to focus on the attainment of skills both numerical and verbal. Hutchinson & Young (1964: 50) stated as long ago as 1964 that, usually, the ultimate aim of schooling was numeracy and, combined with literacy or the power to communicate, it constituted the most important basic mental skill. Earlier school curricula followed the philosophy of the day and creative activities were limited to a few weekly lessons of drawing and painting, basically an "arts and crafts" type of approach. Hutchinson & Young (1964: 50) point out that when secondary schools finally realized the necessity of creative development, a fundamental purpose of any education claiming to educate the child as a whole, this type of education was still considered irrelevant for the able child. The undue predominance of the old literary tradition precluded any really creative work.

It is the opinion of these authors that the primary purpose of secondary education is firstly, the teaching of communicative skills and literacy; secondly the teaching of numeracy; and thirdly, the discovery and training of creative ability. This philosophy typifies the earlier thinking of the 1960's and 1970's wherein school education (subjects taught) had to be accessible, achievable and applicable so as to provide the most direct path to future employment. Subjects of numeracy and literacy e.g. Mathematics, Science and Languages were deemed suitable to achieve these values. As Elliott (1995:308) points out, it is important for students, parents, teachers, administrators and the public to recognize that much more is involved in the full and beneficial development of the individual than merely the "acquisition of literacy" or what can be labelled "readin', writin' & 'rithmetic". Elliott (1995:308) suggests that all school subjects, experiences, aims and attainments ought to be conceived in terms of their relationship to life goals. Schooling should primarily focus on achieving goals now and in the future. "Life goals are not the only relevant goals of schooling, but they deserve more emphasis than they have received" (Elliott, 1995:308). Subjects based in the arts and creative sphere have been overlooked in the past as the aims of educational philosophies have not been

achieving self-growth, self-knowledge and achieving a working understanding of one's world and one's self.

3.4.5 Conclusion

The music educator today needs to employ praxial methodologies that will involve structured, skill-building processes to foster creative expertise. Regelski (1997:9) claims that the teacher who employs the skills to organize the processes whereby learners can create effective musical products will notice outstanding educational advances in the general musicianship and musical interests of learners. Educators must also expand their view of creativity even further and acknowledge all aspects of the creative process. That means that from a social and cultural perspective creativity is an interactive process in which all elements – the *individual*, the *knowledge* and the *socio-cultural setting* – participate.

3.5 SUMMARY

In an overview on the five kinds of musical knowledge that form musicianship - procedural, formal, informal, impressionistic and supervisory - four are essentially *nonverbal* and *situated*. Elliott (1995:74) maintains that musicianship is the basis of any endeavour in music education, in this case composition. Developing learners' musicianship is a matter of induction; a matter of cognitive apprenticeship as Collins, Brown & Newman (1989:453) explain:

“This involves learners becoming immersed in musical practices (or musical cultures.) The musicianship involved in any practice of music making has its basis in specific **communities of practitioners** who share, and advance, specific traditions of musical thinking.”

The praxial music education philosophy of Elliott that envelops active music making, musicianship and creativity as set out in this chapter thus forms an accountable basis for the development of a compositional program. Fundamental issues in developing such a program are henceforth addressed.

CHAPTER 4

FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES IN DEVELOPING A COMPOSITIONAL PROGRAM

This chapter deals with the fundamental issues in developing a composition program, the pivotal educational point being **how we learn**. Cognitive apprenticeship, reflective thinking and music literacy are all situated in a multicultural setting and are articulated as fundamental issues in the development of any music educational program.

4.1 TOWARDS MUSICIANSHIP: HOW WE LEARN

4.1.1 Introduction

“Only in the last century, and only in industrialized nations, has formal schooling emerged as a widespread method of educating the young. Before schools appeared, apprenticeship was the most common means of learning and was used to transmit the knowledge required for expert practice. Even today, many complex and important skills, such as those required for language use and social interaction, are learned informally through apprenticeship-like methods – that is, methods not involving didactic teaching, but observation, coaching, and successive approximation” (Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989: 453).

Learning and teaching has to a large extent become the task of schools and has been structured in such a way as to provide mass education. Learning material is generally presented in the form of extracted theoretical knowledge set out in syllabi mostly for memorization by the learners.

4.1.2 Cognitive apprenticeship

Skills and knowledge have to a large extent been extracted from their uses in the world, broken down to their essential parts, a system of **essentialism**. Dargie (1995:20) explains

that we *abstract* the qualities of the thing we wish to think about by reducing it to a *definition*. The collection of all these abstractions about music are put together as 'Theory of Music'. This then becomes the necessary preliminary study of anyone wishing to become a musician. In contrast, apprenticeship learning embeds the learning of skills and knowledge in their *social and functional context*.

Collins, Brown & Newman (1989:454) admit that schools have been relatively successful in organizing and conveying large bodies of conceptual and factual knowledge. However, standard pedagogical practices have rendered key aspects of expertise invisible to learners. Not enough attention is paid to learning *processes*¹ that experts employ to use or acquire knowledge when carrying out complex or realistic tasks. The result is that much of what learners learn at school remains inert and unintegrated for them. They are unaware of strategies and processes for solving problems and applying cognitive skills. We have to understand the nature of expert practice and methods needed to devise appropriate learning practices.

Collins, Brown & Newman (1989:454) explain that apprenticeship focuses closely on specific methods for carrying out tasks in a domain. Apprentices learn these methods through a combination of observation, coaching, and practice, or what we, from the teacher's point of view, call modeling, coaching, and fading. The apprentice **observes** the master executing the practice, then attempts to **imitate** the master with guidance and help. He receives **coaching** from the master and lastly, the master reduces involvement and **fades** as the apprentice starts mastering the practice. This teaching-learning approach is very apparent in studies of African music and offers many possibilities to the teacher in South Africa today addressing integrated, multicultural issues in music.

Collins, Brown & Newman's (1989:457-458) view of cognitive apprenticeship can be summarized as follows:

¹ Own italics.

- The method is aimed primarily at teaching the *processes* that experts use to handle complex tasks.
- Conceptual and factual knowledge are exemplified and *situated* in the contexts of their use.
- The notion **cognitive apprenticeship** refers to the focus of the *learning-through-guided-experience* on cognitive and metacognitive skills and processes.
- Cognitive apprenticeship also requires extended techniques to encourage the development of *self-correction and –monitoring skills*.

4.1.3 Reflection

“Reflection is the process that underlies the ability of learners to compare their own performance, at both micro and macro levels, to the performance of an expert” (Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989: 456). Schön (1987:26) explains reflection-in-action as doing something we have learned in smooth sequences of activity, recognition, decision, and adjustment without having “think about it”. We reflect on our actions, thinking back on what we have done to discover how our knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome. Our “thinking back” enables us to reshape what we are doing while we are doing it. This he calls “reflect-in-action”.

In an article on “Tracing Reflective Thinking” Davidson & Scripp (1990:51) discuss the Arts Propel approach to arts education in the United States and recount that this approach to arts education is based on the assumption that the essence of artistic experience is contained in the activity of *making the art*. Arts Propel music teachers taking this approach create what are called domain projects in order to better view and assess artistic production. Although production forms the centre of the activity, it must also be buttressed by the student’s perceptions and thoughts about the decisions taking place. Accordingly, domain projects are based on the premise that *production, perception, and reflection* must all be present in significant learning. To this they (1995:51) add: “Musicians must also possess a highly developed sense of self and a knowledge of their individual working process, strengths, and weakness. Therefore, Arts Propel domain

projects place a high value on reflection as an essential intrapersonal aspect of understanding one's work in the domain in terms of self-knowledge and self-assessment."

4.1.4 Practicum

According to Schön (1987:36-37) when someone learns a practice, he/she is initiated into the traditions of a community of practitioners and the practice world they inhabit. He/she learns their conventions, constraints, languages, and appreciative systems and their repertoire of exemplars, systematic knowledge, and patterns of knowing-in-action.

Schön (1987:37) defines a practicum as "a setting designed for the task of learning a practice". Learners learn in situations that approximate real, authentic practices. A practicum is thus a virtual world relatively free of the pressures, distractions, and risks of the real one, to which it refers. Therefore, when learners enter a practicum, they are presented, explicitly or implicitly, with certain fundamental tasks. They must learn to recognize competent practice. "They must build an image of it, an appreciation of where they stand in relation to it, and a map of the path by which they can get from where they are to where they want to be" (Schön, 1987:38). The practicum is also mostly a group or social endeavour. The learner is exposed to and immersed in the practices of the community.

Teaching music, specifically composition, would rely heavily on learners immersing themselves in the practices of authentic music making, apprenticeship procedures and developing thinking processes and skills through reflection on their progress and actions.

4.2 MUSICAL LITERACY

In research by Barbara Kaplan (1988:57) in Alabama U.S.A. in primary schools during 1980, it was found that 48% of parents indicated that they wanted their children to

develop music reading skills, however only 12% of classroom teachers acknowledged efforts to develop such skills. Although this is a primary school situation in the U.S.A. the point is made that music literacy is a skill that is not only fundamental in most music education curricula, but is also a skill society and the community value and that most parents want for their children.

Music literacy was far more promoted and developed in general music education earlier this century in South Africa specifically through the teaching of tonic-solfa singing to school children as is apparent in literature as far back as *The teaching of School Singing* by C. Birchall Hudson (1962). The aim was to enhance music literacy and to improve singing. As late as the sixties and seventies the general class music syllabi of South Africa concentrated on singing as a primary activity in music education. As Birchall Hudson (1962:1) points out in his book for South African music teachers, the purpose of teaching music as singing is firstly:

“that children may come to enjoy singing as a recreation, and to know and enjoy music. Second, it is that children may learn to be able to read music fluently so that they can enjoy singing new music as well as known music; so much of the enjoyment of new music is lost when it has to be laboriously learnt owing to a lack of ability to read fluently at sight.”

It is noticed in this book *The Teaching of School Singing* that the work deals with the teaching of singing through the tonic-solfa system. Even earlier this century music literacy was deemed essential for the prospective teacher. Thus the School Teachers' Music Certificate was initiated in 1887:

“in order that teachers, and especially those in Schools under government inspection, and students in Training Colleges, might have their qualifications to teach singing by note satisfactorily tested and certified” (Venables, n.y.: vi).

British teachers were required to possess the School Teachers' Music certificate in which they were required to possess a knowledge of the tonic-solfa as well as of the staff notation, a resolution passed by the London County Council on April 30th, 1907.

This method and these aims were adapted and included the teachings of Kodály and perpetuated in South Africa by McLachlan who outlined these methods and approaches in his book “Klasonderrig in Musiek” (1986.) Although McLachlan did not *per se* perpetuate the British tonic-solfa system he was certainly an advocate for musical literacy. This book was supplemented by a series of five books “Fun with Notes” (1970), a primary school tonic-solfa singing tutor that has been in use for many years in South Africa reaching its prime in the seventies and early eighties.

As is apparent, music literacy has indeed been part of general education for many years, however the past decade or two has seen a decline in general class music and therefore also a decline in teaching music literacy to the masses. Music literacy is now more or less reserved for those few who elect Music as an examination subject in the high school. The exception is of course those pupils who take music privately or at music centres and who have been fortunate enough to have had individual music instruction in the primary school. However, this group is a small minority.

The current situation during the first year in high school is often one of general musical interest amongst pupils, but with no formal musical background. Learners start subject music in the high school as one of their electives, often knowing full well that they will not continue with the subject throughout high school, but nonetheless wishing for an introduction to the subject. Music should no longer be considered an elitist subject, but should be accessible to all learners. Basic skills, appreciation, literacy and creativity that could last learners a lifetime should be the main consideration in the music curriculum for these learners. As Chertkow (1997:92), a teacher who teaches high school music relates:

“I have become more and more aware of what I called a “gulf” between MUSIC in the real world and MUSIC in the classroom. We cannot go on in the schools with a syllabus drawn up by specialist musicians for the education of specialist musicians. This became even more obvious now that the ‘toelatingsvereistes’ have fallen away and anyone may take music as a subject in Std. 6 and 7”.

She questions further on in the article why these children should continue to be deprived of an opportunity to enhance the quality of their life-style by acquiring some knowledge

of the joys that music can bring. Fortunately, Curriculum 2005 provides enough scope for a broader and more outcomes-based approach that could provide these high school beginner musicians with music skills for life.

In an article by Jordan-DeCarbo (1997:34) she points out that we have often confused subject content with techniques and an ongoing struggle between rote and note ensues.

Studies by Mursell², Bruner³ and Gagné⁴ trace the cognitivist and associationist approaches of learning based on cyclical sequence in which the experience of sound occurs before notation. It was Gordon who adapted this learning sequence approach to music and audiation⁵.

The Gordon⁶ method is notable for its sound to symbol approach - a method that has had resounding success in many centres. It is based on sequential steps of learning that proceed from rote imitation of sound patterns, constant cycling back and forth between more advanced sound vocabulary back to known patterns also employing verbal sound patterns for duple, triple and unusual meters ending with labeling and symbolizing melodic and rhythmical concepts. The advantages of this approach are numerous: active music making as proposed by Elliott lies at the heart of this approach to learning music where labeling and symbolizing of musical concepts (literacy) follows logically after experiencing the sound.

² James L. Mursell. 1943. *Music in American Schools*. Morristown, New Jersey: Silver Burdett, p. 123.

³ Jerome S. Bruner. 1961. *The Process of Education*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 6,8,12,13.

⁴ Robert Gagné. 1965. *The Conditions of Learning*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

⁵ Audiation is the ability to "hear" music that is not physically present.

⁶ Edwin Gordon took the sequential levels of learning outlined by Gagné and adapted them to audiation and musical learning. Gordon's sequence of learning levels is as follows:

Discrimination learning:	Inference learning:
Aural/oral	Generalization
Verbal association	Creativity/improvisation
Partial synthesis	Theoretical understanding
Symbolic association	
Composite synthesis	

Publications by Edwin E. Gordon: 1977. *Learning Sequence and Patterns in Music*. Chicago: GIA Publications and 1980: *Learning Sequence in Music*. Chicago: GIA Publications.

Music teaching should indeed be functional first and theoretical second. “Pupils with little or no interest in music have been forced to struggle with the copying of scales which they did not understand, key signatures which they could not use, and music terms for which they had no use ” (Andrews, 1971:8). Andrews points out that pupils’ interest dissipate with such activities as copying clef signs over and over again, drawing the staff, etc. The knowledge remains academic until the need arises to *use* it. As Andrews (1971:8) puts it:

“ The Great Staff is a frame of reference for our system of the music notation; however, no one really needs to understand it unless he is going to make music with it. Making the music establishes the need for the staff.”

It is indeed the *need* for notation, for example when wanting to notate one’s own composition, that should motivate a learner towards music literacy.

As Jordan-DeCarbo (1997:54) concludes: “Gordon’s approach of sound (audiation)-to-symbol has the potential to accomplish musicianship and literacy – a challenge worthy of the greatest teacher.”

4.3 MULTICULTURAL APPROACHES

The present situation in music education, specifically also in music education in South African schools, demands a revolution in teaching approaches and materials to accommodate the diversity of cultural groups, age groups and mass education that the average teacher has to face.

The importance and relevance of multicultural teaching approaches in South Africa today demands its inclusion in this research. As stated in Chapter 1 point 8: “Composition allows learners to experience alternative music systems by which other cultures’ musical traditions are understood and appreciated through experience and application.”

Multiculturalism is also a prime focus of the Arts and Culture Learning Area as can be seen in Specific Outcomes no. 4 and 5:

4. Demonstrate an understanding of the origins, functions and dynamic nature of culture.
5. Acknowledge, understand and promote historically marginalised arts and cultural forms and practices.

The current situation in South Africa is to a large extent similar to the situation in Canada and the United States. Elliott (1989:13) maintains that we (music teachers) tend to teach a very narrow slice of the musics heard and practised in our multicultural societies. Also our traditional Western music making and listening practices share several idiosyncratic features: they pivot on syntactic structures (tonal melodies and functional harmony), they value re-creation over spontaneous creation; and they emphasize the control of musical environments. He adds that our prevailing philosophy of music education forces us to treat all music as “an aesthetic object of contemplation according to eighteenth century standards of taste and sponsorship”. Standifer (1991:14) supports this view when he refers to the music education situation in the United States of the 1960’s and 1970’s. He concludes that “few music curricula included content and processes that gave learners incentives to acquire the cultural literacy and aesthetic sensitivity they were so frequently said to lack in those days”.

Elliott (1989:17) concurs with Pratte’s⁷ multicultural philosophy which can be summarized as a concept of ‘dynamic multiculturalism’ emphasizing the need to convert subgroup affiliation into a community of interest through a shared commitment to a common purpose. The ideals of this philosophy hold that children ought to learn how to behave in group activities which include unfamiliar values, procedures and behaviours. They must learn to understand practices of all cultural varieties. The achievement of

⁷ Pratte, R. 1979. *Pluralism in Education: Conflict, Clarity and Commitment*. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas.

such procedural and situated understanding may enable children to apply their talents, skills and intelligence to a variety of shared community problems.

Several aspects in the study of ethnomusicology can guide the dedicated teacher in using composition as an **integrated, outcomes-based, multicultural** approach for teaching music.

4.3.1 Teaching method

In the study of various cultures, specifically African music, it is apparent that the learning process differs from the Western learning and teaching approach. Dargie (1995:22) asserts that musical learning must take place by observation, concentrated attention, the development of musical memory and practising until the ability to feel every variation of rhythm becomes something almost in the blood and bones of the learner; by listening until the ability to hear is developed to an extraordinary extent.

Nguza (1993:33) also describes the learning process as one of **imitation**:

“Typical of Africans, musicians learn by imitating others. For instance, when they learn a song, the leader sings one line three times, while others are listening. Then she sings a responding melody line. She sings the second line and the group joins in response. The two lines are joined and others respond in higher or lower voices spontaneously. Then, harmony is created. There is no formal allocation of voice parts. Each musician sings any part of his/her own choice, suitable to his/her voice.”

This teaching and learning approach, in effect, parallel the praxial methodology and the principals of cognitive apprenticeship⁸ as outlined by Elliott as the process involves initial and continuous active music making.

⁸ Refer to Chapter 4.1.2 for a detailed description of “cognitive apprenticeship”.

4.3.2 Teaching perspective

Teachers should keep in mind that traditional African teaching method, particularly in the initial phase, is always approached holistically: Dargie (1995:24) refers to this as Gestalt learning. This means that songs are learned as a whole, a *Gestalt*, a total experience, not something abstracted into its essential elements.

Standifer (1991:16) also refers to the aspect of holistic teaching to develop a comprehensive musicianship by explaining that there must be a synthesis of the various components of musicianship, i.e. listening, analysis, performance, and the **compositional processes** and **writing skills**. He states that a compartmentalized instruction is currently perpetuated in college curricula.

4.3.3 The teacher

The teacher attempting to teach a diversity of cultural music styles should be well prepared and trained for this through effective initial and in-service training of teachers (Hauptfleisch, 1991:64). Teachers would also have to take the initiative in preparing themselves for **outcomes-based, integrated** and **multicultural** music education that, according to Reimer (1970:145) “requires the music teacher to use all possible community resources to bolster his or her own capacities to cope”. Rommelaere (1989:15) supports this view when stating that true multi-cultural education depends on the willingness of music teachers to share, research and explore and a willingness to go back to school.

It cannot be emphasized enough that music educators should reach out to specialists and musicians in the community to assist in the teaching of music of other cultures. The need for tuition by specialists in the music of the relevant cultures is stressed. Music of different cultures should be presented, as far as possible, within their cultural context (Lucia, 1992:82). Rommelaere (1989:14) concurs by stating that multicultural music education is a laudable aim, but the question remains as to how it can realistically be put

into practice. He relates the story of students inside and outside universities not hesitating to approach the ethnomusicologist with the following words: “I want to teach my class to play African music next week. Can you show me what to do?” He concludes that approaching new music is always commendable; but this specific approach is insulting to both the ethnomusicologist and the African musician for it suggests that the complex skills the musician learnt since childhood in both formal and informal teaching can be reduced to a few short lessons. It also implies that the ethnomusicologist’s investigations into the social, linguistic, historical, psychological and musicological frameworks that underlie expressive cultures can be reduced to mere essentials.

Lucia (1992:82) supports this notion of using specialists in cultural spheres and focuses on the integration of the various cultural aspects in a lesson when a specialist is present:

“...an integrated cultural lesson might for example, be a 2-hour session in Standard 10, on **isicathamiya** that taught the history of it (in relation to South African history), the movement, the costume, the origins of the music, something of the importance of the poetry, and explained the religious or social significance. The session could be conducted by the teacher(s) in conjunction with an expert in this music (i.e. a local musician who leads a choir), and could be followed up by a second or third session where the class learns a song or a local choir comes and gives a performance.”

4.3.4 Language and culture

In music from an oral tradition it is important to keep in mind that music forms an integral part of the folk art and folklore. Music is also, in traditional oral-based cultures, an important form of communication and the importance and significance of a song often lie in the meaning of the words. Teachers would need to be particularly sensitive to this aspect in teaching. Determining the meaning of the text, the cultural and traditional connotations and functions of the song as it is traditionally and historically used, would be of paramount importance. Xulu (1990:35) states: “Music in Africa is deeply entangled, in the form of a network with other political, religious and social issues. This means that the study of music in Africa has to take into consideration the philosophies of

the Africans, the musical language of the Africans, the socio-political values of the Africans.”

4.3.5 Cultural intermixing and acculturation

In teaching and learning the musical repertoire of different cultures, it is mostly the case that no music is purely and completely untouched and uninfluenced by other cultures. Interaction and intermixing of cultures often lead to new musical forms and genres e.g. jazz. Another South African example would be tonic-solfa singing, what Pewa (1995:29) refers to as a living example of a method of singing that was adopted from a foreign culture and is now part of black culture in South Africa. This demonstrates that culture is not static, but dynamic and confined to a time space.

4.3.6 Own culture

Reimer (1970:145) warns that teachers could become so multicultural in their outlook that they forget to teach the music of his/her inherited subculture. Reimer (1970:145) also expresses it very clearly that to truly recognize cultural diversity at its deepest level – the affective level – it is necessary to recognize the own culture and to share this with others.

Barbara Kaplan (1988:60) in a study on “The Community as Educator” writes on “The role of Analysis in Understanding Musical Mother Tongue”. She identifies the following steps:

- Acquiring an understanding of the music that we call our own. The analysis of our folk and composed music provides a basis for greater accuracy of performance, for greater understanding of style, for the explanation of cultural differences in a literate, objective, musical way.

- Once we have acquired an understanding of our own music, we may use it for the purposes of curriculum planning, of sequencing materials for the development of music literacy skills, of developing both reading and writing skills in music.
- Use the understanding of our own music as a basis of comparing it to that of other traditions.

Woodward (1993:37) concurs and proposes that culturally foreign music should be preceded by teaching the music of learner's own cultures. The music of the learner's own culture should be given respect and position in the classroom if a receptivity towards the music of other cultures is expected.

4.3.7 Prejudice

Teachers and learners should be aware of the rights and merits of all cultural groups and their musics. This is a social lesson which learners would have to learn in their music education: that all people are universally the same and culturally different. Nettl (1964:11) warns that objectivity and the avoidance of value judgments based on a person's own cultural background and the acceptance of music as a part of culture is essential.

Heunis (1997:61) maintains that music envisaged for a multicultural society is not a hierarchy of music – with “classical” or “serious” music in the Western European tradition at the top and all other music ranked lower. He defines music as a universal medium of expression through sound expressing the deepest feelings and aspirations that come from and belong to all humanity.

Reimer (1970:179) supports this view: “The idea is to explore all musics freely and openly and with a non-prejudiced attitude, seeking for musical understanding and enjoyment wherever it can be found.”

This author is in agreement with above authors on issues regarding multi-cultural approaches in teaching as this is particularly important in South African schools today.

4.4 SUMMARY

The above issues, i.e. how we learn, cognitive apprenticeship, reflective thinking and music literacy are all situated in a multicultural setting and are articulated as fundamental issues in developing any music educational program.

Skills and knowledge have to be acquired through an apprenticeship where learning is embedded in its **social** and **functional** context. Strategies and processes for solving problems and applying cognitive skills should be situated in the contexts of their use. Learning should also take place through **guided** experience. Production, perception and reflection are all present in significant learning and as such should form the basis of a composition program. The composition program thus becomes a practicum: a setting designed for the task of learning a practice in a realistic, authentic situation. This implies that learners would have to immerse themselves in the practices of authentic **music making**, apprenticeship procedures and developing thinking processes and skills through reflection on their progress and actions – the very basis of a praxial curriculum.

CHAPTER 5

DESIGNING A COMPOSITION PROGRAM IN FOUR STAGES

This chapter deals with the design of the composition program based on the four stages of curriculum development as proposed by Elliott.

- Stage one summarizes the orientation phase: the essence of the curriculum viz. aims, knowledge, learners, teaching-learning processes, teachers, evaluation and learning context.
- Stage two involves the preparation and planning phase where concrete decisions about the content, order of learning material and evaluation of learning are made.
- Stage three considers teaching and learning, the heart of the curriculum. At this point the composition program's implementation and broad structuring is described. Lesson Units based on the premise of skill building through **guided composition** are set out in increasingly complex lesson units showing typical assignments.
- Stage four describes evaluation and assessment.

5.1 STAGE ONE: ORIENTATION

When developing a curriculum model one is first and foremost confronted with the organization and problems of curriculum making. A curriculum is in essence something teachers and learners experience together in the teaching situation. Joseph Schwab¹ puts forward the idea of curriculum commonplaces, meaning factors that are always present in any teaching-learning experience, to which Elliott (1995:254) adds.

¹ Schwab, J.J. 1962. "The Teaching of Science as Enquiry" in *The Teaching of Science*. J.J. Schwab and P Brandwein (eds.). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

These are then:

- aims
- knowledge
- learners
- teaching-learning processes
- teachers
- evaluation
- learning context .

Elliott (1995:255) states that one word for “specific teaching-learning situation” is *curriculum*. He proposes that, at root, a curriculum is something “that teachers and learners experience in particular situations as a result of the interactions between and among curriculum commonplaces”.

The first phase towards making a praxial curriculum is the orientation phase that questions the philosophical foundation of a music education. That means that the nature, essence, aims and values of music are considered.

The curriculum commonplaces can be expanded on as follows:

5.1.1 Aims

Elliott proposes that self-growth, self-knowledge, and flow are the central values of music education and therefore also the aims of music education. These aims are the primary aims of any teaching situation. He (1995:259) reasons that these aims are “accessible, achievable, and applicable to all learners provided that musical knowledge is developed progressively and in balanced relation to authentic musical challenges”.

It is of interest to compare the general aims of the current WCED music syllabus:

- to broaden and enrich the pupils’ general musical background by developing their musical knowledge through the various disciplines of music.

- to help pupils to develop specific skills in each of the components of music, by means of their knowledge and understanding of music.
- to lead pupils to develop an aesthetic appreciation of music with the aid of their acquired knowledge, comprehension and skills.

It is notable that the aims of the current syllabus adhere more to the specific outcomes of Curriculum 2005 than to the philosophical foundation of a music education. Curriculum 2005 states its rationale for arts and culture education as:

“Arts and Culture Education and Training invests in creative growth and development related to the needs of learners and the communities in which they live. It prepares learners for the world of work, as well as for the social and political participation in a dynamic and rapidly changing global society. Arts and Culture are an integral part of life, embracing the spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional aspects of human society. Culture embodies not only expression through the arts, but also modes of life, behavioural patterns, heritage, knowledge and belief systems” (Arts and Culture document, 1997:3).

As stated in specific outcomes no. 7 of Curriculum 2005 it can be noted that learners must be able to “demonstrate an ability to access creative arts and cultural processes to develop *self-esteem*...”

A personal approach to teaching within the broad aims of music education is therefore to teach in such a way as to offer learners the opportunity to actively learn music. Mastering musical challenges, offering an opportunity of self-expression, offering opportunities for social musical interaction by means of, for example, orchestral and ensemble playing, and above all offering an opportunity for self-development and the acquisition of new knowledge lie at the heart of a praxial approach.

Gardner (1993:259) supports the view that curriculum should involve understandings and not “thinly veiled ideology, isolated bits of knowledge, or rote, ritualized, or conventional performance”.

5.1.2 Knowledge

Elliott (1995:259) states that Musicianship² is the key to achieving the aims and values of music education and is also a form of procedural knowledge that leans on other forms of knowledge and is always context-sensitive or situated. It develops by progressive musical problem solving and authentic teaching situations where diverse musical practices are taught. Formal knowledge and verbal conceptualizing are always secondary to real, active music making.

The specific outcomes of Outcomes-Based Education in South Africa refers to the acquisition of knowledge, techniques and skills to actively participate in the processes and products of the Arts and Culture domain. Specific Outcome no.2 clearly states that creative processes have to be developed in Arts and Culture.

The interim syllabus of the WCED however, favours a focus on a more academic, formal approach to music education. The subject music is divided into different components namely Practical (Instrumental), Aural, Theory and Harmony and General Music Knowledge. Each component has a number of requirements to be mastered in the forms of formal knowledge, verbal, intellectual concepts, skills and specific abilities. A compartmentalized, extensive and non-integrated subject is often the result. Gardner, as quoted by Elliott (1995:260), opposes the idea of compartmentalization as “artistic forms of knowledge and expression are less sequential, more holistic and organic, than other forms of knowing...and that to attempt to fragment them and to break them into separate concepts of subdisciplines is especially risky”.

An obvious lack in the current music syllabus is in the “creative” area of music: composition, improvisation, arrangement, group music making, etc. often leaves learners frustrated with regards to their music education. Elliott (1995:259) also regards composition, improvisation and arranging as inherent parts of musicianship and these activities should therefore be integral components of music education.

² Refer to Chapter 4.3.3 for a more detailed account of Musicianship.

Personal experience has shown composition³ to be a particularly effective medium for integrating the various components of the subject. Composition offers the opportunity to learn music in an integrated way by combining many aspects of music. For example: freestyle creative work, musical literacy, application of theoretical knowledge, creating pieces for solo or group performance, acquiring knowledge about instruments and playing techniques, discovering and developing technological knowledge by using the computer and keyboard, doing multimedia work e.g. making backtracks to compositions, arranging own compositions e.g. by adding parts, writing variations on a theme, etc. These are only some of the possibilities which learners can explore. Compiling a portfolio of compositions also adds to learners' appreciation of their work and offers the opportunity to have numbers of completed pieces ready at any given time to perform.

The way in which knowledge is thus acquired is through the *explore* and *application* process, an experiential approach according to Gardner (1993:246). He states that many learners learn best with a hands-on approach, dealing directly with the materials that embody or convey the concepts. This is the reverse of the current theoretical, formal, memorization type of approach, and focuses more on outcomes through hands-on learning through exploration, experimentation and application. The current approach is, in this author's opinion, too isolated from a real, authentic musical experience to ever contribute to a lifelong love and participation in music for all. Elliott (1995:260) agrees that formal knowledge should be acquired through integration during active and authentic music making.

5.1.3 The learners

Teaching musicianship is applicable to all learners and attainable by all learners. Learners should be taught in such a way as to become reflective musical practitioners or musical apprentices. At the heart of all music education should be active music making in the forms of performance, composition, improvisation, arranging or conducting, the five musical practices identified by Elliott (1995:40), where learners learn to create, do,

³ Composition as used by this author in "guided composition assignments": Refer to chapter 5.3.2

practice and produce as apprentices in a teaching-learning situation. Gardner as quoted by Elliott (1995:260) states that “in the arts, production ought to lie at the center of any artistic experience.”

Curriculum 2005 supports this when considering Specific Outcome no.3: “Reflect on and engage critically with arts experience and work”. The new curriculum for Arts and Culture focuses far more than the previous syllabus on creative productivity and activities of pupils in the learning situation and process.

In a personal approach that focuses on an interactive, integrated learning style through experimenting and exploring in composition, the learners are encouraged from the start to work as musical apprentices. Learners are taught to work in a disciplined, structured way in individual work projects. Attention is also given to group projects in the form of ensemble work where there is often opportunity to explore different musical practices from various cultures. For example, the Recorder Consort explores the world of Renaissance and Baroque music: articulation, style, basso continuo, etc. actively making music. The woodwind ensemble explores jazz and blues styles and learns the specific playing techniques, harmonies and rhythms of these genres. Rhythm is learnt by grouping together players on the African Drums. They learn metre, rhythmic patterns, beat, time units, syncopation, accents, etc. through actively making music.

5.1.4 Teaching-learning processes

Elliott (1995:261) warns that music education is not only primarily concerned with developing musicianship and musical creativity in the present. An integral part of the music teacher’s task is to continue developing the learners’ musicianship in the future. Musical understanding is essentially the foundation of a lifelong interest and participation in music. Real musical understanding starts when progressive problem-solving, finding and reduction takes place. All these processes are dependent on active participation in challenging classroom opportunities for learners to participate in musical activities that reflect real, authentic musical situations. It is in such authentic music making situations

that learners develop procedural, formal, informal, impressionistic and supervisory musical knowledge. Gardner (1993:245) writes extensively on the topic of “education for understanding” and identifies five entry points for individual knowledge. He explains the topic as a room with at least five doors or entry points into it. They are:

- a **narrational** entry point: conveying information by storytelling. In music education that could include tracing the course of musical developments, composers, the origins of music by telling it as a story.
- a **logical-quantitative** entry point: conveying information by invoking numerical or logical-deductive reasoning processes. One would, for example, explain theoretical or harmonic concepts by explaining intervals, key relationships, chords, chord relationships, melodic contour, etc. from a numerical or graphic point of view.
- a **foundational** entry point: explaining new material by examining the philosophical and terminological facets of the concept. In composition class one could teach a new composition from a philosophical or foundational viewpoint by tracing basic cultural differences in musical style and discussing how certain styles might have originated traditionally, how people perceive their different musical styles and how musical style is influenced by its purpose of function.
- an **aesthetic** entry point: this features a sensory approach. Music, by its very nature, in fact demands this entry point to teaching at some stage. Music is experienced by hearing, seeing, playing, and creating.
- an **experiential** entry point: this is the more hands-on approach whereby learners have the opportunity to explore and experience new material and *discover* the concepts. In composition class this would be a natural approach, as learners would experiment with design, form, melodic and rhythmic material in composing. Secondary products would be a hands-on experience with notation, the functions of theoretical devices and a discovering way of learning formal concepts.

Gardner (1993:247) adds that: “The knowledgeable biologist or political scientist is characterized precisely for his capacity to access the critical concepts through a variety of routes and to apply them to a diversity of situations.”

Learning processes are by their very nature channels leading to understanding and knowledge – the basis of all education. Gardner ⁴, as quoted by Elliott (1995:262) claims that learning is more effective when learners are “engaged by rich and meaningful projects; when their artistic learning is anchored in artistic production; when there is an easy commerce among the various forms of knowing...; and when students have ample opportunity to reflect on their progress.” The true value of real musical understanding and skill lies in the advantage of lifelong music making from which the learner can benefit. Apart from the lifelong skill, ability and enjoyment, there is also the added advantage of being an entrepreneur. Music engineering and the ability to teach, compose, play in orchestras, sing in choirs are all areas open to the entrepreneur.

Curriculum 2005, in Specific Outcome no. 6, also holds this view: “Use art skills and cultural expressions to make an economic contribution to self and society.”

5.1.5 Teachers

Elliott (1995:262) states that “**musicianship**” and “**educatorship**” are interdependent. A teacher needs to have a developed musicianship. This forms part of the idea of musical apprenticeship: learners need to follow the expert example of the teacher. Schön (1987:214) in *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* refers to this as the “Follow me” approach. He says:

“Follow me lends itself to just this circumstance. Its dominant pattern is demonstration and imitation; its underlying message is ‘Do as I am doing,’ whether communicated explicitly, or implicitly. The invitation to imitate is also, in its way, an invitation to experiment; for in order to ‘follow,’ the student must construct in

⁴ Gardner, H. 1990. *Art Education and Human Development*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Trust, p. 41

her own performance what she takes to be the essential features of the coach's demonstration.”

Teachers also need knowledge about educatorship, which means knowledge about child development, psychology, etc. In the daily teaching situation the teacher is confronted with the role of problem identifier, assessor, leader, evaluator, accompanist, example and so forth. Challenges and development opportunities are created for the learners to help motivate and teach them on their road to musicianship. Gardner (1993:246) describes a teacher's role as a “student-curriculum broker, ever vigilant for educational prosthetics – texts, films, software – that can help convey the relevant contents, in as engaging and effective a way as possible”.

It seems obvious that an educator's role is ever changing, fluctuating and adapting to accommodate learners' different and varied needs. To enable an educator to be equipped for this ever-changing role a continuous learning process is needed.

5.1.6 Evaluation

Elliott (1995:264) clearly differentiates between **evaluation** and **assessment**. He defines **assessment** as a process of data gathering with immediate feedback. In contrast, the primary feature of evaluation is grading, ranking and other summary procedures for promoting learners in the school situation. **Assessment** seems the more effective and useful procedure because feedback is particularly important to keep the enjoyment and satisfaction in the process of learning music. Learners need constant feedback on their efforts so as to assist them in being able to evaluate their own efforts, thereby supporting their thinking-in-action and assisting them in being reflective practitioners. Feedback is given in the form of notes, advice, dialogue, correction, example, encouragement, etc. In fact, assessment is an integral part of any teaching-learning situation: it happens continuously in the teaching situation.

Elliott (1995:265) is of the opinion that there is no justification for using standardized tests in music. He argues that conventional tests rely too heavily on linguistic thinking.

He (1995:265) quotes Gardner⁵: “Assessment must be targeted directly at the student’s artistic thinking-in-action.”

Another problem which Elliott (1995:265) highlights is the aspect of alternating periods of instruction and evaluation – pauses for testing. This means freezing the teaching-learning process to examine a learner out of context. Fortunately, the current outcomes-based approach in the new curriculum in South Africa supports the idea of a continuous assessment where learners can prove over a longer period of time, within context, in various hands-on situations their levels of skill and knowledge. The emphasis is also on **formative**, not **summative** evaluation: formative evaluation includes projects, tasks, worksheets, orals, performances, etc.

Curriculum 2005 strongly supports the idea of assessment rather than an exclusively summative examination evaluation, as has been the case for many years in South African schools. The new curriculum defines assessment as the process whereby a variety of information about learners is collected, documented, organized and interpreted to make informed decisions about learners’ work, achievements and development needs (WCED, 1998:2). Furthermore, assessment needs to be activity-based and must conform to the following prerequisites. It must be:

- reasonable
- accountable
- dependable

Activities-based assessment includes, for example, selected response items, constructed responses, products, tasks and process-directed activities (WCED 1998:3).

Another method of assessment that is recommended in Curriculum 2005 is the compilation of learner **portfolios**. The WCED (1998:3) defines a portfolio as a collection

⁵ Gardner, H. 1991. “Assessment in Context: The Alternative to Standardized Testing”, in B. Gifford (ed.): *Report of the Commission on Testing and Public Policy*, p. 15.

of learners' work that offers a profile of his/her effective, successful efforts, progress and achievements over a certain period of time. It also demonstrates what the learner can achieve with knowledge and skills and how effective his/her working methods are. The focus in a learner portfolio is on:

- the learners' thought processes
- development over a time period
- remarkable development stages
- reference for learners, parents, teachers, etc.

Self-assessment also forms an integral part of the successful portfolio. Stages in self-assessment outlined by the WCED (1998:4) include:

- collecting and sorting examples of work in a provisional file;
- generalizing strong and weaker points as it transpires from assessed tasks;
- selecting work from the provisional files towards the end of a learner stage;
- a final reflective assessment (oral or written);
- setting aims for the following learning stage;
- the teachers' evaluation of the learners' self-assessment.

In teaching composition the value of compiling portfolios is particularly important. Learners can collect compositions, select the very best to include in a portfolio and follow their progress in this portfolio. The portfolio offers immediate feedback on teacher, self and peer assessment as comments, suggestions, critique, etc. accompany each example.

Gardner (1993:239) also notes that two distinct arenas, assessment and curriculum, currently exist. He describes domain projects as extended curricular sequences based upon a concept or practice that is central to a discipline whereby learners also encounter many opportunities for assessment – self-assessment and assessment by peers, as well as assessment by teachers and even by outside experts. Furthermore, Gardner (1993:252) also supports the idea of portfolios which he refers to as **process-folios**: “An introduction

into the classroom of meaningful projects, cooperative forms of interaction, and processfolios that document student progress can all sensitize students to their own thought processes and to the ways in which their conceptions mesh or collide with disciplinary knowledge”.

5.1.7 Learning context

The praxial curriculum, as explained by Elliott (1995:266), centres on attaining self-growth and musical enjoyment in the active process of music making. Teachers and learners work together to meet musical challenges in realistic musical situations by being reflective practitioners of various musical forms. Every work or musical project can be seen as a multi-dimensional challenge to be met, from which interpretive, structural, cultural, representative and expressive knowledge can be gained. Formal knowledge is continuously filtered into the active music making process.

The praxial curriculum is specifically designed in such a way as to situate learners in real, authentic music making contexts. Seen from this perspective the teaching-learning context is in itself a key to music education. It can be surmised that any teaching-learning situation should be situated in authentic practices to give meaning to the enterprise.

The current WCED music curriculum offers ample opportunity for the pursuit of Western classical music. However, the study of music of other cultures is lacking. In the subject music syllabus it can be seen from a study of the suggested repertoire that the emphasis is on Western Classical music. It is notable that in recent years the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity and UNISA syllabi have taken a move toward providing a wider and culturally more diverse selection by introducing jazz, blues, ragtime, etc. The examination board of light and popular music in South Africa, A.L.M.S.A.⁶, proves this tendency towards a more diverse music education style. Curriculum 2005 offers wider scope for practicing

⁶ Academy of Light Music of South Africa

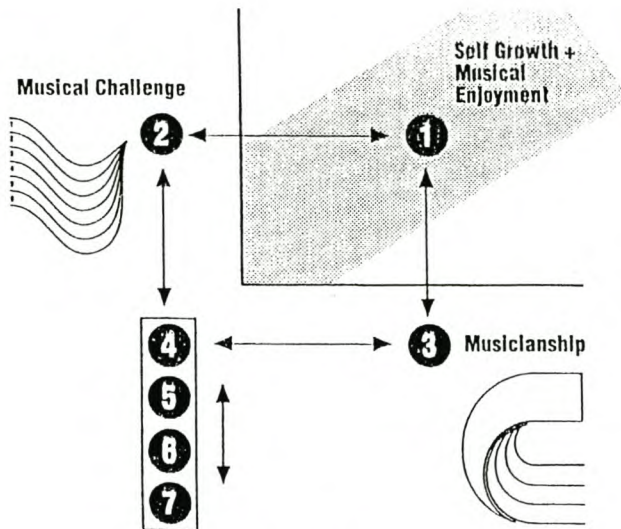
music in a diversity of styles. No limitations are placed on repertoire; in fact, it is encouraged to teach a culturally wide scope of works.

5.2 STAGE TWO: PREPARATION AND PLANNING

In the second phase of curriculum making, the preparation and planning phase, concrete decisions about the content, material, order and evaluation of learning are made. These concrete decisions thus imply the **what**, **how**, and **when**. **What** is going to be learned: the content, **how** it is going to be taught, the materials to be used, and **how** it will be evaluated, and **when**, meaning the order or sequence of learning. Elliott (1995:272) suggests a seven-point plan to formulate and order the curriculum commonplaces as interactive practical considerations.

1. Decide on the types of musicing that will take place.
2. Decide on the musical practices and the musical challenges that must be mastered.
3. Decide on the components of musicianship that the learners will have to master.
4. Decide on the goals of the teaching.
5. Reflect on the teaching-learning strategies that will have to be followed.
6. Reflect on alternative learning strategies that will have to be followed.
7. Decide how the learners' developing musicianship will be evaluated and assessed.

Elliott (1995:273) illustrates the interactivity of the different components in the preparing and planning of the Music Curriculum-as-practicum diagrammatically as:



Preparing and Planning the Music Curriculum-as-Practicum

It can be seen that self-growth and musical enjoyment are in direct relation to the balance between musical challenges and musicianship: when the musical challenges are too few, boredom sets in. When musical challenges are too steep, anxiety and frustration sets in.

Elliott (1995:272) states that there are four good reasons why preparation and planning of the curriculum could be followed by means of the diagram. These are:

1. It reminds teachers that the primary reasons for music and the fundamental values of music education (viz. self-growth, self-development and musical enjoyment) are attainable through developing learners' musicianship. The latter being in direct relation to the musical challenges which the learner has to face.
2. This diagram can be used as a daily work scheme for lesson preparation and planning.
3. By viewing these seven preparation and planning points in their interactive roles, teachers are reminded of the necessity to spiral backwards and forwards between these various points as the need arises in the teaching situation.
4. This approach is open and flexible. Teachers can combine any of the seven points or even add any points.

The seven points to formulate and order the curriculum commonplaces are expanded upon below.

5.2.1 Selecting the types of music that will be practised

There are basically five choices when selecting the types of musicing that will take place in the teaching-learning situation. These are performance, improvisation, conducting, composition and arrangement (Elliott, 1995:40). All five can naturally not be utilized at the same time; therefore the type of activity must be selected. In using a compositional approach, the order of activity could, for example, be: learners could *compose* a four bar phrase according to certain parameters set out by the teacher; they could then *perform* the written melody to the class; the teacher and peers could then discuss possible ways to improve the melody; the learner could then *arrange* the composition for duet or ensemble; it could become a group project where different arrangements for the same melody are made and then performed by the group. One of the learners could *conduct* the final performance. These are possible steps in working towards a creative learning product. These steps need not take place within one or two lessons but could easily be a long-term project.

It is usually more functional and purposeful to combine two or three forms of musicing when preparing and planning a lesson. From a compositional point of view it is indeed essential to reach a *performance* stage where learners can *hear* their efforts.

5.2.2 Selecting the musical practices and musical challenges

Musical practices and musical challenges are in essence the curriculum *matter* of the practicum. The practicum centers on the actions of learners and teachers in relation to selected teaching matter. Elliott (1995:275) identifies four points to consider when selecting the teaching matter:

- what music is inherently significant and worthwhile teaching?
- what music is significant now and for the future?
- what music is relevant considering the cultural identities of the learners?
- what music can be offered considering the teacher's musicianship?

To illustrate:

Using the compositional model as teaching approach, we select the **(A) musical practices** and **(B) musical challenges** and **(C) types of musicing** in planning a one-year course for beginner musicians in the Grade 8 school year.

(A) Musical practices selected after considering the diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the learners:

- Folk music: Afrikaans, Malay and Xhosa music.
- Western Classical music: Baroque music, also easy arrangements of other classical works.
- Easy arrangements of popular music.
- Jazz and blues.
- Technical studies based on scales, triads, rhythms, etc.

(B) Musical challenges selected indicated overleaf.

(C) Types of musicing are underlined:

(A)

<p>MUSICAL PRACTICE</p> <p>SOUND</p>

(B)

<p>MUSICAL CHALLENGE</p> <p>NOTATION</p>
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1. Folk music:

Perform a selection of folk melodies.

- Notate a well-known melody by ear.
 - Perform this in class, compose a counter melody (simple chords), and arrange for a number of players.

2. Western Classical music:

Perform arrangements from the classical, romantic and modern eras.

-Compose short phrases with chordal base. Bass styles e.g. arpeggio, block chord, Alberti, broken chords.

Listen to classical music.

Baroque music:

Perform short pieces and learn techniques such as Baroque articulation, legato/staccato, ornamentation, background to Baroque music (integrating current Gr. 8 General Music Knowledge syllabus)

-Give a short Baroque type motif: learners compose a 4 bar phrase by using motive development e.g. inversion, sequence, repetition, etc.

-Compose short 4 bar phrases: insert articulation, dynamic signs, ornamentation. Perform as a technical study.

Perform Baroque duets, trios.

-Compose ensemble music: duets, trios, for class performance on existing

Baroque melodies by using a simple I-IV-V harmonic base.

Conduct ensemble pieces.

3. Popular music:

Perform and improvise easy arrangements.

-arrange well known popular tunes. Store a chordal bass on MIDI which can be used as a backtrack during performance. Learn instrumentation, polyphony (multi tracks), chords by using keyboards and MIDI.

4. Jazz and blues:

Perform and improvise.

-learners compose a I-IV-V chord series and improvise on the notes of a triad in different rhythmic patterns.

Use a jazz melody and compose variations on the theme.

-compose variations (rhythmic and melodic) on a theme.
-arrange a theme.

Play the blues scale.

Improvise on the blues scale.

-compose scale studies on the blues scale.

5. Technical work:

Play and improvise with scales, triads, interval and rhythmic studies.

-compose studies e.g. scale studies, triad studies, interval studies, rhythmic variations.

5.2.3 Components of musicianship

The components of musicianship are in effect WHAT we teach, thus the specific learning material. The specific details of each lesson closely depend on the nature of the exact work that is to be taught.

The details of subject matter to be taught in a lesson are illustrated by combining these with the goals in the next point: Teaching-learning goals.

5.2.4 Teaching-learning goals

Elliott (1995:278) explains that the short and long term action goals of each lesson depends on a teacher's understanding of the musical challenges of the practicum, the dimensions of musical meaning inherent in these challenges and the musicianship which learners will need to possess in order to meet these challenges. Verbal concepts about musical works should not be used to organize the practicum. In fact, verbal concepts should be filtered in to assist in the teaching and explaining situation and to assist a learner in the learning process. With the action priority of the practicum teachers should consider verbal concepts as additional learning material to be filtered in contextually and parenthetically.

To illustrate:

When combining **components of musicianship** and **teaching-learning goals**, one could draw up the following plan in the preparation and planning phase of the curriculum using the compositional program as an approach.

Each lesson in the Grade 8 year for beginner musicians focuses primarily on

- mastering the technical difficulties of the instrument;
- acquiring music literacy skills using a sound to symbol approach;
- mastering creative skills.

COMPONENTS OF MUSICIANSHIP	OUTCOMES VERBAL CONCEPTS
1. Perform Baroque pieces.	Learners must be able to: Play legato and staccato Use tonguing/articulation Execute simple ornaments e.g. mordents. Compose simple four bar symmetrical melodies and add articulation, dynamic and ornamentation signs in the style of Baroque music.
2. Perform Classical, Romantic and Modern pieces.	Understand formal structures e.g. motif, sequence, repetition. Perform slurs and phrasing stylistically. Be able to compose a sequence, repetition, inversion and octave transposition on a two bar melodic motif.
3. Folk music: learners will experience a wide spectrum folk music and will learn the simplicity of folk melodies and harmonies.	Understand all basic notes and note values. Understand keys. Understand intervals by discovering them in different scales e.g. pentatonic; whole tone, Afro-diatonic, major, etc. Compose short scale melodies in a number of different scales and experiment at the keyboard with instrumentation to create suitable arrangements.
4. Popular music: learners will learn to play a diversity of popular musical styles.	Understand and be able to write all basic chords. Learn about melodic contour. Understand basic harmonies. Understand more about keys. Learn basic non-chordal tones. Compose short songs in a popular style by setting a poem or own words to music and harmonizing with IV V and I.
5. Jazz and blues: perform pieces in the syncopated, rhythmic style of jazz.	Explore syncopation. Discover and use blues notes. Experiment with chromatic notes. Improvise with basic harmonies. Compose four bar bass riffs to use in improvisation.

5.2.5 Teaching-learning strategies

Strategies in the learning process involve the techniques and methods which teachers use to assist learners in the process of problem finding, problem-reduction and problem-solving. Six teaching strategies as identified by Collins, Brown & Newman (1989:481-483) and adapted by Elliott (1995:279-280) can be identified:

5.2.5.1 Modeling

The teacher is the expert example of musical thinking-in-action during performance, composition, arranging, conducting and/or improvisation. It also involves the interaction between setting an example and leading by question and answer.

Composition allows an interactive, cognitive apprenticeship approach between teacher and learner. For example: the teacher *performs* a piece and learner and teacher *discuss* the nature, techniques, mood, harmonies, etc. in the piece. The teacher can *demonstrate* specifics such as executing trills or mordents, tongueing, tonal gradation, etc. A specific motif can be extracted from the piece and the learner can have the opportunity to *compose* answering phrases, repetition, sequences, variations, etc. on the motif. This composition could then be used to supplement the performance piece for evaluation. The composition can be arranged for more than one player should it be a group class and the final arranged piece could be performed as a group project.

5.2.5.2 Coaching

This comprises the diagnosing and assessing of processes and products of learners' musical thinking. Coaching takes place by suggestions, reminders, examples, encouragement, hints, etc. In this way learners' music making becomes a closer resemblance of artistic and creative achievement. Collins, Brown & Newman (1989:481) state that "Coaching focuses on the enactment and integration of skills in the service of a well-understood goal through highly interactive and highly situated feedback and

suggestions.” For example: when looking at a learner’s composition where he/she attempted to compose a four-bar phrase based on I-IV-V harmonies, the teacher would remind the learner that each bar should have its own harmony, use the notes of the triads, whilst remembering that the notes of the triad may be spread in different rhythms, etc.

5.2.5.3 Scaffolding

This includes any teaching aids, media and/or apparatus that can be used to assist the learner in the learning process. An important aspect in teacher support is that it must be authentic and holistic. Teachers use aids such as instruments, metronomes, stereo and sound equipment, computers, MIDI technology, etc. From personal experience the benefits of technology are immediately recognizable when working with teenage beginner musicians because:

- teenagers are naturally intrigued by technology and apparatus, as Wirt (1998:38) acknowledges when stating that learners are intrigued with the way computers notate, arrange, and play their works;
- boys in particular are fascinated and more than willing to get involved in computer-based composition;
- technology in the classroom can attract more learners than just the musically gifted because creating music is a simpler process according to Harris (1994:37).
- teenagers are both intellectually and "motorically" (physically) suited to manipulating and handling of even the most complex keyboards, computer software, etc.
- teenagers are naturally drawn to electronically produced music as pop, rock and techno music fill their teenage worlds.

5.2.5.4 **Fading** (Elliott, 1995:280)

The teacher plays a diminishing role in the support process until the learner achieves and masters a music-making and problem-solving task. For example, the beginner composer needs many parameters within which to write meaningful music. The teacher supplies the four bars, a treble clef, a time signature, a key signature and a suggested rhythm above the staff. The learner has one problem-solving task, namely to use the notes of the scale to write a melody. Even then the teacher could have supplied a written-out scale. As the learner improves and learns, the parameters are reduced. He/she selects own keys, rhythms, melodic contour, etc. The task and role of the teacher fades in the support process.

5.2.5.5 **Articulating** (or verbal reflection)

This includes supporting the explaining process by using diagrams, analogies and models to assist learners in their musical problem solving. The aim of articulating is musical awareness. Articulation helps learners reflect on the processes that they apply when solving musical problems. Teachers help learners to evaluate a certain task by questioning and answering: a verbal interaction. The method relies on getting learners to articulate their knowledge, reasoning, or problem-solving processes.

To illustrate with an example from personal experience: when looking at a learner composition the question was asked: “Don’t you think the sad words of the poem require a slower moving type of melody?” “Why did you chose the tempo marking **Allegro**?” “Tell me why you chose semiquaver movement for a line in the poem which states ‘The old man shuffled along’?” In this way the teacher probes the learner in order to discover the thinking processes and choices made during musical problem solving.

5.2.5.6 Comparative reflection

This involves a reflection on musical thinking of the past by replaying to learners their efforts on tape, video or MIDI. For example: Many of the compositions done by learners would be for MIDI, or the keyboard memory, and thus makes replaying particularly easy and comparative reflection particularly suitable. All work done on computer and saved on learners' own disks can be used for reflection purposes.

5.2.5.7 Discovering

If learners are to become critical and creative musicians, they have to be taught to discover, explore, generate and select with regard to musical problems and solutions.

The composition approach as applied by this author, has been found to be particularly suitable for allowing learners to learn by discovery, e.g.

- discovering and exploring notation i.e. relative pitch and tone duration;
- discovering and manipulating tonal systems;
- designing comprehensible notational symbols and evaluating existing music symbols;
- discovering music from other cultures and exploring and researching why it sounds different;
- discovering tone colours, timbres, ranges and playing techniques on keyboards and instruments to aptly compose for these instruments;
- discovering music as a creative imaginative experience.

5.2.6 Reflect on alternative sequences to achieve teaching-learning goals

Elliott (1995:281) states that popular learning theories maintain a multifold of teaching and learning approaches based on research, psychology and human development theory. Theories such as sequencing learning from simple to more complex concepts, from

general to specifics and moving from the known to the unknown have all gained credence in education.

At closer inspection it would seem that in applying a praxial approach, a holistic, interactive, integrated method would be most appropriate.

- **Holistic:** to enable learners to experience authentic, real music making in executing musical works as a whole.
- **Interactive:** because music teaching is situated and individualistic, learners will have their own individual needs from lesson to lesson. As a result, no linear lesson plan can be drawn up ahead – teachers need to assess the quality and direction of learners’ musical thinking-in-action.
- **Integrated:** the focus is always on actual musical practice. Active musicing and developing of learners’ musicianship are founded in the application of learners’ musical thinking-in-action. When verbal knowledge, as is currently found in the WCED History of Music, Theory and Aural syllabus, is imparted, it should firstly be integrated in a way that is founded in the practicum, and clearly linked to the artistic goals of the practicum and, secondly, it should be dealt with as only a relatively brief interruption in the practicum.

To illustrate:

PRACTICAL LESSON: LEARNING A BAROQUE PIECE ON THE RECORDER IN A HOLISTIC AND INTERACTIVE WAY	INTEGRATED LEARNING MATERIAL AND TEACHING STRATEGIES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher performs the piece. 2. The teacher discusses the background of the piece and the style period. 	<p>Modeling.</p> <p>Integrating History of Music syllabus.</p>

3. The teacher explains theoretical aspects in the piece and asks the learner to explain symbols and signs in the piece.	Verbal reflection. Integrating Theory and Rudiments syllabus.
4. Ask the learner to sing the melody.	Aural syllabus: sight singing.
5. The learner plays the melody.	Sight Reading.
6. Ask the learner to identify the motives, sequences, repetitions, form, etc.	Exploring, discovering. Integrating History of Music syllabus: Form.
7. Sight sing the different melodies together.	Aural: sight singing. Coaching.
8. The teacher performs the piece again.	Modeling.
9. The learner is asked to play the piece.	Fading.

5.2.7 Decide how to assess and evaluate learners' developing musicianship

Because musicianship is a multifaceted, progressive, and situated form of knowledge, music educators require a similarly multifaceted and progressive approach to assessment and evaluation. Gardner (1993:240) uses the term "process-portfolio", a portfolio of learners' work, which sums up an approach to assessment and evaluation that is compatible with the requirements of the music curriculum-as-practicum and with the requirements of outcomes based education. The portfolio is a collection of learners' work collected over a certain period of time and records the development of the learners' musical development.

A portfolio is in fact a process-portfolio as Gardner (1993:240) elucidates. A typical portfolio could include a number of music projects-in-progress, musical projects e.g. compositions, completed to date and feedback and evaluation by teachers, self and peers.

From personal experience it has been found that the portfolio approach is particularly suited to the need of assessing composition because:

- a continuous assessment can easily be made;
- the teacher can compare earlier and later projects by a learner and assess the development;

- problems and good points can be identified easily;
- the learner can assess him-/herself more readily;
- reflective assessment is facilitated;
- the learner possesses concrete examples of his/her musical development;
- the teacher evaluation is more transparent and accessible to the learner;
- the portfolio shows in one glance the quality, quantity and diversity of a learner's efforts.

5.3 STAGE THREE: TEACHING AND LEARNING

5.3.1 Introduction

Teaching and learning is the heart of the curriculum; a music teacher inducts a learner into musical practices through active music making. A music class is a reflective practicum and through its organization and operation intent upon inducting learners into various musical practices through artistic music making. It is thus a social collective; it is a deliberate grouping of aspiring music makers. Learners are immersed, as apprentices, in the ways of thinking that propel a specific music culture. Music teaching and learning is thus also a process of "enculturation".

The main purpose of the music class is to develop the learners' musicianship. The teaching-learning situation is thus directly related and linked to the actions and practicum environment in which musicianship is developed. Elliott (1995:286) maintains that achieving the aims and values of music education depends on involving learners in sustained and purposeful musical thinking that is congruent with the practices of different music cultures. The practicum offers learners the opportunity to engage in various "reflective conversations" with different musical practices in a variety of ways.

The implementation of the composition program is set out below describing skills, guided composition, the structuring and ordering of guided composition in stages and lesson units in order of complexity.

5.3.2 Implementation and broad structuring of the composition approach

5.3.2.1 Introduction

“We are all potential composers, apparently. Or at least the composing-performing-appraising trinity in the national curriculum assumes that we are. Certainly children want – and should have – opportunities to create music for themselves. But teachers are discovering (often the hard way) that making such opportunities both educationally and musically fruitful is not at all easy” (Peggie, 1998:53).

Searby (1995:18) affirms that composition is often considered to be un-teachable because of its highly personal and subjective nature. He concedes that in certain respects it is true, because creativity and originality stem from the imagination.

Yet numbers of teachers have written about composition with children in schools and boast exceptional and fruitful results. Both the United States and Britain have incorporated composing as a requirement for their National Curricula in music. In South Africa the Curriculum 2005 now provides opportunity for creative work in music education. The first encounter with composition in music curricula is bound to be daunting to teachers, as Kaschub (1997a:28) confirms when relating that only in rare instances are music teachers taught to compose music, let alone to lead students in such experiences. Authors Harris & Hawksley (1989:7) affirm that musical education and training makes the greatest demands on performing, listening and critical skills and it is in these areas that music teachers will have become most competent and will feel most comfortable in their teaching. For those music teachers who have had some experience of composing it is likely that it will have been an area that was introduced once these other skills had been established. They conclude: “Many music teachers compose, but few have learned about music *through* composing.”

Kaschub (1997a:28) points out that composition is not reserved for only the most sophisticated and well-trained musicians. “Rather, it is a creative engagement that involves imagining sounds, exploring different ways to hear the sounds, revising what you’ve come up with, making musical decisions about those sounds, testing new ideas, discarding extraneous elements, adopting different formats, and polishing the final version.”

Yet another music teacher champions for composition:

“As a child I received a typical course of piano instruction, learning scales, arpeggios, technical exercises, and traditional musical literature. In high school, teachers helped me to understand analysis, but in college I was so awed by the great musical masterpieces that I had no desire to compose. Like a new parent determined not to repeat the mistakes of her mother, I decided to include composition in my teaching. In the process I discovered that every area of music instruction is enhanced when students compose music. Although some students seem to have few creative instincts, the majority will understand meter, modulation, harmonic structure, and balance better as they write out their musical ideas” (Briefel, 1997:7).

One more teacher (Brown, 1997:17) writes that there are many advantages in learners attempting to write their own compositions, no matter how modest in scope. She identifies these advantages as creativity being encouraging for learners and composition fulfilling three basic roles in musical training in a way that mere learning by rote cannot – it involves the learner performer, composer, listener and critic. It also has the important advantage of not limiting learners to mere learning by rote, but opens up the way for exploration and use of the imagination.

In the U.S.A. the National Standards Curriculum calls for a creative and comprehensive approach to music teaching and learning. Their curriculum outlines the skills learners should have developed in the areas of improvisation, composing, and arranging at certain stages. This curriculum has its staunch supporters, but also experiences opposition from traditionalists who have had a narrow focus on performance music instruction. Implementing this syllabus has presented a daunting challenge to instrumental music

teachers because it implies fundamental change. Hickey (1997:17-18) reasons that the apprehension felt by music teachers who want to embrace a more comprehensive teaching philosophy lies in simply not knowing how or where to begin.

This author is in full agreement with the authors quoted above in relating their apprehension and lack of training regarding composition. Yet undeniably it seems that above teachers consider composition an important element in music education. Music educators today in South Africa most likely experience the very same sentiments.

For example:

Curriculum 2005 for Arts and Culture states in Specific Outcomes no. 6:

Learners will use art skills and cultural expression to make an economic contribution to self and society.

Assessment Criteria: learners will demonstrate the ability to take initiative, to innovate and be productive.

Range statement: At this level the work should be investigative with a view to innovation, productivity and marketability. Use resources – personal, human, physical, found and natural materials – with creativity and productivity.

Performance indicator: this will be evident when the learner uses problem-solving skills in creating and presenting works of art.

The question arises: How can integrated composing projects be made meaningful and educationally and musically fruitful to learners? How can teachers approach and tackle music education in an outcomes-based, purposeful, meaningful and educationally accountable way when they themselves have not been trained as composing artists?

5.3.2.2 A matter of skill

Creativity, the central focus of the above task, is dependent on the previous experience and skills of the pupils, since their capacity to use their imagination will be restricted by their capabilities both at the planning stage and in their ability to execute their plans. Creative projects can easily be inclined to be crude and lacking in demonstration of skills, since none have been specified or taught in advance as a part of the aim of the project. Major (1993:8) provides a solution when stating that learners need to acquire **skills** to compose more effectively. Learners also need to focus on some structural element or musical device so that the latter becomes a feature of the piece, designed to give purpose to the activity that is already relatively abstract.

Major (1993:9) quotes Plummeridge⁷ who maintains that effective participation in performing and composing activities is partly dependent on children having acquired certain musical skills. Plummeridge identifies three types of skills: **-aural**, that is to sing in tune; **translative**, that is being able to read notation; and **manipulative**, that is being able to control voice or instruments. He describes music as a “highly skilful discipline” and maintains that skills need to play a major role “if children are to make any progress in musical activities.” Skill learning is clearly to be achieved through practical activities.

Major (1993:9) outlines three elements of skill learning:

- **technical competence**, the ability to use technical skills learnt on an instrument in improvisation or composition;
- **handling of materials** (which Plummeridge calls ‘manipulative’) which includes the ability to discover unusual or original ways of producing sounds on instruments as well as the ability to handle instruments in an appropriate manner in performance or composition;

⁷ Plummeridge, C. 1991. *Music Education in Theory and Practice*. London: Falmer Press, p. 52.

- **enabling skills**, similar to Plummeridge's translative category, where, in addition to being able to 'read' notation it also requires the skill of using musical concepts in appropriate circumstances.

5.3.2.3 Guided composition

Several authors support the notion of skill building as an essential building block in designing a compositional educational approach. One such approach is **guided** or **structured composition**. Beginner composers who are not yet familiar with all the devices necessary for writing music, will need to become personally involved in writing music within a context that is creative, comfortable, and developmentally appropriate in order to build his or her understanding of musical signs and symbols. Brophy (1996:15) explains: "Guided composition is composing music with as many prescribed parameters as the young composer needs; the ultimate goal is guiding the composer toward the successful notation of his or her composition." Kaschub (1997b:27) adds that music teachers can guide beginner composers by directing them to focus on one or two elements. They should then be allowed to creatively explore and manipulate these elements within certain restrictions and limitations [parameters]. Beginner musicians are usually overwhelmed when asked to compose without guidelines or rules.

5.3.2.4 Structuring and ordering the guided composition method in stages

The following composition program as set out in graded stages, including all assignments and notational examples, have been devised by this author and is this author's own and original work.

Experience has shown the following stages to be applicable:

1. Exploring sound by listening – focusing on one or two concepts.
2. Exploring the concepts by clapping, practicing, singing, movement, improvisation, speaking, imaginative play, etc.

3. Exploring sound by composing – creating a piece within parameters and making a draft copy.
4. Synthesis: Learner and teacher assessing the draft and making adjustments.
5. Transcribing the improved draft copy to make a final copy in standard notation.
6. Performing from the final copy.
7. Re-synthesis: Class, teacher, peer evaluation and assessment.
8. Learner and teacher assessing the performance and making suggestions.
9. Optional arrangement, instrumentation, orchestration adjustments which can be done as individual or group projects.
10. Final draft of arrangement/orchestration.
11. Ensemble practice.
12. Performance: optional recording and/or video taping.
13. Evaluation and assessment.

To expand on each of the above mentioned stages:

Stage 1: Listening

Kaschub (1997a:33) notes that when designing compositional activities learners must possess some mental model of what they have to compose. Listening and singing activities provide learners with a frame of reference, a sound ideal that allows them to form these internal models. In another article Kaschub (1997b:28) states that the first step in planning a guided listening experience is to select a certain feature as a listening focus. Kaschub (1997b:28) identifies the following steps in the listening experience:

- Firstly, posing a question that serves to focus attention.
- Secondly, asking questions that will lead students to discover some aspect of the intended focus.
- The third step requires analysis and establishes an awareness of relationships.
- The fourth step in the listening process allows the teacher to assess whether students are hearing what they have been asked to discover in the music. Here learners can use any form of representation to show their understanding of what they hear. For

example, they can draw graphic representations of the sound, use cut out shapes to show the design, draw instruments in the order they hear them, use dots, dashes, etc. to show pitch or rhythm, etc.

- The final step should be synthesis, correlating what has been heard, or simply listening for the enjoyment of “understanding” what is being heard.

Stage 2: Exploring the concepts

Exploring the nature of sound is a very natural starting point for any creative activity in generating new sound patterns and structures. Compositions are, after all, designs or structures of sound. Various aspects of sound lend themselves to exploration, for example: mood, tempo, pitch, metre, rhythm, structure, textures, and many more. Briefel (1997:7) describes a way of exploring these concepts with learners. Mood and tempo for example:

“I ask each student to demonstrate the tempo for his piece by walking around my living room in the mood he imagines for it. He might plod, walk briskly, march, or skip...” also timbre, “We search for distinctive sounds that the piano can produce, such as raindrops, church bells, street construction noises, avalanches, the Loch Ness monster...” and structure, “To explore structure, I might play a musical question and ask students to improvise and answer. Together we explore tension and resolution, and discuss different forms such as ABA, rondos, and theme and variations.”

On another level, exploring sound towards formulation of concepts include experiencing by hearing, practicing and improvising. Brophy (1996:16) describes his approach in guided composition. He starts off by writing a rhythm on the chalkboard. After practicing the rhythm through speaking and clapping, the learners wrote it down on individual blank chalkboards. Once completed the C-pentatonic scale on Orff instruments were set up. Free improvisation using that rhythm then took place.

Stage 3: Exploring sound by composing

After musical ideas have been explored by listening and then practicing, and exploring the sound physically, learners are ready to build up a composition by using the features experienced.

The assignment should be set with clear indications of what is expected. Learner and teacher should then draw up an assessment rubric, or evaluation criteria, together.

Musical ideas are built into structures by various means, from the smallest unit, a motif, enlarging it by means of repetition, sequence, and other techniques. Building up the composition is part of the exploration. Kratus (1994: 39) attests that learners who compose successfully tend to use more strategies for developing their musical ideas than do learners who do not compose successfully. Teachers should guide learners in developing musical ideas. For example, when students have created a pattern, they can be taught to transpose it up and down the scale. Simple ideas can form phrases, phrases can be repeated, and this could form the A-section of a piece. Thinking up contrasting middle sections immediately adds variety to the project.

Compositions are not necessarily notated at this point, but could include technological projects, traditional or folk idioms in an oral tradition that could be recorded.

Stage 4: Synthesis: Learner and teacher assessing the draft and making adjustments

Bissell (1995:42) warns that before evaluation takes place clear guidelines need to be present to filter out as much subjectivity and bias as possible. Assessment rubrics work particularly well as they allow learners to assess themselves as well.

When discussing a learner composition, focus very specific questions on the work, for example: did you use the crotchet notes correctly? Are all the bars in triple time? In this way a learner could assess the technical and theoretical aspects of his/her work. Bunting (1987:27) recounts that his policy in teaching composition was to influence the musical content as little as possible. However, he ensured by discussion and guidance that learners carried out the working process needed to create a musical composition in a controlled and thoughtful way. By keeping closely in touch with learner's thought processes the teacher can intervene if necessary while leaving the actual decisions to the pupil. Bunting relates a case history with a student, Barry. It is interesting to note the suggestions, probing, prodding and the learners' reaction to this.

At this point the learner should redraft after discussing the composition with the teacher. Technical and theoretical errors could be corrected; strategic changes made, structural changes, accompaniment figures adapted, etc.

Stage 5: Transcribing the improved draft copy to make a final copy in standard notation

Once the learner has improved the draft satisfactorily, a final copy or recording could be made.

Stage 6: Performing from the final copy

Learners should hear their compositions. They should compose in such a way as to be able to give a playable, audible performance, either as a solo, duet or ensemble. It is particularly useful to let them compose for specific learners in the class in the case of an ensemble piece. The teacher and other learners form the audience.

Stage 7: Re-synthesis

Peggie (1998: 55) warns that what often tends to take place in schools and universities is not so much music composition as pre-compositional activity. The exploration and analysis is rarely followed through into synthesis – and almost never, into re-synthesis (rewriting and redrafting). Peggie describes composition as a continual flux of exploration and applied technique. Learners must indeed re-assess work and hone it to perfection.

Stage 8: Learner and teacher assessments

At this point, the learner and teacher could make a final assessment, using the initial guidelines set up. Assessments could be:

- general comments or critiques;
- grading from an assessment rubric;
- grading from general critique criteria.

Stage 9: Optional arrangement, instrumentation, orchestration – individual or group projects

Once a composition has reached this point, the project could be considered complete. However, projects often lend themselves to further exploration and development. Learners might want to arrange a composition using the keyboard or adding more instruments. Wiggins (1990:13) notes that percussion parts, sound effects, band or orchestral instruments, a pizzicato bass line and synthesizers can add a whole new dimension to learner's compositions.

Stage 10: Final draft or arrangement

A final draft of the arrangement or orchestration could now be notated or recorded.

Stage 11: Ensemble practice

The finished product can now be rehearsed and perfected. Wiggins (1990:13) notes that learners who are not otherwise involved in a performing group learn what it is to perfect a piece. Learners also tend to have more patience with 'getting it right' when they are rehearsing their own composition. Once learners have composed additional parts for ensemble players it follows naturally that they would want to rehearse the composition to experience and hear the final sound.

Stage 12: Performance: optional recording or video taping

It is not always necessary to get to this point. Compositions can however be used for a live composition concert, video- or audiotape, parents' visits, etc. School-wide or grade-level sharing of original compositions can be a wonderful experience. Tape recording of any type gives immediate feedback to learners as they can evaluate their own work and will become much more demanding of perfection. Once many hours of rehearsing and perfecting have gone into a composition, learners would need the satisfaction of sharing their effort with others. Performing in a concert, or performing class, etc. would be the natural reward to achieve a sense of accomplishment and recognition.

Stage 13: Evaluation and assessment

A final evaluation of the recording could be included as a critique in the learners' portfolios.

5.3.3 LESSON UNITS: A MATTER OF BUILDING SKILLS

Regelski (1981:125) proposes that a successful music program should combine *all* musical activities in the pursuit of certain instructional goals. Composing soundscapes and nontraditional notation, etc., are not a 'unit' that is followed by another 'unit' on standard notation and songwriting. "All activities should be blended together in a seamless fabric of student actions that involve the problems and practices of music in all its aspects."

Guided composition can be presented in the following order. Typical lessons and assignments from this author's original composition program are illustrated. The composition program as designed and utilized by this author is set out in the following contextual format:

- composing with new notes;
- composing with new rhythms;
- composing with new concepts;
- composing in tonal patterns;
- composing with harmonies;
- composing in different musical styles;
- songwriting;
- projects;
- free composition and other techniques;
- composition and technology.

5.3.3.1 Composing with new notes

Figure 1 shows an example of the type of guided composition a learner can be given in a first lesson and every subsequent lesson when new note values or pitches are introduced. For beginners, it works best to provide virtually all parameters i.e. a “template” of a staff, bar lines, clef, key signature, time signature, even the first and last notes as well. From past experience it has been noted that learners initially struggle to write clef signs, correctly sized notes and correct note stem direction. This however, can be corrected gradually, especially when learners are made aware of what notation really looks like in their own music they perform.

ASSIGNMENT:
Compose a short four-bar melody. Use only the notes C,D,E,F,G and use the provided rhythm.




Figure 1

It is particularly important that learners write music they can perform. It might therefore be necessary to allow players of different instruments to write in such a way as to suit the range of their instrument, as well as the range of their playing ability. Bass instrument players must therefore be permitted to write bass clef melodies so as to enable performance. A good assignment is to let learners write a composition and to instruct them to practise it and play it in their next lesson. Composing scale melodies, Figure 2, is a particularly good way of getting learners to practise scales. Hickey (1997:18) notes that music teachers will find no better way to get their learners excited about practicing than to have them play their own compositions.

ASSIGNMENT:

Many melodies consist of stepwise, scale-like passages e.g.:



- Compose your own stepwise, scale melodies in the following keys. Use the given rhythm. Be prepared to play your melodies in your next lesson.

C major




F major



Figure 2

Compositions need not all be notated. An example of a composition in the oral tradition of music making, using a Xhosa melody is:

Study the Xhosa melody: "Iqira". Note the descending melodic contour. How many different notes are used in the first phrase? What happens to this phrase?



Compose your own short, four-bar melody using only 5 different notes. Use a descending contour. You can notate this if you wish, or sing and record your effort.

Figure 3

5.3.3.2 Composing with new rhythms

New rhythmic patterns are continuously introduced when learning music. It is of great importance in writing music that a new rhythmic motif is taught in all the steps, listening, exploring, experiencing, notating, etc. Rhythm pieces are of the most elementary compositions to compose and learners enjoy playing and clapping their own rhythmic patterns.

An assignment could be to ask learners to compose a rhythmic study that he/she would perform on one open note on their instruments in the next lesson. Figure 4 shows an example of such rhythmic studies for three parts. It is quite interesting to use this when teaching a group class: give the players different notes e.g. a C, E and G. They then play the rhythm piece using this triad. Let them repeat the rhythm piece, this time on the notes G, B and D. They can of course return to the C, E, G chord creating a ternary form rhythm study.

ASSIGNMENT:

- Compose a rhythmic phrase that you will perform in your next lesson by playing it on one open note (wind instruments) or one chord (keyboard instruments). Write the phrase for three players and rehearse it with two classmates.

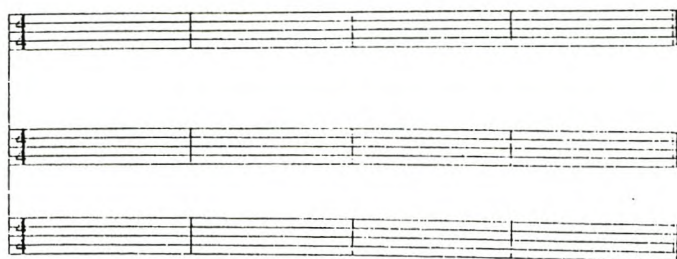


Figure 4

Another type of guided composition assignment is to give learners a rhythmic study template and ask them to complete in the given rhythmic style. Figure 5 shows such an example. This is a valuable exercise to determine how well learners understand and apply a new concept.

ASSIGNMENT:

- Compose a rhythmic phrase for two players. Use notes and rests to provide alternating sound and silence for the players. Complete in the opening style.

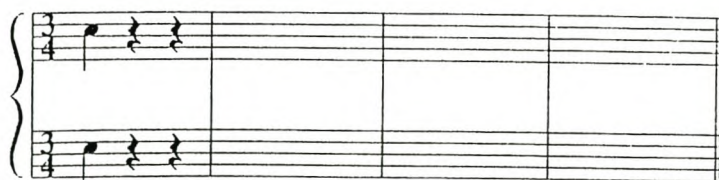


Figure 5

Learners could compose an African Drumming Song (Figure 6) that would not need to be notated, but could be rehearsed for recording. Such an assignment is:

Compose an African Drumming Song for you and two friends. Each player should have a different rhythmic pattern. Use threes and twos to make up patterns e.g. one player can play 123,123,123 and another could play 12,12,12 etc. Let your players accent their first beats.

Experiment with alternating the metre: work out a pattern that could add up to 12. E.g. 123, 123, 1234, 12. (=12), another player could have 12,12,12, 123,123. (=12). Remember to accent all the first beats!

Write down your draft of patterns in numbers that each player would use.

Record the final performance of your African Drumming Song.

Figure 6

5.3.3.3 Composing with new concepts

Virtually any musical concept, as it is introduced in the practical lessons, could form the basis of a composition. Concepts such as syncopation, triads, dynamics, slurs, staccato and legato, inversion, sequence, repetition, mixed metre, and so forth. Figure 7 shows an example of such an assignment to reinforce the concept: octaves. It is a particularly useful tool to reinforce theoretical concepts.

ASSIGNMENT:

- Complete the following melody by composing a complementary four-bar phrase. Repeat the first four phrases at an octave higher, but alter the rhythm by using dotted values.


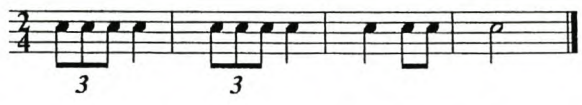



Figure 7

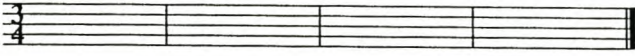
As is mostly the case, teachers have new concepts to introduce while still reinforcing and establishing previously learned concepts. This easily combines in composition assignments where learners use the new concept with a previously learned concept that progressively spirals into an advanced composition.

Figure 8 shows how a new concept, triplets, is used to compose a piece on a previously learned concept, triads. The assignment asks the learner to use triplets to write a rhythmic study of four bars on a single line. The learner then has to use this rhythmic study and expand it to a melody using I, IV, V, I. That basic melody is further expanded to a four-part ensemble piece.

ASSIGNMENT:

Play: 

Compose a rhythmic pattern that include: 



Use the rhythm you composed and expand it harmonically to form a I – IV – V – I melody in G major. Four players can play this piece. Continue in the style and compose a B part, also using I – IV – V – I harmonies and writing another four bars using dotted rhythms.

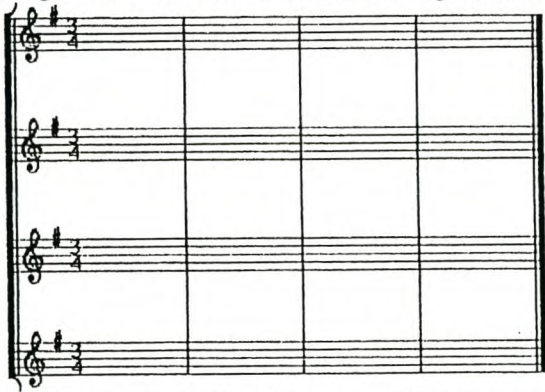


Figure 8

5.3.3.4 Composing in tonal patterns

Using scales (majors, minors, modes, pentatonic, whole tone, gypsy, blues, etc.) can form the basis of many interesting multicultural lessons. Using various instruments, drums and keyboard accompaniments can add a realistic quality to the experience.

Assignment examples:

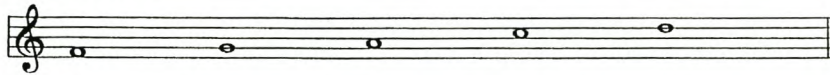
TONAL PATTERN	CONCEPTS
Church modes Assignment: compose and play a piece with parallel open fifths. Play the keyboard on “choir”.	Intervals: open parallel fifths
Pentatonic Assignment: Compose pentatonic melodies to be played on the keyboard on “marimba”.	Scale degrees
Whole tone Assignment: Compose melodies using a whole tone scale to be played on the keyboard on “bells”.	Eastern music; whole tones and semitones; sharps and flats.
Blues Assignment: Compose a Blues melody to be played on your own instrument. Your teacher will accompany you in a jazzy, syncopated style.	Jazz and blues; flattened notes; diatonic and chromatic notes
Majors Assignment: Majors are the basis of most Western Classical music. Compose a scale melody as technical study to be played on your instrument for your next lesson.	Major scales; scale degrees – technical names; keys and key signatures; primary notes; leading note.
Minors Assignment: Minors are found in Western classical music and are the basis of Russian, Hebrew and Eastern European type folk songs. Compose and play a minor piece for your instrument with keyboard accompaniment on balalaika, mandolin, sitar, etc.	Harmonic and melodic; semitones; raised leading notes; minor intervals; relative minor.

Figure 9 shows an example of guided composition using given tonal patterns.

ASSIGNMENT:

Study the following tonal patterns:

PENTATONIC



WHOLE TONE



BLUES

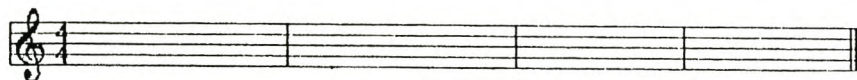


Use all three these patterns respectively and compose your own four-bar melodies in these tonal systems. Use the indicated rhythm.

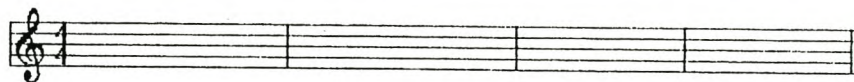
♩ PENTATONIC:



♩ WHOLE TONE:



♩ BLUES:



Use the keyboard and orchestrate the pentatonic melody with a marimba, the whole tone scale with the Koto and the blues melody with the saxophone. Store it on your disk.


Figure 9

As most non-Western music, such as folk music and African music, has an oral tradition, it would make sense to encourage oral and improvisatory work. Figure 6 was an example of composing an African melody that is then simply recorded. This can expand into a very rewarding lesson when rhythm, drums, movement, additional voice parts, etc. are added.

Using improvisation leads to many fun lessons. Figure 10 is an example of such a lesson:

Write a melody that we can use to improvise with in class.

Look at this example:



I V *Improvise* V I

I (b \flat ,d,f) and passing
and auxiliary notes.

Your own example, try a different chord progression e.g. I, I, IV, I, V, IV, I, I:




Figure 10

5.3.3.5 Composing with harmonies: Triads: block, broken, arpeggiated, in inversion, non-harmony tones, four part harmony.

Block, broken and arpeggiated triads

As triads form the basis of harmony, it is a very useful enterprise to use the notes of triads for melodies and later harmonic accompaniments. Learning triads as block, broken and arpeggiated chords open up numerous vistas for composition assignments. The scope is literally limitless. Manipulating triads naturally leads on to chord inversion, chord doubling and spacing, four-part harmony, writing cadences, etc. The main advantage is that learners learn harmony in a holistic, functional and aural approach, whereas traditional harmony classes tend to rely heavily on theoretical “rules” which mostly remain academic to learners. Few learners set out to compose choir or band music with the four part harmony skills they acquire in schools. This approach teaches learners how and why we have and use triads, chords, harmonies, etc. Learners grasp harmony as a I, IV, V primary chord base from which to depart. All work is continuously played, performed, arranged, improvised, etc., reinforcing the functionality of harmony.

A typical initial lesson would be to start off by playing chords, practising different chords and listening to harmonies and then writing and explaining how these triads are formed. Learners could then have an opportunity to write and play triads. From there it naturally follows to break up the notes of a triad to form triad melodies. Use different rhythms and chord progressions to create binary or ternary melodies that are easily accompanied by the rest of a class in the case of group tuition. Figure 11 shows an assignment that is based on a simple two-bar idea, in this case with given rhythm and on a C chord. A further example of two bars, also with given rhythm, is on a G chord. This easily forms a short binary piece, AB, or AABB, which can be lengthened to a ternary piece when played ABA.

ASSIGNMENT:

Compose two melodies: One at A and one at B. Use the notes of triads as indicated, and use the given rhythms.

A

B

Play these as separate melodies, or play AB for a binary piece, or play ABA for a ternary piece

Figure 11

Easy piano styles can be taught by using a I, IV, V progression as block chords in the bass (left hand) and asking learners to write triad melodies for the treble (see Figure 12). They use broken triads to form the melody. Learners could also be encouraged to not only write the harmony below the staff in the traditional I, I₆, IV, etc. but also above the staff as a letter: C, G7, Dm, etc. because popular guitar, keyboard and other instrumental method books use this chord indication system. It facilitates adding other parts like guitars, keyboard, marimbas, and so forth, when wanting to expand the piece for ensemble.

ASSIGNMENT:

Compose a four-bar melody in the descant using only primary triads in broken chord formation.

To that, add a bass of primary block chords to be used by an accompanist.

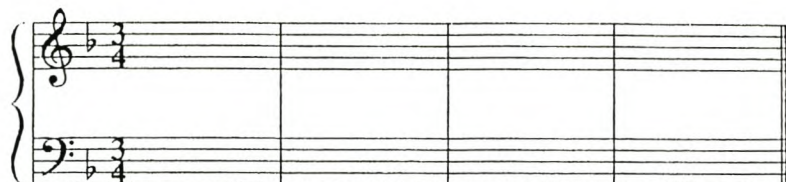


Figure 12

Figure 13 shows how a basic harmonic structure can be used to write a canon. Provide a template with rhythm, bars, chords and voice entry points and assign learners the task to use triads to form a melody that can then be used to sing or play a canon.

ASSIGNMENT:

Compose a melody in F major and use the suggested rhythm and chords. This melody will work as a canon. That means the first player will start at 1. and continue. When he/she reaches the number 2. the second player will start. The parts will blend because the same harmonic base is used.



Figure 13

Inversions

Manipulating triads provides ample opportunity for melodies. Teaching the inversions of triads could be a far more functional experience when composing melodies to play than the traditional, rigid, rote method. See Figure 14.

ASSIGNMENT:
Complete this melody by using the inversions of the triads as indicated. Use your own rhythm. Use the keyboard to orchestrate your melody and store it on your disk.

The figure contains two musical staves. The first staff is in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It contains four measures of music. The first measure starts with a G4 quarter note, followed by an A4 quarter note, and a B4 quarter note. The second measure is empty. The third measure starts with a D4 quarter note, followed by an E4 quarter note, and a F#4 quarter note. The fourth measure is empty. Below the staff, the labels 'I', 'I in inversion', 'IV', and 'IV in inversion' are placed under the first, second, third, and fourth measures respectively. The second staff is also in G major and 2/4 time. It contains four measures of music. The first measure starts with a G4 quarter note, followed by an A4 quarter note, and a B4 quarter note. The second measure is empty. The third measure starts with a D4 quarter note, followed by an E4 quarter note, and a F#4 quarter note. The fourth measure is empty. Below the staff, the labels 'V', 'V in inversion', 'I', and 'I' are placed under the first, second, third, and fourth measures respectively.

Figure 14

Non-harmony tones

Non-harmony tones are at present part of the harmonic devices prescribed in the Harmony syllabus for Grades 10 to 12. However, non-harmony tones are present in virtually all melodies we know, as melodies are normally not based on triad notes alone. It is therefore inevitable that learners will encounter passing notes, auxiliary notes, suspensions, appoggiaturas, etc. as they start embellishing their melodies. It is perhaps not strictly necessary to “label” *all* non-harmony tones, but naming passing and auxiliary notes eases the process of teaching and explaining. Learners naturally use these non-harmony tones when writing even the simplest of melodies. Making them aware of the term later on follows the sound-to-symbol approach and proves most worthwhile as learners apply, explore and experience the concept long before “labeling” it. See figure 15 for an assignment that expects learners to compose variations on a given melody (once again I, IV, V). Melodic variations are easily achieved by adding passing and/or auxiliary notes.

ASSIGNMENT:

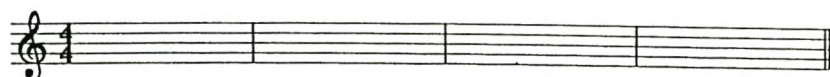
Compose variations as indicated on the given theme:

STUDY IN A MINOR

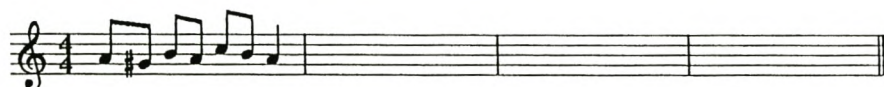
Theme:



• Variation 1 (rhythmic variation)



• Variation 2 (melodic variation; insert passing and auxiliary notes)



• Variation 3 (harmonic variation: add a counter melody)



Figure 15

Four-part harmony

Four-part harmony is a natural successor to composing with triads. At present, four part harmony is an integral component of the Theory and Harmony syllabus for Grades 8 to 12 and therefore an essential concept that has to be taught right from Grade 8. The syllabus for Grade 8 basically requires learners to be able to write four-part chords (with correct doubling and spacing) as well as perfect and imperfect cadences. Figure 16 shows an assignment where four parts are written on four different staves for four different players. It is a more functional way of illustrating the doubling of parts, as learners immediately understand why parts are doubled, namely to accommodate more players (or singers).

ASSIGNMENT:
Compose a four-bar passage for four instruments (two soprano and two bass) and spread a triad over the four instrumental parts. Choose instruments that you and three friends could play.

Hint: Seeing that a triad only has three notes, it will be necessary to double one of the notes of the triad. The root note is best suited as it gives the chord a firmer sound.

Instrument 1

Instrument 2

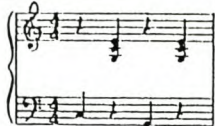
Instrument 3

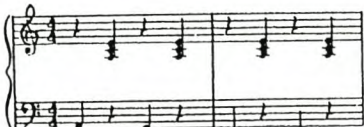
Instrument 4


Figure 16


5.3.3.6 Composing in different musical styles: Jazz, Blues, Rock and Roll, Boogie-Woogie, Baroque, African, Classical.

The teacher could demonstrate a variety of accompaniment styles to show the variety, yet unity, in so many musical styles and textures. Figure 17 shows accompaniment patterns (Wiggins, 1990:8) to introduce to the learners and to explore with during composition:

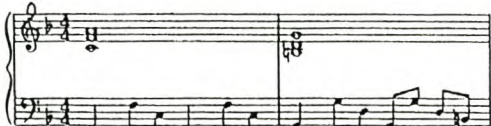
- Rhythm bass in Major (call it "oom-pah") 

- Rhythm bass in Minor 

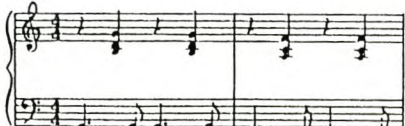
- Arpeggiated bass 

- Rock styles 

Soft rock 1



Soft rock 2



Hard rock



Rock 'n' roll

Figure 17

5.3.3.7 Songwriting

Songwriting involves composing melodies in a homophonic texture, i.e. melodies supported by chords. It is more customary to compose songs with words in the initial stages of songwriting. Words can be chosen or written by the teacher or by the learners. It is important to use relevant words; this is a great inducement for all teenagers. Regelski (1981:127) also notes that it seems undeniable that meaningful words set to music – both of which express or capture teenagers' feelings – are a major factor that attracts this age group to the variety of popular music.

Regelski (1981:127) identifies several special advantages of songwriting:

- Songwriting activities are the major means for developing concepts of the elements of traditional music.
- Songwriting activities nurture the smaller, more detailed aspects that require specific information and readiness.
- Since songwriting activities are so useful in teaching the most basic aspects of music “theory” they are particularly useful in providing a basis for lifelong interest and involvement in music. From these activities, youngsters can acquire the skills needed to continue their musical involvement far beyond their school years – whether these skills involve playing an instrument by ear, arranging popular songs for an avocational singing group, accompanying songs on the guitar, or composing songs just for the fun of hearing one's own works.

A possible procedure of writing songs could be:

- Select a poem (or words), the learners could write this in a language lesson.
- Let them analyze the poem for mood, metre, and possible repeat areas.
- Scan the poem, indicate syllables and mark the strong syllables.
- Decide whether it moves in “twos” or “threes”.
- Select a rhythmic pattern in notation.
- Write the syllables below each note.
- Decide on a key: e.g. major or minor.
- Design a melodic contour that would reflect the meaning of the words e.g. “The tall green trees” would imply an ascending melody; “We scampered down the hill” would likewise imply a descending melody, etc.
- Write a melody using the notes of the selected key. The teacher could set parameters such as: Let the notes move by step; Let the notes skip in thirds; etc.
- Synthesis and re-synthesis are important: Teachers should assist learners in drafting and redrafting their efforts to achieve satisfying results. As with all other compositions, the process could go on to arrangement, orchestration and recording, etc.


Figure 18 shows an example by a beginner Grade 8 learner.

Assignment:


Set the following poem "Moon-Glow" to music. Use imitative and repetitive effects to create a soft, peaceful atmosphere.

MOON-GLOW

Idly we're floating,
Silver sea boating,
Over a star-sprinkled mirror of light.
Dark leaves are shining;
Moon-flowers, twining,
Send forth their fragrance to greet the night.



The musical score is handwritten on six staves. It begins with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics are written below the notes. Dynamic markings include *E* (piano), *MP* (mezzo-piano), *EF* (pianissimo), and *MF* (mezzo-forte). The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.



A vertical illustration on the right side of the page depicts a person sitting in a small boat on a body of water. The background is filled with dense, textured foliage and trees, creating a serene, natural setting.

Figure 18

5.3.3.8 Projects: Introducing an assignment; carrying out assignments: class projects, group projects, technological projects; planning the composition; in-class performance; completing the assignment; evaluation; notation; classroom logistics.

Wiggins (1990:15) asserts that small-group composition is a means of evaluating learners' understanding of specific lesson material. When one uses a conceptualized approach in teaching music, lessons are generally structured around one of the basic elements of music.

Procedure:

Group composition is more successful when previously learnt concepts are reinforced through group work. Wiggins (1990:16) notes that groupwork does not lend itself to presenting new material. Working with groups of teenagers has its own challenges; new material would present too many new hurdles to overcome in a group setup. Present the assignment on the board or overhead projector, for example:

ASSIGNMENT:

1. With your group, compose a piece in compound time. Use only the pentatonic scale on D.
2. Compose an accompanying drum part.
3. Practice the piece.
4. The music should be vibrant, fast and accented.

This type of group composition lesson could take, for example, one 40-minute period. Allow groups of learners approximately 30 minutes to work out a rhythmic pattern, to decide on a pentatonic melody and to structure the work. Allow some rehearsal time and then devote the last 10 minutes or so to listening to performances. Allow the class to assess each other; encourage learners to provide positive feedback. This is essential in nurturing learner creativity and encouraging confidence to explore.

Structure the assessment by focusing critique on the requirements of the assignment. For example:

1. Was compound time used?
2. Was the pentatonic scale used correctly?
3. Is the drum part effective?

4. Is the piece vibrant, fast and accented?
5. How would you rate the overall listener appeal?

Figure 19 is an example of a group composition worked out during a lesson and completed at home in notation. Learners could be encouraged to notate their group compositions at home, because class time is often too limited. The example shows imaginative use of a combination of compound and simple triple time that gives it an authentic and vibrant ethnic feel. Notice the accompanying drum part in simple triple time. Accents were not written in the score – presumably these are inserted during performance. The pentatonic ascending motif is also used quite consistently with some rhythmic variation.

The image shows a handwritten musical score titled "Swando". On the left side, there is a drawing of a person wearing a patterned tunic and leggings, carrying a large drum on their back and holding a stick. To the right of the drawing, the title "Swando" is written in a simple, hand-drawn font. Below the title, there are three systems of musical notation. Each system consists of three staves: a top staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), a middle staff with a bass clef, and a bottom staff with a bass clef. The first system includes a drum part below the bottom staff, with a '3' written above it and a '4' below it, indicating a 3/4 time signature. The notation is handwritten and appears to be a student's work, showing various rhythmic patterns and melodic lines.

Figure 19

5.3.3.9 Free composition and other techniques: exploring notational symbols, serial compositions, texture pieces.

There are endless possibilities when sound and notation are explored in free composition. The work of Self and Paynter⁸ respectively is notable in this regard. Possibilities include: using specified notes (in letter names) a grid can be set up that can be used to sing or play together. Use notes of the pentatonic scale, select the number of players, and explore the sounds that arise when these notes are combined. Figure 20 shows an example by a Grade 8 learner:

ASSIGNMENT:

Use only the letters C D E G (pentatonic scale) to fill in the grids. Use a metre indication to each and play or sing these with a friend. Listen to the sounds! Explore different rhythms while you play.

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4 4	1	C	G	E	G	D	G		C
	2	E	E	E	E	D		E	D
	3	G	G	C	E	D	G	C	C
	4	D	E	C	G	E	D	G	C

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
4 4	1	E	G	E	D	D		G	C
	2	G	G	C	D	E	C	D	E
	3	E	D	G		D	E	D	C
	4	C	G	E	D	D		E	C

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4 4	A	C	E	G	E	C		D	C
	B	E	E	G		G	E	C	C
	C	E	E	G	G	E	D	C	C
	D	G	D	D	E	C	C	D	C

Figure 20

⁸ As referred to in Chapter 3.4

High and Low

A relatively easy initial exercise for the inexperienced beginner musician is to provide a grid and to indicate High and Low on the grid, thereby establishing the concept of higher and lower pitches. The lines, or gaps, could get letter names and learners are then asked to sing or play what they have written. Figures 21 and 22 show examples of the high-low notation compositions. Figure 21 by another Grade 8 learner, shows a subdivision of the grid into three lines of five pitches each: C – G. This melody consists of stepwise motion, interestingly enough with the basic elements of melody already present: repetition, sequence, inversion, etc.

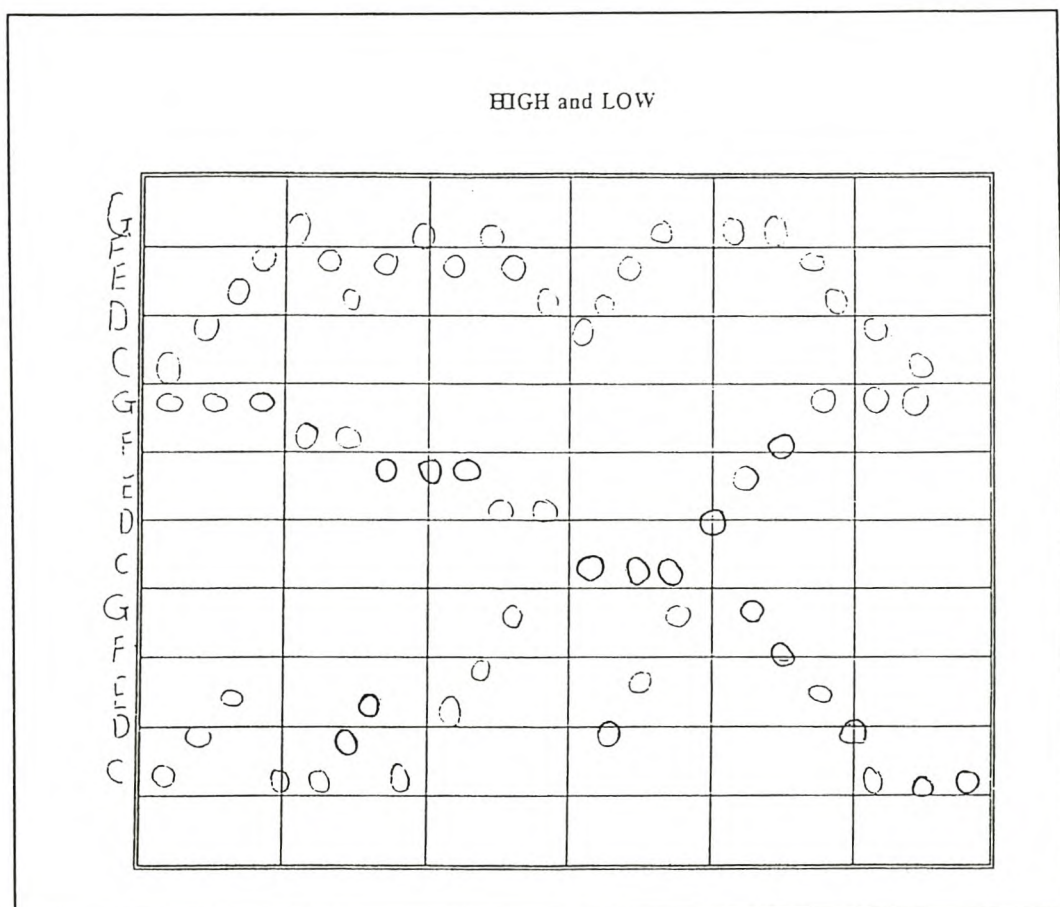


Figure 21

Figure 22, an example by another Grade 8 learner, shows the use of chords: a starting chord, then a short melody based on a triad, followed by a repeat sign and a chord as final cadence.

HIGH and LOW

The figure displays two systems of musical notation on a grand staff. The top system, labeled 'HIGH and LOW', features a treble clef staff with notes G, F, E, D, and C. The bottom system features a bass clef staff with notes C, D, E, F, and G, followed by a repeat sign and a final cadence chord with notes G, F, E, D, and C.





Figure 22

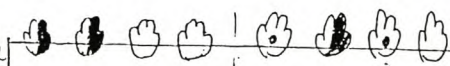

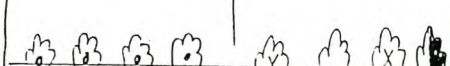
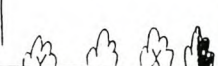
Symbols

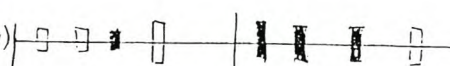
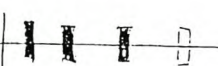
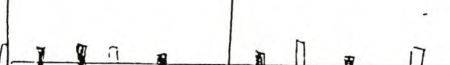

Learners could compose rhythmic studies for instruments and body movement/percussion. Encourage learners to use symbols and/or notation that would clearly indicate what the player should do. It is often necessary to provide a key of symbols and their explanations for the players on the score. The following four compositions, Figures 23 to 26 show a variety of symbolic uses: from very simple (Figure 23) indicating only loud and soft, ending with fast, to a composition for body movement and percussion (Figure 24) showing loud, soft, fast, rest. Figure 25 shows four four-bar compositions using complicated signs for counts and dynamics. Figure 26 shows a complex graphic score for trumpet, clapping, feet and singing.





Figure 23 is a hand-drawn musical score enclosed in a rectangular border. At the top left is a drawing of a person with a large, spiky headdress. To the right of this is a legend with three entries: a large open circle labeled 'hard', a small open circle labeled 'soft', and a solid black dot labeled 'vinnig'. To the right of the legend is a drawing of a person sitting and playing a drum. Below the legend is a four-measure rhythmic staff with notes represented by large and small open circles. Below this are several more staves with various rhythmic notations, including groups of circles and lines. At the bottom of the score are two staves with solid black dots, representing the 'vinnig' symbol.

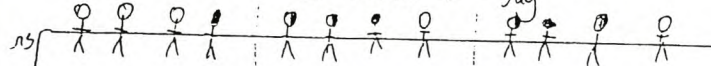
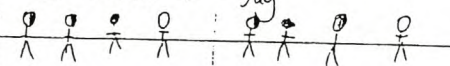




Figure 23





 - hard  - ~~Vinnig~~ kort
 - sag  - rus

$\frac{4}{4}$
 Hande  | 
 Uvde  | 

$\frac{4}{4}$
 SiE(d)  | 
 Staan(d)  | 

 - Hard  - Vinnig
 - rus.  - Sag

ns  |  | 
 g  |  | 

 - hard
 - sag
 - rus
 - Vinnig

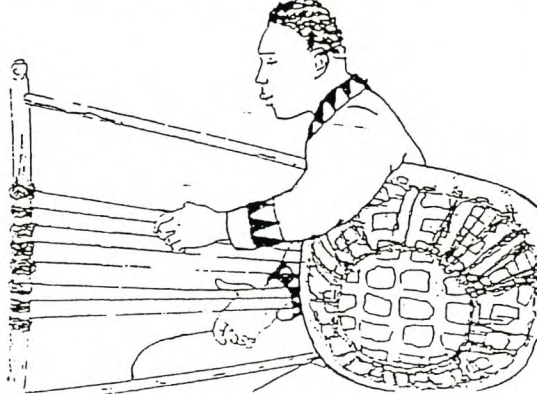









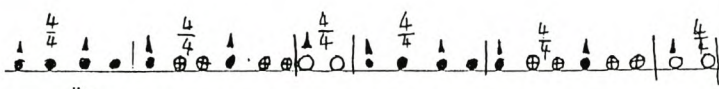
Figure 24







● = 1 telling
 ● = 1/2 telling
 ▲ = hard



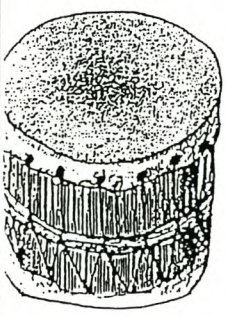



● = 1 telling
 ⊗ = 1/2 telling
 ○ = 2 tellings
 ▲ = hard





● = Anhou vir 3 tellings
 □ = 1 telling
 ⊞ = 1/2 telling
 ⊠ = hard





● = 3 tellings
 ○ = 1 telling

Figure 25

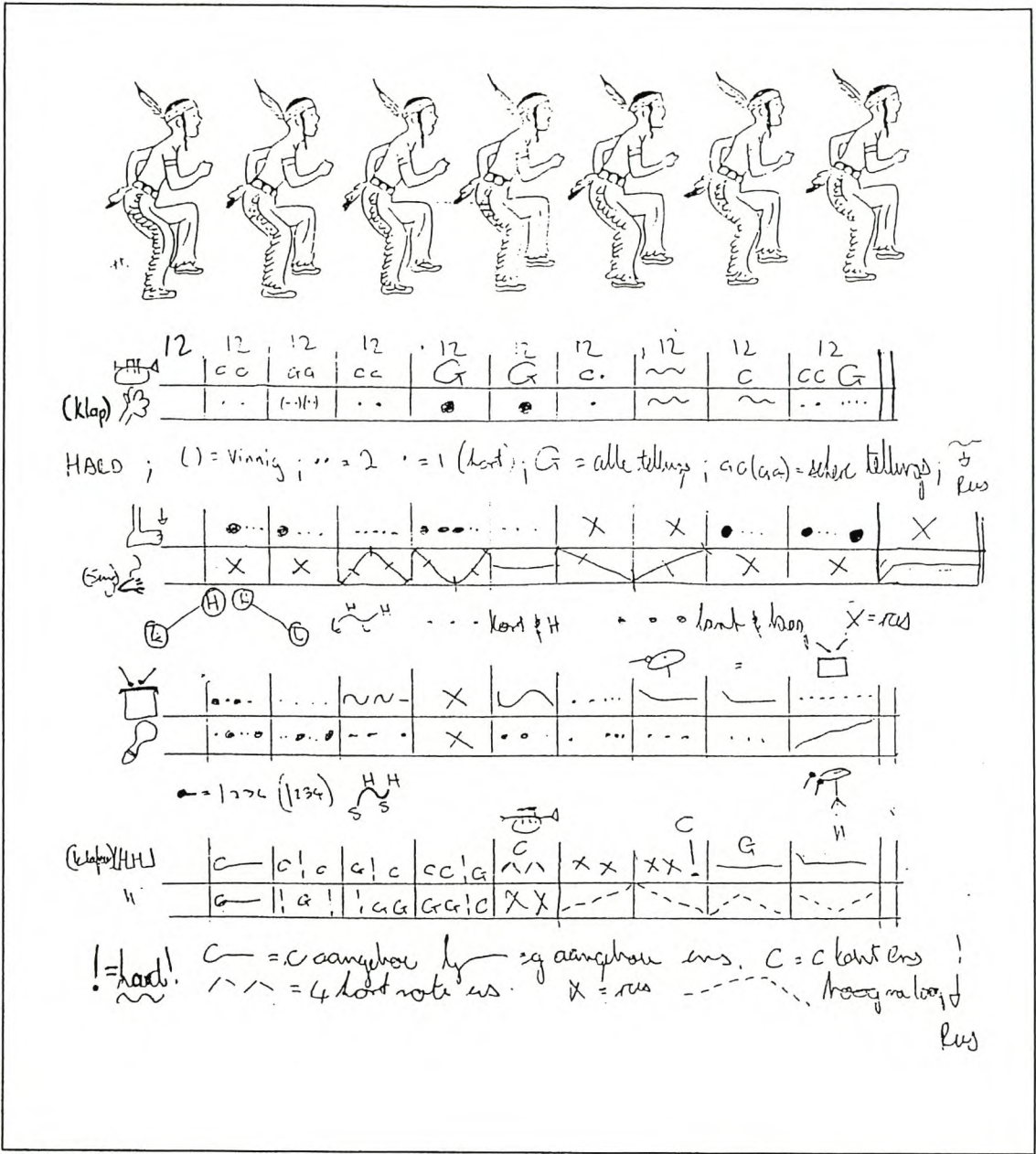


Figure 26

5.3.3.10 Composition and technology: Keyboards, backing tracks, MIDI, Arrangers, Computers, Software.

Keyboards are of the most accessible and affordable of electronic instruments available today. The range and diversity of keyboards are virtually unlimited, but even the most basic of keyboards already have an enormous amount to offer learners. Experience has shown that the basic requirements of a keyboard should be:

- the keyboard should have at least a range of three octaves;
- the keyboard's key width should be a standard piano key width;
- the keyboard should have a selection of timbres (usually indicated as instruments) and rhythm (usually indicated as different styles: swing, rock 'n roll, pop, march, etc.)
- the keyboard should ideally also have an arranger: a feature which allows for one finger playing in the bass and fills in harmonies in the style of the selected rhythm.

Optional: a MIDI interface, allowing the storing of music and allowing connection with a computer.

- A handy feature is a composer function. This feature allows the player to lay tracks, the number depending on the type of keyboard. With the top of the range instruments one is able to use a simple five-track composer, four voices and rhythm, or the more complicated 16-track composer.

-

The advantages of keyboards are many-fold:

- Learners achieve a keyboard sense that is useful particularly for wind instrument players;
- Learners explore many different sounds, timbres, sound combinations, rhythm and accompaniment styles;
- Learners apply knowledge about chords, keys and chord relationships;
- Pieces can be stored on disk for later reference or to add to a portfolio;
- Learners experience an authentic sound closer to a real musical practice. For example: a simple exercise would be playing a blues melody with the right hand and

adding one-finger notes in the bass with the chord arranger on. Then, with the Blues Swing accompaniment rhythm style on, an introduction and “fillers” on, a very realistic and authentic sounding Blues-style piece is created.

- Learners have a more immediate sense of achievement: A good musical product is more readily achieved when playing and hearing their own compositions “filled out”. The technical playing demands of the instrument are far less than traditional instruments, which allows greater freedom of expression and a more immediate sense of accomplishment. This in itself is an important motivating factor for teenagers.

How to use the keyboard in composition class

An illustration from personal experience: the simplest of exercises can be tried out on the keyboard. The first attempt could be during the lessons exploring tonal systems. The pentatonic, whole tone and blues scale are played, practiced, improvised, sung, etc. The learners then compose four-bar guided compositions with set parameters: using only the notes of the pentatonic scale and using a given rhythm. These melodies can be tried out on the keyboard using the marimba to create an ethnic sound for the pentatonic melody, the Koto for the whole tone melody to create Eastern sounding music and the saxophone with the Blues Swing Bass to create a really jazzy piece. Likewise, even the simplest of melodies can be “orchestrated” on the keyboard by using the arranger. Melodies in duple rhythm can be played with the polka accompaniment and triple meter melodies with the slow waltz accompaniment. This immediately enhances and promotes basic understandings, in this case metre.

Learners can play and compose ensemble music that includes parts for the keyboard. The keyboard then acts as a keyboard version of string, woodwind or brass instruments.

Learners can improvise melodies over the arranger bass, or over a riff, or over a simple chordal bass. Montano (1996:39) also uses the approach of having learners play patterns on the keyboard, followed by learners playing patterns as accompaniments while others improvise and then trade parts. The playing of chords and various progressions is a widely known and fine example of a hands-on activity that develops musical

understanding. Learners can notate the basic chordal pattern, or the riff. This can also be offered to the class as a basis for improvisation using different timbres on the keyboards.

Learners can develop and explore different accompaniment styles on the keyboard. By listening to different styles they become more aware of new ways in which to compose accompaniments.

Montano (1996:9) describes how the composing and arranging component of a curriculum could be enhanced with the recording, orchestrating, editing, and notating capabilities of MIDI keyboards and sequencers. He notes how electronic MIDI keyboards, with banks of instrumental, vocal, and synthesized timbres, offer opportunities in composing and arranging to students with even limited keyboard-playing abilities. Learners can improvise and build pieces track by track, while using sequencers. They can record with either the real-time method or the step method, using various timbres for various tracks. The sequencer's editing feature allows the learner to change any aspect of a composition. This includes changes in the orchestration, which can be made through reassigning timbres to tracks. Technology thus enables learners to build creations interactively before giving live performances. With the use of music notation software, the sequences that learners have recorded by playing a keyboard can also be converted to files that can be printed in notated form.

The keyboard is particularly well used in another, follow-up phase of composition, namely working on computer. Keyboards can be connected to a PC provided the PC has a sound card, the necessary software has been installed and the keyboard has a MIDI facility.

Hardware and Software

For schools that have a computer running a Windows program, a single workstation for composition with basic software would be more than adequate. Learners simply work in rotation at the computer.

Software that allows both the sequencer approach and traditional notation include Freestyle (from Mark of the Unicorn), PG Music Power Tracks Pro, Passport's Music Time, Dr. T's CopyistDTP (PC, Atari, Amiga) and QuickScore (PC) and Twelve Tone System's Cakewalk Home Studio (PC) to name but a few. There are many other software packages that are available on the market in South Africa.

Hickey (1997:21) agrees that technology allows easier integration of compositional activities into instrumental performance classes and that the computer is a tool that makes composition easier than ever before. Computers and sequencing programs allow learners to easily notate music, transpose music, print their compositions and for more advanced learners there is the option to layer their music into multi-track compositions. Even beginners find the music notating programs easy to use as they have an auditory facility where every note that has been written can be heard immediately or, with a click of the mouse, it can be played back. Music can easily be written for ensemble or band and printed out. The possibilities are endless. Brophy (1996:15) is in agreement that youngsters enjoy playing at the MIDI keyboard and watching the notation for their piece being created simultaneously on the computer screen. He describes this as a highly enjoyable way to encourage creative composition. However, he continues by pointing out that certain difficulties may be encountered. The first lies in the availability of the equipment – many schools can simply not afford computers, keyboards, etc. The second lies in understanding the notation created by the computer. Composition software is more understandable to composers who are already musically literate. However, a beginner composer who is not yet familiar with music notation needs to become personally involved in writing music within a context that is creative, comfortable, and developmentally appropriate in order to build his or her understanding of musical signs and symbols.

5.4 SUMMARY

The design of any music education program would hinge on the basic fundamentals of curriculum development. In the orientation phase the essence of the curriculum, in this case a composition program, is encapsulated in the structured approach towards learning. The second phase, preparation and planning, flows forth from this as creative and technical skills are built through **guided, structured composition assignments**. The implementation and broad structuring of the composition program are determined by the philosophical and educational considerations mentioned: the fundamental and educationally accountable aim being to “**guide**” learners towards creative expertise and technical skill.

CHAPTER 6

STAGE FOUR: EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF LEARNER COMPOSITIONS

The fourth stage in curriculum development, as stipulated by Elliott, is evaluation and assessment of learner products or performances. A praxial view, focussing on **product** and **learning process**, for evaluation and assessment is addressed in this chapter. The process of assessing and the process of developing assessment tools for the evaluation of learner compositions are explored and presented. The relevance of evaluating a learner composition is evident when the effectiveness of the composition program is evaluated by means of learner achievement.

6.1 WHY MEASURE AND EVALUATE?

Bray, as quoted by Lynch, defined assessment as “the process by which the teacher and pupil make judgements about teaching and learning within music lessons” (Lynch, 1998:41). He gives seven reasons for assessment:

1. to gain accurate information on the development, progress, and achievement of pupils;
2. to evaluate the teaching and learning which has taken place;
3. to enable learners to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding;
4. to use this information to improve performance;
5. to increase motivation and individual responsibility for learning;
6. to inform future learning;
7. to inform future planning.

Tuley (1985:32) supports this notion by pointing out that learners need constructive evaluation as they proceed through any learning process. They need thoughtful reaction from a teacher or else they often fail to see a need for basic development in a discipline.

Boyle & Radocy (1987:9) describe the function of evaluation in various levels. They are achievement, diagnostic, aptitude, and attitude functions.

“Essentially the four functions require the evaluator, respectively, to (a) examine the learner’s behavioural changes as a result of *past* experiences, (b) assess the learner’s *present* abilities and traits, (c) make decisions relative to the learner’s *future* behaviours, and (d) make instructional decisions based on the learner’s *feelings, interests, or preferences* regarding learning activities, subject matter, events, objects, individuals, and/or other phenomena.”

Boyle & Radocy (1987:2) state that a strong information base must be made from which instructional and evaluation decisions are made. They identify two broad realms of knowledge that are included in an information base: subjective and objective. Subjective information includes information based on informal, nonsystematic observations and interpretations made by an observer based on his/her own feelings, experience, knowledge, intuitions, and even prejudices. Objective information is relatively unaffected by personal feeling or opinion. Tests such as multiple choice questions, true/false type questions and essay type questions are all examples of ways of testing objectively.

Both objective and subjective information are important in the evaluation of musical behaviours and music programs. Boyle & Radocy (1987:2) state the need for stronger objective bases for evaluation regarding individual musical behaviours and music curricula. A prerequisite to the development of such bases is an understanding of the test, measurement techniques and evaluative procedures available. Even evaluation procedures that are basically subjective should be subjected to objective focuses.

6.2 DEFINITIONS

For clarification the following terms are defined:

6.2.1 Musical behaviour

“Musical behaviour is an integral and important part of human existence. It includes that facet of human psychological behaviours through which people, either individually or collectively, interact with musical phenomena” (Boyle & Radocy, 1987:5).

6.2.2 Test

“Test refers to the application of a systematic method for gathering data that indicate the extent to which an individual or group of individuals demonstrate a specific behaviour or set of behaviours” (Boyle & Radocy, 1987:6). It is usually described with the aid of a numerical scale or a category system.

6.2.3 Measurement

“Measurement in education and psychology essentially involves quantification of test data” (Boyle & Radocy, 1987:6). Measurement attempts to achieve improved precision and objectivity of observation.

6.2.4 Evaluation

“Evaluation is a broader term than either test or measurement. In education, it usually involves or at least implies the use of test and measurements, but in addition involves making some judgement or decision regarding the worth, quality, or value of experiences, procedures, activities, or individual or group performances as they relate to some educational endeavour” (Boyle & Radocy, 1987:7). The authors also state that evaluation

is an ongoing, systematic process that is an integral part of any educational endeavour and is therefore also a functional process.

6.3 MEASURING MUSICAL ACHIEVEMENT

Music achievement includes General Music Knowledge, knowledge of notation (theory), aural-visual skills, aural skills, and composition as well as performance. Several well-known tests and testing procedures are known for testing history of music, theory, aural training, etc. However, in South Africa, where composition has not been a requirement of the curriculum, testing and evaluating would be new areas for teachers. Boyle & Radocy (1987:163) describe measuring musical achievement in composition as similar to an essay type question in language. Composition is an opportunity to synthesize aural and aural-visual skills and notation as well as a creative act. Boyle & Radocy (1987:163) propose that: “Music students at virtually any age and degree of sophistication may be asked to order and arrange sounds in some meaningful way; composition need not be limited to music majors enrolled in theory classes.”

6.4 EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

6.4.1 A praxial view

Elliott makes a clear distinction in his praxial philosophy on the differences between evaluation and assessment. The main difference is that assessment provides the learner with feedback and also provides useful information to teachers, parents, and the surrounding educational community. In contrast, “evaluation is primarily concerned with grading, ranking, and other summary procedures for purposes of student promotion and curriculum evaluation” (Elliott, 1995:264). He proposes that achieving the aims of music education would depend on assessment. “The primary function of assessment in

music education is not to determine grades but to provide accurate feedback to students about the quality of their growing musicianship.”

Elliott (1995:264) stresses the fact that learners should also become proficient at assessing their own musical thinking-in-action by learning what counts as competent music making. Elliott maintains that for learners to become informed about musical excellence and creativity they will need opportunities to reflect on the results of their musicianship and that of their peers. Assessment is therefore the joint responsibility of teachers and students.

Elliott (1995:264) maintains that musicianship can not be assessed adequately by focussing a learner’s thinking at one moment in time. Learners’ thinking develops gradually and is an ongoing process. “It reveals itself in the intersection of several conditions: (1) The opportunity to make music in the context of (2) an authentic musical situation that, by definition, surrounds the student with (3) musical peers, goals, and standards that serve to guide and support the student’s thinking.” Unlike traditional testing and examinations, it is not a matter of interrupting the teaching-learning process for the special event of testing. When learners are continually assessed, it becomes a natural, comfortable part of the learning experience. Another related aspect is the freezing of the teaching-learning program to evaluate learners out of context. Too little of what they know and can do is then evaluated.

6.4.2 Assessment defined

Spencer (1988:62) states that musical assessment is complex. He (1988:62) notes that at present in the United Kingdom it is the tendency that all assessment must ultimately be presented in the form of a numerical mark. The situation in South Africa today is similar. Assessing a musical product or performance is complex because in any creative achievement the variables are many and combine in subtle and complex ways, also judgement is very subjective.

Spencer (1988:62-64) suggests four levels on which we can exercise our musical judgement, whether of composing or of performing:

1. Indisputable musical fact: this assesses the extent to which a candidate plays or writes correct notes, correct rhythms, etc. Here Spencer notes that music examinations have tried to seek 'respectability' by trying to fit into the culture of the "Three 'Rs'" - a culture most at home with the measurable and unambiguous world of words and numbers.
2. Aspects of sound, though palpable, not readily or precisely described by notation or technical language: dynamics, articulation, phrasing, timbres and combinations of all these are aspects of music which tend to be notated ambiguously and are therefore open to interpretation. It is of course the nature of art to be ambiguous and this is where assessment runs into trouble, because assessment beyond this point is perceived as a 'matter of opinion'.
3. Personal preferences of assessors: teachers need to keep a sense of perspective in order to assess compositions in styles that are unfamiliar or even alien to them. This is where continuous assessment is so important, because it is during the teaching-learning-assessing process where the teacher will get to know the musical thinking of the learner, and it can lead to mutual understanding.
4. Process: besides the awareness of the wide range of variables involved in the assessment of a composition, teachers will need to assess the process by posing questions such as "What is the learner learning from this task? What musical skills are being developed? What knowledge is being absorbed?" Spencer (1988:64) warns that in assessing a composition a single piece of work may seem incomplete or unprepossessing if judged simply as an end-product, but it may be significant in the context of a developmental process.

6.5 ASSESSING COMPOSITIONS

6.5.1 What does assessing a composition entail?

Assessing composition does not only rest on grading the end product. In their assessment teachers should include the skills, knowledge and understandings that learners have gained during the developmental process of composing. Spencer (1988:73) points out that music teachers will need to develop skills for assessing composition, to enable the writing of assessments that are brief and to the point, and to describe the achievement in musical terms. The assessment of the musical *product* and the recording of the learning *process* thus need to go hand in hand.

6.5.2 How does one assess the composing process?

It is useful to view the Midland Examining Group syllabus criteria of the United Kingdom as it is particularly explicit about the teacher's roll in supervising and assessing composing coursework, both to enable documentation of the process, and to ensure authentication:

Although the precise means of maintaining supervision will inevitably differ from centre to centre and with the type of work chosen, it is expected that the teacher will be involved at the following stages:

- (a) Initial discussion at the time when the theme is chosen and the work is being planned.
The teacher must be involved in the choice of theme and must make notes on the discussion.
- (b) Discussion, either initially or in the early stages, of the availability and use of source material and method of presentation.
- (c) Periodic supervision and discussion of each composition including making notes of the discussion.

- (d) Discussion at any time when composing is completed to resolve doubts about the work that has been presented. The teacher must make notes on the discussion.
- (e) Guidance on presentation of the compositions.
- (f) Certification by the teacher that the marks shown were awarded in accordance with the group's instructions.

From MEG (B) syllabus, p. 35

(Spencer, 1988:75)

6.6 MEDIA OF ASSESSMENT

6.6.1 Observation

In order to form a clear and comprehensive profile on learners' development of their potential, and the development of their skills, knowledge and understandings, continuous observation of their work, performances of their compositions, discussions with them, etc. will have to be made. Ogilvie (1992:205) states that observation must play a key role in assessment supported by an efficient system of concrete evidence to justify the conclusions of that observation. He (1992:205) recounts how he observed the skills and concepts elicited from the content of the lesson by recording the variety and gradation of responses by means of plus or minus signs. Observation also plays an important part in the assessment of the product. He sets aside time for uninterrupted performance of compositions. With group work in particular it is important for the teacher and the rest of the class to witness the performance, time consuming though it is, so that adequate evaluation can be made of the contribution of particular individuals.

Observation and reporting could include:

- the playing of first drafts of compositions;

- discussions on how to improve compositions;
- observing skills of tone gradation, dynamics, instrumentation during compositional performances;
- observing improvisation;
- observing performances of final drafts of compositions.

6.6.2 Portfolios

Gardner (1993:240) refers to a portfolio as a “process-folio” and defines this as “an effort to capture the steps and phases through which students pass in the course of developing a project, product, or work of art”.

Portfolios could include:

- initial brainstorming ideas;
- early drafts;
- first critiques;
- journal entries on pivotal moments when ideas jelled;
- collections of works by others which had been useful;
- interim and final drafts;
- self-critiques and critiques by peers, mentors, teachers, outside experts;
- future ideas.

Gardner (1993:241) notes the following in establishing a “process-folio” culture:

- students should observe their own teachers also involved in projects - reflecting upon them; tracking and comparing progress - and so being models to their learners. Here once again, the power of apprenticeship is apparent.
- teachers should read ALL learner process-folios from time to time in order to coach, instruct, encourage and offer strategic feedback.

- Peers can provide considerable help for one another by exchanging of ideas, acting as sounding boards for new ideas, listening, assisting in performing compositions, etc.
- An important ingredient in establishing a process-portfolio culture is the articulation and maintenance of standards: teachers should continuously strive towards improvement, new challenges and higher standards with their learners.

6.6.3 Audio and video tapes

Carlin (1996:38) maintains that traditional methods of assessment often fail or are inadequate because:

- They fail to address the wide range of group and individual skills and processes of listening, performing, and creating that are involved in learning music;
- Data is gathered and judgments are made too late in the composition process to assist students with their own learning or to make changes while they are working;
- Musical learning involves a wide variety of physical tasks and mental and emotional processes and responses. Assessment and evaluation of these outcomes require observation and judgment on several levels.

Audio or videotaping learners is a concrete way of recording their music making and thinking-in-action. It is a record of all their actions; words and sounds that can be played over and over again to reflect upon, to listen to critically, analyze or even edit.

Carlin (1996:38) lists the advantages of using video in the classroom:

- it provides tangible audiovisual record of the learning *process* and *outcomes*;
- it enables students to participate in their *own* and *peer-evaluation* processes by placing learners in the position of critical observers;

- it provides a basis for a *longitudinal assessment* by repeating the video at several different stages of the composing process;
- it provides a *broad-based record* of learner-teacher and peer interaction during the learning process, documenting information on aspects beyond the set task;
- it provides the opportunity to keep *accurate data* on individuals' progress;
- it is a tool to *document* the *creative process* and *artistic growth*;
- it enhances *teacher awareness* of classroom processes, interactions and perceptions.

As this author can testify, an added advantage of recording and videotaping is the fact that teenagers love to see and hear themselves performing. Carlin (1996:39) agrees to this and notes that learners grow artistically and intellectually as they watch themselves perform.

6.6.4 Self, peer and teacher assessment

Spencer (1988:74) identifies the “power of self-criticism” as crucial to the composing process. He (1988:75) relates the story of Charlie Parker¹ reminiscing on the emergence of his own unique improvising style:

“I’d been getting bored with the stereotyped changes that were being used all the time at the time, and I kept thinking there’s bound to be something else. I could hear it sometimes, but I couldn’t play it. Well, that night, I was working over Cherokee, and, as I did, I found that by using the higher intervals of a chord as a melody line and backing them with appropriately related changes, I could play the thing I’d been hearing. I came alive.”

It is the insights, experiments, processes and skills that had developed, that we need to observe when assessing the development of learners’ work.

Carlin (1996:39) also notes that using videotape as a means of assessment facilitates self and peer evaluation. “Showing each working group video clips from all the stages enables

¹ Quoted in: Shapiro, N. & Hentoff, N. 1955. *Hear me talkin’ to ya*. New York: Rinehart, p. 354.

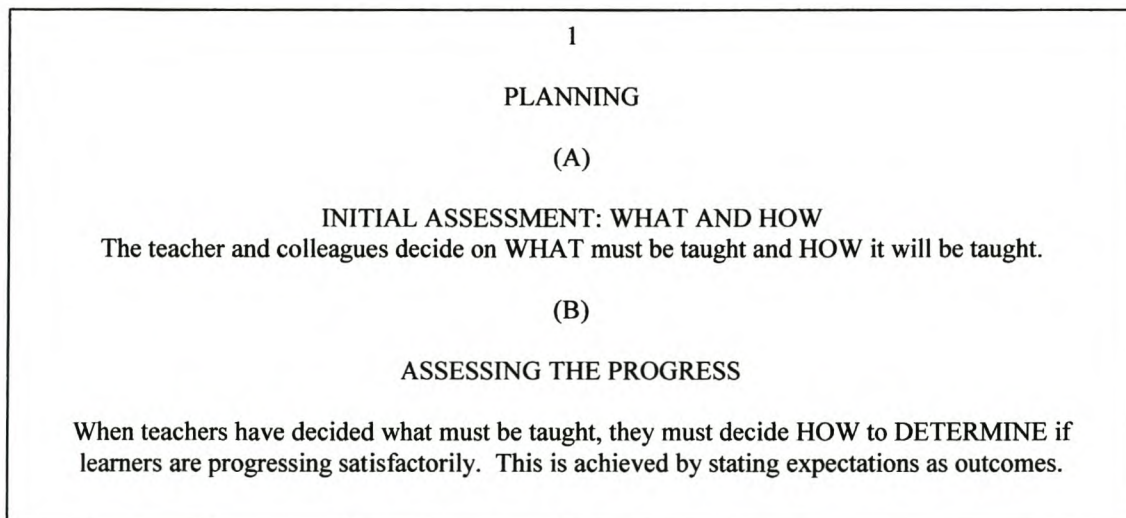
self-evaluation to take place in the form of reflection, dialogue, and assessment, as well as offers the opportunity to peer-critique a total process.”

6.7 THE PROCESS OF ASSESSMENT

6.7.1 Continuous assessment: formative and summative evaluation

The process of evaluation, particularly composition, should be conceived in two stages: a *formative* assessment, which would take into account the development process and the level of the composing challenge for the particular learner, while a *summative* assessment would take into account the quality of the end-product. More able and ambitious learners should be presented with more challenging tasks. This ensures that more able learners are stretched and rewarded with more difficult tasks.

The WCED (1997:5,6) outlines the process of continuous assessment in four stages:



2

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT
(FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT)

(A)

GATHERING DATA

The DATA teachers need, can be gathered in many ways. E.g:

- checking learners workbooks, portfolios, projects, etc.
- keeping informal records in the form of notes about discussions and critiques;
 - discussions with learners.

(B)

INTERPRETATION OF INFORMATION

The teacher can COMPARE the learner's progress with the expected progress. This interpretation can be expressed as statements on the learner's progress (formative assessment).

3

REPLANNING

The knowledge that the teacher had gained enables him/her to plan the NEXT STEP.

The teacher could possibly:

- CONTINUE with the following phase of teaching and learning according to the original curriculum;
- OR ADJUST his/her teaching approach if remedial steps are necessary to achieve the originally planned outcomes;
 - OR plan a MORE CHALLENGING CURRICULUM.

SUMMARY

(SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT)

This process includes a summative statement on every learner's progress.

These summative records are important for:

- future decisions on education;
- feedback to learners on their general progress;
 - reporting to parents;
 - information to the headmaster;
- descriptions of the learners achievements for planning new learning aims.

6.7.2 Outcomes of continuous assessment

The WCED (1997:7) states that in the past the notion was to view assessment as the allocation of numerical marks. However, in outcomes-based education, the process is of importance as well, hence continuous assessment. Awarding numerical marks is therefore not the only solution to evaluation, as each learner's development of understanding, writing a critique or profile could assess skills, etc. without marks, for example.

Assessment critiques could be:

- Descriptive and diagnostic e.g. "John understands and uses note values correctly. He must still spend more time on dotted note values."
- Without being judgmental e.g. "John composes technically safe pieces."

Diagnostic assessment as described above, is an example of a **qualitative**, rather than **quantitative**, approach to assessment (WCED, 1997:7).

Continuous assessment can thus be either in the form of critiques or in the form of marks (grades).

6.7.3 Reports

Reporting can be defined as the documenting of learners' development and achievements. The WCED (1997:8) suggests that teachers use their own format of reporting, but suggests the following useful, understandable and user friendly types of reporting techniques:

- Descriptive profiles which refer to aspects of a learner's diligence, independence and responsibility;
- Symbols accompanied by a key;
- Marks;
- Reference to achievement aims/ skill levels;
- Control check lists for emotional characteristics, attitudes, skills, etc.
- Qualitative criteria descriptions:
 - "The learner can use notation with assistance."
 - "The learner has a certain level of skill"
 - "The learner can work independently"
 - "The learner has mastered the technique of using irregular note groups."

Reporting also includes writing reports on what has been documented. The format of such a report should be meaningful and user-friendly. When writing a report, it must be kept in mind for whom the report is intended: parents, headmasters, etc. Parents have a right to be kept informed on the development and progress of their child. Teachers should report on:

- progress and achievements;
- interests;
- attitudes;
- skills;
- applications.

6.7.4 Grading projects

The United Kingdom, for their General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) coursework in music, have different Examining Groups and they vary considerably in their approaches to converting composing assessments to numerical marks. One approach is to give a 'mark description', and to give an indicated range of marks that tallies with that description. The NEA (Northern Examining Association) and WJEC (Welsh Joint Education Committee) in their syllabuses both adopt this approach. The NEA's description of their lowest range of marks out of a total of 30 reads:

0-10 Compositions in this category will display a basic understanding of the demands of composition. At the top of the scale candidates might be expected to invent or select a musical idea of the order of simple folk tunes or nursery rhymes and present a simple arrangement of them with very basic chords and/or percussion accompaniment of moderate rhythmic interest. The lower end of the scale will contain candidates for whom any form of composing or arranging is difficult.

From NEA syllabus, p. 25

(Spencer, 1988:81)

Another British Examining Body, the LEAG (London and East Anglian Group) is thorough and explicit, linking their marking schemes to a choice of criteria suited to an individual composition:

Each piece is marked out of 100, apportioned as follows.

30 marks are available for award according to the following criteria:

- a) degree to which the candidate maintains the chosen style;
- b) fluency and success with which the candidate exploits the material and medium;
- c) impact and overall impression of the work.

70 marks are available for award according to the criteria chosen by the examiner as most appropriate to each piece. Each criterion selected is to be weighted (10, 20 or 30 marks). Examiners should use a minimum of three and a maximum of five criteria.

- a) Form: structure, balance, scale, repetition/contrast, development of musical ideas, climax.
- b) Medium: use of instruments/voices/sound sources, and understanding of their capabilities, clarity and contrast.
- c) Notation: accuracy and consistency within the chosen system. Does the notation adequately represent the desired sound? Can it be performed?
- d) Melody: degree to which the melody satisfies the aim. Flow, contour, ornamentation, phrase length and shape, repetition, sequence, scale shapes, implied harmony.
- e) Harmony/accompaniment: appropriateness of chosen style.
- f) Tempo/Rhythm: relationship between tempo and rhythm, metre, cross-rhythms.
- g) Texture: layering, counterpoint, manipulation of density.
- h) Location: spatial separation of instruments or loudspeakers in electronic music and musique concrete.
- i) Dynamics: appropriate use and control, balance.

From LEAG syllabus, pp. 11-12

(Spencer, 1988:81)

The following can be noted:

- Assessors select a range of criteria on which to base an assessment.
- Notation is not necessarily standard notation, but should symbolize and convey the message of the music accurately and understandably.

Awarding a grade to a particular composition could be based on a criterion-referencing system. This is a set of *Grade Criteria* of skills and knowledge applicable to each grade. Teachers could draw up a criterion-reference for Grades A to F to assess compositions.

Keith Swanwick (1994:107) comments on criterion statements and notes that they may appear to be potentially fair and relatively easy to use, but they require careful compilation and must be hierarchically sequential. Criterion statements' function must be clearly understood. Using criterion statements is like matching up your impression of a composition to a set of elements of which some will match and some not. There has to be a fairly good match, or the criterion statement would in fact not be reliable.

Swanwick (1994:107) identifies a number of prerequisites which criterion statements would have to meet:

- (a) they should be clear;
- (b) they should be qualitatively different from each other;
- (c) they should be brief enough to be quickly understood but substantial enough to be meaningful;
- (d) they should be able to be hierarchically ordered in a clear and justifiable sequence;
- (e) they should be useful in a range of settings, including different achievement levels and musical styles;
- (f) they should reflect the essential nature of the activity – in our case they should be true to the nature of music.

The British Grade Descriptions (Spencer,1988:87) for the National Criteria are for example:

Grade C attainment:

A typical Grade C candidate is likely to have shown the ability to present music in a finished form and be able to discuss it with the assessor if required. Compositions would demonstrate evidence of technical knowledge and control of the medium used with design and imaginative use of ideas and resources, e.g. a march for trumpet, synthesizer, piano and percussion with a contrasting middle section.

Grade F attainment:

A typical Grade F candidate is likely to have shown the ability to present music in a basic form and be able to discuss it with the assessor if required. Compositions would demonstrate signs of technical knowledge and control of the medium used with design of ideas, e.g. a short march for trumpet, with a very simple rhythmic/harmonic accompaniment.

6.8 DEVELOPING AN ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR COMPOSITION

6.8.1 Critique

Hickey (1999:26) warns that music teachers should not always approach composing with grading in mind. More often than not, it suffices to discuss and recommend changes or improvements. However, it is important to write concrete statements or critiques, on learner compositions, particularly for future reference and for the learner to consult repeatedly. Teachers, but should include peer and self- critiques need not only do the critiques.

The critique form could take the following format:

COMPOSITION ASSESSMENT CRITIQUE

Name:.....Class:.....

Composition.....Date:

Assessed by:.....

OBJECTIVES	COMMENT

LEARNER'S COMMENT

TEACHER'S COMMENT

6.8.2 Criterion reference cards

A number of descriptive levels with a corresponding grade could be compiled. The descriptions could vary from very basic, to more complex. An example of a very basic set of questions, adapted from Tim Cain's Assessment sheet for assessing composition (Cain, 1991:8), can be:

LEVEL	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
1	A	Does it sound complete with moments of tension and relaxation? Is it technically correct?
2	B	Is the piece within a recognizable style? Are there signs of technical skill?
3	C	Is there a coherent structure? Are there understandable and meaningful notational and structural devices?
4	D	Does it communicate an atmosphere or mood of some sort? Are minimal technical skills present?
5	E	Does it sound like a piece of music (rather than a jumble of sounds)?

A more complex criterion-reference card system, adapted from Swanwick (1994:108) could be:

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
1	The quality of the composition is erratic and inconsistent. Content is neither neither Neither, neither neither structurally nor expressively significant. Technical and theoretical errors seriously hamper the legibility and overall impression.
2	Some consistency in formal and structural patterns and melodic material. No expressive qualities or musical craftsmanship.
3	Some expressiveness is evident in the choice of melodic, rhythmic or harmonic material. The general impression is impulsive and unplanned; lacking structural organization.
4	The composition is tidy and conventionally expressive. Melodic and rhythmic patterns are developed and used with some consistency. The work is fairly predictable.
5	A secure and expressive composition which contains some imaginative touches. Texture, instrumentation, dynamics, articulation, phrasing are evident and contrasted or varied to generate some structural interest.
6	There is a developed sense of style and an expressive manner drawn from identifiable musical traditions. Technical, expressive and structural control is consistently demonstrated.
7	The composition demonstrates confident technical mastery and is stylistic and compelling. There is refinement of expressive and structural detail and a sense of personal commitment.
8	Technical mastery of compositional techniques totally serves musical communication. Form and expression are fused into a coherent and personal musical statement. New musical insights are imaginatively and systematically explored.

6.8.3 Rubrics

Hickey (1999:27) describes an assessment rubric as a scoring tool that teachers use to list the aspects of an assignment they will evaluate. For each aspect that teachers list, they should specify the criteria or ‘descriptors’ according to which they intend to rate the students’ performance.

Rubrics should:

- Have descriptors that would take in the form of a whole range of qualities – from poor to good – and should consist of some sentences describing the particular level.
- Be drafted for specific compositions with the objectives of the assignment listed with corresponding descriptors. Hickey (1999:27) projects that the correlation between an assignment and its assessment indicators on the rubric will help learners to understand the teacher’s expectations and will also enable teachers to determine with considerable precision a learner’s progress and understanding.
- Be distributed along with the assignment so that both teachers and learners are aware of the requirements throughout the process.

Hickey (1999:27) outlines a strategy for setting up composition assignments and corresponding assessment rubrics:

- Determine which component parts of the final product are critical to the objectives of the assignment. Decide on about three to five objectives.
- Imagine extremes of quality in learners’ work on each component. Write out, clearly and explicitly, the outcomes the composition would exhibit for learners’ work ranging from excellent to very poor.

- Arrange these descriptions of possible outcomes at opposite ends of a “quality line”.
- Write descriptions of compositions that would fall between these extremes on the quality line.
- Repeat this process of creating a quality line for each of the components to be assessed.

Example of a rubric using General Criteria (Hickey 1999:29):

QUALITY LINE
NEEDS WORK.....TERRIFIC !

AESTHETIC APPEAL	Does not present an effective general impression. Musical ideas do not hold the listener’s interest.	Includes at least one interesting musical idea. Yet, the overall impression is not effective.	Includes some interesting musical ideas. The general impression is pleasant and moderately effective.	Strong aesthetic appeal and general impression. Would be enjoyed by many listeners. Keeps the listener interested.
CREATIVITY	Musical idea is familiar or a cliché. No variety or exploration of musical elements (range, timbre, dynamics, tempo, rhythm, and melody).	Musical idea is neither familiar nor a cliché. However, there is no development, variety, or exploration of musical elements.	Involves some original aspect(s) of musical idea(s). Explores and varies at least one musical element.	Includes very original, unusual, or imaginative musical ideas. Explores and varies at least two musical elements.
CRAFTSMANSHIP	Gives no sense of a completed musical idea. Exhibits no clear beginning, middle, or end section. Form appears random rather than organized. Musical elements (range, dynamics, timbre, tempo, texture, rhythm, melody) do not connect well or are not used to organize musical ideas or the form.	Presents one complete musical idea. However, composition lacks overall completeness. Fails to use musical elements to organize musical ideas or form.	Ending feels final. Uses at least one musical element to organize the musical ideas and overall form.	Presents at least one complete musical idea. Has a coherent and organized form with a clear beginning, middle and end. Uses musical elements to organize musical ideas or the form.

A rubric can be handed out to learners along with the composition assignment and can assist learners in directing their efforts. It also clarifies how grades or critiques will be made, and most importantly it assists learners to develop general self-assessment skills that they can apply to future efforts.

Teachers and learners should work together to develop rubrics for composition assignments. When teachers and learners decide together on outcomes and evaluation criteria, it allows the learners the insight into their assessment that in turn can direct their efforts more constructively. Teachers and learners can draw up assessment rubrics for each and every composition assignment should they wish.

An example of an assessment rubric drawn up by teacher and learners:

Assignment: Syncopation and Blues

When we have an accented note (long note or accent sign) on a weak beat of a bar, we get a syncopated effect. Typical rhythms are given.

The Blues scale is given and lowered notes on the third and seventh steps of the scale are shown.

Write a jazz composition using the blues scale combined with syncopated rhythms.

QUALITY LINE

ROOKIE.....PRO

SYNCOPIATION	Has no apparent syncopation.	Has one or two syncopated effects.	Has sufficient syncopated effects to sound "jazzy".	Has imaginative and creative syncopated effects for solo and accompaniment parts.
USE OF THE BLUES SCALE	The Blues scale was not used correctly.	One or two blues notes are used. Seems complete but lacks originality.	Musically complete. Blues scale used correctly. Contains some original ideas.	Correct and coherent use of melodic devices. Imaginative and effective.
GENERAL AESTHETIC APPEAL	Does not present an imaginative effect.	Some interesting effects. Does not hold the interest of the audience.	Generally very interesting, with some effective uses of musical elements.	Holds the interest with imaginative, interesting ideas. A great deal of audience appeal.

6.9 SUMMARY

As is evident in this chapter, it is necessary to address evaluation and assessment of teaching and learning within music lessons. The reason is to gain accurate information on the development, progress, and achievement of learners; also to evaluate the teaching and learning that had taken place.

It is by now clear that learners need feedback, i.e. evaluation and judgment, to be able to proceed on a developmental course. Because assessment of a subjective product such as a composition is always problematic, several methods and approaches have been identified and developed in this chapter to assist teachers and learners in a meaningful evaluation and assessment process.

Assessing composition does not only rely on grading an end product. The skills, knowledge and understandings that learners had gained during the developmental process are of significant importance. The assessment of a musical product and the learning process thus need to go hand in hand. To this end, a number of methods have been discussed i.e. observation, portfolios, audio and video tapes, self/peer and teacher assessment and reports to assist the teacher. Critiques, criterion reference cards and rubrics are also particularly user-friendly methods which learners relate to and readily understand.

In the next chapter an evaluation of a learner composition is made utilizing methods discussed here to demonstrate the learning process and also to ascertain the extent of the knowledge and skills that had been acquired by a specific learner during the one year composition course.

CHAPTER 7

EVALUATION OF THE COMPOSITION PROGRAM

This chapter deals with the evaluation of the composition program as a curriculum. Evaluating this music education program is basically a process of determining the **value** of the proposed curriculum.

Educational program evaluation is addressed in general and methods to evaluate this program are described. For the purpose of evaluating this composition program three methods were employed:

- an **expertise-oriented** approach relying on the professional judgment of colleagues and other experts through focus group discussion and structured questionnaire: a qualitative method.
- A **survey-questionnaire** for learners assessing instructional material, processes and functioning including aesthetic and affective appeal: a quantitative approach.
- An **objectives-oriented** approach: A case study is made of the accomplishment of a specific learner and the focus is on the achievement of the learner compared to the objectives of current curricular goals.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Evaluating a composition program is simply a process of determining the value of the program. Woody (1997:40) describes educational program evaluation as systematically collecting relevant information and comparing it to accepted standards. As he (1997:40)

expands, the object of an evaluation could be the band, chorus, orchestra, general music class, or entire music program of a school or district, in this case, a composition program. Many aspects could be evaluated e.g. objectives, curriculum, scheduling, materials, etc.

He (1997:40) points out that it is advantageous for music teachers to initiate the organization of evaluations of their programs. The advantage being that when teachers are the initiators, they are not on the defense when someone comes to evaluate them.

A variety of methods could be used to evaluate a music program; in this case the composition program. These include:

- **survey questionnaires** for teachers, learners, parents, etc.;
- **checklists** and **review forms** for assessing instructional materials;
- **observation logs** describing program processes and functioning;
- student **achievement tests** for measuring program outcomes;
- **documents** stating existing objectives and standards at the school, district, state, and national levels.

The evaluators can design the selection of measuring tools and methods used in any combination. The process of choosing evaluation materials is in many cases an opportunity for evaluation in itself.

Woody (1997:41) outlines three general approaches to the process of evaluating a music program. Each of these approaches is useful and they can be combined to ensure greater reliability.

1. *Expertise-oriented approach.* This approach relies on the professional judgments of colleagues and other experts. They become, in effect, a review panel that conducts on-site visits and observes the music program in action or alternatively evaluates material from the program. They are and become prepared for this role by familiarizing themselves with the curriculum. Presumably, these standards and the

diversity of the team members protect the evaluation from any individual member's preconceived biases.

2. *Objectives-oriented approach.* This approach is perhaps the most easily recognized and accepted. It begins with the establishment of well-defined curricular goals for the music program. The information is collected about actual outcomes - the final accomplishments of students. However, this approach, with its focus on the products of the program, has limitations. It can overlook the process of the program and any unintended outcomes (those not mentioned in the stated objectives).
3. *Naturalistic approach.* The naturalist model uses qualitative inquiry techniques. Evaluation team members spend considerable time in and around the music program. Evaluators strive to build a rapport with administrators, teachers, students, and parents in order to have informal interviews, etc. Their insights, along with inductive reasoning, reveal the day-to-day realities (process) of a music program. The naturalistic model enables evaluators to discover any unintended outcomes, both good and bad, of the curriculum.

Harris & Hawksley (1989:54-55) raise a number of pertinent questions teachers might want to ask themselves for a hands-on evaluation of a composition course:

- ***General aims***

Have the main aims of the course been fulfilled?

- (a) Have the pupils enjoyed and experienced music through composing?
- (b) Have the pupils developed their skills in composing?
- (c) Has the experience of composing expanded the pupils' understanding of music?
- (d) Have other educational and social aims been fulfilled?

- ***Content***

- (a) Was the course content suitable in terms of (i) age and ability (ii) appeal?
- (b) Did the course progress in a systematic way?
- (c) Were divergences followed up? Did these take over from the original plan in the case of any class?
- (d) Was adequate, relevant material always available for all needs?
- (e) Has account been taken of material which was (i) very successful (ii) a failure?
- (f) Was the composing content of the whole music course suitably balanced with other activities?

- ***Method***

- (a) Was the method of teaching appropriate to the needs of each class (i) for class work (ii) for group work?
- (b) Were there times when the wrong approach was used? How did this become apparent and was the reason specific to that class?
- (c) Were you dissatisfied with any particular method or approach? Was this because of (i) poor preparation of content (ii) poor organization (iii) lack of class motivation?
- (d) Which methods or approaches were consistently successful, and can the reasons for their success be readily identified? Can the successful method be employed more widely?
- (e) Has the presentation of the course been inhibited by lack of space or resources? If so, what are possible improvements?

- ***Assessment and pupils' response***

- (a) Has the chosen method of assessment during the course been helpful in directing any changes in content, method or approach?
- (b) Have pupils' responses, both positive and negative, been appropriately considered in terms of course content?

(c) Have pupils' verbal responses, as well as an assessment profile, contributed to the final evaluation?

• *Teacher's role*

(a) Is there a suitable means of self-appraisal for the teacher during composing activities?
Is this best agreed with colleagues?

(b) Can reasons be identified for any difficulty in teaching composing as against the demands of other aspects of the music course?

Generally, can the course be judged successful and worth continuing?

Elliott (1995:290) conforms to the theories of Eisner¹ and Mann² that evaluating a praxial curriculum depends on gathering a wide range of information to evaluate the multilayered and interactive nature of the teaching-learning situation.

He maintains that there is no predetermined way in which evaluation of a program has to proceed. However, he identifies three steps:

1. *Descriptive*: This method involves the evaluator to develop descriptions, verbal, video, and audio descriptions of the music program over a reasonable time period. In addition to observing the quality of learners' work, data gathering also includes descriptions of learners' enthusiasm and enjoyment, or lack thereof. Work from learner portfolios, judgments from parents, principals and colleagues and own evaluations could also be included.
2. *Interpretive*: "Evaluators develop analyses of and explanations for the actions, transactions, and interactions described in Step 1." The teacher uses this step to interpret data gathered to highlight strengths and weaknesses.

¹ Eisner, E.W. 1979. *The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs*. New York: Macmillan.

² Mann, J.S. 1968-69. "Curriculum Criticism", *Curriculum Theory Network* 2, pp. 2-14.

3. *Evaluative*: Critics make judgments and recommendations about the program on the basis of the results of the first two steps. Judgments and recommendations will vary according to the personal abilities and interests of the evaluators.

Elliott (1995:290-291) concludes:

“For many teachers and school systems, curriculum evaluation is a desirable but difficult task. There is often a shortage of people with the knowledge to evaluate music programs critically. If provisions for curriculum evaluation are built into the curriculum-making process and if the results can be accumulated and related to follow-up studies of student graduates, many music educators will gain exactly what they need to substantiate what they already know informally: that their music programs are, in fact, enabling children to achieve self-growth, self-knowledge, and enjoyment, three of the most important life values human beings can attain.”

7.2 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AS DATA-GATHERING TECHNIQUE

For the purposes of this research in evaluating the composition program, it was decided to use a focus group discussion. This conforms to the **expertise-oriented** approach as outlined by Woody (see 7.1) where **qualitative** data is gathered from a panel of selected experts in the field under study.

Focus group discussion as a data gathering technique has the following six characteristics:

- (i) It consists of a number of individuals with
- (ii) specific and varying characters who
- (iii) supply information that is
- (iv) qualitative in nature by means of
- (v) structured questioning by a
- (vi) facilitator.

The primary purpose of a focus group is to gain research-related data. In this regard it differs from, for example, the Delphi-technique where the ultimate purpose is to achieve consensus and acceptable solutions to a specific problem. Brainstorming and thinking-scrum activities are similar to focus group discussion, but those techniques also tend to

seek answers and find solutions. Both these group activities also mainly consist of a panel of experts in a certain domain and the success of the functioning of these groups can often be traced to the measure of expertise present in the group. Focus groups, on the other hand, are intent upon tapping the knowledge and general perceptions that individuals hold on the research topic in a wide spectrum of viewpoints.

- According to Schutte (HSRC, n.y:11) focus group discussions have the following distinctive characteristics which distinguish themselves from traditional group data gathering:
 - The focus group consists of “similar” individuals in interaction.
 - The purpose of a focus group is to gather qualitative data by means of a fixed or structured discussion.
 - Focus group discussion is a qualitative data-gathering technique that gathers data inductively and naturalistically.
- The value of focus group data-gathering lies in the following aspects:
 - It is a socially sensitive data-gathering technique and designed to gather data in a specific social surrounding.
 - It is flexible and adaptable for unexpected developments.
 - It has inherent face value.
 - The raw data or result is virtually immediately available.
 - The costs of data gathering are relatively low.

7.3 THE STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

A structured questionnaire consisting of 20 questions was used to initiate the topics for the focus group discussion. The composition program as outlined in Chapter 5 of this document was introduced and explained and then discussed.

The questionnaire:

1. To what extent does such a composition program lend itself to **class activities** such as ensemble, improvisation, etc?
2. To what extent does such a program stimulate **creativity**?
3. To what extent should creative activities be **structured**?
4. How effective are musical **concepts** and **terminology** conveyed in such a program?
5. How effective can material in such a program be **graded** according to level of difficulty?
6. How effective is such a program for the **slow learner**?
7. How effective is such a program for the **fast learner**?
8. How **flexible** is such a program?
9. How does such a composition program adhere to the **current WCED Music Syllabus** for Grade 8 learners?
10. How effective is such a program for use in **Outcomes-based education**?

11. How appropriate is such a program for this **age group**?
12. How **typographically** and **visually stimulating** are the assignments in this program?
13. Is **new subject matter** effectively introduced?
14. Would learners, in your opinion, enjoy such a **composition program** more than rigid **theory exercises**?
15. Could such a program **motivate** learners more for the theoretical side of their music studies?
16. To what extent does such a program achieve presenting music as an **integrated whole**?
17. To what extent is such a program **future** oriented?
18. To what extent does such a program allow learners to work and learn **in an area wider than Western Classical music**?
19. How would you describe the balance between **literacy type knowledge** and **creative application of knowledge**?
20. Are you of the opinion that new learning material can be supplemented with **stimulating, creative follow-up assignments**?

7.4 RESULTS OF THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

7.4.1 Introduction

The focus group consisted of a panel of music teachers currently in the teaching profession. Present teaching situations varied from tertiary education to independent and public school educators. Teaching experience varied from 3 to 20 years. The fact that the respondents were of different age groups and teaching situations allowed for a substantiated insight into what the teachers expect and experience in their daily teaching situations.

7.4.2 Current problems in Subject Music Education

As an introductory topic, to set the background and to sketch the scenario to the problem of this research, respondents were encouraged to discuss current prevailing problems they experience in teaching music, specifically theory that influences the running of the music program at their various schools.

The result:

- Teachers find that learners discontinue music lessons, specifically subject music, after an initial enthusiastic start due to:
 - a too heavy subject load: subject music presently has too many components;
 - learners do not obtain the minimum standard at the end of Grade 9 to be able to continue with music in the senior phase;
 - a lack of interest to continue with music as it is difficult to obtain an A grade for the subject;
 - learners' conviction that music is a dead-end subject with no prospects for the future;
 - a dislike for some of the components of subject music, specifically theory, aural training and history of music.

- It was felt that the workload of the subject is too heavy. Most learners have in mind playing and learning an instrument. When the subject is compartmentalized into various components, the subject becomes too academic and unrealistic for the learner to enjoy the subject.
- Teachers emphasized the present tendency in schools to be grade and result oriented. Learners are inclined to select subjects they excel in to achieve good grades. Music has proved to be a difficult subject in which to obtain an A grade, hence the reluctance of learners to take this subject.
- It was also felt that Grade Eights in the Music course are on a number of different developmental levels in music. Certain learners are beginners and some have considerable musical background. It is virtually impossible to differentiate efficiently and the difficulty of setting exam papers for the course work on various levels was emphasized.
- It was lamented that the current syllabus is not flexible enough to accommodate the vast majority of learners wanting to learn music. The over-emphasis on instrumental Western Classical performance also contributes to the “exclusivity” and “elitist” perceptions surrounding the subject.
- Concern was expressed about assessment in the current Subject Music course. It was generally felt that grading is far too harsh and teachers are in fact disadvantaging their own subject. Excellent learners achieve 80% for faultless performances, which implies that the grading scale is set down by 20%.
- Teachers were generally concerned about subject numbers and it was felt that:
 - Music teachers do not market their subject effectively;
 - The current strict grading system disadvantages the learners;

- Learner desires and needs with regard to contemporary music styles are not catered for.
- It is lamentable that music education at primary school level has deteriorated and declined to such a severe extent due to staff retrenchments.
- Teachers were generally concerned about the current needs of learners to develop in the field of technology i.e. keyboards, computers, synthesizers, etc. and the lack of facilities, equipment, and mostly, the lack of skilled and knowledgeable teachers.
- It was also felt that the current music education system and syllabus do not provide for life-long involvement and skills in music. It was stated that learners leave school with Matric Subject Music being able to play four Unisa Grade 7 pieces and not much else. The same learners never touch an instrument again and never continue to learn and to play for enjoyment.

7.4.3 The composition program.

The respondents were introduced to the topic:

Guided Composition: an integrated, outcomes-based music curriculum for grade 8.

The approach and a sample program of assignments (as set out in Chapter 5) were explained and reviewed. The respondents were then invited to discuss this approach. The structured questionnaire was used as basis for the discussion and is summarized as the questions and responses naturally led to overlapping of topics during the discussion:

- **Future oriented:** It was generally felt that the composition approach was far more future oriented than the current theory class situation. The learner needs and demands are more catered for when using composition as a basis for music learning and the move is away from an “academic”, rote, drill work approach.

With the future in mind, it was also generally felt that composition is an approach that caters more for the utilization of technology e.g. computers and keyboards. It was iterated that learners do not have a Western Classical sound ideal or frame of reference. They are interested in current, up-to-date music and their frame of reference is influenced, and often limited, to popular trends in teenage music. It transpired that teachers mostly felt unequipped and untrained for the technological trends in music education. That was apparent particularly with teachers from an older generation. The respondents expressed their fears regarding their inadequacy in computer skills, keyboard tutoring, modern music styles, sequencing, etc.

- **Creativity:** The respondents expressed their conviction that music should always be taught creatively as an art and as a craft. Creativity should be an integral and inherent part of music education. It is a subject that is taught as an apprenticeship and educators should aim for creative products, rather than pure academic knowledge. Moreover, teachers concurred that the current theory and harmony approach does not stimulate and develop creativity in learners. The respondents expressed their support for the idea of **structured creativity**, as set out in the composition assignments.
- **WCED Music Syllabus and outcomes-based education:** The respondents were of the opinion that the composition method could presently be taught quite effectively to encompass all the present demands of the WCED syllabus, yet be easily utilized for outcomes-based education. It was in fact acknowledged that the composition program is particularly suitable as a working method in outcomes-based education. Concern was expressed about the readiness of learners, learning music through composition, for Grades 10 to 12, as the external Grade 12 Music Examination requirements would have to be met.
- **Differentiation:** It was generally endorsed that composition lends itself aptly for the demands of the fast and slower learner and the various levels of development between learners in the same class through the provision of differentiated assignments. In this

regard, relief was expressed about assessment. It was agreed that it was far more viable and accountable to assess compositions in a portfolio than to set numbers of different theory exams.

- **Integrated, holistic learning:** The respondents affirmed that it made far more sense to teach music as an integrated whole than to subdivide components of music and then to teach them as loose-standing entities. Learners do not always relate the various aspects of music to each other when taught as different “subjects” – they simply fail to make the connection between, for example, what they learned in history of music on Baroque and the current Bach piece they are playing. It was mentioned that language is learned as a whole, moving from sound to symbol, and that the analogy should be applicable to music education as well.
- **Lifelong learning:** The respondents acknowledged that music skills that are learned in a situated, realistic situation as a real music practice, have far more potential to contribute to a lifelong involvement with music than the current situation. It was felt that learners learn how to “use” the knowledge they acquire, as it is a situated and practical working knowledge. Composition equips a learner with the necessary music-making skills to make, create, utilize and apply music in everyday life. It is hoped that the tendency to take music to matric level and thereafter never get involved in it again, could be eliminated to a certain extent with a more hands-on, situated approach.
- **Acquiring concepts and musical literacy:** The respondents concurred that composition is intrinsically a method of teaching music from the sound-to-symbol approach and as such induces musical learning through concept formulation, terminology acquisition and formal theoretical knowledge sprouting from the actual practical music-making situation. Respondents upheld that theoretical knowledge should be acquired on a need-to-know basis and should *result* from active contact with music playing and composing.

- **Wider cultural reach:** The respondents expressed their conviction that composition allows for a wider cultural reach as learners from various cultures could be accommodated in the music learning process. They also predicted that more learners would find music an accessible subject if composition replaced “formal theory classes”. It was iterated that the word “theory” should be banished from music education!

7.4.4 Potential problems and shortcomings

The respondents were asked to project any potential problems or shortcomings of a composition program. The respondents stated that:

- Teachers would have to be very creative, well prepared and inventive when using a composition program;
- They were concerned that composition would require much individual attention and therefore be very time consuming.
- There was doubt about the suitability of a composition program for mass education i.e. large classes.

7.4.5 General remarks

The respondents indicated that:

- They find composition an appropriate and worthwhile method for teaching music interactively, holistically and practically.
- They projected that composition would be suitable and adaptable for all ages, not only Grade Eights.
- They [music teachers] were currently in a rut, bound to outdated syllabi and not in tune with the needs and demands of the youth.
- They anticipate that a music education program such as a composition program would stimulate better learning with particular regard to harmony. Some acknowledged that

they felt inadequate in their harmony teaching skills and that a composition method made far more sense as a practical method of teaching the functions of harmony.

7.5 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

- It was remarkable that the respondents unanimously identified with all the problems regarding current subject music education in schools.
- It was also noted that all the respondents concurred that subject music education is presently ruttled, bound strictly by outdated syllabi, outdated teaching methods and strategies and that change, as projected in Curriculum 2005, was welcomed.
- Concern was reiterated about currently using composition because the examination and syllabus requirements are such that learners still have to pass an external Grade 12 examination. The respondents were particularly concerned with the “academic” level of learning that learners would need for the senior phase.
- The respondents also reiterated their feeling of inadequacy on an inventive, creative, curriculum-making level.
- It was also repeatedly stated that teachers are not always equipped to deal with technological advances such as computers and keyboards. Even although change in the syllabus was welcomed, fears about new courses, new technology, new teaching methods, strategies and assessment were expressed.

7.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- It can be concluded that music teachers in general are not always fully equipped to deal with *teaching-situation analyses*, *strategic planning* and *curriculum making*. The respondents, music teachers, seemed easily daunted by the task of treading in new teaching territory, hence the reiterated desire for more teaching courses, workshops and in-service training. The music education situation in South Africa has, for many years, been syllabus-bound. Teachers were presented with a complete and detailed syllabus. For example, Grade 8 subject music learners had to learn 7 pieces, scales, etc. on their instrument, had to learn about the Baroque and Classical style periods in History of Music, did aural training and had to learn the rudiments of theory and harmony. The limitations of the teaching material are obvious and have probably induced generations of limited teacher innovation. Teachers do not currently experience themselves as curriculum-makers and yet curriculum making is at heart something that teachers do in the everyday teaching situation. Connely & Clandinin (1988:4) underline the fact that all teaching and learning i.e. curriculum matters must be looked at from the perspective of the involved persons. Curriculum development and curriculum planning are fundamentally questions of teacher thinking and teacher doing. They believe that is the teachers' 'personal knowledge' that determines all matters of significance relative to the planned conduct of classrooms and conclude that 'personal knowledge' is the key term. The question arises whether student teachers at tertiary level are exposed enough to teaching-situation-analyses, strategic management and planning, finding solutions for teaching problems, planning work courses, i.e. curriculums for specific needs in the teaching situation and generally working and planning creatively for music education.
- It can also be concluded that learner needs and desires have to a large extent been ignored in the teaching of music. General music education (class music) has touched on topics such as pop music; rock, etc. and subject music has "expanded" to include learning jazz and ragtime repertoire. Yet, the *sociological*, *cultural* and *developmental*

stage of the learners have not been considered in the current curriculum and teaching strategies. A composition program attempts to address these issues and provide for a wider scope and basis in music teaching and learning.

- It can also be noted that, in general, music teachers are not inclined to market and promote their subject effectively. Music as an elective subject has been considered for many years as an elitist and inaccessible subject meant for the few talented musicians who excel on their instruments. The conclusion can be made that by using more user-friendly, up-to-date and contemporary teaching materials, approaches and strategies in music education, a *wider socio-cultural base* can be reached and drawn from.
- It may be observed that the teaching of music finds its roots in the *praxiality* of the subject. It is noted repeatedly how music education finds its definition, its purpose and motivations in the act of doing and actively *making* and *creating* music. Several authors support a praxial, action-based philosophy of music education, notably Elliott (1995), Rao (1987) and Regelski (1981).

Composition attempts to *situate* and *activate* musical learning by teaching *skills* through which learners can activate and catalyze their creativity. It is concluded that when learning and experiencing music in a situated, authentic and practical way, as through composition, lifelong involvement and skills, continued enjoyment and accountability for the subject could be stimulated and enhanced.

7.7 SURVEY-QUESTIONNAIRE TO LEARNERS.

7.7.1 Introduction

This empirical study is of a **descriptive, explorative** nature based on percentages. A questionnaire (Appendix A), consisting of 27 questions, was completed by a group of 26 Grade 8 learners involved in the composition program. The questionnaire is derived from the theoretical research as set out in the body of this research. Questions with an emphasis on the **affective** appeal were included to ascertain the level of enjoyment learner's experience through composition, in contrast to the questions of a more cognitive and academic level set by experts in the focus group discussion.

7.7.2 Survey methodology

The survey methodology employed was decided upon because of the availability of one period on the school timetable during which the questionnaire could be set to a group of 31 Grade 8 learners that have been involved in the composition program. The questionnaire was handed out to the 31 learners with brief instructions as to the procedure and anonymity of the questionnaire and they were left to complete the form. Five of the learners did not manage to complete the questionnaire due to limited time or lack of interest; the results are thus based on 26 completed forms.

The questions on the questionnaire were designed to be simple and direct, consisting mainly of closed questions so as to be suitable for 13 year-olds.

7.7.3 Biographical profile of the survey group

All the respondents indicated that they have music instrument(s) at home (Table 1).

TABLE 1: MUSIC INSTRUMENTS AT HOME.

TYPE	%	N
Piano, guitar, recorder	19,2	5
Recorder	3,8	1
Guitar	11,5	3
Keyboard	3,8	1
Piano	23,1	6
Piano, keyboard	7,7	2
Organ	7,7	2
Guitar, recorder	7,7	2
Clarinet, piano, recorder	3,8	1
Guitar, trumpet	3,8	1
Guitar, piano	7,7	2
TOTAL	99,8 ³	26

It can also be noted that 53,8% (Appendix A)⁴ of the respondents' parents have taken music lessons at some time. Presently 46,2% of all respondents have brothers or sisters also taking music lessons. Only 5 respondents in total do not have a member of the family able to read or write music. 57,7% of the respondents indicated that they would want to continue with music lessons after matric. 46,2% of the respondents indicated that they were beginners in music and 88,5% showed an interest in continuing with music lessons the following year. In the entire group, only 38,5% are keyboard/piano players, indicating the feasibility of using composition for non-keyboard players as well. 88,5% of all the respondents were positive about wanting to learn how to read and write music.

³ In some cases the total percentage does not add up to 100% due to rounding off the decimal point.

⁴ All percentages can henceforth be referred to on Appendix A.

7.7.4 Findings

About two thirds, 65,4% of the respondents were very positive about their enjoyment of composition. Feelings about theory were ambivalent with an equal distribution of positive (50%) and negative about theory. 80,8% of learners found composition assignment instructions clear and 84,6% were positive about the type of assignments they have received. 76,9% of the respondents were of the opinion that their compositions are good, 73,1% enjoy composing and 61,6% enjoy listening to their own compositions.

Only two respondents indicated that they did not enjoy using the computer for composition and only 4 respondents indicated a dislike for using the keyboard in composition. Respondents were mostly very positive about the activities in the composition class e.g. duets, ensemble, etc. to the extent that 76,9% responded “very enjoyable” and “enjoyable” to these activities. 11 of the 26 respondents admitted that they never compose more than the set amount of assignments. With regard to questions on notation and music literacy only one respondent indicated that composition does not help at all with understanding music notation and eight respondents indicated that composition had not at all stimulated them to create their own music.

7.7.5 Summary

It can be surmised that the respondents' backgrounds are to a certain extent homogeneous considering their exposure to musical instruments at home and contact with family members who have had music lessons at some stage. More or less half the group are beginners in music yet the majority intend continuing with music for the near future and roughly half intend continuing with music post matric. The conclusion can be drawn that the musical experience is presently pleasant and fulfilling enough for them to wish to continue their association with music education. It can also be seen that the vast majority wishes to learn to read and write music and find composition and compositional activities enjoyable to this end. It can also be noted that only 2 of the respondents did not enjoy using computer technology in composition class. It can safely be concluded that these

youngsters generally tend to find computers and keyboards very stimulating and interesting. It can be noted that the largest group (69,2%) preferred music other than Jazz, African music and Western Classical. It can be assumed they lean towards more popular, commercial and/or rock styles, which has an implied message for music teachers. The vast majority also seems to experience composition as very positive for their music literacy skills.

In general, the consensus is one of affective appeal with particular strength in the types and clarity of assignments received, the quality of own compositions and the enjoyment level of the composition class activities.

7.8 OBSERVATION LOG OF LEARNER COMPOSITIONS COMPARED TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CURRENT WCED CURRICULUM.

Another method of program evaluation identified by Woody (1997:40) involves an observation log of learners' work in which the processes and functioning of the curriculum are assessed through evaluating the product. This method is combined in this research with another evaluation method identified by Woody, viz. the comparison of learner's work to current curricula identifying the level of proficiency reached by learners.

Two compositions by a Grade 8 beginner are evaluated in the following observation log. The first untitled composition (figure 27) was written at the beginning of the course and the second composition (figure 28) "Adventures of the Day", was written at the end of the year, after one year of composition class.

7.8.1 Untitled composition (figure 27)

- lack of the use of clefs is apparent. The second line is indicated with the letter "C" to establish pitch.
- The beats per bar fluctuate between quintuple and quadruple time.
- Ineptitude in writing musical symbols such as rest signs is evident.
- Note stems show no conformity to convention: all stems point up.
- Bar lines are inserted after the clef at the beginning of every line.
- The composition starts on C, it can be assumed to be in C major, yet ends on D, G, and F resulting in tonal ambiguity.
- The composition is of limited pitch range and length.

Despite the above limitations and obvious lack of technical and musical skill, the following is already apparent:

- Unity of rhythmic motives and melodic contour is evident.
- A good balance is achieved between various rhythmic motives.
- Longer note values provide a sense of phrasing.
- Contrapuntal devices such as repetition (bars 7 and 12) and sequence (bars 10 and 11) are evident in an early stage of development.

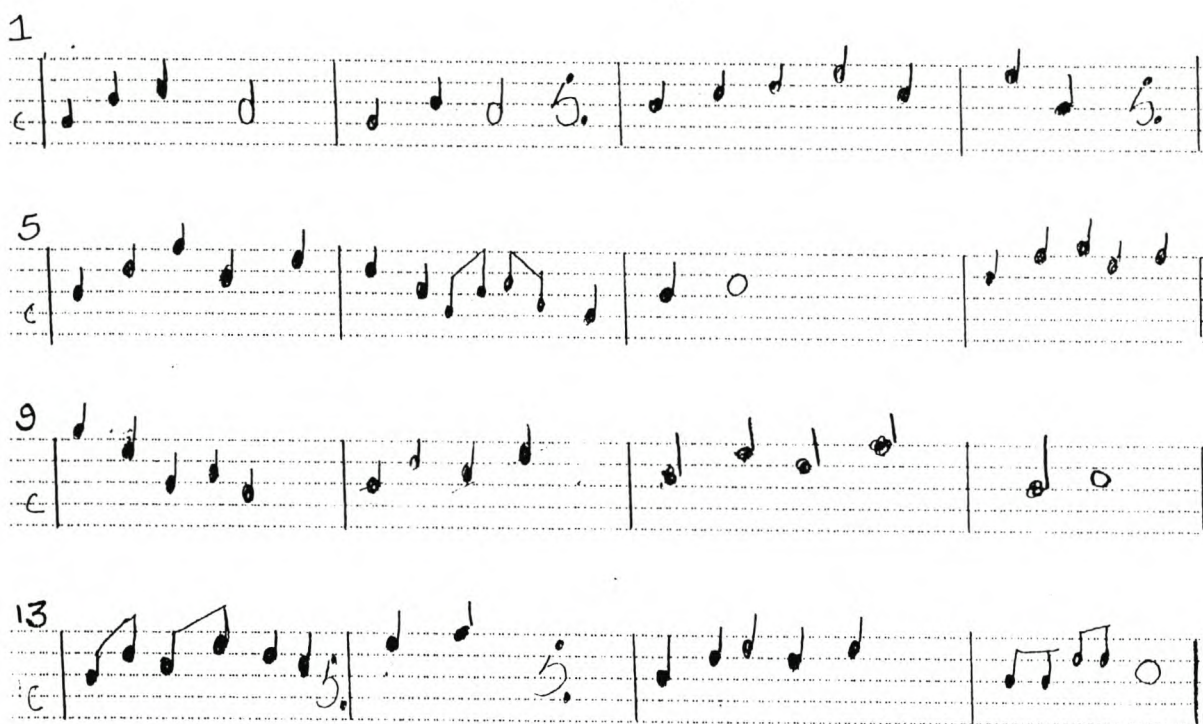


Figure 27 Untitled composition by a Grade 8 learner.

7.8.2 Adventures of a Day (figure 28)

The following composition is compared to the present WCED syllabus for Theory Grade 8 to ascertain the level of conformity and proficiency reached through composition to the current theoretical requirements.

This composition still shows some technical and theoretical errors and limitations, e.g. a full bar silence should be indicated with a semibreve rest, phrases are of irregular length and grouping is not always correct (e.g. the bass in bar 45).

However, many positive and advanced techniques and skills are employed:

WCED THEORY SYLLABUS GR. 8	LEARNER COMPOSITION
1. Staff notation: F and G clefs, all note values and rests, pitches in the bass and treble clefs including ledger lines, transcription of a melody at the same pitch.	The work clearly shows considerable skill in using the clefs, dotted note values, rests, the correct use of ledger lines, transposition from treble to bass clef (bars 1,2 to 3,4)
2. Time signatures: all simple time signatures, correct grouping of various rhythmic patterns up to and including quavers.	In this compound timework the time signature selected, and by implication the grouping within this metre, is already more advanced than the requirements for this grade.
3. Scales and key signatures: Notation of all major and harmonic or melodic minor scales in the F and G clefs, with or without key signature. Identification of the keys of given melodies.	Scales are applied in this composition as an essential part of the melodic and harmonic material, not as a theoretical exercise. Note the scale of B flat major in bars 29-30, bars 31-35 the bass triad scale and the scales in bars 45-46.
4. Intervals: visual recognition, as well as the notation of all simple intervals and their inversions (a) between any two steps of any major or minor scale (b) in the F and G clefs.	Although intervals are not named e.g. perfect 5 th , major 3 rd , etc. they are utilized correctly as relative distances between notes to obtain melody and harmony.
5. Triads: visual recognition, as well as the notation and playing of major and minor triads (a) in root position (b) in close position on all notes (c) in the F and G clefs.	Consistent use of triads in all inversions, in block and arpeggiated form, and as functioning harmony is displayed throughout the composition. Note in particular the triad scale: bars 31-35.
6. Four-part writing: the writing of Primary triads in root position in four parts, in major and minor keys. The writing of perfect and imperfect cadences in major and minor keys up to and including 4 sharps	The correct use of cadences is evident throughout the composition although not written in traditional chorale style e.g. the perfect cadence in E \flat major bar 9; the plagal

and 4 flats.	cadence in B \flat major bars 18-19; the perfect cadence in B \flat major (including the use of the dominant 7 th) in bars 34-35.
--------------	---

7.8.3 Summary and Conclusion

Besides conforming to the requirements of the Grade 8 theory syllabus, the composition also shows many melodic, contrapuntal and harmonic devices foreshadowing more advanced work and a grasp of these devices as functioning tools to be utilized in the writing of music. Examples are:

- Two-part techniques such as contrary motion (bars 27-28); imitation (bars 1-3); sequence (bars 6-7, bars 31-34); repetitive motivic use (bars 1,3,8,15-16,37-38,42.)
- Use of non-harmonic tones e.g. bar 4 the *échappé*; bars 6-7 the upper and lower auxiliary notes; passing notes in bars 45-46.
- Modulation e.g. bars 8-9 the modulation to E \flat major.
- Form: clear sections are achieved through the use of new melodic and rhythmic material, yet unity in the composition as a whole is maintained. The form, ABCA, a variation of ternary form shows a definite feel for formal design. The return to A material, bar 36, shows a feel for ternary or cyclic design and rounding off. Form devices such as links are also employed, e.g. the repeated note motive used as a link in bar 36 to lead in the return of the A-section.

When comparing the two compositions of the beginner learner it can be concluded that a number of musical developments took place over the course of one year's music study in composition. The early composition clearly shows considerable lack and limitations in technical and musical skill. The later work already shows a number of significant developments in the areas of technical, musical and creative skill. Perhaps the most important development for this learner, is the awareness of *musical process* towards *musical product* employing creativity and technical skill. The music learning experience

thus becomes one of integration of theoretical content with creative skill when using composition as a medium for acquiring theoretical and formal knowledge. The latter is employed as functional and meaningful knowledge, not as separate learning material to be memorized and forgotten.

Adventures of a Day

1 *Allegro*

6

10

15

20

25

29

moderato

34

39

mf

44

ff

Figure 28: "Adventures of the Day" by a Grade 8 learner.

7.9 INCURRED PROBLEMS

- It was found that learners, due to varying abilities and stylistic interest, **responded negatively to certain assignments**. The incidence is however, negligible.
- In general, learners did not particularly respond well to having to synthesize learning matter by repeatedly **returning to compositions** for improvement. This learning however, was not the case with composition assignments for keyboard and computer. The latter proved to be the only medium in which learners strove for perfection.
- On the whole it was found that composition demands intensive teacher-learner interaction and as such is a **time consuming activity**. It was not always possible to work in depth on every composition of every learner. Learners are to a certain extent left to their own devices and independent working ability seems paramount.

7.10 RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is evident that currently teachers do not experience themselves as curriculum-makers and yet, **curriculum development** and **curriculum planning** are fundamentally something that teachers do in the teaching situation everyday. Most teachers are confronted daily with diverse and heterogeneous cultural and socio-economic groups with different needs and demands. It seems imperative that teacher training and education, both pre-service and in-service, should involve a great deal of hands-on preparation for the realities of teaching in schools by equipping students with the problem-solving and managerial skills needed to plan tailored curricula, work programs and music programs suited to individual needs and schools.
- It is also apparent that there is a need for teaching courses, workshops and **in-service training** for teachers currently in the teaching situation. Teachers in South Africa

have in the past been presented with complete and detailed syllabi and to a certain extent had limited potential and necessity for curriculum development and teacher innovation. It is evident that specifically the older generation of teachers feels out of their depth in this regard.

- It can also be recommended that teachers be trained in **marketing** and **promotional skills** to propagate their subject and make it more actual, user-friendly, future-oriented and situated in the current day and age for learners. Music as a subject has for many years been considered elitist with a strong focus on the Western Classical tradition. It seems imperative that a wider socio-cultural base be drawn from by updating the music program and activities of the school.
- It has become evident in the course of this study that **learner needs** and **desires** have to a great extent been ignored in the past. The sociological, cultural and developmental stages of learners have not always been considered in music education when planning curricula and teaching strategies. The composition approach has proved to provide to a certain extent for wider cultural appeal and more up to date methodologies e.g. when using technology for composition. The learner survey-questionnaire indicated that learner interest in the various musical styles was maximal in styles other than jazz, African and Western Classical. It can safely be assumed that other styles would mean pop, commercial and/or rock styles. It can thus be recommended that this tendency in musical preference be utilized to attract and stimulate learners for music education by equipping learners for music in general by assisting them in mastering and understanding basic musical, technical and creative skills through these current popular music styles.
- The composition program in this research is founded on the praxial music education philosophy and it has become evident that music education finds its definition, purpose and motivation in the act of actively **doing**, **making** and **creating** music. The learner survey-questionnaire supports this proposition that learners enjoyed the composition class activities, i.e. duets, ensemble, group work and particularly

computers and keyboards. It became obvious repeatedly that learners enjoy the *activity* of music making meaning playing an instrument, composing music, playing their compositions on keyboards, arranging their compositions on the computer and so forth. The recommendation can be made that a stronger focus **on active music making** should form the core of any music educational program.

- It was found in this research that there was a need and a desire for **music literacy**. The learner survey-questionnaire showed great learner interest in learning to read and write music and an enjoyment of learning music literacy skills through composition. It is recommended that music literacy be promoted and stimulated through **active, situated and authentic programs** whereby learners could fulfill their need for literacy skills by employing challenging and worthwhile assignments to foster literacy skill building.
- One of the shortcomings of this program is revealed in the **time restrictions** for music periods as currently experienced in schools. Composition demands a great deal of teacher-learner interactivity and school timetables are not always accommodating. It is recommended that methods, strategies and work sessions be planned and organized meticulously to facilitate composing, discussion and evaluation to the maximum.
- It is also recommended that a **follow-up, more advanced composition program** be designed to complement this elementary level composition program. The focus on a more advanced program should then be on further expansion on harmony, melodic devices and more exploration in electronic timbre.

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APPENDIX A RESULTS OF THE LEARNER QUESTIONNAIRE

This is a research project. Your name is not asked. We require only your honest answer.

Answer the questions by circling the answer category that corresponds most accurately with your choice, or write the answer on the dotted line where required.
E.g.

How do you feel now?

Good	(1)
Bad	2

1. Do you have any music instruments at home?

No	0 % 0	1
Yes	100 % 26	

If yes, which instrument/s?

.....

2

2. Has one or both of your parents/guardians taken music lessons?

Yes	53,8 % 14	3
No	46,2 % 12	

3. Does any of your brothers or sisters take music lessons?

Yes	46,2 % 12	4
No	53,8 % 14	

4. How many members are in your family (mother and father included)?

.....	5
-------	---

5. How many of them can read and write music?

.....	6
-------	---

6. Are you a beginner in music?

Yes	46,2 %	12
No	53,8 %	14

7

7. Do you intend continuing with music next year?

Yes	88,5 %	23
No	11,5 %	3

8

8. Do you take piano/keyboard lessons?

Yes	38,5 %	10
No	61,6 %	16

9

9. Would you continue with music lessons after matric?

Yes	57,7 %	15
No	38,5 %	10

10

10. How much would you like to be able to read and write music?

Very much	38,5 %	10
Much	50 %	13
Not at all	7,7 %	2

11

11. How enjoyable do you find composition in general?

Very enjoyable	26,9 %	7
Enjoyable	38,5 %	10
Not enjoyable	23,1 %	6
Very unenjoyable	11,5 %	3

12

12. How enjoyable do you find theory excersises in general?

Very enjoyable	3,8 %	1
Enjoyable	46,2 %	12
Not enjoyable	26,9 %	7
Very bad	23,1 %	6

13

13. How clear or unclear do you find the composition assignments?

Very clear	7,7 %	2
Clear	73,1 %	19
Unclear	15,4 %	4
Very unclear	3,8 %	1

14

14. How attractive do you find the composition book?

Very attractive	11,5 %	3
Attractive	57,7 %	15
Unattractive	23,1 %	6
Very unattractive	3,8 %	1

15

15. How good or bad do you find the type of assignments in your book?

Very good	19,2 %	5
Good	65,4 %	17
Bad	3,8 %	1
Very bad	11,5 %	3

16

16. How good or bad do you think your compositions are in general?

Very good	3,8 %	1
Good	73,1 %	19
Bad	11,5 %	3
Very bad	11,5 %	3

17

17. To what extent do you enjoy using the computer in composition?

Great extent	65,4 %	17
Certain extent	26,9 %	7
Not at all	7,7 %	2

18

18. To what extent do you enjoy using the keyboard for composition?

Great extent	65,4 %	17
Certain extent	19,2 %	5
Not at all	15,4 %	4

19

19. To what extent do you enjoy the following musical styles:

	Great extent	Certain extent	Not at all
Music of Africa	3,8 % 1	26,9 % 7	65,4 % 17
Western Classical music	26,9 % 7	42,3 % 11	26,9 % 7
Jazz	30,8 % 8	23,1 % 6	26,9 % 7
Other	69,2 % 18	26,9 % 7	3,8 % 1

20
21
22
23

20. How enjoyable or unenjoyable do you find the activities in the composition class (duets, ensemble, etc.) ?

Very enjoyable	15,4 % 4
Enjoyable	61,5 % 16
Unenjoyable	11,5 % 3
Very unenjoyable	11,5 % 3

24

21. How enjoyable or unenjoyable do you find writing your own compositions ?

Very enjoyable	34,6 % 9
Enjoyable	38,5 % 10
Unenjoyable	15,4 % 4
Very unenjoyable	11,5 % 3

25

22. How often do you compose more compositions than only those assigned in class?

Often	11,5 % 3
Sometimes	46,2 % 12
Never	42,3 % 11

26

23. How often does the teacher explain the composition assignments in class?

Always	57,7 % 15
Sometimes	38,5 % 10
Never	3,8 % 1

27

24. To what extent does composition help you to notate music?

Great extent	42,3 % 11
Certain extent	53,8 % 14
Not at all	38 % 1

28

25. To what extent has composition stimulated you to write your own music (e.g. making sound tracks, etc.)?

Great extent	34,6 % 9
Certain extent	34,6 % 9
Not at all	30,8 % 8

29

26. How enjoyable or unenjoyable do you find listening to your own compositions?

Very enjoyable	23,1 % 6
Enjoyable	38,5 % 10
Unenjoyable	23,1 % 6
Very unenjoyable	15,4 % 4

30

27. Think about MUSIC, what comes to mind first?

.....

31

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION