Annotated Bibliography of Resources

for General Music Classrooms

Daniel Szelogowski

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Professor Alena Holmes

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Early Childhood (Ages 0-8):

Reifinger, James L. "The Acquisition of Sight-Singing Skills in Second-Grade General Music: Effects of Using Solfège and of Relating Tonal Patterns to Songs." Journal of research in music education 60, no. 1 (2012): 26–42.

> Reifinger's research examines two aspects of teaching sight-singing: solfege syllabus versus the neutral syllable "loo" for singing patterns, and the use of songs related to the studied tonal patterns compared to unrelated songs. Second grade students enrolled in general music received sixteen sessions of sight-singing instruction, wherein previous learned patterns were reviewed, and a new four-note pattern and song were introduced. The study examined four independent variables by level of instructional treatment, including related songs/solfege, related songs/"loo", unrelated songs/solfege, and unrelated songs/"loo", with the dependent variables being contour and pitch accuracy of familiar versus unfamiliar patterns. The data was collected over sight-singing pre-, and post-tests, as well as a retention test. Between the pre-test and post-test, a significant improvement in sight-singing skills was clear, and most post-test to retention tests showed insignificant differences, displaying the retention of the skill. The study found that sight-singing skills also transferred to unfamiliar patterns, and effectiveness differed based upon the familiarity of the pattern – however, solfege with familiar patterns and "loo" with unfamiliar patterns showed significantly greater accuracy in contour, though relating patterns to songs was insignificant to student achievement. As well, the students demonstrated a significant improvement in sight-singing skills resulting from the incorporation of sight-singing in regular general music classes, and that only sixteen sessions of solfege use improved note and contour accuracy.

Rajan, Rekha S. "Preschool Teachers' Use of Music in the Classroom: A Survey of Park District Preschool Programs." Journal of music teacher education 27, no. 1 (2017): 89–102.

> Rajan presents a study on preschool teachers' use of music and type of music activities in their classrooms. The research discusses the use of music every day by most teachers, as well as the issue of music activities being primarily teacher-directed such as through CD sing-alongs or musical cue following, though the teachers noted the use of music in building academic connections and keeping children engaged during transitions. However, although the teachers valued music and found it important to their methodology and the children's development and learning, many inhibitors also hinder the development of more viable, child-centered music activities, including limited resources, self-lack of musical ability, and lacking knowledge of music education standards – as well as children having limited instrument access due to concerns of hygiene (including no instruments with a mouth-based action such as a trumpet or harmonica) and preconceived notions of their ability to respect any class instruments. Rajan discusses the need for teacher preparation and professional development coursework in training early childhood and music education, with greater focus on creating and understanding child-centered musical activities, and encouraging pre-service music teachers to collaborate with early childhood teachers who lack background in teaching music, as well as recognizing the many different forms and contexts of music education.

Garner, Allison M. "Singing and Moving: Teaching Strategies for Audiation in Children." Music educators journal 95, no. 4 (2009): 46–50.

> Garner discusses approaches to teaching basic musical skills to preschool and elementary students. Garner's approach focuses on fostering students' listening ability through the use of movement and other interactive activities, based upon Edwin Gordon's musical-listening concept of "audiation" combined with Howard Gardner's theories of developmental psychology as an application of internalizing music instruction through movement activities. Garner's study applies movement and singing activities into Suzuki instruction to reinforce the students' audiation abilities, utilizing vocalizations, movement with verbalizations, and rhythmic rhymes; as well, the author uses creative movements to establish musical character, beats, pulsation, and articulation, as well as illustrating contrasting concepts of high or low, fast or slow, and loud or soft. Beginning instrumental students are encouraged to use the space in their classroom to freely move to music and respond by walking, jumping, galloping, running, or skipping, based on what they hear – this is easily built upon by playing a simple melody in various articulations and having the students respond based on the accent to build physical and aural relations to the sounds. Garner also suggests that students learning a piece like the "Twinkle" variations of Suzuki book 1 be encouraged to sing the variations by chanting the words in the rhythm variations, then mentally phonate the words and pat or stomp the rhythm while the teacher echoes the figural patterns from the variations to the student. By having the student sing or hear a pitch or interval before playing it, many beginner issues including fingering patterns are easily avoided.

Wiggins, Jackie, and Karen Bodoin. "Painting a Big Soup: Teaching and Learning in a Second-Grade General Music Classroom." Journal of research in music education 46, no. 2 (1998): 281–302.

> Wiggins discusses the results of observing the differences in teaching styles from the author's general music classes compared to Bodoin's second grade general music classroom, a teacher with much more experience at the time. The resulting data from the study presented not only information on the teaching and learning process within the collaborative classroom, but also on Bodoin's introspections on methodology and classroom management. Bodoin discussed the vulnerability and exposed nature of reflecting on self-recordings of teaching, and the lack of attention drawn from the students in having an intrusive party studying the lesson in the background. Wiggins discusses four key issues or themes related to teacher expertise, being that the teacher is an expert musician, uses a variety of instructional strategies, provides support for learning, and manages the classroom routine to facilitate learning. As well, the author discusses issues relative to student comprehension of musical ideas, being that students figure things out for themselves, establish their own contexts, are aware of what they are already know, coach peers and seek coaching from their peers, and evaluate their own work. Given this data, Wiggins suggests that a deep, intimate understanding of how teaching and learning takes place in the music classroom enables teachers to better understand the process of musical teaching and learning experiences and what they truly look like; thus, it is of clear

importance that teachers are provided opportunity to examine their own work and consider how issues related to learning and teaching manifests within their work – especially when working with students of such a young age.

Hurley, Craig, Dorothy Musselwhite, and Brian C. Wesolowski. "Examining the Effect of Aural Preparation on Second Grade Students." Research and issues in music education 14, no. 1 (2018).

Hurley, et. al., present a study on the effect of aural preparation (hearing, decoding, creating, and performing rhythms/pitches) on second grade student's ability to read, perform, and dictate musical rhythms prior to being introduced to music notation. The study sought to find the validity and reliability of using music reading, performing, and dictation to assess rhythmic achievement and potential, and how aural preparation affect student's ability to read, perform, decode, and dictate rhythms. In the study, six second grade classes were split in half, where three classes received aural preparation interventions and three classes received none, and each student was given a pre- and post-test to assess their rhythmic performance and dictation skills. The authors found that the students who received aural preparation interventions saw a significant increase in performance skills with reading and performing music, but no significant increase in dictation skills regarding musical decoding and writing, and the results proved the psychometric evaluation to have strong predictive validity for all measurements.

Upper-elementary Music Classroom (Grades 3-5):

Courey, Susan Joan, Endre Balogh, Jody Rebecca Siker, and Jae Paik. "Academic Music: Music Instruction to Engage Third-Grade Students in Learning Basic Fraction Concepts." Educational studies in mathematics 81, no. 2 (2012): 251–278.

> Courey, et. al., present a research study on the effects of academic music intervention on abstract understandings of fraction symbols and size, music notation, and the relational comprehension between third grade students in a mixed socio-economic, multicultural public school. In the study, students were assigned to either a general math class or academic music class where students would apply their understanding of music and fractions to solving fraction problems. The study found that the music students, who were assessed with a post-examination with less fraction knowledge, produced similar scores to the students who had studied in the general math class. The authors propose that the scores are a compelling reason for music to be viewed as an integral part of the elementary curriculum, given that fractions are often the hardest math concept for elementary students to grasp – as such, the intervention was found especially effective for students with a lower than average understanding of fractions, and the use of academic music strengthened their understanding of fractions in various forms through a semiotic-based musical game.

Raschdorf, Taryn, Brittany Nixon May, and Amie Searcy. "Integrating Social-Emotional Learning into Our 'New Normal' Teaching Elementary General Music." General music today 34, no. 2 (2021): 42–48.

> With the increase of remote instruction as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, many school districts and states nationwide have been increasingly adopting social-emotional learning (SEL) initiatives. Raschdorf, et. al., discuss the success of elementary general music teachers in integrating SEL into their curriculum, noting that face-to-face and remote instruction can both foster SEL into the classroom environment through building student-teacher and student-student relationships, practicing mindfulness, engaging in inclusive musical activities, and encouraging family music engagement. The authors note that music-making activities nurture whole-child development naturally through student collaboration, self-regulation, empathy building, and critical thinking and problem solving – as well as the fact that music education and SEL education share complementary objectives including developing self- and social-awareness, promoting responsible decision-making and self-management skills, and positive relationship skills. As well, encouraging family engagement by bringing family members into the virtual music classroom reinforces both the student's bonds with their family and the concepts of SEL without the teacher's physical instruction. The authors also discuss the necessity of inclusive music practices through selecting a variety of world music to present learning opportunities regarding the music's cultural, social, and historical contexts.

Whitcomb, Rachel. "Teaching Improvisation in Elementary General Music: Facing Fears and Fostering Creativity." Music educators journal 99, no. 3 (2013): 43–50.

Whitcomb discusses the necessity of improvisation in elementary general music and the obstacles faced by educators attempting incorporation into their curriculum – of which include lack of person experience in improvisation and training in teaching improvision and lacking instructional time. By combining improvisation with other musical skills and familiar teaching methods and resources, Whitcomb suggests that improvisation can be much more easily incorporated with simple lesson plans with dynamic guidelines as skills develop. The author notes that it is important for teachers to begin the instruction based on what they know – applying melodic and rhythmic vocabulary using their preferred teaching methods in a gradual improvisational process; as well, teachers should also take note to step away from their comfort zone and become more familiar with the music the students are interested in beyond the classroom, which helps to increase enthusiasm and willingness to perform by tailoring instruction to their individual interests. Whitcomb presents a variety of lesson plan ideas, including "Hot Cross Buns" with one improvised note being gradually added over time through each iteration, call-and-response rhythmic patterns, "spontaneous folk song rondo" where a folk song is played with alternating improvised measures, pop songs with improvised body percussion, and improvised progressions to animated films.

Delaney, Diane W. "Elementary General Music Teachers' Reflections on Instruction." Update : applications of research in music education 29, no. 2 (2011): 41–49.

Delaney discusses a study of evaluating video recordings of content instruction of elementary general music teachers, both as a self-evaluation and comparative with another elementary general music teacher. The four participants (of varying experience) explained and reflected upon their methods as well as another teacher's approach after watching tapes of lessons and being surveyed through an open-ended interview, with techniques including rhythm, harmony, singing, and composition. After watching the videos, the teachers were asked what they learned from watching the recordings of their instruction, if/why they found the information valuable to their teaching, what circumstances they would consider recording more of their lessons for observation, if/why they found watching another teacher's instruction valuable, how they would improve the process of valuating their own instruction including what interview techniques they would use, and what techniques have helped them further improve their instruction. All of the teachers felt that singing was an important skill to teach every student and emphasized individual and group singing, and rhythm exercises were included in every lesson and were applied to teach word rhythms, syllabus, mathematical relationships, and movement. Listening activities were also used in every lesson, but movement was applied more formally and featured much more structure. Nonetheless, all of the teachers found great benefit in studying not only their own teaching, but others as well.

Azaryahu, Libby, Susan Joan Courey, Rivka Elkoshi, and Esther Adi-Japha. "'MusiMath' and 'Academic Music' – Two Music-based Intervention Programs for Fractions Learning in Fourth Grade Students." Developmental science 23, no. 4 (2020): e12882–n/a.

Azaryahu, et. al., note that music and math both require symbolic notation and abstract thinking, and thus seek to examine the effect and knowledge transfer from integrating

musical training into mathematical achievement. The research study presented three different classes: a 'MusiMath' holistic lesson focused on rhythm within a melody, an 'Academic Music' acoustic lesson which used rhythm only, and a regular fraction lesson. In the music classes, students learned to write and perform musical notes and rhythmic patterns by drumming and clapping as one aspect of their lesson in fractions; the students worked toward filling measures with notes to produce a specific fraction within 4/4 time using whole notes as the largest division and eighth notes as the smallest division. In the math class, the students were taught the correlation between musical durations and mathematical fractions, as well as fractions beyond half, quarter, and eighth. The study showed that after three- and six-month periods, only the 'MusiMath' group demonstrated a greater transfer to trained and untrained fractions that the other groups, and the 'Academic Music' group displayed a trend on trained fractions, of which gains were more evident than in untrained. However, both music groups outperformed the regular math class in growth in trained fractions, but only the 'MusiMath' group displayed greater gains in untrained fractions.

Middle School General Music:

Walby, Nathan. "Tell Me What You Hear: Vocabulary Acquisition and Application in the General Music Middle School Classroom." Music educators journal 98, no. 2 (2011): 55–60.

Walby discusses the difficulty in teaching musical vocabulary in the middle school general music class, especially for performance-oriented teachers, and a new approach that vocabulary is best learned when vocabulary lessons on word meanings and relationships are taught alongside listening activities which apply the vocabulary. In doing so, these lessons are able to take the place of the learning style formed by learning vocabulary in a performance ensemble setting, where they would normally be applied concretely through performance. The author presents one of many approaches through the style of teaching dialect – presenting vocabulary in varied, conflicting contexts where the students understanding is refined by contradiction and contextual usage. Other such approaches include comprehension activities – such as partnered words and pair matching, fill-in-the-blanks, and categorical word sorting – retention activities like word walls and word trees, pre-written assignments which utilize odd-man-out identification, partner words, multiple choice, and temporal mapping, as well as written response questions. All of these activities are approachable for students of any musical background or experience and can be correlated to any piece or style of music based on student interest or growth necessity.

Davis, Virginia Wayman. "What Middle School Students Need from Their General Music Class (and How We Can Help)." General music today. 24, no. 3 (n.d.): 17–22.

Davis presents research on the encouragement of middle school general music teachers to "teach for transfer", such that learning activities are clearly worthwhile and prepare students for playing music in the adult world. The research focuses on three primary needs of the middle school music student: "active, hands-on learning challenges, which involve the student in music-making; in-depth exploration of focused listening, which acquaints students with the availability of listening opportunities and teaches them what to listen for; and opportunities for social connection, drawing together students and teachers in a community of music makers." One of the biggest issues for middle school general music is the lack of clarity as to what their level of "general music" is, either potentially a dumbed-down higher education music appreciation course or an accelerated elementary music program – the teacher must have a clear intent for the course curriculum and the target student audience. As well, course objectives must be absolutely clear, because there is generally a lack of what constitutes success in middle school music. Thus, Davis' three needs become the design for curriculum objectives, with an essential focus on hands-on learning and music-making both individually and as a community and listening to music for understanding.

Giebelhausen, Robin. "In the Beginning of the Middle: Curriculum Considerations for Middle School General Music." General music today 29, no. 1 (2015): 41–45.

Giebelhausen notes that teaching middle school general music is often a treacherous journey for music educators due to the lack of being taught the scenario compared to that

of ensembles and elementary school general music, and creating an appropriate curriculum is thus a difficult task because of lacking knowledge; as such, Giebelhausen shares this experience and discusses various approaches to instruction. The author notes that the middle school organization of "teams" for core subject teachers, with elective/cross-team teachers being separate, creates an inescapable issue of trust and reputation beyond the scope of their assigned team. As such, it is most important that the students feel that they are in a safe, inclusive environment where they can be assured freedom from being demeaned by others and that their words, ideas, and experiences will be honored, the primary factor for building reputation with the students. With the changing schedule of students and cross-teaching, it is especially important for the general music teacher to teach cross-instructionally, taking ideas from other subjects and applying them in a way that the students know or are learning in other classes. As well, since many students may end their formal musical journey in middle school, it is especially important for students to actively play music, and low-personal risk activities need to shape the students' comfort in playing and singing in class – and movement activities are just as important as instrument playing, which the students will almost certainly buy into as long as the teacher does.

Dubach, Joyce. "The Music Class from Hell, or What I Learned from Teaching Junior High School General Music." General music today 18, no. 3 (2005): 13–15.

Dubach reflects upon the experience of a school district's rapid shifting of elective courses throughout the elementary and middle schools especially, having been given a new music elective course designed to lesson the overcrowding of other electives. The class had chairs but no desks, textbooks, or curriculum, which had to be designed on the fly. Dubach utilized a videotape player and TV with a multitude of rented tapes of musicals for the first semester – with the weekly plan being to introduce a musical to the class on Monday, show the video across Tuesday through Thursday, then quiz the students on the video on Friday. In this curriculum, Dubach found that the musicals had exposed most students to many new experiences and concepts, including lessons and identities taught from the stories of the musicals, which the students greatly enjoyed – including Dubach teaching the historical background of the musicals and the context of the stories. After musicals, Dubach moved on to film scoring in modern movies such as Star Wars and the compositional approaches used in evoking imagery and identifying characters through music. The second semester was more focused on musical games, such as recognizing and/or identifying the origin of a song and the similarities between pieces, as well as the use of music in business commercial psychology to increase buyer retention, among others. Dubach notes that all of these methods became permanent staples within other music classes, including orchestra.

Madsen, Cornelia May Bates. "Creativity and Music Education: Comparing Two Methods of Teaching Junior High School General Music". ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1977.

Madsen's research focuses on two different models of describing to educators how students learn and recreate – the first being that we have "four dimensions of being": physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental, all of which are important to the educational process and

curriculum, and the second being that students learn within a varying-time span process of four phrases: "the knowledge reservoir; a question; unconscious, preconscious, and conscious thinking toward possible solutions; and the evaluation" – a creative process deemed to produce optimal results in a strong environment. The research project aimed to compare traditional textbook-focused teaching methods versus creativity-oriented methods within seventh-grade general music classes. Madsen found that not only did an open, creative general music classroom provide greater freedom for individual creativity development and significantly increased creativity when taught by creative activity methods, but also that students achieved significant academic ability growth among their enjoyment of music, with cognitive and affective growth occurring simultaneously. As such, Madsen suggests that there must be sufficient motivation for a student to seek positive musical experiences in their future lifestyle.

High School General Music Classroom:

Hughes, William. "From Methods to Practice in General Music: William Hughes Outlines a High School General Music Course That Introduces University Methods Students to Classroom Teaching." Music educators journal 79, no. 1 (1992): 21–56.

Hughes discusses that one major reason for the lack of general music courses in high schools is the lack of course materials and textbooks for an effective class, among other issues such as staffing, finances, class scheduling and philosophical differences between administrators. A study was performed between a university methods professor and a high school choir director who worked together to devise a semester-long general music curriculum – a suggested cooperative approach for other school districts lacking such a course. The students at the university's "Secondary School General Music Methods" course were involved in supervised daily teaching of the course at the high school after peer-teaching each other in small groups to rehearse effective teaching behavior, although this proved less effective in recognizing self-mistakes and lacking student attention. The students studied both the high school instructors and the students, recording expressions, behavior, and responses, among other factors. The university students were allowed to teach their most creative and interesting lesson plan based on individual preferences; many of these included improving skills in rhythm, musical theory identification such as patterns, pulsation, and form, identifying the process of traditional and digital music composition, recognizing and disassembling various compositional forms, and performing a variety of musical movements and styles through drumming, recorder, and singing. The project was found to be not only beneficial for the high school students, but also the university students, the high school teacher, and the university professor as well.

Bucura, Elizabeth. "Fostering Self-Efficacy Among Adolescents in Secondary General Music." General music today 32, no. 3 (2019): 5–12.

Self-efficacy is a constantly changing variable in adolescent lives, and as such they are likely to feel vulnerable while learning, regardless of the situation. Bucura suggests that self-efficacy is an important consideration for secondary general music teachers especially – even for students who appear confident or participate in other music classes or hobbies. Informal approaches to making music may potentially cause ensemble members to feel especially vulnerable, and as such, teachers are more likely to increase student willingness to grow musically and participate through building self-efficacy. Bucura note that secondary general music teachers must consider at least four sources of self-knowledge that effect the self-efficacy of students: verbal persuasion, psychological and emotional states, vicarious experiences including peer abilities, and mastery experiences of what they deem as authentic – thus, it is important for teachers to acknowledge students' personal feelings and long-term vision for musical pursuits, as well as their own musical ideas. By acknowledging how self-efficacy affects student success in music, the teachers can better enable students to build confidence, help them overcome difficult tasks, and further motivate their musical pursuits.

Philpott, Chris, and Julie Evans. A Practical Guide to Teaching Music in the Secondary School. London: Routledge, 2009.

>   Philpott and Evans present research-based approaches to reshaping music classrooms to become more effective and engaging for students. The authors begin with a discussion on the effectiveness of 'personalized learning' in music education, focusing on each student's learning to enhance their participation, progress, and achievement based upon their individual abilities. As well, the authors suggest that well-developed musical pedagogy should encompass a multitude of factors: cultural understanding, teaching creativity, teaching critical thinking and understanding, technology integration, and assessing for learning. For students to progress beyond this point, the authors note that singing is a necessity in music education, and teaching sustained, and effective vocal learning must be ensured just as much as instrumental learning. The authors also suggest that students should have the opportunity to collaborate with other musicians, inside and outside of the classroom and with other adult musicians and music organizations at various venues and schools. Of course, collaboration should not only be within music, but also with the integration of other subject areas – especially other artistic mediums.

Davis, Virginia Wayman, Laura Singletary, and Kimberly VanWeelden. "General Music Today Music Ideas Series: Viewpoints in Secondary General Music—Article Two: Power Trio: Three Ideas for Renewed Success with Classroom Ensembles." General music today 33, no. 1 (2019): 6–14.

>   Davis, et. al., discuss methods of incorporating instrumental ensembles into general music classrooms across a variety of age groups, during or after school; the "Power Trio" refers to the effective ensembles for general music, including bucket drums, ukuleles, and modern bands. The authors suggest that bucket drumming be used as a comfortable and fun alternative to clapping rhythmic patterns, also motivating students to attempt more complex rhythms while being easily integrated alongside other classroom instruments (including other percussion). Ukulele are suggested for general music classrooms especially because of the range of the instrument fitting well with younger students singing voices especially and the variety in sizes being the most viable choice for beginners; it is also suggested that high school age students be taught to tune gradually over a few months of playing, not just younger students, and that frequent breaks will be necessary for students to relax their hand joints. For older students, high school age especially, modern band is most likely to be more meaningful and motivating than other ensembles because of the connections young adults make with popular music. This should include a variety of instrument groupings, including electric guitar and bass, keyboard, drums, computers/technology, and vocals.

Wise, Stuart. "Secondary School Teachers' Approaches to Teaching Composition Using Digital Technology." British journal of music education 33, no. 3 (2016): 283–295.

>   Wise discusses that while many schools have access to technology, regardless of quantity available for teachers, the most common theme in integration is simply reluctance to use it. As such, students of three schools were studied regarding tasks designed to provide only

a basic enough understanding of compositional software to allow for some individual choices, with a fourth school allowing students to compose with no limitations intended to teach them the software. The approach of the first three schools reflects upon a procedural teaching style of traditional software use, all of which resulted in a lack of "strong creative focus" compared to the fourth school which did not impose limitations. Wise argues that creativity and digital literacy are equally important skills that are universally necessary in music education.