

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, &
Professional Papers

Graduate School

2023

Integrating Social Emotional Learning in the Elementary Music Classroom

Nicole Evans

The University Of Montana

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd>



Part of the [Elementary Education and Teaching Commons](#), and the [Music Education Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Evans, Nicole, "Integrating Social Emotional Learning in the Elementary Music Classroom" (2023).

Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers. 12174.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/12174>

This Professional Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

INTEGRATING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN THE ELEMENTARY MUSIC CLASSROOM

By

NICOLE CHRISTINE EVANS

Bachelor of Music Education, The University of Montana, Missoula, MT, 2018

Bachelor of Music, The University of Montana, Missoula, MT, 2018

Professional Paper

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Master of Arts
in Integrated Arts and Education

The University of Montana
Missoula, MT

July 2023

Approved by:

Scott Whittenburg, Dean of The Graduate School
Graduate School

Karen Kaufmann, Chair
Director Creative Pulse (Emeritus)

Dr. Michael Musick
School of Visual and Media Arts

Dr. Michael Ruybalid
School of Music

Integrating Social Emotional Learning in the Elementary Music Classroom

Chairperson: Karen Kaufmann

Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, many students demonstrated a need for further social emotional learning (SEL) support. The work of this project focuses on how to help support students' SEL development through SEL integration into the elementary music classroom. An increased focus on integrating SEL throughout educational settings is relatively new, and thus the research into how to do this effectively is still emerging. Based on the principle of collective teacher efficacy, this project explores how to integrate SEL specifically aligned with the *Second Step Elementary Curriculum* into the kindergarten through fifth grade general music classroom. Utilizing the existing research, the author develops five key principles connecting the role of general music education with SEL which were then used to guide the design and implementation of six SEL integrated music activities across several sections of students. After implementation, these activities were then revised based on what was learned through student feedback, recording activities, and written educator perceptions. Upon completion of the project the author asserts that while there is no single correct way to integrate SEL in the elementary music classroom, there are a few guiding principles that help create effective activities that are engaging while also addressing both SEL and musical objectives. This work serves as a beginning step for the continued work in SEL integration, while offering concrete examples and guidance for music educators interested in pursuing SEL integration in their own classrooms.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Literature Review	3
Methods and Procedures.....	11
Project Description	14
Activity Design.....	14
Kindergarten Implementation & Revision	15
First Grade Implementation and Revision	17
Second Grade Implementation and Revision	18
Third Grade Implementation and Revision.....	19
Fourth Grade Implementation and Revision	20
Fifth Grade Implementation and Revision.....	21
Conclusion.....	22
Bibliography	27
Appendix	30

Introduction

Ask any adult the name of at least one teacher who impacted their life, and they could tell you. I am no different. The most impactful teachers in my childhood were music teachers. The relationships I had with those educators, the community I found through music participation, and the invaluable life lessons I learned in music classes played a critical role in making me the adult I am today. Now, as a music educator myself I recognize the value of my teachers' hard work and dedication. These educators recognized where I needed support: whether it was in music with a broken oboe reed, in social skills needed to navigate middle school friendships, or emotional support when life-threatening medical concerns struck my family. My teachers did everything in their power to meet me where I was and help me grow. I aspire to be this kind of educator for my own students.

After student teaching and a semester as a substitute in Great Falls and Big Timber, Montana, I moved to Helena Montana and accepted my first full time position with Helena Public Schools during the summer of 2019. My first year in the district I taught at Kessler, Smith, and Jim Darcy Elementary Schools. For the last three years I have taught at Kessler and Hawthorne Elementary Schools. I began classroom teaching in August of 2019 and thus did not make it through an entire school year before the COVID-19 pandemic closed schools in March of 2020. Upon returning to the classrooms the next school year it became apparent that our students were struggling academically as well as exhibiting social and emotional needs. While we are now three years removed from the initial pandemic shutdown, my students are still struggling to recover many of the social and emotional skills that were once considered common place. Continued societal and political challenges only seem to compound the struggle.

In my desire to follow in the footsteps of my music teachers, I began to think about what I could do to help. How could I use music to meet my students where they are while helping them grow in additional ways that will be meaningful throughout their lives? This question became the impetus for my project.

In 2021 Helena Public Schools implemented a new instructional framework based on John Hattie's *Visible Learning*. Hattie's research shows that the single most important influence on student achievement is collective teacher efficacy (2023). Hattie's definition of collective teacher efficacy is "the collective belief of staff of the school/faculty in their ability to positively affect students" (2023). Hattie's research indicates that when teachers believe in their collective ability to make a positive impact in students' lives and work collaboratively, they do just that at an exponential rate. Recognizing my unique position's ability to influence collective teacher efficacy, I sought out what kind of social emotional learning (SEL) was already taking place within my schools. I approached our school counselor and discovered that the *Second Step* curriculum is used throughout the district for the weekly SEL lessons the counselors teach.

This information combined with the desire to help my students, became the focus of this project. I set out to help support student SEL development through integration of SEL instruction in the music classroom. This project began with research and furthering my understanding of SEL instruction, *Second Step*, and how to integrate them effectively into the general music classroom. The goal of this project is to develop my own understanding of SEL education to better support my students' development through SEL integrated music activities. After diving into the research, I used my new knowledge to design engaging and effective lessons for each level I teach, kindergarten through fifth grade, which address music and *Second Step* objectives. Each lesson seeks to increase the collective teacher efficacy and ultimately help students develop the social and emotional skills necessary for success in their future. These activities were then implemented with my own classrooms and evaluated based on student perception, engagement, and teacher perception. After implementing and reflecting on each activity, I revised the original descriptions in hopes that the activities can successfully be used by other educators attempting to integrate SEL into their general music classroom.

Literature Review

As an elementary music educator, I firmly believe in the power of music education for all students. Elementary general music is an expectation for all students in my school regardless of physical abilities or learning exceptionalities resulting in an Individualized Education Plan or 504 Plan for health-based accommodations. Based on Catherine Dunphy's TED Talk, "Sing Your Own Song: The Power of Music Within Each of Us," she whole-heartedly agrees that music can be beneficial for all children. In her TED Talk, Dunphy tells the story of her younger sister who contracted pneumonia as an infant and suffered severe deficits due to the illness. Despite these deficits, Dunphy's sister interacted with and found great joy in music throughout her life. This inspired Dunphy's belief that music is innate in all humans and can benefit each one regardless of ability levels (2019). This belief is at the heart of my work towards an SEL informed music classroom. My music classroom is a place for all students regardless of their background, ability level, how much time they spend in an individualized special education setting, or anything else. Due to this, the student groups I see each week represent a diverse population with diverse needs both academically as well as in terms of social emotional development and needs. The research informing this project collectively present five key components that inform my decisions in designing and implementing SEL integrated activities in my classroom:

- music educators have a unique opportunity to help students develop lifelong SEL proficiencies
- a safe and caring classroom environment is critical
- effective SEL integration must be active and intentional
- self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making are the foundational components of *Second Step* as well as many other SEL curriculums nation-wide
- there is no single "right way" to integrate SEL in the music classroom

By integrating SEL into my music instruction I expand my knowledge base and become a better music educator by taking another step towards providing high quality music education for all my students while also helping them develop the social and emotional skills necessary to be successful in school and in life.

The foundations of quality music education were taught to me in my undergraduate studies at the University of Montana, expanded upon through numerous professional development opportunities throughout my career, and are solidified by the newly adopted Helena School District #1 Music Curriculum that guides my teaching practice. The education and certification process by which I became a licensed music educator was rigorous and challenging in many aspects; I worked tirelessly for four-and-a-half years to earn my undergraduate degree and pass the exam necessary to earn a teaching license. Since beginning teaching, I have also taken over two-hundred credits of professional development. Through all this education, very little time was spent addressing social emotional learning and how to help students develop social and emotional skills. Excluding a brief discussion in my Elementary Music Methods course, none of this education specifically addressed how to incorporate SEL in the music classroom. The work of this project is to fill this deficit by exploring how to integrate SEL in my elementary general music classroom. I sought to understand what best practices exist for teaching SEL in music, and how to design activities that would be engaging and musically beneficial for students while also addressing SEL objectives aligned with the *Second Step* curriculum taught by our school counselor.

Upon learning my school counselor uses the *Second Step* curriculum, I determined that, based on Hattie's assertions regarding collective teacher efficacy, my time would be well spent working to align my SEL integration with the counselor's curriculum. With a better understanding of the *Second Step Curriculum* gained through this research and online training, I could take the concepts and skills taught explicitly by our school counselor and review and build upon them in the music room. The

Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) website houses a wealth of information, including a diagram of the SEL domains that appears frequently throughout the research (CASEL 2022). These domains: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making; form the basis of the Illinois Social Emotional Learning Goals that are the basis and categorization of Scott N. Edgars recommended strategies and activities presented in *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music* and the accompanying *Student Workbook* (2017, 2019). These SEL domains are also the basis on which the Committee for Children developed the *Second Step Elementary Classroom Kits* that my school uses for SEL instruction with our counselor. In *Second Step*, each grade works through four units during the year that are titled “Skills for Learning,” “Empathy,” “Emotion Management,” and “Problem Solving” (2011). As described in the webinar led by Jennifer Sanderlin, Forrest Walter, Alexandria Rolle, Zack Sherman and Julia Meyer; this research-based curriculum addresses each SEL domain at a developmentally appropriate level each year of kindergarten through fifth grade. *Second Step* provides hands on resources as well as online videos, music, and games to help students develop SEL skills in fun and engaging ways (2022).

Committee for Children has also developed *Second Step* resources for a wide range of age-groups as well as the *Out-Of-School Time Program* to help integrate intentional SEL into after-school programs. Jennifer Sanderlin and Sam Trevathan presented a webinar in August of 2022 demonstrating how this program takes the classroom instruction of *Second Step Elementary Classroom Kits* and builds on those skills with fun and engaging activities for after-school programs. While I do not have access to this entire program, the webinar featured Sam Trevathan’s Kids’ Orchestra program in Louisiana and how they incorporate *Second Step* aligned SEL instruction into their after-school music program (2022).

Trevathan’s work provided a glimpse at what *Second Step* based SEL could look like in my classroom outside of the scripted explicit instruction provided in the curriculum itself. It also caused me to be

optimistic that reviewing these concepts in a different setting and context would strengthen the students' understanding of the material and their ability to transfer skills to a wide variety of settings.

In my current teaching assignment, students come to me for music from kindergarten through fifth grade, after which they move to middle school. Kelly-McHale addresses the unique and continuous role music education plays in students' lives when she writes, "There is one aspect of elementary general music that is very important to the overall development of students yet is often not discussed or even considered. This aspect is the fact that general music often provides a sense of consistency over a child's elementary career" (Edgar, Kelly-McHale, Rawlings 2017). I take seriously each students' relationship with me and music class as a consistent part of their education for six years – nearly half of their public-school education. I view this relationship longevity as both a great responsibility as well as a great pleasure. Scott N. Edgar encourages music educators to integrate SEL, stating that "music educators are in a prime position to help students become socially and emotionally competent while developing excellent musicianship" (2017). As one of only a few educators in the building that will work with students for such an extended period, capitalizing on our time together to recognize and focus on building the SEL skills that will help students find success beyond the walls of my classroom is a crucial component of my work. The work of this project helped me learn the best ways to integrate SEL into my music classroom and capitalize on the longevity of the student-teacher relationship that our elementary music model provides.

A core component of effective SEL integration is that the music classroom must be a safe space for all students. In their article "Creating Safe Spaces for Music Learning," Hendricks, Smith and Stanuch challenge educators to be intentional about creating environments that meet the needs of all students when they write, "whether our students may be prone to serious anxiety or just require a safe space to take musical risks, *all* students need teachers who can respond to their diverse needs." They continue by daring educators to examine common music education practices and how they may be doing harm to

students' musical development as well as their social-emotional well-being (2014). Jacqueline Kelly-McHale and Jared Rawlings address similar concerns in their respective chapters of the book *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*. Kelly-McHale addresses the various ways students socialize and identify in and through the music classroom and the ways that can be both positive and negative for students. In a connected chapter, Jared Rawlings addresses bullying in the music classroom and the harm it can cause students when educators let things like gender-stereotyping instruments or rigid hierarchical structures in ensembles persist through a program (Edgar, Kelly-McHale, Rawlings 2017). In their chapters, Kelly-McHale and Rawlings demonstrate action on the challenge posed by Hendricks, Smith and Stanuch to re-examine common practices that may be unintentionally causing harm to students by paving the way for isolation and bullying. In *Portraits of Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: Teaching Music with Heart*, Mary Jensen emphasizes the critical role of a caring and safe environment and how she often prioritizes that before academic objectives in her SEL integrated music classroom (2021). Jessica Kwasny echoes the sentiment of foundational relationships and a safe environment with her guiding principle of "... people first, musicians second, and students third" (2021). Becky O'Brien notes this same safe space for *all* students as a critical component of effective SEL in her thesis titled "It's Always Personal: Social Emotional Learning the Elementary Music Classroom with Student Populations of Varied Needs" (2022). With numerous authors in agreement, a safe classroom environment is clearly a foundational component of effective SEL integration. As I embarked on the journey of SEL integrated music education, my relationship with students and the atmosphere I created in my classroom were critical components of making my SEL integrated activities effective. Although the activities and lessons designed and analyzed in this project did not pertain specifically to creating a safe classroom environment, the way I teach every day and my ongoing work to create a positive and safe classroom environment are informed by this research.

After years of hearing about the connection between arts education and SEL in casual conversation combined with the experience of how music education shaped my own life and social development, I began teaching expecting SEL to “just happen” as a natural side effect in my music classroom. While this may occasionally be true for some students, the need for effective SEL integration to be active and intentional is echoed throughout the research. This was a foundational impetus for my work to intentionally integrate SEL into my teaching through this project. In their study examining the existing research as of 2017, Emilia-Angeles Campayo-Muñoz and Alberto Cabedo-Mas examine twenty-one studies linking emotional intelligence and music education. While these authors conclude that additional research is needed in numerous areas to truly understand any potential cause-and-effect relationship, there is also significant correlation between active and intentional SEL and improved skills evident in student behaviors (2017). Becky O’Brien agrees in her master’s thesis when she writes, “... with intentional teacher intent and guidance, teachers can begin to meet students’ SEL needs. Once accomplished, students learn about their emotions, their behavior, and they learn self-regulation” (2022). To quantitatively prove this point, Matt Omasta, Mark Graham, Stephanie L. Milling, Elizabeth Murray, Amy Petersen Jensen, and Johanna J. Siebert set out to examine the National Core Arts Standards and their alignment with the Illinois Social Emotional Learning Standards (which are currently being used as a precedent by many states working to develop their own standards). What they discovered was, “... there is no standards-based theoretical foundation to support the idea that students taking arts classes will automatically develop SEL competencies simply by engaging in arts learning. Rather, educators hoping to increase student learning in both the arts and SEL simultaneously must make conscious efforts to ensure they explicitly address both of these learning areas” (2021). In 2019 a group from the University of Chicago led by Camille A. Farrington conducted research of existing literature as well as through interviews with arts educators in the Chicago public school system to identify how arts education connects to social emotional learning. A concluding statement of this work is

that “... this research has made clear that there is not a tight fit between specific arts disciplines and the social and emotional growth opportunities they can afford. How an instructor teaches often matters more than what they teach” (2019). This assertion that SEL does not automatically happen in arts education is aligned with the many authors listed above and my own new-found beliefs that guided this project. This research shows that SEL instruction will not “just happen” as I work to teach the music curriculum. Instead, I must be intentional about integrating SEL concepts into our music curriculum. The activities designed for this project are specifically aligned with the *Second Step Curriculum* and represent just a few ways to explicitly incorporate SEL instruction into the music curriculum.

Exactly how to integrate SEL into the music classroom is a developing field, and my hope is that this project will contribute to the field and enliven my current classroom. As is evidenced by my research, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to SEL integration. Rather, SEL integration should include methodically scaffolded skills focused on student needs and playing to the educator’s strengths just like other content areas. Quality education in all areas requires teachers who can learn and grow alongside their students and adapt their teaching to meet diverse student needs. The lesson reflection and review aspects of this project allowed me to do just that. The following authors offer explanations and examples for how to effectively integrate SEL in the music classroom. In their report, *Arts Education and Social-Emotional Learning Outcomes among K-12 Students: Developing a Theory of Action*, the University of Chicago researchers explored existing literature as well as interviewing current arts educators to understand the relationship between the arts and SEL and create an action for educators to capitalize on these connections. Their research finds that the individual art practices, which build together to form art education processes, each provide opportunities for social-emotional development in a variety of areas. They state that, “just as the art practices must be cultivated into long-term art competencies through guidance and instruction, the social-emotional components of these activities must be cultivated into long-term social-emotional competencies” (Farrington et al., 2019). This report indicated to me that

educators who want to capitalize on the SEL connections in the music classroom must approach it methodically just as we do our music standards, by breaking skills down into activities specifically designed to build that skill. Taking a more generalized and author specific approach, Scott N. Edgar, Mary Jensen, Jessica Kwasny, and Rachel Manchur all offer detailed lesson plan examples for ways they have integrated SEL into their classrooms. Edgar's lessons are categorized based on the Illinois SEL Goals and are often pen-and-paper experiences geared toward middle school and high school level performing ensembles (2017, 2019). Mary Jensen's examples emphasize frequent collaboration and teamwork opportunities as well as integrating SEL themes into performance opportunities (2021). Jessica Kwasny focuses primarily on relationship building and small SEL infused activities that can be incorporated into larger lesson plans throughout the year (2021). Finally, Rachel Manchur focuses on SEL lessons she has developed based on children's literature (2021). This wide variety of examples reaffirms for me that there is no one "right way" to integrate SEL into the music classroom; rather effective SEL is based on student needs and abilities as well as teacher strengths and skills. In creating my own SEL activities, I relied on my own strengths as an educator, as well as activities similar to other lessons my students have experienced in an effort to help them feel more comfortable branching out into SEL in the music classroom.

Upon concluding the initial research portion of this project, I compiled five keys to effective SEL integration that I took into the next phase of activity design, implementation, and revision. First, I had a much deeper understanding of SEL instruction and specifically the *Second Step* curriculum which directly informed the SEL objective and strategies used in my activities. Second, I recognized the unique role I play in students' education as I am a consistent teacher over the course of six years. Capitalizing on this relationship longevity and collective teacher efficacy to help support my students' SEL development is a component of my work I feel passionate about. Third, effective SEL requires a safe and caring environment for students. Fourth, despite my prior beliefs the research showed that effective SEL

integration must be active and intentional and thus I must focus on this to help support my students in this area. Finally, there is no single way to integrate SEL in the music classroom. This assertion made me optimistic that in the design, implementation, and revision phase of this project I would find numerous options for SEL integration that would be effective in my classroom while also allowing for flexibility and creativity in how I accomplish both music and SEL objectives with my students. These keys were the bedrock upon which I designed SEL integrated activities for my own classroom.

Methods and Procedures

The project consisted of three core phases: research and design, implementation, analysis and revision. The first, and chronologically lengthiest phase of the project, was research and design. During this phase I researched existing resources and materials for SEL integration in the elementary music classroom. I then combined the research with my existing knowledge base to design SEL integrated activities aligned with *Second Step* and aimed to meet students where they are and promote development both musically as well as social-emotionally. This phase of the project resulted in six activities based on music curriculum as well as *Second Step* objectives. The second phase, implementation, took place beginning in January of 2023. During this phase I implemented all six activities with their designated grade-level and recorded the process with initial reflections through videos as well as a written log. During the final phase, analysis and revision, I revisited the initial activity designs as well as the videos and written reflections to revise the activity descriptions for future use as well as to glean further information and meaning from the project as a whole.

This project was designed to research and apply integrated SEL in the general music classroom for kindergarten through fifth grade. Specifically, the activities were designed in alignment with the *Second Step* curriculum taught by the school counselor and using the information gleaned through the research portion. The project occurred during the 2022-2023 academic year at both Hawthorne and Kessler elementary schools within Helena Public Schools in Helena, Montana. Hawthorne Elementary

had a student population of approximately 200; 15% were registered for the free/reduced lunch program and 27% were on IEP or 504 plans. Hathorne's standardized testing scores for the 21-22 academic year were above the state and district averages in math and science, and below the district average, but on par with the state average for reading. Kessler Elementary had a student population of approximately 240; 31% were registered for the free/reduced lunch program and 25% were on IEP or 504 plans. Kessler's standardized testing scores for the 21-22 academic year are below the state and district averages in math, below the district average but on par with the state average for reading, and below the district average but above the state average for science. The students involved were in classrooms designated kindergarten, first grade, second grade, second/third combo class, third grade, fourth grade, fourth/fifth combo class, and fifth grade. For the purpose of clarity each activity was assigned a grade level and then the combination classes were taught the activity that best matches where the majority of students in that class fell within the music curriculum. The classroom groups consist of all students in these schools, including those with physical disabilities or learning exceptionalities resulting in an IEP or 504 plan. The students also represent a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, religions, and socio-economic status.

The initial research portion of the project began in July of 2022 and yielded a variety of results regarding how others in the field are integrating SEL and music at the elementary level. Due to research in this area being relatively recent and limited, clearly defined and tested best practices for SEL integration in the music classroom do not yet exist. Consequently, I combined the research with my knowledge of best practices in elementary music education to create SEL integrated music activities. The activities were designed during the late fall of 2022 with feedback solicited from other music educators as well as *Second Step* trained educators. The intended outcome of this portion of the project was to inform the design of an SEL integrated activity for each grade level while also broadening my own knowledge base as it pertains to SEL in order to aid in future SEL integration in the classroom.

After incorporating feedback, the activities were implemented in each classroom during their semi-weekly 30-minute music lessons in January, February, and March of 2023. Most activities were videoed for further reflection and analysis after the fact. Some videos were shared with fellow educators for feedback while others were restricted due to photo/video permissions for specific students. A journal entry was also created for each activity with educator reactions and perceptions of flow, effectiveness, student engagement, considerations for future adjustments, and adaptations made for student ability levels. Data from the students was collected as an anonymous quick response asking for student perceptions and opinions on the lesson as well as any written work produced by students during the activities. This portion of the project was the hands-on experiment aspect of the overall experience.

The final phase, analysis and revision, is where I compiled the evidence and reflections in order to produce revised versions of each activity design based on what I learned in the classroom from my own students. Although I frequently reflect on my own teaching and lessons in order to improve for the future, this process was much more in depth and included videos of many lessons and reflective journal entries reviewed after the fact in order to compare how the activity did or did not work for different groups of students and potential explanations as to why. This process produced clear and explicit instructions for each of the activities that I will be able to revisit with future students as well as share with other educators. My analysis also included looking at the project as a whole in order to glean core components that I can use to continue working on SEL integration in my classroom in the future.

Prior to completing this project, an expected outcome was that students would respond to these activities similarly to how they respond to their regular music lessons – students enjoy most aspects of the lesson and feel they grew moderately during their time in the music room. As an educator and designer of the activities, I expected I would be able to align the lessons with the *Second Step* curriculum, but there would be aspects of each activity that would need to be refined and adjusted after

implementing the activities with actual students. I also predicted some activities would be more effective with some groups of students than with others, which is a natural and common occurrence when teaching up to four different groups of students the same lesson. Examining what made the activities more successful with some students and how I could adapt the activities to increase efficacy for students was a critical component of the analysis process. My aim was to create effective activities for my students, for my own personal growth, and for fellow educators.

Project Description

In order to better understand the process of this experience we will first examine how the SEL integrated music activities were designed during the fall of 2022 and how my research as well as individual teacher strengths played into their development. As the activities were designed concurrently to promote vertical alignment and scaffolding of skills from one grade level to the next, all six activities will be addressed generally as a whole during this section. Then, beginning with kindergarten and moving through fifth grade, the implementation and revision process for each activity will be addressed individually. Please note that exact descriptions of each activity are not included in this section but can be found with the plans for each activity in the Appendix.

Activity Design

A core concept gleaned from my research was the value of a safe classroom environment where students generally feel comfortable and know what to expect. Based on this, a primary goal during the activity design process was to create lessons that would feel natural for both the students and me based on our existing classroom culture and routines. Because I often use children's literature as a lesson or unit spark in my classroom, I included my collection of children's books in resources I gathered to spark my own activity design processes. I also gathered all the *Second Step Elementary Curriculum* resources to which I was given digital access as well as numerous elementary music pedagogical materials, and the Helena School District #1 Music Curriculum. I began the process by scouring the *Second Step Elementary*

Curriculum resources and curriculum guides, focusing on key lessons noted by the Helena Public Schools elementary counselors and specifically the guidance from my school counselor, Mrs. Micah Kemper. I noted a few key skills that would easily transition into music lessons; namely the listening rules cards used in the first-grade activity, and belly breaths used in the second and 4th grade activities. After deciding on a few possible skills and objectives for each grade level from the SEL curriculum, I dove into music resources in search of songs, games, instrument activities, and more that would address music curricular objectives while also providing a bridge to the chosen SEL objectives. During this process, I determined that the children's literature I was already using frequently in class would provide a great bridge between music and SEL objectives because it allowed students to engage with hypothetical situations and characters instead of being asked to discuss their own emotions in a group setting where that is not a normal expectation. The third-grade activity is a notable exception to both the children's literature connection as well as the goal to base the SEL integration activities in activities and routines that felt familiar in our classroom. This is because I had free improvisation on my list of activities to try after taking Dr. Michael Musick's *Creative Improvisation* class, it fit well with the SEL objectives I had chosen for third grade, and I wanted to add additional contrast in one of the lessons as an experiment to see how students would respond. Upon completing the initial design for all six activities, I sent them to colleagues both with music education as well as SEL backgrounds for feedback. Much of the feedback provided was complimentary and my fellow educators were excited to hear back about implementation. There were a few grammatical edits throughout as well as additional discussion questions posed for the first and second grade activities that I incorporated into the activity designs prior to implementation.

Kindergarten Implementation & Revision

Kindergarten began their activity based on *My Many Colored Days* the first week of January upon our return from winter break (Seuss 1996). Due to the lengthier nature of this activity, I made a few adjustments to the initial design throughout implementation. After only one class (out of 4 sections

total), I determined I should wait a couple of weeks before adding the additional step of labeling their feeling as comfortable or uncomfortable to allow the students to practice just naming the emotions they saw/heard first. This worked well, and when I reintroduced the additional step of labeling the emotion as comfortable or uncomfortable in week three the students were much more successful. I noticed about halfway through the activity sequence that some of the less-verbal students were engaged with the book and video, but not ever sharing an emotion at the end. Inspired by the work of Scott N. Edgar, I created a small emoji choice board on my iPad that I used with the less verbal students to encourage their participation during sharing. This accommodation was effective for my students, and they were able to demonstrate an emotional understanding of what they were seeing and hearing even though they were not able to verbalize their response. This accommodation also provided a quick one-on-one opportunity for me to teach the student a feeling word to match the emoji they chose and for them to practice saying the word while visualizing the emoji. Although the students loved the color of the day activities and immediately asked to do the color as soon as they entered the music room each day, holding their attention while everyone who wanted to share got a turn became challenging in the later weeks of the activity. This was the reason I included the possibility of asking students to share via drawing occasionally throughout the activity in the revised activity description.

My students loved these activities and continued to occasionally ask if we can do another color day more than a month after completion of the book. This activity seemed effective as the data I collected on student responses demonstrated that most students developed their understanding of the connection between music and emotion as well as their ability to identify a variety of feelings. It was particularly impactful to witness the students teaching each other new emotional vocabulary as we worked our way through all the different colored days.

First Grade Implementation and Revision

In contrast to the long sequence for kindergarten, the first-grade activity was a single day lesson that occurred during the second week of February. However, it has similarly stuck in the minds of my students. After implementing the *Bear Snores On* activity with four first grade classes, I only made minor revisions to the initial design because overall it was quite effective (Wilson 2005). The singing voice question and answer circle at the beginning allowed me the opportunity to hear students individually while also asking students to practice their skills for listening for an extended period of time. While some students did struggle with this, the physical cues with the *Second Step* visual cards allowed me to remind students who needed it without interrupting the student who was singing. Once students learned the song and we began reading the book, most students actively engaged in the conversation about how the animals felt. Students also shared some enlightening stories and thoughts when we talked about how the animals in the story hurt the bear's feelings by accident and how that can happen in the real world too. As one might predict, the game from "Beth's Notes" was the highlight of the day and students were desperate to have their turn being the bear.

This lesson worked effectively to review loud and soft and label piano and forte; I continue to reference it when we work with dynamics because the students remember the song and game which helps them to recall the concepts and vocabulary. Drawing on the skills for listening from *Second Step* worked well as students had already been introduced to them by the counselor and I could use the physical signal that goes with them as a reminder throughout the lesson. The skills for listening visual and physical cues are a strategy I plan to integrate into my teaching practice after experiencing how effectively they worked in this setting. The game at the end proved challenging for some students when it came to self-regulation both with the dance and freeze as well as with taking turns and not having time for everyone to have a turn that day. However, this provided a great opportunity to practice these

skills in a safe environment and allowed us to remember other *Second Step* calm down strategies as well as connecting our feelings about the game to the animals in the story.

Second Grade Implementation and Revision

The second-grade lesson based on Gaia Cornwall's book *Jabari Jumps* was a two-day process that took place the first week of February (2017). This lesson was inspired by an ostanati activity shared by Meg Tietz at the 2022 Montana Music Educators Association Convention titled, "Start With A Story: Incorporating Literature into the Music Room" (2022). Tietz gave written permission for her ostanati to be adapted and used for this project. *Jabari Jumps* provided the perfect opportunity to connect the self-regulation strategy of belly breaths that the students learn in *Second Step* with understanding confidence. In order to push students slightly and encourage them to use their belly breaths and ultimately feel confidence when they master something challenging, I adapted Tietz's ostanati slightly and added the challenge of instruments on day two of the activity. On day one my students intently listened to the story and self-identified as being able to relate to Jabari's feelings of nervousness at doing something new. The second day, students were thrilled to revisit Jabari with instrument parts, but the activity did prove to challenge them. We needed to pause and take a belly breath a couple of times throughout the lessons (both to calm down from excitement at getting out the instruments as well as to manage frustration due to the challenge), but students did an excellent job of encouraging each other, persevering, and eventually mastering their instrument parts.

After teaching this lesson with three sections of second grade students, I discovered that a critical piece of this activity was also making sure the students feel a sense of accomplishment and confidence at the end. This resulted in a couple of small revisions to the initial design allowing for adaptation based on the students. As I implemented this lesson with each class, I began to alter my focus from getting all the ostanati happening together to making sure each group had a chance to demonstrate their part successfully for the class and then combining various groups if we were ready.

This change allowed me to emphasize the students' success and take a moment for them to recognize the confidence they felt once they mastered it. Students were engaged throughout this lesson, and while it isn't an activity we come back to or talk about frequently, it was successful in that it challenged the students musically while focusing on strategies for accomplishing something difficult and the feelings of success that come once accomplished.

Third Grade Implementation and Revision

Free Improvisation was a delightful surprise in my third-grade sections (which also included one second-grade third-grade combination class) during the first week of February. As stated previously, this lesson was a departure from trying to create activities that felt normal and natural for my classroom routines, and due to that I was more than apprehensive about how the students would react. However, approximately ninety-five percent of students who took part in the activity reported that they enjoyed it and would like to do it again in music class. As a group, students were surprisingly eloquent in their ability to connect our free improvisation work to the guidelines for conversation they had learned from *Second Step*. We had great conversations comparing the two, and while their free improvisation experience isn't a direct application to verbal conversation skills, they were certainly practicing listening and responding.

Due to the student-lead nature of this activity, the written activity design does not offer extensive information as to how exactly the lesson will play out. Consequently, the only revision I made after implementing this activity was a note emphasizing the importance of how the teacher approaches the activity and facilitates feedback because I discovered that my demeanor drastically impacted the students' behavior with a brand new and occasionally uncomfortable music-making experience. I did discover a notable difference in the second/third combo section's ability to stay calm and respectful while listening to their classmates' improvisations. They were clearly trying, but the uncomfortable giggling persisted throughout the lesson whereas it faded away in the sections comprised of solely third

graders. The students' ability to listen and respond to what they heard instead of just playing independently the whole time was also not as advanced in the combo section. I anticipate that this was due to the maturity difference that comes with age since it was primarily second grade students that struggled. As students requested, I plan to revisit free improvisation in the third-grade sections both this year as well as when they move into fourth and fifth grades, as I am interested to see how students will develop both their improvisation and feedback skills.

Fourth Grade Implementation and Revision

Beginning at the end of January and stretching into the second week of February, two fourth-grade sections and one fourth/fifth combination class undertook a project based on Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow's *Your Name is a Song* (2020). The first day of this project began quite well with students playing barred instruments and singing to accompany the book. Based on the videos and teacher perception the students engaged well with this activity and were successful musically. A few students provided feedback that the song felt "baby-ish" however. I predicted this could be remedied by rewriting the accompaniment to allow students who would like more of a challenge to choose a more challenging part that would still fit with the basic pattern currently written. Once students began the composition and writing component of this project it became much more challenging from both the teacher's perspective as well as from student feedback. Perhaps because they were not accustomed to doing much writing in music, or perhaps due to other causes, it seemed that as soon as I handed students a piece of paper and a pencil there was an immediate push back. Because of this, as well as my own developing skills for managing individual work with instruments, the composition component of the project took much longer than I had initially designed. I reached out to elementary music colleagues in my district for guidance on classroom management and volume regulation for a project like this and much of what they suggested helped in my classroom; thus, it is included in the revised activity design found in the appendix.

Because my schools just received classroom sets of instruments this year, my students are not accustomed to everyone being able to play at the same time nor have they had much practice making individual composition choices. Before attempting this project again with future classes I will be much more intentional about scaffolding the composition decision making skills used in this project. I also found that for some students the entire activity guide, particularly with the bonus notation component at the bottom was overwhelming. In the future I will try dividing it into two half sheets or potentially a half sheet that is front-and-back to help students manage this anxiety. I also encountered a need to support additional IEP accommodations during this project because it steps outside what we traditionally do as far as independent reading and writing. With the support of one of my school's special education teacher, Ms. Brit McMahon, I was able to support my IEP students with music notation stickers, scribing written work, and adapting their barred instrument to help students be more successful performing their composition independently. Although the composition aspect of this project was personally stressful for me as well as many of the students, the work produced proved to me that the project was not beyond their ability levels; I just needed to explain the work and guide them through the process more effectively. Regardless of the challenges, all students were able to complete the project successfully and were surprisingly excited on performance day to share their compositions and get to hear all their classmates. While this activity required some major revisions and significant instructional growth on my part, feedback from students after completion and the expressions of joy and accomplishment on their faces during performance made the long process worth it and this activity as a whole worth revisiting in the future.

Fifth Grade Implementation and Revision

In the first days of February two sections of fifth grade and a fourth/ fifth combination class learned about Aretha Franklin and wrote their own rhythmic building blocks in 6/8 time based on the topic of character traits they want to demonstrate as they prepare to transition to middle school. The

students and I spent extensive time in the weeks prior to this activity scaffolding the skills of feeling and reading 6/8 time. This scaffolding was instrumental to the success of this lesson for my students as they had not done much work visualizing or reading 6/8 time until this. Students reported that they enjoyed this lesson and my perception of their engagement throughout confirms that. While fewer students than I had expected recognized the hit song *Respect*, beginning with that music seemed to grab their attention regardless. This activity also struck a nice balance between using Carole Boston Weatherford's book *R-E-S-P-E-C-T* to introduce the SEL concepts while also encouraging students to apply these concepts to their own lives (2020). Upon picking up their class and seeing the list of character traits on the white board, one fifth grade teacher even commented that they didn't realize our students even knew all those words.

The primary revisions to this activity design were to stretch it out slightly and give students more time to practice and build success performing their rhythmic building blocks. I also included recommendations to give more structure to the process of writing the building blocks that I found helpful for my students. Connecting the book and Aretha Franklin to real world events through the video of Aretha singing at President Obama's first inauguration also appeared to be impactful for students. After watching that video and connecting our work to Aretha as a real person, I found that even students who are less verbal in class became engaged in creating the list of character traits they want to see in themselves as they move on to middle school. I plan to do this lesson with fifth grade students next spring as well, and even more than the musical concepts of reading, writing, and performing rhythms in 6/8 time, my hope is that students will carry the SEL objectives of this lesson with them to middle school.

Conclusion

This project was designed to help support my students' SEL development through the integration of SEL instruction in the music classroom. The initial research phase helped me to develop

my own understanding of SEL best practices and what SEL instruction looks like in my school. The second phase; designing, implementing, and revising engaging SEL integrated activities aligned with the district music curriculum as well as *Second Step* afforded me the opportunity to implement what I had learned from the research and then reflect on that implementation to further understand how I can support students' SEL development in the music classroom. After multiple Second Step Elementary Curriculum trainings and significant time spent exploring the digital curriculum resources and collaborating with the school counselor, I am much more confident in my understanding of the SEL curriculum and which skills to focus on with students. During the research and design phase of the project I deepened my knowledge of the CASEL SEL Framework that is the foundation for *Second Step* as well as many other SEL curriculums, which also played a major role in how I chose to construct my own SEL integrated activities (2022). I also learned that introducing the topic and allowing students to fill in what they know and process how they can connect it to our music room worked particularly well with almost all levels of students. As I continue to dive into SEL integration, allowing the students to teach me what they know so I am sure to meet them where they are and facilitate development from there will be very beneficial. I learned a great deal about the Second Step Elementary Curriculum and how it is used in my district through this process, but that work is not complete. As I seek to further develop SEL integration in my classroom, I will continue to engage with our SEL materials and work to find ways to integrate them naturally and effectively into music lessons throughout the year.

Throughout the project I witnessed in my own students the point many of the research authors made that effective SEL integration must be intentional. My current second grade class has faced many obstacles in their brief time, including but not limited to the global COVID-19 pandemic that began before they even started school and caused an uncertain and bumpy first two years of school for them. These students often struggle with perseverance and confidence in the music classroom. Often if they do not accomplish something on the second try, they become frustrated and want to give up and I do

not know what to say to get them motivated again. However, by intentionally reviewing belly breaths they had already been taught by the counselor and focusing on self-management strategies when faced with a challenge, these students were able to transfer and practice these skills in the music room and find success musically as well as with practicing their SEL skills and feeling confident. Had I taught this lesson prior to my research and focus on learning about SEL instruction and integration, the frustration of this lesson likely would have been too much for these students because I didn't have the tools and knowledge to help them transfer their budding SEL skills into the music room. This experience clearly demonstrated for me what Camille A. Farrington and the research group from the University of Chicago stated when they wrote "how an instructor teaches often matters more than what they teach" (2019).

The second phase of this work, designing and implementing engaging lessons that address both SEL and music objectives, was a turbulent process that offered numerous opportunities for reflection and growth as previously discussed. Upon completion of this process however, I have six tested and revised lessons that most students enjoyed and effectively engaged students with SEL and music objectives. While I had been nervous that students would feel uncomfortable or push back against the SEL conversations happening in this new setting, the students did not give any feedback as such, and based on my observations and students' responses, these lessons were at least as engaging as our traditional classroom routine if not even more so.

In the research, many authors emphasize a safe classroom environment for SEL integration to be effective. This sentiment, echoed by many, was most clear to me through the words of Jessica Kwasny when she wrote "... people first, musicians second, students third" (2019). In the initial phases of this project, I took this to mean that the SEL integrated lessons must conform to our normal music room routines because consistency helps children feel safe. However, I challenged this belief with the free improvisation lesson for third grade. What I learned is that when the students feel safe in their environment, with their teacher, and with each other they may be willing to step out of their comfort

zone on routine and type of activity. Because most all these students have been together and with me in music for three or four years, this group felt safe enough to try something new together and found they truly enjoyed it. We also set up clear expectations for the activity and feedback that added to the sense of safety. The value of a safe environment cannot be understated, but the third-grade students also taught me that there are more ways to create safety than just sticking to the status quo.

I also learned that instead of always needing an entire lesson to be focused on SEL integration, there are many ways to use a small activity to infuse SEL into my classroom, similar to the work of Jessica Kwasny in *Portraits of Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: Teaching Music with Heart* (2021). The small activities I have already tried as part of this project include reviewing listening skills with a sing and share circle, using colors and art in conjunction with listening examples to access feelings, practicing listening and giving feedback with free improvisation and student compositions, and taking pause to acknowledge feelings of anxiety and challenge as well as the accomplishment and confidence that comes with success. These seemingly small activities form the foundation of my work to continuously integrate SEL instruction into all that we do in the music classroom.

My increased understanding of how to support students' SEL development as a result of this project has also influenced the classroom management and intervention strategy aspects of my teaching. Many members of the Hawthorne staff have come together over the last two years for two book studies based around understanding and supporting student behavior in schools. The overarching themes of this work have been that students do well when they can, interpreting behavior as communication, and teaching the missing skill behind disruptive or inappropriate behavior. As I have worked to improve my approach to student behavior, the work of this project has helped me to better understand what developmentally appropriate SEL skills are, and subsequently how to identify when student behavior demonstrates these skills or a lack of these skills. My ability to identify what the SEL skills are and when a student is potentially missing one of these skills is the first step to either building

an activity that helps develop that skill for a whole group or working with my colleagues to help implement interventions targeting the missing skill for a particular student.

SEL integration and creating an SEL informed classroom will be an area of continuous learning for me. My district counselors plan to continue with the *Second Step Elementary Curriculum* while also making significant revisions and supplements. I will need to inform myself on these changes and collaborate with my school counselor to make sure I am aligning my work with hers to capitalize on what collaboration and collective teacher efficacy can do to help our students. I will also continue increasing my familiarity with the SEL curriculum and language that the students learn with the counselor so that as SEL learning opportunities naturally arise in the music classroom I am better able to help students work through the situation by accessing language and strategies to which they have already been introduced. The work of this project has provided an opportunity to explore SEL integration and get a great start towards what I am sure will be a career-long journey as I strive to continue learning and adapting my instruction to meet students where they are and help them develop both musically as well as in the social-emotional domain. Having completed this work after only four years in the classroom, it is exciting to know that my knowledge and skills will continue to develop for the next twenty to thirty years of my career. During these years hundreds of students will walk into my classroom deserving the very best I have to offer, and there is no doubt my work with SEL integration will be a benefit to them as we work collaboratively to help them develop into the best versions of themselves.

Bibliography

- Campayo-Muñoz, Emilia-Ángeles and Alberto Cabedo-Mas. 2017. "The Role of Emotional Skills in Music Education." *British Journal of Music Education* 34 (3): 243-258. <http://weplib.lib.umt.edu:8080/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/role-emotional-skills-music-education/docview/2011273340/se-2>.
- CASEL. 2022. "Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning". Last Modified October 15, 2022. <https://casel.org>.
- Committee for Children. 2011. *Second Step Elementary Classroom Kits*. Seattle, WA: Committee for Children.
- Cornwall, Gaia. 2017. *Jabari Jumps*. New York, NY: Scholastic Inc.
- Dunphy, Catherine. 2019. "Sing Your Own Song: The Power of Music within Each of Us." Filmed 2019 in DunLaughtaire, Ireland. TEDx video. <https://youtu.be/rFlqQmLT88I>.
- Dr. Seuss. 1996. *My Many Colored Days*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Edgar, Scott N., Jacqueline Kelly-McHale, and Jared Rawlings. 2017. *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications.
- Edgar, Scott N. 2019. *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music - Student Workbook*. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications.
- Farrington, Camille A., Joseph Maurer, Meredith R. Aska McBride, Jenny Nagaoka, J. S. Puller, Steve Shewfelt, Elizabeth M. Weiss, and Lindsay Wright. 2019. *Arts Education and Social-Emotional Learning Outcomes among K-12 Students: Developing a Theory of Action*. University of Chicago Consortium on School Research, 1313 East 60th Street, Chicago, IL 60637.
- "Hattie Effect Size List - 256 Influences Related to Achievement." VISIBLE LEARNING., accessed Mar 30, 2023, <https://visible-learning.org/hattie-ranking-influences-effect-sizes-learning-achievement/>.
- Helena Public Schools. 2022. *Helena School District #1 Music Curriculum*. Helena, MT.

- Hendricks, Karin S., Tawnya D. Smith, and Jennifer Stanuch. 2014. "Creating Safe Spaces for Music Learning." *Music Educators Journal* 101 (1): 35-40.
doi:10.1177/0027432114540337. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0027432114540337>.
- Jensen, Mary. 2021. "Social Emotional Learning in the Elementary General Music Classroom." In *Portraits of Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: Teaching Music with Heart*, edited by Scott N. Edgar, 55-85. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications.
- Kwasny, Jessica. 2021. "You are A Musician. You are Loved!" In *Portraits of Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: Teaching Music with Heart*, edited by Scott N. Edgar, 87-119. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications.
- Manchur, Rachel. 2021. "Utilizing Children's Literature in Teaching Social Emotional Learning." In *Portraits of Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: Teaching Music with Heart*, edited by Scott N. Edgar, 122-136. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications.
- O'Brien, Becky. 2022. "It's Always Personal: Social Emotional Learning in the Elementary Music Classroom with Student Population of Varied Needs." M.M.E., University of Wisconsin – Steven's Point. <https://www-proquest-com.weblib.lib.umd.edu:2443/docview/2681510448?pq-origsite=primo#>.
- Omasta, Matt, Mark Graham, Stephanie L. Milling, Elizabeth Murray, Amy Petersen Jensen, and Johanna J. Siebert. 2021. "Social Emotional Learning and the National Core Arts Standards: A Cross-Disciplinary Analysis of Policy and Practices." *Arts Education Policy Review* 122 (3): 158-170.
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/10632913.2020.1773366>. <http://weblib.lib.umd.edu:8080/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/social-emotional-learning-national-core-arts/docview/2560461835/se-2?accountid=14593>.
- Sanderlin, Jennifer, Forrest Walter, Alexandria Rolle, Zack Sherman, and Julia Meyer. 2022. *Second Step Live Demo Event*. online: Committee for Children.

Sanderlin, Jennifer and Sam Trevathan. 2022. *Enrich Your Out-of-School Time Program with Intentional SEL*. online: Committee for Children.

Tietz, Meg. "Start with A Story: Incorporating Literature into the Music Room." Montana Music Educators Association, October 20-21, 2022.

Thompkins-Bigelow, Jamilah. 2020. *Your Name is a Song*. Seattle, WA: The Innovation Press.

Weatherford, Carole Boston. 2020. *R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul*. New York, NY: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

Wilson, Karma. 2002. *Bear Snores On*. New York, NY: Margaret K. McElderry Books.

Appendix

SEL in the Elementary Music Room Aligned with the Second Step Curriculum *My Many Colored Days* Sequence

Grade: Kindergarten

Duration: 5-10 minutes on 12 different occasions

Materials:

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Computer, projector, and speakers

Notes Alive! production of *My Many Colored Days* (video also available on YouTube)

Objectives:

HSD Music:

I am learning to describe the feeling and mood of a piece of music.

I am learning to recognize same and different parts of music.

I am learning to identify different sound sources.

Second Step:

Students will be able to identify a variety of feelings displayed in response to scenarios.

Students will be able to label feelings as comfortable or uncomfortable.

Procedure:

Day 1:

- Introduce book and read pages 1-4.
- Watch Notes Alive! introduction and ask students to listen carefully for what each color will represent. After watching the video students identify that each color will be “different feelings and moods.”
- Prepare students that next time they come to music we will start with our first color to listen and watch and try to figure out how our friends in the video are feeling.

Day 2-11:

- Read the next page of the book first and allow students to predict what the feeling might be just based on the color and art in the book.
- Listen to the music and watch the video. Encourage students to share what they think the characters were feeling based on the music and video.
- Once students get comfortable with the process and sharing their responses, add identifying whether their response is a comfortable or uncomfortable feeling.
- *Note that students may provide a variety of answers to the same color and that is ok – there is no “right” answers for this activity.
- If students begin to tire of the routine of sharing aloud, consider allowing them to draw an emoji and write their feelings.
- *For students with limited verbal skills, I found a choice board of 5-10 emojis and allowing them to point to one was a helpful accommodation.

Day 12

- On the final day – “mixed-up day”, read the book and watch the video as before.
- Discuss how we can’t really describe the day with one feeling word this time and that is ok – we all have days where our feelings and moods go up and down and all over the place.

- Ask students to reflect on their own day so far and how it has gone. Ask them to choose two feelings they have had today to share with the class.
- *For some students – you know who they are – this may be extremely challenging and cause a lot of anxiety. I remind them they get to pick which ones they want to share, they don't have to explain why, and if they need to choose just one or share only with me that is ok too. This worked for all my students so far, but if a student truly did not want to share, I would recommend not pushing them.

SEL in the Elementary Music Room Aligned with the Second Step Curriculum
Bear Snores On/Grizzly Bear

Grade: 1st Grade

Duration: 25-30 minutes

Materials:

Bear Snores on by Karma Wilson

Grizzly Bear folk song – can be found for free here

(<https://www.bethsnotesplus.com/2012/10/grizzly-bear.html>)

Objectives:

HSD Music:

I am learning to respond to musical opposites.

I am learning to identify and use Italian musical terms within musical contexts. (*piano*/*forte*)

I am learning to demonstrate the difference between my speaking voice and singing voice.

Second Step:

Students will be able to demonstrate welcoming and inviting behaviors.

Students will be able to name feelings when presented with environmental and situational cues.

Students will be able to demonstrate that people can have different feelings about the same situation.

Students will be able to demonstrate listening and following directions within the context of a game.

Procedure:

- Begin by leading a brief discussion on what happens when a snowstorm comes. What does the weather do and how does that affect our activities? What is your favorite thing to do during a snowstorm? (Students each think of an idea and hold it in their brain.)
- Review how we listen respectfully to our classmates (SS listening skills – eyes watching, ears listening, body still, voice quiet).
- With a singing voice question (focused around *so*, *la*, and *mi*) ask each student what their favorite thing to do during a snowstorm is and encourage them to respond on an improvised vocal melody.
- Teach the “Grizzly Bear” folk song by rote. Ask students to identify what happens to our voices during the second and third lines. (We get really quiet and then get loud again when the bear is mad.) Label *piano* and *forte* and sing song together demonstrating *piano* and *forte* with both voice and body.
- Read *Bear Snores On*, stopping to insert the “Grizzly Bear” song each time the book reads “but the bear snores on.” (I change “brown bear” to “grizzly bear” on the first page to make the book match the song better.)
 - As each animal enters the cave, invite students to predict how that animal feels about the situation.
 - Just before the bear wakes up have students predict how he will respond. After the bear wakes up and “gnarls, snarls, roars, rumbles, jumps, stomps, growls, and grumbles” ask students to identify how they think the bear feels based on his actions.
 - On the next page, the bear “whimpers, moans, wails, groans, and blubbers” – ask students how the bear feels now. Have his feelings changed since he first woke up? Does the bear have different feelings about this situation than the other animals in the cave? What could the other animals do to be welcoming and inviting to help the bear

feel better? Is it possible to hurt someone else's feelings even if you don't mean to?
Should we apologize and try to make it better even if it was an accident?

- Move to circle positions and play the "Grizzly Bear" game from the Beth's Notes website listed above.
 - When giving directions encourage students to use their self-talk strategies to remember the rules of the game and prepare students that we will practice taking turns today and that we might not all have a turn to be the grizzly bear.
 - Review *piano* and *forte* and encourage students to demonstrate these dynamics each time they sing the song during the game.
- *It is likely there will not be much time for numerous students to have a turn being the bear. This game would be a fun review activity or reward for positive behavior in the future.

SEL in the Elementary Music Room Aligned with the Second Step Curriculum
Jabari Jumps

Grade: 2nd Grade

Duration: 15 – 20 minutes on 2 different occasions

Materials:

Jabari Jumps by Gaia Cornwall

ISBN: 978-0-7636-7838-8

Classroom instruments – drums, barred Orff instruments

Objectives:

HSD Music:

I am learning to visually identify and name classroom instruments.

I am learning to label different parts of music.

I am learning to keep the steady beat.

I am learning to perform with artful expression.

Second Step:

Students will be able to identify physical and situational clues that indicate the feeling of confidence.

Students will be able to demonstrate correct belly-breathing technique.

Students will be able to demonstrate that practicing helps you build your confidence.

Procedure:

Day 1

- Read *Jabari Jumps* inserting one of the three accompanying ostanati written by Meg Tietz after each page.
 - Stop and discuss throughout the book: How does Jabari feel? How do we know that? What strategy is he using to manage his emotions?
 - If students are grasping the three ostanati, try dividing into groups and layering them together beginning with students as one group and teacher as the second group.

Day 2

- Review the story of *Jabari Jumps*, what it means to feel confident, how to use belly-breathing, and that practicing can help build your confidence.
- Prepare students that today we are going to do something challenging and we may not feel confident at first, but we will practice until we do. It is natural to feel worried or nervous when we do something new, so we are also going to practice belly-breaths throughout the lesson to help us manage any uncomfortable feelings we may be having.
- Review Meg Tietz’s ostanati. Add alternating pats to #1 & #3, and a slide tap to #2.
- Transfer the ostanati to classroom instruments.
 - #1 to drums (or other unpitched percussion)
 - #2 to glockenspiels/metallophones (slide down and land on low C for “splash”)
 - #3 to xylophones; encouraging students to move up and down the instrument to match the words.
- Perform instrument ostanati with the book, individually at first and then layering as students gain confidence. Remind students that we are practicing with each repetition and even though this is challenging we will get more confident as we go. Stop and practice belly-breaths as needed. *Ostinato pattern 2 will likely require teacher support when layering due to the long

whole note and the rest. Teacher may also use a wood block or cowbell to reinforce the steady beat throughout.

Additional Resources:

Ostanati written by Meg Tietz (*used here with permission)

1:

4/4 I can do this! I can do this! I can jump!

2:

4/4 Whee splash!

3:

4/4 Up the lad - der, wait no may - be not!

SEL in the Elementary Music Room Aligned with the Second Step Curriculum
Free Improvisation as Conversation

Grade: 3rd Grade

Duration: 20-25 minutes

Materials:

Assorted classroom instruments

Objectives:

HSD Music

I am learning to perform with artful expression.

I am learning to recognize same and different parts of music.

I am learning to perform and improvise using known rhythms.

I can visually identify and name classroom instruments.

Second Step

Students will be able to demonstrate assertive communication skills in response to scenarios.

Students will be able to demonstrate focusing-attention and listening skills in response to scenarios.

Students will be able to initiate, continue, and end a conversation in a friendly way in the context of a game.

Procedure:

- Introduce students to free improvisation through the following video <https://youtu.be/ggsAnq2w6WE>. Watch for a couple minutes then discuss: what do we hear? Are they playing together in some way? Are they sharing ideas? What does improvisation mean?
- Sitting in a circle, all students get an instrument and put it behind them. Choose 5-6 students and ask them to try it out – remind them there are no rules about what you play as long as it does not damage our instruments.
- Allow students to play for a short time then discuss. Use “I notice... I value... I wonder...” sentence starters to solicit feedback from both students involved in the performance as well as audience members.
- What if we thought of our free improvisation as a conversation? What are some skills you have talked about in Second Step that help create a good conversation? How could we apply these skills to our music making? Choose 5-6 new students and try again.
- Continue the playing and feedback cycle until all students have had a chance to attempt free improvisation. *Note that group size may need to vary depending on the students and instruments in that group.

*In this activity it is critical to model the judgement-free tone and formatted feedback. Even when responding to student feedback, allowing for all opinions that are offered respectfully is of the utmost importance. Particularly at first students may be prone to giggling – I suggest calmly reminding them that all sounds made are part of the performance and if they are not in the performing group their job is to be absolutely silent. If you approach this activity with a calm and sincere demeanor and an open mind, you will be amazed at what your students create and the critical thinking they demonstrate and share in their feedback.

SEL in the Elementary Music Room Aligned with the Second Step Curriculum
Your Name is a Song

Grade: 4th Grade

Duration: approx. 2 hours

Materials:

Your Name is a Song by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow
ISBN: 978-1-943147-72-4
Barred Orff instruments
Attached activity guide – one per student

Objectives:

HSD Music:

- I am learning to label different parts of music.
- I am learning to accompany myself or others.
- I am learning to perform and improvise using a pentatonic scale.
- I am learning to read, write, and perform rhythmic notation.

Second Step:

- Students will be able to demonstrate listening-with-attention skills.
- Students will be able to demonstrate giving and receiving a compliment.
- Students will be able to demonstrate the technique for deep, centered breathing.

Procedure:

Day 1

- Begin by reviewing belly breaths from the Second Step curriculum as a calming/centering activity for the class.
- Echo sing the refrain while patting the steady beat (potentially half notes depending on tempo) to prepare the Orff instrument part.
- Teach the chordal accompaniment and practice singing and accompanying with the refrain.
- Read the book, inserting the refrain with accompaniment throughout. Discuss the moral of the story as time allows.

Day 2

- Review the refrain without instruments.
- Distribute the attached activity guide and assist students through step one of breaking their own name into syllables. Students should use as much or as little of their full name as they are comfortable sharing.
- Students distribute the syllables of their name into the four beat boxes under step 2 and draw in the rhythmic values to match as time allows.

Day 3

- Begin again with belly breaths – reminding students that today they will be asked to perform for a peer which may cause anxiety, but that is normal. Remember your calm down strategies.
- Once students can accurately pat their rhythm, they transfer their rhythm onto the barred instrument writing a melody of their choosing.
 - Encourage stepwise motion for students to end of either G or C
 - Students should write note names in the rhythm boxes once they have decided on a melody to help them remember their composition.

- Once students have composed their name melody, they should practice it individually and then perform for a peer and the teacher.
- Practice performing as a whole group so students get used to playing their rhythm in time, but have the comfort of everyone playing at the same time

Day 4

- More advanced students will likely have their name songs composed by this time and can move on to the bonus activity of writing out their melody on the staff.
- Students who missed a day or may need more support will likely still need time to solidify their rhythms and practice performing them on their chosen pitches.
- A mix of individual practice, partner practice, and whole group practice is helpful on this day.

Day 5

- Deep belly breathy – it is performance day.
- Allow students a short amount of time to refresh their memory on their name songs.
- As a whole group, review the refrain with accompaniment, and determine the order of groups that will perform the B, C, D, E, etc. sections of the rondo.
- Put it all together – acknowledging the anxiety of performing individually and something of your own creation at that while also celebrating our accomplishments.

*The individual composition skills in this activity may be quite challenging for some students – especially if this type of activity is relatively new to them. Budget extra time and prepare expectations very explicitly to avoid chaos, confusion, and rapidly increasing classroom volume levels. With larger groups it may be helpful to have half the class practice with their fingers while the other half uses mallets and then switch. Additionally, be prepared that students with fine motor skills, reading, or writing challenges may need additional support and accommodations beyond what they traditionally need in the music room due to the amount of writing and notation in this project. The attached activity guide could also be divided into two half size sheets to help manage students’ anxiety about being asked to do a “project” and write music.

Additional Materials:

Music adapted from *Music for Children vol. 1* pg.132

4/4

Your name is a song. Sing it - loud and sing it strong.

5

4/4

Be proud of who you are. You sh - ine bright just like a star.

Your Name is a Song Activity Guide

Step 1:

Write your full name.

Separate your name into syllables.

Step 2:

Transfer the syllables into the beat boxes below. Each box may contain 0, 1, 2, or 4 syllables.

--	--	--	--

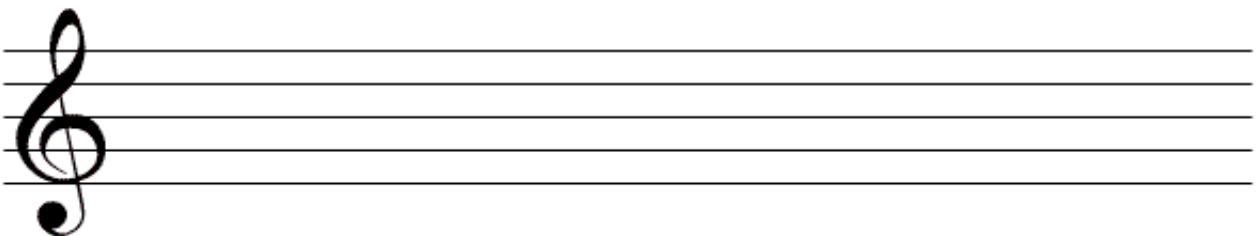
Above the syllables, draw the correct rhythmic notation for the number of sounds you have put in each beat box.

Step 3:

After practicing your rhythm from step 2, use your barred instrument to write a melody using your rhythm. Write the note names above your rhythmic notation.

Bonus:

If you finish early, please notate your melody from above on the treble clef staff below.



SEL in the Elementary Music Room Aligned with the Second Step Curriculum
R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Grade: 5th Grade

Duration: approx. 60 minutes

Materials:

R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul by Carole Boston Weatherford
ISBN: 978-1-5344-5228-2
Barred Orff instruments
Paper & pencil for each student

Objectives:

HSD Music:

- I am learning to label different parts of music.
- I am learning to accompany myself or others.
- I am learning to read, write, and perform rhythmic notation.
- I am learning to use both the top and bottom numbers in a time signature.

Second Step:

- Students will be able to define *respect*.
- Students will be able to communicate their own perspectives.
- Students will be able to identify *Second Step* skills and concepts being used in scenarios students might encounter at school.

Procedure:

Day 1:

- Play “Respect” recording for students and discuss. Has anyone heard this song? What does it mean? What do we know about the definition of respect and showing respect from *Second Step*? https://youtu.be/A134hShx_gw
- Read *R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul* and discuss. What was special about Aretha Franklin? (Emphasize her work ethic and work to stand up for what was right in various aspects of her life.) Prepare students that next time we will be creating a list of character traits we want to have and see in others in order to have a positive impact on our world
- Teach melody from *Music for Children vol. 1* pg. 106 with accompaniment.

Day 2:

- Review what we learned about Aretha Franklin on day 1. Play video of Aretha Franklin singing “My Country Tis of Thee” at Barak Obama’s inauguration. <https://youtu.be/F4D9jQpecVo>
- What are some words we can think of to represent who we want to be and what we want to advocate for in our world today?
- Take one from the list and demonstrate creating a one-measure rhythmic building block with it in 6/8 time. I recommend giving students visuals of dotted quarter, dotted quarter rest, three eighth notes, quarter-eighth, and eighth-quarter and review how each pattern sounds so they can choose what rhythm they want to use from the provided list.
- Depending on length of list, divide class into partners or small groups and allow each group to choose a word and write a rhythmic building block for it. Groups of 2-4 students work well in my classroom for this type of assignment. Groups should demonstrate their rhythm to the teacher in order to submit it to the list for next time.
- If time allows, get out instruments and review the melody and accompaniment from day 2.

- Prior to the next lesson, take the rhythms the students created and input them into an interactive visual for use next time.

Day 3

- Students set up instruments and review the A section melody and accompaniment.
- Use the interactive visual to combine the student created rhythmic building blocks into a two-measure pattern that repeats as a contrasting section.
- Create a rondo by changing the building block pattern each time the students go back to play and sing the A section.

*Optional – consider dividing the class in half and adding a separate instrument for the contrasting sections and students switch instruments part way through in order to extend the lesson. If time is scarce, students can simply use their mallets to click the rhythm of the contrasting sections or play the rhythm on a designated note.

Additional Materials:

Music adapted from *Music for Children vol. 1* pg. 106.

Each day you will cho - ose who you want to be. When you are faced with the

The first system of music is in 6/8 time. It consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef with a melody line. The lower staff is an alto clef with a bass line. The lyrics are: "Each day you will cho - ose who you want to be. When you are faced with the".

6

time to de - cide, will you stand up for what you know is right?

The second system of music is in 6/8 time. It consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef with a melody line. The lower staff is an alto clef with a bass line. The lyrics are: "time to de - cide, will you stand up for what you know is right?".

9

Each day you will cho - - ose who you want to be.

The third system of music is in 6/8 time. It consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef with a melody line. The lower staff is an alto clef with a bass line. The lyrics are: "Each day you will cho - - ose who you want to be.". The system ends with a double bar line.