

LEE-HOLMES, RUE SHIRRILLAN, Ph.D. A Descriptive Study of Middle School Teachers' Current Perspectives on and Teaching Practices for Integrating Music in Public School Curricula. (2008)

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The purpose of this study was to investigate middle school teachers' current perspectives on and teaching practices for integrating music into their respective curricula. Two research questions guided the study. What are teachers' current practices for integrating music into their curricula? What music-related resources and support systems do teachers feel are necessary to integrate music into their curricula?

A 35-item questionnaire was distributed to 138 middle school teachers in a rural public school system in Eastern North Carolina. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: (a) current teaching practices for integrating music and other arts areas into the general curriculum as related to the use of Bresler's (1995) integration styles and Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections, (b) availability of music-related resources such as musical training and adequate planning time and support systems for integrating music into the general curriculum, and (c) demographic information. Two open-ended questionnaire items required respondents to explain their reasons for or for not integrating music into their curricula. Descriptive statistical procedures were used to analyze the questionnaire data. Results of the present study revealed most middle school teachers did not integrate music or other arts areas into their general curricula. Of the respondents who indicated a practice of integrating music, Bresler's

(1995) affective integration style and Wiggins' (2001) teaching tools connections were the techniques most frequently used. Of the respondents who indicated a practice of integrating other arts areas, Bresler's (1995) subservient approach and Wiggins' (2001) teaching tools connections were the techniques most frequently used. Most respondents indicated that they did not have appropriate musical training, adequate planning time, and available music-related resources to integrate music into their curricula; though, respondents agreed they had support to integrate music into their curricula from their colleagues and administrators. Respondents primarily integrated music in the general curriculum for the purpose of teaching subject area content. The primary reasons given by respondents for not integrating music in the general curriculum were lack of time and musical knowledge.

Additional research on investigating the integration of music at the middle school level is needed; though, results from this study suggest that teachers may benefit from access to music-related resources to teach music-integrated lessons. Additionally, teachers may benefit from professional development for the purpose of creating music-integrated lessons that promote young adolescents' critical thinking and problem solving skills through the integration techniques that engage students' higher-level processing skills.

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS'  
CURRENT PERSPECTIVES ON AND TEACHING  
PRACTICES FOR INTEGRATING MUSIC  
IN PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULA

by

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*“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”* (Philip. 4:13, KJV)

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Middle schools emerged during the 1950s and 1960s from the concerns of parents, administrators, and other stakeholders that junior high schools were not meeting the developmental needs of young adolescents. The National Middle School Association (NMSA) continued to address the initial concerns of young adolescents' developmental needs in its landmark position paper, *This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents*. NMSA's vision denoted several beliefs and practices that should be implemented to create successful middle schools, including: (a) a relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory curriculum, (b) multiple learning and teaching approaches that respond to students' diversity, and (c) organizational structures such as interdisciplinary teams that support meaningful relationships and authentic learning (National Middle Schools Association, 2003).

NMSA "is committed to the concept of integrated curricula" (National Middle School Association, 2002, para. 18) because integrated curricula help develop four types of relationships that affect how middle school students learn, including relationships: (a) between the learner and content, (b) between learner and teacher, (c) among learners, and (d) within the content itself. As these relationships are cultivated, middle school students improve their academic skills

and concepts and begin to develop more complex levels of processing skills. Additionally, NMSA encourages middle school educators to “push themselves beyond the conventional, separate subject format” (National Middle School Association, 2002, para. 2) by reconsidering that skills and concepts can only be achieved through traditional teaching. Teachers are challenged to implement the tenets of the middle school philosophy regarding curriculum integration by collaborating with teachers across disciplines, developing integrated themes, and designing new assessment strategies.

Research findings relative to NMSA’s overall vision are abundant. Research studies concerning the integration of music into other subjects at the middle school level are sparse. Consequently, the current study was designed to investigate middle school teachers’ current perspectives on and teaching practices for integrating music into their respective curricula. Successful middle schools, as recommended by NMSA, implement an integrated curriculum that addresses young adolescents’ diverse learning styles through interdisciplinary instruction.

### **Integrated Instruction and Its Relationship to Arts Education**

Integrated instruction involves integrating concepts and skills from two or more disciplines to create meaningful learning experiences. During integrated instruction, middle school students develop and apply skills, ask questions, solve problems, and expand their critical thinking skills. Students use their knowledge to search for answers to personal questions and concerns (Beane, 1991).

Integrated instruction helps middle school students construct and expand their own meanings and make curricular connections. As a result of integrated instruction, academic achievement increases in core classes, such as English language arts and mathematics, and in exploratory classes (Beane & Lipka, 2006).

An exploratory curriculum includes subjects such as foreign languages, computer career-technical education, health, physical education, and arts education (e.g., music, dance, visual arts, and theater arts). In North Carolina, these classes are sometimes referred to as the Basic Education Program or BEP classes. The Basic Education Program, initially approved by the North Carolina State Board of Education in 1984, describes a basic curriculum that is “fundamentally complete” and provides “a common core of knowledge and skills which every child shall command when he or she graduates from high school” (Public Schools of North Carolina, 1994, p. 5).

Exploratory curricula, such as arts education classes, provide young adolescents with opportunities to explore interests beyond the traditional core curricula that include English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. When enrolled in arts education classes, students experience knowledge that engages Gardner’s (1993) theory of multiple intelligences. According to Gardner (1993), individuals learn and solve problems through: (a) logical and mathematical analysis, (b) verbal and linguistic skills, (c) musical thinking, (d) spatial representations, (e) bodily and kinesthetic movement, (f) an

understanding of self, and (g) an understanding of others. Four of Gardner's (1993) multiple intelligences are characterized by knowledge and skills that may be associated with specific arts education disciplines: (a) musical thinking is a skill that may be associated with music education, (b) verbal and linguistic skills may be associated with theater education, (c) bodily and kinesthetic movement skills correspond with skills needed for dance education, and (d) spatial representation skills correspond with skills needed for visual arts education. The remaining intelligences are addressed during various learning experiences, such as studying rhythms and meter of a song (mathematical analysis) or performing a monologue or a group improvisational skit (understanding of self and others). With an understanding of how Gardner's (1993) multiple intelligences benefit arts education classes, middle school students are afforded the opportunity to explore and learn academic content and skills in an environment conducive to learning.

Arts education also contributes to middle school students' developmental progress. Middle school students, who typically range in age from 10 to 14 years, are developing abstract thinking skills. As suggested by Piaget's developmental theory, young adolescents are beginning to incorporate logical thinking and rely less on concrete reality (Gruber & Voneche, 1977). Arts education stimulates creativity and encourages subjective responses and divergent thinking. Through arts education, middle school students are afforded opportunities to meet their academic and developmental needs by maintaining a balance between concrete and abstract experiences.

Abstract experiences can be developed further through the disciplinary connections made from experiencing interdisciplinary lessons. The formation of interdisciplinary teams is regarded by many middle school educators and administrators as the “cornerstone of responsive middle level schools” (Clark & Clark, 1997, p. 267). An interdisciplinary team has a varied configuration of two to five teachers from different subject areas that typically include English language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science (Clark & Clark, 1997; Mertens & Flowers, 2004). Erb (1992) identified four key organizational aspects of interdisciplinary teaming, two of which include: (a) common planning or meeting time and (b) shared students. All teachers on a team are responsible for the basic instruction of the same group of students. The remaining key organizational aspects: (a) a common block of instructional time and (b) common team space in adjacent classrooms, help facilitate the overall operation of interdisciplinary teams.

George and Alexander (1993) expound on the previous organizational aspects of interdisciplinary teaming and add an important, but often neglected, component of an interdisciplinary team; teachers have “the responsibility for planning, teaching, and evaluating curriculum and instruction in more than one academic area” (p. 249). Capelluti and Brazee (2003) add that “teachers must learn to work collaboratively, establish equitable responsibilities among team members, and set attainable goals for the team” (p. 33). Regrettably, many middle school interdisciplinary teams have not reached the level of team organization as

described by George and Alexander (1993) and Capelluti and Brazee (2003). Many middle schools use interdisciplinary teams only as an organizational structure for teachers and students (Capelluti & Brazee, 2003). Consequently, the implementation of interdisciplinary content is not achieved due to inadequate collaboration among team members or arts educators.

### **Background of Problem**

#### ***A Brief History of Middle School Education***

From the late nineteenth to middle twentieth centuries, the traditional school configuration was the eight-year elementary school and four-year high school (Juvonen, Le, Kaganoff, Augustine, & Constant, 2004). The eight-four configuration provided basic skills and vocational training; yet neglected the educational and developmental needs of adolescent students. The developmental gap created by the eight-four configuration inadequately prepared students for the high school curriculum. As a result, junior high schools were developed for seventh through ninth grades with the intention of addressing the specific educational and developmental needs of young adolescents. The junior high curriculum consisted of vocational classes for students preparing to enter the job market and college preparatory classes for students preparing to enter college. The absence of developmentally appropriate instruction specifically for young adolescents remained a concern for educators. With minimal public support and few administrative guidelines, junior high schools became “little high schools” (Thompson, 1976, p.153). Junior high schools began to have proms,

graduation ceremonies, and departmentalized teaching with content being taught in isolation. The original intent of junior high schools was not fully realized; subsequently, another movement for a new approach intended to address the needs of young adolescents was initiated.

The new movement led to the 1972 establishment of the National Middle School Association (NMSA). With the advent of the NMSA, the number of middle schools increased and the grade configuration changed from 7-9, which had been the configuration of junior high schools, to 6-8; though, the practices within the school did not change. Gruhn and Douglass's (1956) goals for junior high schools were still not being implemented. The goals included:

1. *integration* of skills, interests, and attitudes to promote appropriate student behavior;
2. *exploration* of interests and abilities of young adolescents;
3. *guidance* in helping young adolescents make appropriate decisions;
4. *differentiation* of educational opportunities based on student background, interests, and aptitude;
5. *socialization* experiences that promote adjustment to adolescence; and
6. *articulation* that helped young adolescents makes the transition from elementary school to junior high school. (p.12)

Discussions developed on how to reform and implement a middle school model that truly benefited young adolescents after the 1983 publication of *A Nation at Risk*. *A Nation at Risk*, a report published by the United States Department of Education, recommended that American educational systems



apply increased accountability standards in four key areas: (a) instructional content, (b) expectations of adequate knowledge and skills of high school and college graduates, (c) amount of time students spent in academic experiences, and (d) qualified teachers (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). *A Nation at Risk* was the impetus for many conversations and published reports on education reform, especially at the middle school level.

The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development published a report in 1989 entitled, *Turning Points: Preparing America's Youth for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. The aptly titled report made recommendations for a developmentally appropriate middle school education that benefits students who, as they become adolescents, are approaching a turning point in their lives. A summary of the eight major Carnegie recommendations includes: (a) divide large middle schools into smaller communities for learning, (b) teach a core of common knowledge, (c) ensure success for all students, (d) provide teachers and principals with the major responsibility and power to transform middle grade schools, (e) provide teachers with proper training to teach young adolescents, (f) promote good health, (g) encourage family support, and (h) establish a relationship between schools and communities (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1989).

The National Middle School Association published a position paper in 1982 entitled, *This We Believe*. The document consisted of 10 fundamental elements of a middle school education. *This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents* (National Middle School Association, 2003) presented an

updated position supported by research and empirical evidence that consisted of 14 school practices and cultural characteristics of a successful middle school education. According to NMSA, eight school practices for a successful middle school education include: (a) educators who are committed to working with young adolescents, (b) leadership that is courageous and collaborative, (c) a shared vision that guides decisions, (d) an environment that is inviting, supportive and safe, (e) high expectations for students and teachers, (f) active learning for students and teachers, (g) an adult advocate for every student, and (h) school-initiated family and community partnerships (National Middle School Association, 2003). Consequently, NMSA endorses the aforementioned school practices to foster a strong and supportive school culture for young adolescents that provides the following six cultural characteristics: (a) a relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory curriculum; (b) multiple learning and teaching approaches that respond to students' diversity, (c) assessment and evaluation programs that promote quality learning, (d) multifaceted guidance and support services, (e) school-wide efforts and policies that foster health, wellness, and safety; and (f) organizational structures such as interdisciplinary teams that support meaningful relationships and learning (National Middle School Association, 2003).

### ***Interdisciplinary Teams***

A primary concern voiced by educators and administrators during the junior high and middle school movements was the departmentalization of instructional content. Departmentalization is not conducive to the developmental

and academic needs of young adolescents. Departmentalization inhibits the development of positive relationships between teachers and students. Furthermore, departmentalization contributes to the erosion of the process for young adolescents to understand cross-curricular relationships and develop complex processing skills; for this reason interdisciplinary teaming was advocated. The Pontoon Transitional Design of the 1960s became the model for interdisciplinary teaming with an emphasis on team teaching, flexible scheduling, an integrated curriculum, and teacher collaboration (Clark & Clark, 1992). The model was “designed to bridge the gap between mass education and a more individualized education” (Boyer & Bishop, 2004, para. 7). Interdisciplinary teaming creates a support system for middle school students (Clark & Clark, 1997), teachers are able to address students’ needs through collaboration (National Middle School Association, 1995), and students experience decreased discipline problems and increased engagement in authentic learning (Arhar & Irvin, 1995).

George and Alexander (1993) maintain that elementary students benefit from a close relationship with one teacher. Content sharing among elementary teachers of the same grade is not necessary. Conversely, high school teachers are “academic specialists” (p. 248). They rarely share the same students; yet, collaboration among high school teachers of the same disciplines occurs regularly. Interdisciplinary teaming at the middle school level offers a transition between the self-contained classrooms of elementary school and

departmentalization of high school. A few teachers share a small group of students and “create opportunities to make connections across various subject areas” (Clark & Clark, 1997, p. 267).

The most common configuration of subject areas in an interdisciplinary team is comprised of the traditional core subjects of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Clark and Clark (1997) suggested that traditional core teachers “work with . . . music specialists, especially when the topics allow for interdisciplinary instruction” (p. 269). The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) (United States Department of Education, 2002) identified the arts as being core academic subjects; though, arts education classes are considered to be exploratory classes and increased emphasis continues to be focused on the traditional core subjects because of the mandated testing requirement for those subjects.

Hackmann et al. (2002) reported in a study of trends and implications of interdisciplinary teams at the middle school level that 14% of the 1,400 schools surveyed provided exploratory teachers common planning time with traditional core teachers to plan interdisciplinary instruction. Although the percentage of teachers was small, the practice of shared planning and collaboration among traditional core subject teachers and exploratory teachers to enhance curricular connections among disciplines was being implemented.

### ***Theoretical Foundation for Integrated Instruction***

The Progressive Education Movement (1880-1950) developed during a time in United States' history when life was changing rapidly (Labuta & Smith, 1997). Immigration, transatlantic communication, the invention of the telephone, phonographs and "moving pictures," the Great Depression and two world wars affected the lifestyles of Americans. Developments in education also occurred with the implementation of kindergartens and junior high schools and the restructuring of the senior high school curricula. Along with these educational developments included new educational philosophies. Bohan (2003) maintained that two of the "hallmarks of the early Progressive Era of educational change were the development of new social science methods of research and investigation and . . . innovative experiential teaching methods" (p. 73). The primary premise of progressive education was addressing a child's physical, emotional, and intellectual abilities (Progressive Education, 2007), often indicated as teaching the whole child. Proponents of progressive education maintained that a child learns best through active experiences. Emphasis is placed on "creativity, activities, naturalistic learning, real-world outcomes, and experience" (Ellis & Fouts, 2001, p. 23). Children experience hands-on activities that encourage experimentation and individual thinking. A framework for integrated instruction is introduced through the philosophy of teaching the whole child. Knowledge from various disciplines must be integrated to fulfill the premise of teaching the whole child.

Prominent during the Progressive Education Movement American philosopher John Dewey suggested individuals learn best through experiences. According to Dewey, an experience is a means to gather information through interaction with the environment (Dewey, 1934). Dewey wrote that one's ability to make a conceptual connection with the world involved interaction. Individuals learn and remember information when they engage in activities and perceive the experience to be special.

Another learning theory that provides a framework for integrated instruction is the constructivist theory. The constructivist theory, like progressive education, suggested that an individual is an active learner when acquiring knowledge (Fosnot, 1996). Each learner constructs his or her own reality through individual and shared experiences. The learner incorporates new experiences into existing mental constructs of prior knowledge. This learning process allows an individual to develop a meaningful understanding of a new concept.

A final theoretical basis for integrated instruction involves research about how the brain functions. "The brain is a rhythmic pattern detector" (Fernandez, 2006, para. 24). The brain develops patterns when new information is received. As new information is collected, the brain organizes it according to prior knowledge (Cromwell, 1989). While the brain performs this multi-faceted process of organization, information is learned quickly and retained for meaningful understanding. The brain's process of seeking patterns suggests that integrated

instruction is cognitively beneficial to the learner than fragmented instruction (Ellis & Fouts, 2001).

In an effort to address the aforementioned adolescent needs and frameworks for integrated instruction, Alexandrino (2004) created and compiled a collection of interdisciplinary arts lesson plans specifically designed for use by middle school educators. Using the benefits of the arts and knowledge of adolescent development as frameworks, the lessons are written for the educator from a limited arts background yet who believes in the benefits of an arts integrated education. The primary objectives for writing the lessons include: (a) affording students the opportunity to explore and appreciate the arts, (b) presenting students the opportunity to develop new and creative ideas, (c) encouraging students to develop problem solving and critical thinking skills, and (d) allowing students to express their own talents.

### ***Types of Integrated Instruction Models***

Several models of integrated instruction exist. Fogarty (1991) proposed 10 models of integrating the curriculum. The models are divided into four categories. The first category of Fogarty's (1991) model, integration within single disciplines, includes fragmented, connected, and nested models. The fragmented model follows the traditional model of instruction and emphasizes concepts of each discipline. The connected model makes subtle conceptual connections within one discipline. The nested model presents a three-dimensional approach by targeting thinking skills, social skills, and content-specific skills within one discipline.

The second category of Fogarty's (1991) model, integration across several disciplines includes sequenced, shared, webbed, threaded, and integrated models. The sequenced model describes simultaneous teaching of topics in separate disciplines. The shared model overlaps concepts across two disciplines by incorporating team teaching. The webbed model integrates a theme into several disciplines. The threaded model blends common concepts across all disciplines by threading "thinking skills, social skills, study skills, graphic organizers, technology, and a multiple intelligences approach to learning" (p. 64).

The third category of Fogarty's (1991) model, integration within the learner, comprises only the immersed model. The learner is immersed within the content and becomes an expert on the topic. The fourth category of Fogarty's (1991) model, integration across networks of learners, comprises only the networked model. The learner researches various resources to gather information on a particular topic. Fogarty's (1991) models present examples of curriculum integration along a continuum that begins with traditional departmentalized instruction and ends with the learner directing the integration process. Fogarty (1991) suggested educators use the 10 models of curriculum integration as a beginning to embark on the development of their own models of curriculum integration.

Jacobs and Borland (1986) proposed the Interdisciplinary Concept Model, a four-step model for developing interdisciplinary units. The model was designed to be implemented across all academic levels of instruction. Consequently,



students' academic knowledge is improved and students are made aware of cross-disciplinary relationships, of which Jacobs and Borland (1986) specifically included the arts disciplines. Step one involves identifying a central topic. Step two involves brainstorming the various content domains that could be connected with the topic. Step three involves formulating guiding questions for the development of a scope and sequence and step four finalizes the process by designing and implementing specific activities that allow exploration of the theme. Jacobs and Borland (1986) suggested the Interdisciplinary Concept Model is not a panacea; though, the model offers an option for educators who are serious about interdisciplinary instruction.

The Consortium of National Arts Education Associations developed the document, *Authentic Connections* (2002), which identifies three interdisciplinary models that clarify how the arts can be integrated with integrity into the general curriculum. The three models include: (a) parallel instruction, (b) cross-disciplinary instruction, and (c) infusion. Parallel instruction represents limited exposure and few cross-curricular connections to interdisciplinary instruction. Two or more teachers focus on a common concept or topic within their respective disciplines. For example, a music teacher and a history teacher teach a unit on World War II. During history class, the teacher focuses on the war and its effects on society, politics, and the nation's economy. The music teacher focuses on swing music and how the war affected the genre in addition to how the war affected swing musicians and establishments in which they performed.

Cross-disciplinary instruction creates an environment for learners to transfer knowledge from one discipline to another. Similar to parallel instruction, two or more teachers focus on a common concept and engage in increased collaboration by sharing a common planning time and team teaching. For example, during a music lesson on timbre, the science teacher joins the lesson by teaching about the acoustics of sound.

Infusion is “the most rare and sophisticated of the three” interdisciplinary models as described in *Authentic Connections* (The Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 2002, p. 9). Highly integrated teaching and learning occur in this model in which learners focus on strong relationships between disciplines. Infusion is usually a collaborative effort between two or more teachers; though, one teacher who has sufficient knowledge in multiple areas may use this model. For example, a unit about the concept of repetition integrates music, mathematics, and visual arts. Learners study repetition in minimalist music, tessellations (a mathematical concept of repeating shapes), and draw tessellated patterns.

Several models of integrated instruction are prevalent; as well as models that include the integration of the arts disciplines. Research findings on educational programs that advocate integrated instruction specific to arts instruction are also extensive. The subsequent discussion will provide a theoretical basis for arts integration and present several arts integrated programs and arts integrated instructional strategies and styles.

## **Arts Integration**

### ***Theoretical Foundation for Arts Integration***

Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligences supports arts integration. The theory explains how individuals have the potential to construct an understanding of domains through various intelligences such as: (a) logical-mathematical, (b) verbal-linguistic, (c) musical, (d) spatial, (e) bodily-kinesthetic, (f) interpersonal, and (g) intrapersonal. Gardner (1995) proposes the many dimensions of learning as described by the theory of multiple intelligences should be used to cultivate desired capabilities, approach a concept, subject matter or discipline in a variety of ways, and personalize education. When enrolled in arts classes, students experience knowledge that engages all multiple intelligences. Moreover, when students are engaged in lessons that integrate music, Gardner's (1995) proposed uses of the multiple intelligences are refined.

A theory of learning modalities also supports arts integration. The learning modalities theory involves using auditory, visual, and tactile or kinesthetic sensory skills to process information (Barbe & Swassing, 1979). Arts education classes include a full range of auditory, visual, and tactile/kinesthetic experiences. For example, a music class involves reading lyrics, listening to music examples, and moving to the beat or performing on an instrument. Integrating music into traditional core classes such as English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies, addresses the three learning modalities because music is "multimodal by nature" (Campbell & Scott-Kasner, 2002, p. 29).

Another theoretical foundation for arts integration, specifically music integration, is Standards eight and nine of the *National Standards for Music Education* (The School Music Program: A New Vision, 1994). The *National Standards for Music Education* adopted by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) as the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* (NCSCS) for music education in kindergarten through twelfth grade, articulate the musical skills and knowledge expected of pre kindergarten students through twelfth grade. Standards eight and nine specifically refer to integration of music with other subjects.

COMPETENCY GOAL 8: The learner will understand relationships between music, the other arts, and content areas outside the arts. (National Standard 8)

Objectives

8.01 Identify similarities and differences in the meanings of common terms used in dance, music, theatre arts, and visual arts including line, color, texture, form/shape, rhythm, pattern, mood/emotion, theme, and purpose.

8.02 Describe ways in which the concepts and skills of other content areas taught in the school including English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies are related to those of music.

8.03 Demonstrate the character traits of responsibility, self-discipline, and perseverance while informally or formally participating in music.

COMPETENCY GOAL 9: The learner will understand music in relation to history and culture. (National Standard 9)

Objectives

9.01 Identify the distinguishing characteristics of representative music genres and styles from a variety of cultures.

9.02 Describe how elements of music are used in various exemplary musical compositions.

9.03 Compare across several cultures of the world and in history, the functions of music, roles of musicians, and conditions under which music is typically performed.

9.04 Show respect for music from various cultures and historical periods. (Public Schools of North Carolina website, 2000)

### ***Arts Integrated Educational Programs***

Arts integration is the topic of many current educational programs and research studies. The Arts Education Partnership created the document *Creating Quality Integrated and Interdisciplinary Arts Programs* (2003) which features several educational programs that integrate music and the other arts in other subject areas. *Clap, Sing and Read* is a program in Chicago that integrates Orff-Schulwerk and Suzuki methods with literacy skills for kindergarten through second grade students. Students learn the rhythm of the words to help build their reading vocabulary and parents are encouraged to attend lessons and model the activities at home.

*SmART Schools* is a program in select Rhode Island and New Hampshire elementary schools that advocates the arts as core subjects and encourages arts integration. Daily activities require students to create, perform, and respond, which are three tenets of the *National Standards for Music Education*. Research findings on the effects of arts integration in *SmART Schools* indicate “an 8.9% average improvement in percentage of children achieving the high bar standard of the state testing in mathematics problem solving, compared to a 2.1%

improvement in comparison schools” (Education Development Center, 2003, para. 5).

Annenberg Media, through its website and Annenberg/CPB Channel, provides free video workshops for teachers of students in kindergarten through twelfth-grade that explain why and how teachers may integrate the arts into other subjects. Workshop Video titles include *The Arts in Every Classroom*, *Connecting with the Arts*, and *The Art of Teaching the Arts*. The video workshops offer valuable information for teachers who are interested in creating an important role for integrated arts education in their lessons (Annenberg Media Learner website, 1997-2008).

*HOT Schools* in Connecticut integrate the arts into elementary and middle school curricula in an effort to help students develop higher order thinking skills such as analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and creating. Students in *HOT Schools* use creating, responding, and performing to help develop their higher order thinking skills. The three basic tenets of the *HOT Schools* approach are “strong arts, arts integration, and democratic practice through an underpinning of multiple intelligence theory” (Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, 2007).

*Hofstra University’s Middle School Summer Program in the Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts with Integration of Math, Science, and Technology* in Long Island, New York integrates science, mathematics, and technology through arts education. The Hofstra program is developmentally designed for middle

school students because the concepts in the curriculum require abstract thinking. According to Piaget, abstract thinking generally begins to develop with young adolescents in grades sixth through eighth (Arts Education Partnership, 2003).

North Carolina A+ Schools are an arts-based school reform effort that began as a four year pilot study in 1995 and concluded in 1999; though some of the original pilot study schools in addition to new schools continue to be members of the North Carolina A+ Schools Network. In A+ Schools, the arts are viewed as essential to how teachers instruct and how students learn in all content areas. A primary purpose of the school reform effort is to implement daily arts instruction such as music, dance, visual arts, and theater arts to all students from a trained arts educator. Additionally, the four arts areas are integrated within the other content areas of the general curriculum while focusing on Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligences and current brain research (Marron, 2003; Nelson, 2002).

Many arts integrated educational programs have been the impetus for research studies that support the academic, social, and emotional benefits of arts education. The research document *Champions of Change* (Fiske, 1999) contains studies that examined the impact of arts education on the academic, behavioral, and thinking lives of young people. Improved reading skills, increased levels of mathematics proficiency, and increased grade-point averages are findings in the report that support academic success. Increased levels of creative thinking, improved self-concept, and decreased inappropriate behavior are report findings

that support social and emotional success. Similarly, the research compendium *Critical Links* (Deasy, 2002) contains summaries and commentaries of studies that examined arts education experiences or the academic and social effects of arts education experiences. Commentaries indicate each study's contribution to the field of arts education and implications for further research. *Critical Links* differs slightly from *Champions of Change* because *Critical Links* organizes the studies in the categories of music, dance, drama, visual arts, and multi-arts. Findings from the music studies include a positive relationship between music training and spatial-temporal reasoning, a positive relationship between music instruction and reading ability, and improved writing skills of two emotionally disabled students.

Educational programs based on theoretical models of arts integration and studies focusing on the impact of arts integration suggest important benefits. Participants in arts integrated studies and educational programs demonstrated positive results in academic, social, and emotional skills as a result of their arts integrated experiences. Use of higher order processing skills and increased creative thinking skills also improved as a result of arts integrated experiences.

### ***Arts Integrated Instructional Strategies and Styles***

Music educators have discussed the issue of music integration for many years. Music and arts integration have been proposed for several reasons including: (a) music integration supports Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligence; (b) music integration complements current brain research and



learning (Jensen, 2001; Snyder, 2001); and (c) music integration helps maintain the existence of music in the schools since the inception of state accountability mandates (Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006). Although valid, the aforementioned reasons raise concerns from music educators about preserving the integrity of music during integrated lessons.

Thompson (1995) wrote about the importance of maintaining artistic integrity during interdisciplinary teaching. Although Thompson (1995) specifically referred to visual arts, the author's perspective can apply to music integration. The author stressed the quality of art must not be compromised. Thompson (1995) suggested the arts should be taught for its inherent value, which Hope (2003) described as the essentialist viewpoint. In addition, the arts should be taught for its ability to encompass concepts and processes across other disciplines, which Hope (2003) described as the instrumentalist view point. Thompson (1995) offered criteria that support quality art teaching during interdisciplinary lessons:

1. Art products should reflect the individuality of the creator.
2. Art skills must be taught as part of the lesson.
3. Instruction should be developed at the aesthetic development of the art work.
4. Art educators should design and/or direct those art components used in interdisciplinary lessons.
5. Information from art history, art criticism techniques, and aesthetic issues should be incorporated into interdisciplinary lessons.

6. Interdisciplinary instruction should supplement, not supplant specific art instruction. (p. 39)

Catterall and Waldorf (1999) devised criteria for effective arts integration after investigating the development of The Chicago Arts Partnership in Education (CAPE). CAPE is an arts-integrated program that was developed in Chicago during 1992. The goal of CAPE was to initiate collaboration between local artists, arts agencies, and teachers at all grade levels. Interviews and observations of teachers, artists, principals and supervisors were gathered during a six-year period. Criteria were developed to implement effective arts integration that included:

1. Students should see connections across disciplines and walk away with a bigger picture.
2. The students must take their work seriously.
3. The expressions and activities in the arts should genuinely speak to important areas of the academic curriculum.
4. The content lesson and academic lesson should be of equal importance.
5. The experience should have a planned assessment with rubrics and scoring guides.
6. The lesson plans should grow from state curriculum standards in both content areas and the arts. (p. 58)

Educators interested in curriculum integration may examine several types of curriculum-integrated models, including some arts-specific integrated models. The following discussion will examine two integrated instructional approaches:

(a) Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections and (b) Bresler's (1995) integration styles. Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections are not specific to music integration but the approach advocates maintaining the integrity of individual disciplines during integrated lessons and the style can easily be applied to integrating music into other subjects. Bresler's (1995) integration styles specifically refer to integrating music and other arts areas into other subjects.

Wiggins (2001), along with Jackie Wiggins, developed five integrated levels called connections because the emphasis of instruction is “. . . how the disciplines are connected and the resulting relationship that is created in the learner's mind” (Wiggins, 2001, p. 42). The integrated levels are not discipline specific and help maintain the integrity of individual disciplines as advocated by Catterall and Waldorf (1999) and Thompson (1995). Wiggins' (2001) five integrated levels include: (a) teaching tools connections, (b) topic connections, (c) thematic or content connections, (d) conceptual connections, and (e) process connections.

As described by Wiggins (2001), the teaching tools connections use one discipline to serve another by relaying information in a manner that is easy to remember, such as singing the alphabet song. Topic connections occur when one discipline enhances another, such as using a play about Abraham Lincoln to study both the historical era and how the literary work expresses the human condition. Thematic or content connections describe integrated thematic units in which the academic goals of several disciplines are addressed. Conceptual

connections focus on concepts such as structure and conflict and resolution. For example, conflict and resolution can be discussed in music class when studying harmonic resolution and in history class when studying the causes of war.

Process connections occur when the processes of learning such as interpreting, sequencing, and classifying are the focus. Classifying is a process that can be studied in music when discussing the various families of instruments and the instrumental members of each family or in science when studying the various classifications of clouds.

Bresler (1995) identified four styles of music integration as a result of data gathered from a study of the implementation of the arts education curricula in three elementary schools over a course of three years. Bresler concluded that classroom teachers typically use one of four styles of music integration: (a) subservient, (b) co-equal, cognitive, (c) affective, and (d) social.

The subservient style is the most prevalent of Bresler's (1995) integration styles. The music activities used in this style are rather simple and engage lower-level cognitive processing skills such as remembering and understanding as described by Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Processes (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002). The subservient integration style uses music to enhance topics or concepts, for example singing *Fifty Nifty United States*, a song that identifies each state of the union, when studying the United States. Bresler (1995) writes that the primary motivation for using the subservient style is "economy of time" (para. 22) and lack of necessity for music expertise because teachers with little

musical knowledge use this approach. Contrary to the subservient style, the co-equal, cognitive style is the least practiced integration style; yet the learning experiences associated with this style engage higher-order cognitive processing skills such as analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and creating as described by Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Processes (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002). As a result of the arts-specific knowledge integrated into the curriculum, students are challenged and encouraged to make conceptual connections across disciplines.

In the affective style of integration, music serves a mood-altering function. Emphasis is placed on feelings and attitudes towards music while creativity and self-expression are acknowledged. Common practices of this style involve the use of music as a background to structured activities. Additionally, music is played to relax students and encourage creativity during arts-related projects. Another realm of the affective approach to music integration is the social integration style. This style focuses on the school's relationship with the community. Music provides entertainment for parent-teacher organization meetings, school programs, and festivals. School administrators promote this approach because musical programs generally attract large crowds due to the large number of student participants. Large crowds create a positive feeling of community and support among students, parents, and educators. Additionally, large crowds generate more funds and provide positive exposure for the school.

### **Statement of the Problem and Purpose**

The fundamental elements of the National Middle School Association (NMSA) affirm that successful middle schools provide: (a) a relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory curriculum, (b) multiple learning and teaching approaches that respond to students' diversity, and (c) organizational structures that support meaningful relationships and learning. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) has published the document, *The Balanced Curriculum: A Guiding Document for Scheduling and Implementation of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study in the Middle Grades* (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2006). The purpose of the document is to provide guidance to administrators and teachers about how to address the fundamental elements of NMSA and implement a balanced and comprehensive curriculum involving all disciplines that includes “arts education (dance, music, theatre arts and visual arts), career-technical education, English language arts, guidance, healthful living (health education and physical education), information skills and computer skills, mathematics, science, second languages, and social studies” (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2006, p. 1). The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) believes that to avoid leaving any child behind academically, administrators and educators must address students' needs by teaching the whole child through a balanced curriculum that focuses on all content areas regardless of whether the content is federally tested. If teaching a balanced curriculum that includes integrated instruction and an

exploratory curriculum in the arts are important components of middle schools, then additional research on the status of arts integration at the middle school level is important and necessary. The current study investigated middle school teachers in a rural public school system in Eastern North Carolina regarding their current perspectives on and teaching practices for integrating music into their respective curricula.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the teachers' current practices for integrating music into their curricula?
2. What music-related resources and support systems do teachers feel are necessary to integrate music into their curricula?

### **Value of the Study**

Music integration has received considerable attention at the elementary level. Researchers have studied music's effect on various aspects of elementary students' academic, social, and emotional behaviors. Advocates of a music integrated curriculum readily acknowledge the apparent benefits of the instruction; despite, minimal research and little discussion of music integration occurring at the middle school level. Integrating music into other subjects is developmentally and academically appropriate for middle school students. Music integration encourages abstract thinking, develops critical thinking skills, and adheres to current brain research that advocates multi-disciplinary learning instead of fragmented learning. "Arts learning and learning in other disciplines

becomes part of a cohesive experience” during integrated arts instruction (Stevenson, 2006, p. 5). The current study contributes to the minimal amount of research on arts integrated curricula at the middle school level by providing insight into middle school teachers’ perspectives on and teaching practices for integrating music in their curricula. Furthermore, this study may encourage further research in the area of music integration at the middle school level.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

Curriculum integration provides various opportunities for middle school educators to meet the developmental needs of young adolescents. Concepts are reinforced, many learning styles are addressed, and students increase their awareness of the content correlation between different subjects. Music education provides similar benefits. Consequently, integrating music into the middle school curriculum would seem advantageous, yet minimal research on integrating music into the middle school curriculum exists.

The following review of literature includes discussion on adolescents' developmental needs and instructional strategies appropriate for students ages 10-15. Additionally, research summaries and findings concerning adolescents' perspectives on interdisciplinary learning and curriculum integration using music are reviewed. Due to the sparse research on integrating music into the middle school curriculum, discussions concerning music integration will also include research summaries and findings at the elementary and high school levels. The chapter concludes with research summaries and findings relating to teachers' perspectives on curriculum integration followed by a discussion of research summaries and findings on teachers' perspectives on arts integration and music

integration. Discussions include teachers' perspectives at the elementary, middle, and high school levels due to the minimal amount of research on teachers' perspectives at the middle school level.

### **Adolescent Development and Educational Needs**

Adolescence is a difficult period in a child's life. Physical, emotional, and cognitive changes take control of the adolescent while leaving the child a "perplexing mixture of contradictions" (Thompson, 1976, p.154). Physical changes generate self-esteem and self-image concerns in adolescents because they desire to relate with their peers (Huebner, 2000). Adolescents also develop a need to establish an individual identity and search for a peer group in which to identify. Autonomy is important during adolescence. Gaining an appropriate level of independence from parents prepares an adolescent to become a self-sufficient adult. As adolescents separate from their parents, a special relationship is formed among peers. Peer groups include members who share common characteristics; furthermore, the groups provide a safe place for adolescents to socialize and develop a positive social identity (Tarrant, MacKenzie, & Hewitt, 2006).

In addition to the external and internal physical development, adolescents also experience intellectual development. The adolescent brain continues to mature through a process called synaptic pruning (Caskey & Ruben, 2003; Public Broadcasting Service, 1995-2008). Brain cells and cognitive connections that are repeatedly used become stabilized and flourish. Likewise, brain cells and

cognitive connections that are ignored and rarely used are eliminated. The synaptic pruning process supports the “use it or lose it” adage. During an interview, neuroscientist Jay Giedd, remarked, “So if a teen is doing music . . . those are the cells and connections that will be hard-wired. If they’re laying on the couch . . . those are the cells and connections that are going to survive.” (Public Broadcasting Service, 1995-2008). Short-term memory is also affected during an adolescents’ cognitive development. As the brain develops, adolescents develop abstract thinking, advanced reasoning, and meta-cognition skills. Adolescents begin to solve problems and think critically and logically. As described by Lorain (2002-2008), brain development confirms the following typical adolescent behaviors: (a) engaging in strong, intense interests, often short lived, (b) preferring interactions with peers, and (c) preferring active to passive learning. The following behaviors provide a framework for teaching implications in the middle school curriculum.

Lorain (2002-2008) suggested teachers of adolescents do the following to improve students’ learning: (a) present limited amounts of new information, (b) provide opportunities for students to process and reinforce new information, (c) provide lessons that are varied with many hands-on activities, and (d) provide lessons and activities that require problem solving and critical thinking. Wilson and Horch (2002) proposed that adolescents experience peer collaborations, reflective writing, and an integrated curriculum. Caskey and Ruben (2003) concurred by offering the following suggestions: (a) teach adolescents what is

happening in their brains, (b) adopt curricular models that provide connections across subject areas, and (c) use classroom practices which are compatible with brain development like project based activities, learner-centered instruction, and hands-on activities. As indicated in this discussion, adolescents need an educationally enriched environment. An integrated curriculum will provide a developmentally appropriate learning environment for adolescents.

### **Middle School Students' Perspectives on Interdisciplinary Instruction**

Boyer and Bishop (2004) analyzed and described young adolescents' perceptions of interdisciplinary teaming. The data collected from 77 middle school students at three middle schools included journal free write, photography, focus groups, and individual interviews and metaphor. Data were analyzed and repeated themes revealed students felt they were self-disciplined and self-directed learners by being members of an interdisciplinary team. Findings also indicated students perceived personal growth in confidence, leadership, independence, tolerance, and collaborative skills.

In a study by Davies (1992) student feedback was collected from interdisciplinary units over a five-year period. Seven hundred sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders completed a Likert-type questionnaire to indicate their level of agreement with several statements concerning their experiences with interdisciplinary units. Students were asked to comment on their interest in the topics, their level of learning, and assess their work. The results of the questionnaire revealed that 80% to 95% of the students felt the interdisciplinary

units were successful and they learned something. Eighty-seven percent of the students assessed their work as good, very good, or excellent.

### **Middle School Students' Perspectives on Music Education and Curriculum Integration Using Music**

McDowell (1998) conducted a study on middle school students' perception of the importance of music as a part of the school curriculum. Sixth- and seventh-grade students at middle schools in two districts were asked to write a letter to an imaginary school board that expressed the students' concerns about whether music should or should not remain a part of the school curriculum. A content analysis of the responses was used to categorize recurring words or phrases. Several categories emerged in support of keeping music a part of the school curriculum. Categories relating to the current study are included. The middle school students indicated support for music by writing: (a) everyone loves music; (b) music is fun; (c) music is a part of life; (d) we need the benefits of music. Students' responses also included statements in support of eliminating music from the school curriculum; nevertheless, the majority of statements supporting the inclusion of music prevailed.

Hom (1990) conducted a study in which the attitudes and achievement of middle school students were examined after they experienced a social studies curriculum in which music, art, literature, and drama were integrated. The control group received traditional social studies lessons that focused on cognitive skills. The experimental group received social studies lessons that focused on cognitive

skills and affective skills through the integration of music, art, literature, and drama. Results indicated no statistically significant difference in attitude towards social studies between the control group and the experimental group; though, the experimental group showed a statistically significant increase in achievement. Furthermore, students from the experimental group were interviewed to collect qualitative data. The interview consisted of two open-ended questions that asked the students' preferred activities in history class and the students' feelings about the music, art, literature, and drama activities in history class. A content analysis was conducted to determine categories of students' responses and the data were quantified for statistical purposes. Results for the open-ended question that required students to specify their preferred activities in history class indicated students primarily preferred music (29%) and art (22%) activities. Results for the open-ended question that required students to specify their feelings concerning the arts-related activities indicated students enjoyed all arts-related activities incorporated into their history class (34%), learned more and in a better way (24%), and found the activities interesting (17%).

Schubert and Melnick (1997) conducted a study that investigated the effects of student attitude and academic performance after experiencing an arts integrated curriculum including visual, performing, and/or musical arts within their history, civics, geography, and English classes. The participants, who were students from elementary, middle and high schools, experienced integrated units that lasted from as little as a few weeks to as long as the entire school year.

Data about student attitudes were collected from interviews of teachers and administrators. Findings suggested student self-concept and overall attitude towards school increased, students improved their leadership skills, and student absenteeism decreased. Additionally, students produced high quality work, were outspoken during class discussions, and began to see the content connections among subjects.

### **Integration of Music in Elementary and High School Curricula**

Wolf (1999) conducted a qualitative, multi-year study in which he investigated a claim by teachers that their students, through peer collaboration, participated in more substantive ways while creating an opera than in non-opera settings. Students in four elementary classrooms were observed in two different settings. First, students were observed while working on an opera. Second, students were observed during non-opera settings, such as working in cooperative groups to solve an open-ended problem during mathematics class or working in groups to develop an oral presentation on American Indian leaders in social studies class. Data collection included classroom observations, transcripts of teacher and student interviews, student ethnographies, and collection of student work and activities. Results suggested that in three of the four classrooms: (a) students remembered and used prior information when solving problems primarily during the opera setting than in the non-opera settings, (b) students revised previous ideas and suggestions for a better outcome primarily during the opera setting than in the non-opera settings, and (c) student

interactions and participation increased over time in the opera setting than in the non-opera settings.

Whitaker (1996) conducted a study in which the curricular connections were examined during the integration of music with the elementary curriculum. Several research questions were addressed. The question that relates to the current study is, "Did the students, teachers, and administration perceive any connections between the music class and the elementary classroom?" Data were collected from classroom observations and open-ended interviews from students, teachers, and administrators. Data also included artifacts such as lesson plans, music teacher journals, and tape-recorded meetings with the music teacher. Results indicated students made curricular connections when (a) they were older than third grade and (b) a public performance was involved. The principal predicted a difference in student understanding after the integrated lessons but the classroom teachers did not reinforce the music teacher's lessons or question the students about their learning experiences during music class. Consequently, the difference in student understanding was not qualified.

Burton, Horowitz, and Abeles (2000) conducted a study to determine if cognitive skills developed in arts education classes have an effect on learning and thinking in other content areas. More than two thousand fourth-, fifth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students completed: (a) a questionnaire about their arts experiences in school and out of school, (b) the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT), and (c) a self-concept test. Teachers completed the Classroom



Teacher Arts Inventory (CTAI) which required them to provide ratings for: (a) their perceptions of students' abilities such as imagination and cooperative learning, (b) their school climate, and (c) their frequency for integrating the arts and collaborating with arts specialists. Results indicated that children who had an increased participation in arts education classes or arts lessons scored higher on the TTCT, self-concept test, and teacher perceptions when compared to children who had minimal participation in arts education classes or arts lessons. The CTAI results indicated significant associations between the CTAI scale and several variable indicators such as increased student creativity, student self-concept, and improved school climate.

A study by Kieffer (1996) examined how high school students made curricular connections to construct meaning in an arts-integrated, thematic and collaborative integrated senior project. Seven second-semester seniors enrolled in a class in which they studied a theme of their choice in collaboration with at least one peer. Students studied the theme through various aspects including the integration of one arts perspective. Results indicated several overall conclusions from the study. First, the student/teacher role constantly changed during the project. Unlike traditional methods, students initiated the content to be studied in class. Teachers had to adjust and deal with content outside their realm of expertise. In effect, teachers also became students. Second, learning was student centered. The more effort students put into their learning, the more they understood the content. Finally, students built on prior knowledge to acquire and

apply new knowledge. The acquisition of new knowledge provided students a basis for making contextual connections as well as making connections with their world. Although, each student defined art differently, prior knowledge of the preferred art discipline allowed students to create a project that supported a personalized learning experience. Through the students' decisions to choose an appropriate theme, integrate an arts discipline of choice, and collaborate with their peers and teacher, an active learning environment was created and curricular connections were achieved.

Results from the previously discussed studies indicate that students perceive lessons that integrate music and other arts areas to be advantageous in many ways. Increased academic understanding, improved self-esteem, and enjoyment while participating in music activities support the students' rationale for participating in lessons that integrate music and other arts areas. The remainder of the discussion presents the perspectives of curriculum integration and arts integration from the point of view of elementary, middle, and high school teachers.

### **Teachers' Perspectives on Curriculum Integration**

In a study by Weilbacher (2000) five middle school teachers were interviewed to analyze why they decided to use curriculum integration and why they decided to stop using curriculum integration. Common themes extracted from the interviews that explained why the teachers used curriculum integration included: (a) opportunities to form relationships with students and opportunities

for students to form relationships with their peers, (b) opportunities for students to co-plan the curriculum with the teacher which made the learning more relevant for the students, (c) opportunities for students to make connections among academic subjects, their community, and their own experiences, and (d) opportunities for the teacher to be intellectually challenged and experience personal growth. Common themes extracted from the interviews that explained why the teachers decided to stop using curriculum integration primarily focused on time management. Authentic curriculum integration required the teachers to spend time developing the curriculum, researching content, locating resources, and planning lessons. The teachers believed they did not have adequate time to devote to curriculum integration in addition to their other teacher responsibilities and personal obligations.

Homestead (1998) conducted a study that examined why three middle school teachers from a small rural school in Georgia used curriculum integration, how they conceptualized curriculum integration, and how they implemented curriculum integration. The data from case studies of the three teachers was generated from interviews, observations, and group meetings. An analysis of data indicated that the teachers primarily engaged in curriculum integration because they were open to new ideas and they had support from their principal, teammates, and other faculty. An analysis of data indicated the teachers conceptualized and implemented curriculum integration through a curriculum design model, social integration, mandated content, and teacher interests.

### **Teachers' Perspectives on Arts Integration and Music Integration**

Bolak, Bialach, and Dunphy (2005) documented their experiences in designing a pilot program in which a team of middle school teachers collaborated to create arts integrated thematic units for two sixth-grade classes. The team consisted of the traditional core teachers and teachers from exploratory classes which included music, visual arts, and physical education. The primary goal of the program was “to integrate what was known from education research and practice within a coherent approach toward adolescent education that educators can use in their own efforts to transform middle grade schools” (Jackson & Davis, 2000, p. xiii). The pilot program was an attempt at restructuring the school to combat some critical issues in the small mid-western school which included: (1) disappointing test scores, (2) lack of teacher enthusiasm, (3) lack of parental involvement, and (4) community dissatisfaction. Several positive events occurred as a result of the program. Students' achievement scores increased by 15% in reading and 18% in mathematics compared to the previous year's scores. Teachers incurred the responsibility of more leadership roles to envision the creation and implementation of more arts integrated lessons. Teachers became more energized, which resulted in more energized students; furthermore, teachers developed “committed collegial relationships and teaming” (Bolak et al., 2005, para. 36). Additionally, parental and community support increased.

Hull (2003) conducted a study to investigate teacher beliefs of arts integration. Twenty-three teachers who taught in Oklahoma K-12 schools

completed the Q methodology which is a systematic method that examines individuals' points of view. The participants were presented with several statements about arts integration and ranked the statements according to their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements. Results of the Q statements revealed four themes of teachers' perspectives on arts integration: (a) *Both/And*, (b) *Who Me?*, (c) *What Ifs?*, and (d) *Yes, Arts*. *Both/And* respondents believed the arts have a valid curriculum and the arts are essential to student learning. These respondents also believed they have adequate training to integrate the arts into their curricula. *Who Me?* respondents believed arts integration was important but were unsure how to implement an arts integrated curriculum. *What Ifs?* respondents believed there were too many barriers that prevented arts integration such as administration, time, and training. *Yes, Arts* respondents indicated enthusiasm about including the arts in their curricula, confidence in implementing the arts, and a belief that the arts should be implemented because they are fun.

In a study by Purnell (2004) arts integration practices and perceptions of third, fourth and fifth grade teachers were examined. Fifty-seven of 75 participants from three Pennsylvania school districts completed and returned a self-administered questionnaire that required the teachers to answer questions concerning their perceived value of arts integration, how often they used arts integrated practices, and the available resources for teaching arts integrated lessons. Results revealed 100% of respondents believed integrating the arts in

other subjects improves or greatly improves teachers' ability to meet their students' multiple learning styles. Ninety-four percent reported playing subject-related music during class and having used arts projects to assess learning. Eighty-four percent of respondents had never taken an arts-related class; while 81% believed they did not have appropriate assessment tools. Fifty-six percent indicated inadequate access to arts materials. Fifty-three percent indicated administrative support for arts integration. Respondents ranked planning time as the most important resource; yet more than half indicated that they did not have enough planning time to adequately plan arts integrated lessons.

Shuck (2005) conducted a study to determine elementary school teachers' perceptions of implementing music integrated lessons and their perceptions of the integrated lessons on student achievement. Fourteen elementary teachers and administrators completed a survey that examined the levels of music integration in the elementary classroom, key issues that affect successful music integration, and the influence of music integration on academic achievement. Results concerning the levels of music integration indicated 60% of the participants implemented thematic or content connections on a weekly basis. Forty-seven percent integrated music as a teaching tools connection each week and 44% used music as a conceptual connection. Forty percent of the participants integrated music as a topic connection each week and 17% used music as a process connection each week. Results concerning key issues that affect successful music integration indicated awareness of music integration and

training as the top two issues followed by three issues that developed from the respondents' opinions which included the availability of materials, implementing the whole child philosophy, and meeting state accountability requirements. Responses concerning the influence of music integration on academic achievement revealed that the educators believed music integration was not only academically beneficial, but emotionally and behaviorally beneficial as well. Respondents who were music educators indicated they believed that "broader knowledge and connections across disciplines benefited areas of music" (Shuck, 2005, p. 191).

As evidenced from the previous discussion, research studies on middle school teachers' perspectives on integrating music and other arts disciplines into other subjects are sparse; yet the research findings revealed common beliefs among teachers. Primarily, teachers believe that support from administrators and team members in addition to adequate planning time and arts training are crucial elements in integrated instruction.

### **Restatement of the Problem and Purpose**

A cornerstone of the middle school concept is interdisciplinary instruction that involves integrating knowledge and skills across all disciplines whether the discipline is federally tested or not. Regardless of its importance in the foundation of middle school instruction, research on the status of interdisciplinary teaching that incorporates music and other arts disciplines at the middle school level is minimal. The current study was designed to investigate the status of middle

school teachers' perspectives on and current teaching practices for integrating music in their curricula. Focusing on educators' points of view will provide insight into the general practice of integrating music into other subjects and encourage further research in the area of music integration at the middle school level. Two research questions guided the study: (a) what are teachers' current practices for integrating music into their curricula and (b) what music-related resources and support systems do teachers feel are necessary to integrate music into their curricula?



## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of the current study was to investigate middle school teachers' current perspectives on and teaching practices for integrating music in their respective curricula. The study was designed to address the following research questions.

1. What are teachers' current practices for integrating music into their curricula?
2. What music-related resources and support systems do teachers feel are necessary to integrate music into their curricula?

#### **Questionnaire Design**

A 35-item questionnaire developed by the researcher was used to gather data for the current study (see Appendix). Questionnaire items were constructed from a review of literature relating to research studies and survey questionnaires involving arts integration and curriculum integration (Anderson & Ingram, 2002; Bresler, 1995; Hull, 2003; Purnell, 2004; Wiggins, 2001). The items were divided into three sections: (a) current teaching practices that related to Bresler's (1995) integration styles and Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections, (b) availability of music-related resources and support systems that contributed to integrating music into the general curriculum, and (c) demographic information regarding the

participants. The current teaching practices section of the questionnaire was comprised of 17 questionnaire items that were divided into three categories: (a) Bresler's (1995) integration styles (Q1-Q8), (b) Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections (Q1; Q9-Q12), and (c) Bresler's (1995) integration styles and Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections as applied to the integration of other arts disciplines such as visual arts, dance/movement, and theater arts/drama (Q13-Q17).

Bresler's (1995) integration styles were developed from a three-year ethnographic study of the integration of music and other arts areas into the general curriculum. Four integration styles were identified: (a) subservient integration, (b) co-equal, cognitive integration, (c) affective integration, and (d) social integration. Subservient integration (Q1-Q2) involved the use of music to teach another subject. Co-equal, cognitive integration (Q3-Q4) involved the inclusion of higher-order processing skills such as analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and creating along with aesthetic qualities as they equally relate to both music content and content of other subjects. Affective integration (Q5-Q6) involved the use of music to affect a change in mood or promote creativity in student work. Social integration (Q7-Q8) involved the use of music at school-related programs and community events.

Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections evolved from the researcher's work, in collaboration with Jackie Wiggins, that focused on the observation of teachers and students in addition to reviewing literature about curricular integration. Five

integrated levels were developed: (a) teaching tools connections, (b) topic connections, (c) thematic or content connections, (d) conceptual connections, and (e) process connections. Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections are not music specific, yet the integration connections can be applied to integrating music into other subjects. Wiggins' (2001) compared the teaching tools connections (Q1) with Bresler's (1995) subservient integration style. The teaching tools connections involve the use of music to teach another subject. The topic connections (Q9) involve the use of music to enhance another subject. Thematic or content connections (Q10) involve the integration of music and other subjects as thematic units. Conceptual connections (Q11) focus on integrating concepts such as form and predicting in music and other subjects. Process connections (Q12) focus on integrating processes such as sequencing and classifying in music and other subjects.

A five-point Likert-type frequency scale provided response options that included *never*, *rarely (once per nine weeks)*, *sometimes (monthly)*, *often (every other week)*, and *regularly (weekly)* with respective score values ranging from one point to five points. For questionnaire items 13 through 17, if respondents indicated a current teaching practice for integrating other arts disciplines into their curricula, they were required to write the name of the arts discipline.

The music-related resources and support systems section consisted of 10 questionnaire items (Q18-Q27). Specifically, the items solicited information from respondents related to their training in music (Q18-Q20), amount of planning time

for music-integrated lessons (Q21-Q23), use of available music-related resources (Q24-Q25), and support from colleagues and administrators to integrate music into the general curriculum (Q26-Q27). A four-point Likert-type agreement scale provided response options that included *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*, with respective score values of one point to four points. Additionally, two open-ended questionnaire items (Q28-Q29) were included that required respondents to explain their reasons for integrating music into the curriculum or for not integrating music into the curriculum. The demographic section consisted of six questionnaire items (Q30-Q35) that required respondents to indicate subject(s) and grade(s) they currently taught (Q30-Q31), their years of teaching experience (Q32), their highest academic degree obtained (Q33), and musical and other arts activities they experienced during their leisure time (Q34-Q35).

### **Reliability and Validity**

To determine internal consistency reliability, the questionnaire was piloted using nine middle school teachers in a school system neighboring the county in which the questionnaire was conducted. A questionnaire feedback form was included at the end of the pilot questionnaire. Respondents answered *yes* or *no* to the following eight questionnaire items relating to the format of the questionnaire.

1. Was the meaning of the questions clear and straightforward? If not, please indicate which questions were not clear and what was confusing.

2. Were the questions an appropriate length? If no, please indicate your concern.
3. Did the questions follow a logical order? If no, please indicate your concern.
4. Did the frequency scale provide you with an appropriate way to respond? If no, please indicate your concern.
5. Did the agreement scale provide you with an appropriate way to respond? If no, please indicate your concern.
6. Was the layout of the questionnaire problematic? If yes, please indicate your concern.
7. How long did it take you to complete the survey?
8. Was the amount of time you indicated an appropriate amount of time? If no, please indicate your concern.

In an additional section included for suggestions that might improve the questionnaire, three respondents provided comments. One respondent indicated that questionnaire items number seven and eleven repeated: *I use music to help my students transfer knowledge when teaching specific concepts such as conflict resolution, predicting, and form.* The items were repeated to account for Bresler's (1995) co-equal, cognitive integration style and Wiggins' (2001) conceptual connections. The premise for both integration techniques is to use music to help students transfer knowledge across disciplines by engaging students' higher order processing skills such as analyzing and synthesizing as described by Blooms' Taxonomy of Cognitive Thinking (Bloom 1956; Krathwohl, 2002). A second respondent suggested the inclusion of an "N/A" option but did not provide an explanation for the suggestion. The researcher felt the response options

provided were sufficient. The “N/A option was not included. A third respondent wrote the following comments: “interesting topic” and “good luck.” Respondents’ feedback did not result in modification to the questionnaire items.

Three subscales based on the two research questions of the study were identified for purposes of conducting an analysis of reliability. The subscales included: (a) Bresler’s (1995) integration styles, (b) Wiggins’ (2001) teaching connections, and (c) music-related resources and support systems that contributed to the integration of music into the general curriculum. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of reliability was determined using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) statistical software; version 16. A reliability coefficient of .82 was observed for the first subscale, which consisted of the eight questionnaire items (Q1-Q8) relating to Bresler’s (1995) integration styles. The second subscale, for which a reliability coefficient of .81 was observed, was comprised of the five questionnaire items (Q9-Q12) associated with Wiggins’ (2001) teaching connections. The music-related resources and support systems subscale (Q18-Q27) included questionnaire items that related to the availability of music-related resources and support systems that involved the use of integrating music into the general curriculum. A coefficient of reliability of .83 was observed for this third subscale. The three reliability coefficients indicated the questionnaire was reliable and could be used in the research study (George & Mallery, 2003; Morgan, 2004).

### **Participants and Data Collection**

The participants for this study were 138 middle school teachers from a rural school system in Eastern North Carolina. The school system in which the current study was conducted included four middle schools comprised of sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Music teachers, guidance counselors, visual arts teachers, and media specialists were excluded from the study.

The researcher contacted the superintendent of the school system in which the current study was conducted to acquire permission to conduct the study using the middle school teachers employed in the superintendent's school system. Permission was granted; though, later in the school year, the superintendent resigned. An interim superintendent was appointed. The researcher requested permission from the interim superintendent to conduct the study using the middle school teachers employed in the interim superintendent's school system. Permission to conduct the study in the same school system was granted a second time. The researcher contacted the principals at each of the four middle schools via electronic mail or telephone to explain the study and request their permission to use the teachers employed at their respective schools in the study. Upon approval from the principals to conduct the study with the teachers at their schools, a date was determined and agreed upon for questionnaire distribution. The researcher delivered the questionnaires with attached cover letters secured in manila envelopes to two participating principals in Middle School A and Middle School C and one designee in Middle School B.

The cover letter for the questionnaire informed the participants that their participation was voluntary; but their input was needed to gather information for the dissertation study. Additionally, the cover letter stated that completion and return of the survey constituted consent to participate in the study. The name of the school was written on each manila envelope as well as the researcher's name and contact information. Handwritten instructions on the outside of each manila envelope requested: (a) all teachers except music teachers complete the survey, (b) questionnaires should be returned in the same manila envelope in which they arrived, and (c) the envelope be sealed upon receipt of all returned surveys. A telephone conversation between the researcher and the principal at Middle School D resulted in the agreement that the researcher would send a Portable Document Format (PDF) file of the questionnaire to the principal via an electronic mail attachment. The principal agreed to print and distribute the questionnaires to the teachers at the school. The same instructions for completion of the survey were included in the body of the electronic mail message as were included on the manila envelopes provided to the other middle school principals.

Each principal indicated via electronic mail message varying circumstances in which respondents completed the questionnaires. Teachers at Middle School A and Middle School C completed the questionnaire during staff meetings. Teachers at Middle School D completed the questionnaire during team meetings. Team meetings are when teachers of each grade meet during their



respective planning periods to discuss grade-specific and school-related issues. Teachers at Middle School B completed the questionnaire in their respective classrooms at school during their planning periods. Teachers were instructed to return their completed questionnaire to the principal or designee who secured the questionnaires in the original manila envelope (Middle Schools A, B, and C). The surveys from Middle School D were returned in a manila envelope obtained from the school. The researcher collected the completed questionnaires within two weeks of the distribution.

### **Data Analysis**

Questionnaire items were coded for data entry and analysis. Responses for the two open-ended questions were analyzed and categorized for recurring themes (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2002a). Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 16. Descriptive statistical analyses were conducted to investigate the main premise of the study, which was to examine middle school teachers' current teaching practices for integrating music into their curricula.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of the present study was to investigate middle school teachers' current perspectives on and teaching practices for integrating music into their respective curricula. The following two research questions guided the study:

1. What are the teachers' current practices for integrating music into their curricula?
2. What music-related resources and support systems do teachers feel are necessary to integrate music into their curricula?

The study participants were 138 middle school teachers who taught grades six, seven, and eight in four middle schools located in one rural North Carolina school system. Music teachers, guidance counselors, visual arts teachers, and media specialists were excluded from the study.

A 35-item questionnaire developed by the researcher was divided into three sections focusing on: (a) current teaching practices for integrating music and the other arts areas into the general curriculum, (b) the availability of music-related resources and support systems that contributed to integrating music into the general curriculum, and (c) demographic information regarding the

participants. The questionnaire also included two open-ended questionnaire items that required respondents to indicate why they integrated or why they did not integrate music into their respective curricula. One hundred thirty-eight questionnaires were distributed and 91 were returned resulting in a 65% response rate. A 65% response rate was acceptable by the researcher and is considered a good response rate for questionnaire studies designed for descriptive rather than inferential purposes (Babbie, 1986; Baruch & Holton, 2008; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2003).

Of the returned questionnaires, seven questionnaires were voided. Five questionnaires were completed by ineligible respondents including a guidance counselor, a media specialist, a music teacher, and two visual arts teachers. The questionnaires from the guidance counselor and media specialist were voided because those individuals were not classroom teachers. The questionnaire from the music teacher was voided because the purpose of the study was to examine whether non-music teachers integrated music into their curricula. The questionnaires from the visual arts teachers were voided because of perceived sample bias concerning questionnaire items that required respondents to indicate how frequently they integrated the other arts areas in their curricula. Two questionnaires contained conflicting information. One respondent marked *never* for all questionnaire items relating to Bresler's (1995) integration styles, Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections, and integrating the other arts into the general curriculum; yet the respondent provided a response for the open-ended

questionnaire item that required respondents to explain their reasons for integrating music into their curricula. Another respondent marked *regularly* for all the questionnaire items relating to Bresler's (1995) integration styles, Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections, and integrating the other arts areas into the general curriculum but in the questionnaire section relating to music-related resources and support systems that contributed to integrating music into the general curriculum, the respondent wrote, "*not sure how to answer because I do not teach.*" Data from the remaining eighty-four questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software; version 16. Results of descriptive statistical procedures are reported.

### **Demographic Information**

The questionnaire required respondents to provide the following demographic information: (a) subject(s) and grade level(s) currently taught, (b) years of teaching experience, (c) highest degree obtained, and (d) music activities and other arts activities experienced during leisure time. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents ( $n = 23$ ) indicated they taught mathematics. Nineteen percent of the respondents ( $n = 16$ ) indicated they taught English language arts. Eleven percent of the respondents ( $n = 9$ ) indicated they taught science; while ten percent of the respondents ( $n = 8$ ) indicated they taught career-technical education classes. Seven percent of the respondents ( $n = 6$ ) specified they taught social studies. Five percent of the respondents ( $n = 4$ ) specialized in teaching exceptional children. Four percent of the respondents ( $n = 3$ ) indicated

they taught health and physical education. English as second language teachers responded with two percent ( $n = 2$ ). Eleven percent of the respondents ( $n = 9$ ) indicated they taught a combination of classes such as English language arts and social studies or mathematics and science. Eighty-seven percent ( $n = 73$ ) of the respondents indicated they had a clear teaching license for the current academic subject specified; whereas, 8% ( $n = 7$ ) indicated they did not have a clear teaching license for the current academic subject specified. Five percent of the respondents ( $n = 4$ ) did not indicate the academic subject they taught or the status of their teaching licensure for the academic subject they currently taught.

Twenty-five percent of the respondents ( $n = 21$ ) indicated they currently taught students in all three middle school grades. Twenty-four percent of the respondents ( $n = 20$ ) indicated they currently taught sixth grade. Twenty-three percent of the respondents ( $n = 19$ ) indicated they currently taught eighth grade. Sixteen percent of the respondents ( $n = 13$ ) indicated they currently taught seventh grade. A small number of the respondents (5%;  $n = 4$ ) indicated they currently taught a combination of sixth and seventh grades. A smaller number of the respondents (2%;  $n = 2$ ) indicated they currently taught a combination of sixth and eighth grades. Eighty-five percent ( $n = 71$ ) of the respondents indicated they had a clear teaching license to teach the current grade level specified; while 10% ( $n = 8$ ) indicated they did not have a clear teaching license to teach the current grade level specified. Six percent of the respondents ( $n = 5$ ) did not indicate

which grade level they currently taught or the status of their teaching licensure for the grade level they currently taught.

Forty-eight percent of the respondents ( $n = 40$ ) indicated they had zero to ten years of teaching experience. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents ( $n = 24$ ) had 11 to 20 years of teaching experience; while 11% of the respondents ( $n = 9$ ) indicated 21 to 30 years of teaching experience. Eight percent of the respondents ( $n = 7$ ) indicated more than 30 years of teaching experience. Five percent of the respondents ( $n = 4$ ) did not indicate an answer regarding their teaching experience.

Most respondents (77%;  $n = 65$ ) indicated that their highest obtained degree was the bachelor's degree. Eighteen percent ( $n = 15$ ) of the respondents indicated their highest obtained degree was the master's degree. Five percent of the respondents ( $n = 4$ ) did not provide an answer regarding the highest academic degree obtained.

Respondents were allowed to indicate more than one response regarding the musical and other arts leisure activities in which they engaged. Most respondents (92%;  $n = 77$ ) indicated musical leisure activities that involved listening to recorded music. Fifty-five percent ( $n = 46$ ) of the respondents indicated they attended live musical performances; while 46% ( $n = 39$ ) of the respondents indicated involvement in singing activities. Twenty percent ( $n = 17$ ) of the respondents indicated they played a musical instrument; 13 of the 17 indicated the piano as their instrument of choice. Five percent ( $n = 4$ ) of the

respondents indicated that they composed music. Almost one-quarter of the respondents (24%;  $n = 20$ ) indicated involvement with theater arts.

Dance/movement activities and visual arts activities were each indicated by 11% ( $n = 9$ ) of the respondents.

### **Questionnaire Results**

Section one in the questionnaire contained 17 items requiring respondents to indicate their current teaching practices of integrating music and the other arts areas into their curricula. Questionnaire items in this section were divided into three categories: (a) items that addressed Bresler's (1995) styles of music integration, (b) items that addressed Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections, and (c) items that addressed the integration of the other arts. Respondents indicated their frequency of music integration into their respective curricula using a five-point Likert-type frequency scale with response options that included *never*, *rarely (once per nine weeks)*, *sometimes (monthly)*, *often (every other week)*, and *regularly (weekly)* with respective score values ranging from one point to five points.

Eight questionnaire items (Q1-Q8) collected data relating to Bresler's (1995) four styles of music integration, which include: (a) subservient (Q1-Q2), (b) affective (Q3-Q4), (c) social (Q5-Q6) and (d) co-equal, cognitive (Q7-Q8). Subservient integration style involves the use of music to teach facts about another subject. Affective integration style involves the use of music to affect a change in students' behaviors or moods. Social integration style involves

regarding music as entertainment for school programs and meetings. Co-equal, cognitive integration style involves the inclusion of higher-order processing skills such as analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and creating along with aesthetic qualities as they relate to both music content and content of other subjects. Mean scores, standard deviations, frequencies, and associated percentages for questionnaire items relating to Bresler's (1995) integration styles are presented in Table 1.

Results indicated that for these questionnaire items, the majority of respondents chose the *never* response option. Questionnaire item three was observed to have the highest mean score ( $M = 2.18$ ;  $SD = 1.23$ ). Questionnaire item three addressed Bresler's (1995) affective integration style which describes the integration of music to affect a change in behavior or mood. Sixty-four percent ( $n = 54$ ) of the respondents indicated they *never* or *rarely* integrated background music into their curricula. The combined number of the respondents who indicated they *sometimes*, *often*, or *regularly* integrated background music into their curricula (34%;  $n = 29$ ) was less than the number of respondents who indicated that they *never* (38%;  $n = 32$ ) integrated background music into their curricula. One respondent did not answer questionnaire item 3.

Questionnaire items seven and eight achieved the lowest mean score ( $M = 1.35$ ,  $SD = 0.78$ ;  $M = 1.35$ ,  $SD = 0.80$ , respectively).



**Table 1. Questionnaire Items Relating to Bresler's (1995) Integration Styles**

Survey Items & Integration Style	Mean Score	SD	Five-Point Response Scale					NR Freq. (%)
			Never Freq. (%)	Rarely Freq. (%)	Sometimes Freq. (%)	Often Freq. (%)	Regularly Freq. (%)	
1. Enhance curriculum (Subservient)	1.69	0.87	43 (51)	28 (33)	7 (8)	5 (6)	0 (0)	1 (1)
2. Motivate students (Subservient)	1.94	1.11	40 (48)	20 (24)	16 (19)	5 (6)	3 (4)	0 (0)
3. Background music (Affective)	2.18	1.23	32 (38)	22 (26)	17 (20)	6 (7)	6 (7)	1 (1)
4. Relax students (Affective)	1.62	0.98	52 (62)	21 (25)	3 (4)	7 (8)	1 (1)	0 (0)
5. Sing/play at programs (Social)	1.78	0.99	44 (52)	19 (22)	15 (18)	4 (5)	1 (1)	1 (1)
6. Sing/play in community (Social)	1.58	0.92	53 (63)	18 (21)	10 (12)	1 (1)	2 (2)	0 (0)
7. Teaching concepts (Co-equal)	1.35	0.78	65 (77)	11 (13)	4 (5)	2 (2)	1 (1)	1 (1)
8. Understand shared concepts (Co-equal)	1.35	0.80	68 (81)	6 (7)	8 (10)	1 (1)	1 (1)	0 (0)

*N* = 84

Note 1. Percentages might not equal 100 due to rounding

Note 2. *Never* = 1, *Rarely* = 2, *Sometimes* = 3, *Often* = 4, *Regularly* = 5

Note 3. NR = No Response.

Both questionnaire items addressed Bresler's (1995) co-equal, cognitive

integration style which equates the significance of the music curriculum with the

curriculum of other subject areas by involving the use of higher order processing skills such as analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and creating as identified by Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002). The number of respondents selecting each of the five response options for each questionnaire item differed. Ninety percent ( $n = 76$ ) of the respondents for questionnaire item seven indicated they *never* or *rarely* integrated music in this manner. The total percentage of respondents (8%;  $n = 7$ ) who indicated they *sometimes*, *often*, or *regularly* integrated music to teach concepts was less than the percentage of respondents who chose the *rarely* response option (13%;  $n = 11$ ). One respondent did not answer questionnaire item 7. Eighty-eight percent ( $n = 74$ ) of the respondents for questionnaire item eight indicated they *never* or *rarely* integrated music in this manner. Unlike the response for questionnaire item 7, the total percentage of respondents (12%;  $n = 10$ ) who indicated they *sometimes*, *often*, or *regularly* integrated music to teach shared concepts was greater than the percentage of respondents who chose the *rarely* response option (7%;  $n = 6$ ).

Five questionnaire items (Q1; Q9-Q12) addressed Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections. Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections are comprised of five integration styles: (a) teaching tools connections (Q1), (b) topic connections (Q9), (c) thematic or content connections (Q10), (d) conceptual connections (Q11), and (e) process connections (Q12). Questionnaire item 1 was used to represent both Bresler's (1995) subservient style and Wiggins' (2001) teaching

connections. Similar to Bresler's (1995) subservient style, Wiggins' (2001) teaching tools connections involve the use of music to help learn facts about another subject (Wiggins, 2001). Topic connections are superficial connections that are used to enrich another subject. Thematic or content connections involve common themes integrated across several subjects. Conceptual connections focus on concepts that are shared among subjects such as form as it relates to the structure of a story or the structure of a musical composition. Process connections focus on cognitive processes that are shared among subjects such as sequencing, organizing, and interpreting. Mean scores, standard deviations, frequencies, and associated percentages for questionnaire items relating to Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections are presented in Table 2.

Results of the data analysis for this section of the questionnaire revealed that a majority of respondents chose the *never* response option for each of the questionnaire items relating to Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections. The highest mean score ( $M = 1.69$ ;  $SD = 0.87$ ) among items in this section of the questionnaire was observed for questionnaire item one, which focused on Wiggins' (2001) teaching tools connections involving the use of music to help learn facts about another subject. Eighty-four percent ( $n = 71$ ) of respondents indicated they *never* or *rarely* integrated music to help students learn facts about their respective curricula.

**Table 2. Questionnaire Items Relating to Wiggins' (2001) Teaching Connections**

Survey Items & Integration Connections	Mean score	SD	Five-Point Response Scale					NR Freq. (%)
			Never Freq. (%)	Rarely Freq. (%)	Sometimes Freq. (%)	Often Freq. (%)	Regularly Freq. (%)	
1. Enhance curriculum (Teaching Tools)	1.69	0.87	43 (51)	28 (33)	7 (8)	5 (6)	0 (0)	1 (1)
9. Music related to content (Topic)	1.65	0.90	48 (57)	21 (25)	12 (14)	2 (2)	1 (1)	0 (0)
10. Thematic units (Thematic)	1.30	0.71	67 (80)	12 (14)	3 (4)	1 (1)	1 (1)	0 (0)
11. Teaching concepts (Conceptual)	1.20	0.56	72 (86)	8 (10)	3 (4)	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
12. Teaching processes (Process)	1.26	0.58	67 (80)	13 (16)	3 (4)	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)

$N = 84$

Note 1. Percentages might not equal 100 due to rounding

Note 2. *Never* = 1, *Rarely* = 2, *Sometimes* = 3, *Often* = 4, *Regularly* = 5

Note 3. NR = No Response.

Fourteen percent ( $n = 12$ ) of respondents indicated they *sometimes* or *often* implemented the teaching tool connections in their curricula. The *regularly* response option was not selected by any respondent and one respondent did not provide an answer for this questionnaire item.

The lowest mean score among questionnaire items in this section was observed for questionnaire item 11 ( $M = 1.20$ ;  $SD = 0.56$ ). A majority of respondents (96%;  $n = 80$ ) indicated they *never* or *rarely* integrated music to

teach concepts relating to other subject areas. Five percent ( $n = 4$ ) of the respondents indicated they *sometimes* or *often* integrated Wiggins' (2001) conceptual connections. None of the respondents indicated using this integration style on a *regular* basis.

The final five items (Q13-Q17) in section one of the questionnaire addressed the integration of other arts areas such as visual arts, dance/movement, and theater arts/drama into teachers' curricula. The five questionnaire items represented a combination of Bresler's (1995) integration styles and Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections. Mean scores, standard deviations, frequencies, and associated percentages for questionnaire items relating to the integration of other arts subject areas are presented in Table 3.

The highest mean score for this section of the questionnaire was for item 13 ( $M = 1.82$ ;  $SD = 1.12$ ). More than half of the respondents (73%;  $n = 61$ ) indicated they *never* or *rarely* integrated Bresler's (1995) subservient style or Wiggins' (2001) teaching tools connections to integrate the other arts areas in their curricula. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents ( $n = 23$ ) indicated they *sometimes*, *often* or *regularly* integrated the other arts to teach facts about their curricula. One respondent did not provide a response.

**Table 3. Questionnaire Items Relating to Integration of Other Arts Areas**

Five-Point Response Scale								
Survey Items & Integration Connections	Mean	SD	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	NR
			Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
13. Learn facts about content (Subservient & Teaching Tools)	1.82	1.12	48 (57)	13 (16)	16 (19)	4 (5)	3 (4)	1 (1)
14. Teaching concepts (Co-equal, cognitive)	1.46	0.87	61 (73)	10 (12)	9 (11)	2 (2)	1 (1)	1 (1)
15. Understand shared concepts (Conceptual)	1.40	0.77	60 (71)	13 (16)	8 (10)	0 (0)	1 (1)	2 (2)
16. Teaching processes (Process)	1.40	0.81	64 (76)	8 (10)	11 (13)	0 (0)	1 (1)	0 (0)
17. Perform at programs (Social)	1.47	0.82	58 (69)	13 (16)	11 (13)	0 (0)	1 (1)	1 (1)

*N* = 84

Note 1. Percentages might not equal 100 due to rounding

Note 2. *Never* = 1, *Rarely* = 2, *Sometimes* = 3, *Often* = 4, *Regularly* = 5

Note 3. NR = No Response.

Questionnaire items 15 and 16 received the lowest mean score ( $M = 1.40$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ;  $M = 1.40$ ,  $SD = 0.81$  respectively) for integrating the other arts areas into the general curriculum; though the number of respondents selecting each of the five response options for each questionnaire item differed. Eighty-seven

percent of the respondents ( $n = 73$ ) indicated they *never* or *rarely* use the other arts areas to teach shared concepts (Q15); whereas 86% of the respondents ( $n = 72$ ) indicated they *never* or *rarely* use the other arts areas to teach cognitive processes (Q16). For questionnaire item 15, 11% of the respondents ( $n = 9$ ) indicated they *sometimes* or *regularly* integrated the other arts areas to teach shared concepts; whereas 14% ( $n = 12$ ) of the respondents for questionnaire item 16 indicated they *sometimes* or *regularly* integrated the other arts to teach cognitive processes. Respondents did not choose the *often* response option for either questionnaire item 15 or questionnaire item 16, and two respondents did not provide an answer for questionnaire item 15. Across questionnaire items 13 through 17, visual arts was the arts area most frequently indicated as being integrated into the curriculum followed in frequency by theater arts/drama and dance/movement.

Section two of the questionnaire contained items requiring respondents to indicate the availability of appropriate music-related resources and support systems to assist in integrating music into their curricula. Questionnaire items were divided into four categories: (a) items that addressed training in music (Q18-20), (b) items that addressed adequate planning time (Q21-23), (c) items that addressed music-related resources (Q24-25) and (d) items that addressed support for music integration (Q26-27). Respondents indicated the extent of their agreement or disagreement with the questionnaire items by using a four-point scale with response options that included *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *agree*, and

*strongly agree*, with respective score values ranging from one point to four points. Respondents who *strongly agreed* or *agreed* with the questionnaire items were categorized; likewise, respondents who *strongly disagreed* or *disagreed* with the questionnaire items were categorized. Mean scores, standard deviations, frequencies, and associated percentages for questionnaire items relating to music-related resources and support systems for integrating music into the curriculum are presented in Table 4.

Overall results for questionnaire items relating to music-related resources and support systems for integrating music into the curriculum revealed that the highest mean score ( $M = 2.41$ ;  $SD = 1.03$ ) was observed for questionnaire item 27 which stated, “*I have support from my administrator(s) to integrate music in my curriculum.*” Fifty-seven percent of the respondents ( $n = 48$ ) agreed or strongly agreed with questionnaire item 27; whereas forty-one percent ( $n = 34$ ) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the questionnaire item. One respondent did not answer the questionnaire item and one respondent wrote “NA” on the questionnaire form.

The lowest mean score ( $M = 1.31$ ;  $SD = 0.64$ ) was observed for questionnaire item 22 which stated, “*I have adequate team planning time with the music teacher to plan music integrated lessons.*” Ninety-three percent of the respondents ( $n = 78$ ) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this questionnaire item as opposed to seven percent ( $n = 6$ ) who agreed or strongly agreed with the item.



**Table 4. Questionnaire Items Relating to Music-Related Resources and Support Systems for Integrating Music into the Curriculum**

Survey Items	Mean Score	SD	Four Point Agreement Scale				
			SD Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	SA Freq. (%)	NR Freq. (%)
<b>Music Training</b>							
18. Appropriate music training	1.58	0.84	50 (60)	22 (27)	7 (8)	4 (5)	1 (1)
19. Music-related professional development	1.49	0.79	57 (68)	15 (18)	10 (12)	2 (2)	0 (0)
20. Music-related college courses	2.27	1.04	29 (35)	10 (12)	37 (44)	7 (8)	1 (1)
<b>Adequate Planning Time</b>							
21. Individual planning	1.70	0.85	45 (54)	20 (24)	18 (21)	1 (1)	0 (0)
22. With music teacher	1.31	0.64	65 (77)	13 (16)	5 (6)	1 (1)	0 (0)
23. With other teachers	1.73	0.81	41 (49)	26 (31)	16 (19)	1 (1)	0 (0)
<b>Music-Related Resources</b>							
24. Consulted music teacher	1.36	0.65	61 (73)	17 (20)	5 (6)	1 (1)	0 (0)
25. Music-related resources	2.11	0.98	31 (37)	18 (21)	30 (36)	5 (6)	0 (0)
<b>Support</b>							
26. From colleagues	2.19	1.01	27 (32)	17 (20)	33 (40)	6 (7)	0 (0)
27. From administrators	2.41	1.03	21 (25)	13 (16)	39 (46)	9 (11)	1 (1)

*N* = 84

Note 1. Percentages might not equal 100 due to rounding;

Note 2. SD = Strongly disagree; D = strongly agree; A = agree; SA = Strongly agree;

Note 3. NR = No Response

Across the four categories of items in this section of the questionnaire, the highest mean score ( $M = 2.27$ ;  $SD = 1.04$ ) for the “Music Training” category was observed for item 20. Fifty-two percent of the respondents ( $n = 44$ ) agreed or strongly agreed that they had taken one or more music-related courses for college credit. A total of 41% of the respondents ( $n = 34$ ) specified the number of college courses they had taken for credit. Of those respondents, 71% ( $n = 24$ ) indicated they had taken at least one college course for credit. Forty-seven percent of the respondents ( $n = 39$ ) disagreed or strongly disagreed with questionnaire item 20. The lowest mean score ( $M = 1.49$ ;  $SD = 0.79$ ) was observed for questionnaire item 19. Eighty-six percent of the respondents ( $n = 72$ ) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had received music-related professional development. Fourteen percent ( $n = 12$ ) of those responding to questionnaire item 19 indicated they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

The highest mean score ( $M = 1.73$ ;  $SD = 0.81$ ) for the “Adequate Planning Time” category was observed for questionnaire item 23. Eighty percent of the respondents ( $n = 67$ ) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had adequate time to plan a thematic unit that integrated music with other teachers. Twenty percent of the respondents ( $n = 17$ ) agreed or strongly agreed that their time to plan a thematic unit that integrated music with other teachers was adequate. Questionnaire item 22 had the lowest mean score ( $M = 1.31$ ;  $SD = 0.64$ ). Nearly all respondents (93%;  $n = 78$ ) disagreed or strongly disagreed with having

adequate planning time with the music teacher; while 7% ( $n = 6$ ) agreed or strongly agreed with the questionnaire item.

The highest mean score ( $M = 2.11$ ;  $SD = 0.98$ ) for the “Music-Related Resources” category was observed for questionnaire item 25. Fifty-eight percent ( $n = 49$ ) of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with having access to appropriate music-related resources such as a varied selection of music, musical instruments, or music assessment tools. Forty-two percent ( $n = 35$ ) agreed or strongly agreed with this questionnaire item. The lowest mean score ( $M = 1.36$ ;  $SD = 0.65$ ) for the “Music-Related Resources” category was observed for questionnaire item 24. Ninety-three percent ( $n = 78$ ) of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with having consulted the music teacher concerning integrating music into their curricula. Seven percent ( $n = 6$ ) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with questionnaire item 24.

The highest mean score ( $M = 2.41$ ;  $SD = 1.03$ ) for the “Support” category was observed for questionnaire item 27. Fifty-seven percent ( $n = 48$ ) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed they had support from their administrators to integrate music into their curricula; whereas 41% ( $n = 34$ ) of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. The lowest mean score ( $M = 2.19$ ;  $SD = 1.01$ ) was observed for questionnaire item 26, which stated, *“I have support from my colleagues to integrate music in my curriculum.”* Fifty-two percent ( $n = 44$ ) of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed

with questionnaire item 26. Forty-seven percent ( $n = 39$ ) agreed or strongly agreed with the questionnaire item.

### **Open-Ended Responses**

Questionnaire items 28 and 29 were two open-ended response items in which respondents indicated their reasons for integrating music or for not integrating music into their respective curricula. The qualitative data were analyzed by the researcher for recurring key words and themes (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Hatch 2002; Merriam, 2002a). Recurring key words included “content,” “relaxation,” “motivation,” and “time.” Categories were created and the recurring key words were used as headings. Descriptions of how music was integrated were included in the most appropriate category or a new category was created. For example, one respondent explained how music was integrated during a poetry unit. The poetry example was categorized under “content” because the standard course of study for the teacher’s curriculum includes a unit on teaching poetry. A few respondents explained how music was used to help diverse learners. A new category labeled “differentiated instruction” was created to accommodate similar responses. Differentiated instruction involves varying instructional practices to accommodate the individual and diverse needs of students. Category headings were coded and further analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software; version 16. Respondents were allowed to indicate more than one response for the open-ended questionnaire items; therefore, frequencies and associated percentages

indicate the number of responses instead of the number of the respondents.

Categories, frequencies, and associated percentages relating to the open-ended response questionnaire items are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. *Open-Ended Responses***

<b>Reasons for Integrating Music</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Content (reinforce, remember, support, teach)	18	33
Student Motivation	13	24
Student Relaxation and Enjoyment	10	18
Background Music	6	11
Concepts (reinforce, remember, teach)	3	05
Differentiated Instruction	3	05
Classroom Management	2	04
<b>Reasons for Not Integrating Music</b>		
Lack of Time (instructional, planning)	17	29
Lack of Knowledge	16	28
Lack of Resources	7	12
Lack of Interest	6	10
Student Distraction	6	10
Difficult	2	03
Lack of Confidence	1	02
Not Relevant	1	02
Few Benefits	1	02
Intend to Integrate	1	02

A total of 113 responses were provided across the two open-ended questionnaire items. Fifty-five responses resulted from the respondents' explanations for integrating music into their curricula. The majority of the responses (33%;  $n = 18$ ) provided indicated the integration of music involved reinforcing, remembering, supporting, or teaching the content of teachers' respective curricula. Fifty-eight responses resulted from the respondents' explanations for not integrating music into their curricula. Most of these responses (57%;  $n = 33$ ) indicated that a lack of instructional or planning time or a lack of knowledge prevented them from integrating music into their curricula.

### **Summary**

Findings of the current study revealed most respondents *rarely* or *never* used the integration styles indicated by Bresler (1995) or Wiggins (2001). The most commonly indicated of the integration styles for the *sometimes*, *often*, or *regularly* response options for the integration of music were Bresler's (1995) affective integration style and Wiggins' (2001) teaching tools connections. The most commonly indicated integration styles for the *sometimes*, *often*, or *regularly* response options for the integration of the other arts areas were Bresler's (1995) subservient approach and Wiggins' (2001) teaching tools connections. Visual arts were indicated as the most commonly integrated discipline of the other arts areas. Respondents disagreed with having appropriate musical training, adequate planning time, and available music-related resources to plan lessons that integrated music into their curricula. Respondents agreed that they had more

support from their administrators than from their colleagues to integrate music into their lessons. Nevertheless, agreement for the support systems category was greater than agreement for the remaining categories of the music-related and support systems section of the questionnaire. Responses from the open-ended questionnaire items revealed respondents integrated music in their lessons primarily to reinforce, remember, support, or teach content that was shared among the music curriculum and the curriculum of other subjects. Responses also revealed respondents did not integrate music in their lessons because of a lack of instructional time or planning time and a lack of musical knowledge.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Introduction**

The present study was designed to investigate the current teaching practices of middle school teachers in one rural Eastern North Carolina school system. Two main research questions guided the study:

1. What are the teachers' current practices for integrating music into their curricula?
2. What music-related resources and support systems do teachers feel are necessary to integrate music into their curricula?

Participants (N = 84) completed and returned a 35-item questionnaire developed by the researcher. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: (a) current teaching practices relating to the integration of music and other arts areas into the general curriculum, (b) the availability of music-related resources and support systems for integrating music into the general curriculum, and (c) demographic information regarding the participants. Two open-ended questionnaire items required respondents to indicate reasons for or for not integrating music into their curricula. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical procedures.



## Discussion

### ***Research Question One***

Research question one focused on examining teachers' current practices for integrating music into their curricula. Seventeen questionnaire items were designed to provide answers to the first research question. Questionnaire items one through eight addressed the integration of music as represented by Bresler's (1995) integration styles. Questionnaire items one, and nine through twelve addressed the integration of music as represented by Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections. Questionnaire items thirteen through seventeen addressed the integration of other arts areas as represented by Bresler's (1995) integration styles and Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections.

***Bresler's integration styles.*** The two integration styles that received the highest percentage among Bresler's (1995) four integration styles were the affective style and the subservient approach. These two integration styles involve the use of music to affect a change in mood and to help students learn facts about another subject. Additionally, these two integration styles engage students in the use of lower level cognitive processing skills such as remembering and understanding as described by Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002). The teachers' primary practice of using the affective integration style and subservient approach allude to respondents' written comments expressing apparent frustration with the rigid state and federal educational mandates of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) (United

States Department of Education, 2002). Teachers expressed how they did not have time for “fun” lessons that integrated music due to preparing their students for End-of-Grade tests. Implementing Bresler’s (1995) affective style and subservient approach require little musical knowledge and less time to plan than Bresler’s (1995) co-equal, cognitive integration style. There is a possibility that teachers in the current study may create an increased number of music-integrated lessons that involve Bresler’s (1995) co-equal, cognitive integration, if they had fewer testing requirements than currently required by NCLB.

Integrating Bresler’s (1995) co-equal, cognitive integration style provides an academic challenge for middle school students because of their use of the higher order processing skills such, as analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and creating as identified by Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002). Lorain (2002-2008) and Lounsbury (1999-2008) suggested that young adolescents receive lessons that involve hands-on activities and opportunities for problem solving and critical thinking; though, the teachers in the present study and in Bresler’s (1995) study indicated minimal use of co-equal, cognitive integration in their teaching practices. Co-equal, cognitive integration, and similar integration models such as the *Authentic Connections’* (2002) infusion integration model and Fogarty’s (1991) threaded and immersed integrated models develop students’ higher-order processing skills.

Teachers need ample planning time to collaborate with the music teacher and appropriate musical training to create and teach effective lessons that

integrate music using the co-equal, cognitive integration style. Respondents in the current study indicated that adequate planning time, collaboration with the music teacher, and appropriate musical training were resources that were not available to them. The perceived lack of these resources may account for the increased number of teachers indicating more frequent use of Bresler's (1995) lower processing level of integration techniques than Bresler's (1995) higher processing level of integration techniques.

***Wiggins' teaching connections.*** The two teaching connections with the highest percentage of use among Wiggins' (2001) five teaching connection levels were the topic connections and teaching tools connections. Topic connections involve the use of music to enrich another subject. Teaching tools connections involve the use of music to teach facts about another subject. Similar to the description of Bresler's (1995) subservient integration style, Wiggins' (2001) describe the topic connections and teaching tools connections as superficial examples of integration that do not necessarily increase young adolescents' understanding of academic content. The three integration techniques engage the lower order processing levels such as remembering and understanding as described by Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002). Wiggins' (2001) conceptual connections and process connections engage the higher order processing levels such as analyzing and synthesizing as described by Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl,

2002); though these two integration techniques received the lowest percentage of use among the teaching connections integration styles.

Conceptual connections and process connections create an environment for young adolescents that allow them to develop a meaningful understanding of the relationship between the music curriculum and curricula of other subjects by using critical thinking and problem solving skills. Unfortunately, only 10% ( $n = 8$ ) of the teachers in the present study indicated implementation of the integration techniques that engage the higher order processing levels. As with Bresler's (1995) co-equal, cognitive integration style, teachers' minimal use of Wiggins' (2001) conceptual connections and process connections may be due to inadequate planning time, lack of collaboration with the music teacher, and lack of appropriate musical knowledge to integrate music into their curricula using the higher level integration styles.

***Integration of the other arts.*** The approaches that received the highest percentage for the integration of other arts areas were Bresler's (1995) subservient approach and Wiggins' (2001) teaching tools connections. These results parallel the responses for Bresler's (1995) and Wiggins' (2001) categories of integration styles for the integration of music. Additionally, the minimal use of the co-equal style, process connections, and conceptual connections for the "Other Arts" category parallel the results for use of these same styles in the integration of music. Interestingly, the percentage of teachers who used the subservient approach, teaching tools connections, co-equal style, and the

process connections integration styles for the integration of other arts areas was greater than the percentage of teachers who used these same integration styles for the integration of music. This writer speculates that the teachers in the current study felt more comfortable with integrating other arts areas instead of music into their curricula because the resources needed to integrate the other arts areas in the general curriculum may be more accessible and easier to use than music-related resources. Paper and pencil for creating content-related drawings or using student performers for dramatizing an excerpt from a story during a reading class are resources that are easily acquired.

### ***Research Question Two***

Research question two examined the availability of music-related resources and support systems teachers perceived as necessary to create music-integrated lessons. Questionnaire items relating to this research question were divided into four categories including appropriate musical training, adequate planning time, the availability of music-related resources, and support systems. Nearly three-quarters of the teachers (73%;  $n = 61$ ) indicated they lacked appropriate musical training. A little more than half of the teachers (52%;  $n = 44$ ) indicated taking one to three college courses for credit.

Almost all teachers (93%;  $n = 78$ ) indicated that they did not consult the music teacher to plan music-integrated lessons. This response was surprising, given that a full-time music teacher was employed at each middle school involved in the current study. Nevertheless, only 7% ( $n = 6$ ) of the respondents

indicated they had consulted the music teacher concerning the integration of music into their curricula. One of the most valuable music-related resources available to general classroom teachers is the music teacher. Two factors may contribute to music teachers not being consulted by the general classroom teacher to assist with music-integrated lessons. First, music teachers and general classroom teachers typically do not share common planning time. Thus, any collaboration between the music teacher and general classroom teacher would need to occur either before school hours or after school hours. Coordinating schedules for additional planning time outside of regular school hours is difficult. Second, some general classroom teachers may have the perspective that the music class provides a planning period for them and the music class serves as entertainment for the students. Consulting the music teacher for the purpose of using music as an academic subject is not readily considered by general classroom teachers.

A little more than half of the teachers (52%;  $n = 44$ ) agreed that they had support for integrating music into their curricula; although this support came primarily from their administrators rather than from their colleagues. Administrative support to integrate music into general classroom curricula and the availability of a full-time music teacher as a resource are two factors that presumably may increase the likelihood of general classroom teachers' integration of music into their lessons. Results of the data analysis of the current study did not support this presumption.

***Open-ended questions.*** The most prevalent responses to the questionnaire item soliciting reasons for integrating music into the general curriculum included: (a) teaching subject area content, (b) motivating students, (c) providing music for student relaxation and enjoyment, and (d) playing background music while students completed assignments. These statements were reflective of responses for the questionnaire items pertaining to Bresler's (1995) integration styles and Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections that specified the use of music to motivate and relax students. The statements least reflective of responses for the questionnaire items pertaining to Bresler's (1995) integration styles and Wiggins' (2001) teaching connections specified using music to teach subject area content and to serve as background ambiance. The researcher speculates that the difference in the responses occurred for two reasons. Several respondents indicated a current practice of integration during the multiple choice responses but did not always provide an open-ended explanation. Several respondents partially confirmed their multiple choice responses with open-ended explanations that did not explain all of their multiple choice responses.

The reasons most frequently indicated by teachers for not integrating music into the general curriculum included: (a) lack of instructional or planning time, (b) lack of musical knowledge, (c) lack of music-related resources, and (d) lack of interest to teach music-integrated lessons. Participants' open-ended responses that explained why they did not integrate music into their curricula

consistently reflected their level of disagreement for similar questionnaire items in the music-related resources and support systems part of the questionnaire.

### **Implications**

Results of the current study revealed that participants in the school system in which the current study was conducted generally were not integrating music into their respective curricula. Among the respondents who indicated a current practice for integrating music into their curricula, the predominant use of integration was to engage students in remembering and understanding content which are the typical behaviors of lower-order processing skills, as identified by Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002). Despite this tendency, the inclusion of music at any cognitive processing level is beneficial to middle school students. Students are provided the opportunity to begin understanding curricular connections between music content and the content of other subjects. The fact that the teachers in the current study indicated a basic level of music integration is promising.

The respondents' involvement in music activities during their leisure time might provide a positive precursor for the inclusion of increased music-integrated lessons in their classrooms. Integrating music and other arts areas into other subjects allows middle school students to make curricular connections and discover common relationships among various disciplines because of the broadness of subject matter incorporated within the arts. Due to a perceived lack of instructional or planning time, musical knowledge, and music-related



resources and support systems, many participants in the current study did not integrate music into their respective curricula. Consequently, the following suggestions are presented to promote increased music integration at the middle school level.

1. While traditional teaching methods are effective, non-traditional methods are sometimes required to create a successful learning environment for middle school students. Teachers may motivate themselves to think creatively and bring their interest of music into their classrooms. Teachers may use their current knowledge of music and expand that knowledge by understanding how music correlates with their curricula. Integrating music into the general curriculum is a good starting point for teachers of middle school students to become progressive thinkers and for middle school students to develop their critical thinking and problem solving skills.
2. Middle school administrators can actively show their support for middle school teachers' integration of music into their curricula by making available music-related resources and providing opportunities for music-related professional development. Professional development may encompass a range of activities that include the integration of music from the lowest cognitive processing levels of integration to the highest cognitive processing levels of integration.
3. Non-music teachers may benefit from consulting a music teacher about planning lessons that integrate music. Although common planning time during school hours might not be available, teachers can take advantage of meeting before or after regular school hours.
4. Planning and teaching lessons that integrate music involve extra time; therefore, teachers may benefit from techniques designed to improve time management skills.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

Research literature supports the integration of music and other arts areas at the middle school level. The National Standards for Music Education,

Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligences, and research investigating music's impact on brain function provide theoretical foundations for the integration of music into other subject areas. Furthermore, several arts integrated educational programs such as Annenberg Media's video workshops that focus on arts integration, Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Schools, and A+ Schools that integrate the arts into the general curriculum purport the benefits of integrating music and other arts areas into the middle school curricula. Unfortunately, even with supporting literature and effective arts integrated educational programs at the middle school level, research relating to integrating music into the middle school curricula remains sparse. Recommendations for continued study concerning the integration of music into the middle school curricula include the following.

1. Replicate the current study using middle schools in several school systems and compare the data to determine specific factors that might affect the extent to which music is integrated into middle school curricula. Additionally, examine how a school's culture affects the extent to which music is integrated into the general curriculum.
2. Conduct a case study on individual middle school teachers to examine more precisely their reasons for the presence and absence of integrating music instruction in their curricula.
3. Conduct a study of middle school students to examine their beliefs about and responses to integrated music instruction.
4. Conduct a study that investigates the perspectives of middle school teachers concerning the integration of all arts disciplines in the general curriculum.

## **Conclusion**

Making meaningful connections across academic subjects is an important experience for young adolescents. Middle school students are developing complex thinking processes, such as abstract thinking and reasoning, and they are beginning to consider multiple points of view. Lessons that integrate music may help to create environments beneficial to fostering the young adolescents' thinking processes. A curriculum that integrates music incorporates and develops the following: (a) multiple intelligences, (b) auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile learning modalities, (c) critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, and (d) creativity. Improving the aforementioned learning styles and skills of middle school students through the integration of music in the general curriculum possibly contributes positively to the preparation of students for success in the ever-changing global society of the twenty-first century.

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**Appendix**  
**Survey Questionnaire**

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO  
CONSENT INFORMATION

A Descriptive Study of Middle School Teachers' Perspectives  
on Integrating Music in Public School Curricula

Researcher: Rue S. Lee-Holmes

The purpose of this dissertation research study is to describe the current perspectives and teaching practices of middle school teachers in a rural school system in North Carolina concerning the teachers' implementation of integrating music into their respective curricula. Data gathered from the study will provide insight into why middle school teachers integrate or do not integrate music into their curriculum.

Participants will have twenty minutes to complete a questionnaire concerning the integration of music in your curriculum. Completion and return of the survey will indicate consent to act as a participant in this study.

No personally identifiable information is being collected. Your privacy will be protected; however, your participation is voluntary. The researcher will be the only individual with access to research data. Data will be kept in a secured file cabinet in the researcher's private office. Data will be shredded after three years.

No known risks are associated with participation in this study. Benefits of the study will allow educational leaders to provide participants appropriate resources and staff development opportunities to assist participants' efforts to integrate music into their curricula.

Questions concerning this research study may be addressed to Rue S. Lee-Holmes by phone (XXX) XXX-XXXX ext. XXXXX or via email: XXXXX@XXXXXXX.

The Institutional Review Board at UNC-Greensboro, which insures that research involving people follows federal regulations, has approved this research and information sheet. Questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study can be answered by Mr. Eric Allen, the Research Compliance Officer at UNCG, at (336) 256-1482.

## Integrating Music in Public School Curricula

This survey requests that you provide your perspective on integrating music in your middle school curriculum. Please read each statement carefully and respond by indicating the extent to which you believe the statement describes your beliefs and current practices. The survey contains 35 items that are divided into three (3) sections.

### **Section One – Current Teaching Practices:**

Please read each statement carefully and respond using the following **frequency scale**. Please circle the frequency or number that best describes your response to the statement.

#### **Frequency Scale**

- 1 = never
- 2 = rarely (once per nine weeks)
- 3 = sometimes (monthly)
- 4 = often (every other week)
- 5 = regularly (weekly)

Statement	Frequency Scale				
1. I use music to enhance my curriculum by singing or playing songs to help my students learn facts about the content.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I use music to motivate my students by allowing my students to listen to music of their choice while they complete their work.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I play background music while my students complete assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I play music to relax my students after energetic activities such as break or playing games.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My students sing songs or play instruments at programs, such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, academic programs, and/or promotion ceremonies.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My students go on field trips to community venues such as retirement centers, hospitals, and other schools and sing songs or play instruments.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I use music to help my students transfer knowledge when teaching specific concepts such as conflict resolution, predicting, and form.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I use music to help my students identify and understand shared concepts between my curriculum and the music curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5

**Section One – Current Teaching Practices** (continued):

Statement	Frequency Scale				
9. I play music that relates to my curriculum's content to enrich the lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I use music to help my students transfer knowledge across disciplines when I teach a thematic unit with a team member.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I use music to help my students transfer knowledge when teaching specific concepts such as conflict resolution, predicting, and form.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I use music to help my students transfer knowledge when teaching specific processes such as sequencing, organizing, and interpreting.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I use other arts areas such as visual arts, theater [drama], and dance [movement] to help my students learn facts about the content. <b>If you circled 2, 3, 4 or 5, please specify the other arts area(s).</b> <hr/>	1	2	3	4	5
14. I use other arts areas to help my students transfer knowledge when teaching specific concepts such as conflict resolution, predicting, and form. <b>If you circled 2, 3, 4 or 5, please specify the other arts area(s).</b> <hr/>	1	2	3	4	5
15. I use other arts areas to help my students identify and understand shared concepts between my curriculum and the music curriculum. <b>If you circled 2, 3, 4 or 5, please specify the other arts area(s).</b> <hr/>	1	2	3	4	5
16. I use other arts areas to help my students transfer knowledge when teaching specific processes such as sequencing, organizing, and interpreting. <b>If you circled 2, 3, 4 or 5, please specify the other arts area(s).</b> <hr/>	1	2	3	4	5
17. My students use other arts areas at programs such as PTA meetings, academic programs, and/or promotion ceremonies. <b>If you circled 2, 3, 4 or 5, please specify the other arts area(s).</b> <hr/>	1	2	3	4	5



**Section Two – Resources:**

Please read each statement carefully and respond using the following **agreement scale**. Please circle the number that best describes your degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement.

**Agreement Scale**

1 = strongly disagree

2 = disagree

3 = agree

4 = strongly agree

Statement	Agreement Scale			
18. I have appropriate training to teach music integrated lessons.	1	2	3	4
19. I have had music-related professional development training such as workshops, in-service, or teacher academy.	1	2	3	4
20. I have taken one or more music-related courses for college credit.  <b>If you circled 3 or 4, please specify the number of music-related college courses that you have completed.</b>	1	2	3	4
21. I have adequate individual planning time to plan for music integrated lessons.	1	2	3	4
22. I have adequate team planning time with the music teacher to plan music integrated lessons.	1	2	3	4
23. I have adequate team planning time with other teachers to plan a thematic unit that integrates music.	1	2	3	4
24. I have consulted the music teacher concerning integrating music in my curriculum.	1	2	3	4
25. I have access to appropriate music-related resources such as a varied selection of music, musical instruments, stereo player, or music assessment tools for use in my classroom.	1	2	3	4
26. I have support from my colleagues to integrate music in my curriculum.	1	2	3	4
27. I have support from my administrator(s) to integrate music in my curriculum.	1	2	3	4



**Section Three – Demographic Information:**

Please read each statement carefully and respond using the answer that best describes you and your teaching situation.

30. (a) Please check the box next to each subject you currently teach.  
 (b) Please specify whether or not you hold a clear teaching license for each subject you currently teach.

<b>Subject(s) Currently Teach</b>	<b>Clear Teaching License?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Career-Technical Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> English Language Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

31. (a) Please check the box next to each grade level you currently teach.  
 (b) Please specify whether or not you hold a clear teaching license for each grade level you currently teach.

<b>Grade Level(s) Currently Teach</b>	<b>Clear Teaching License?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> 6th Grade	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> 7th Grade	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> 8th Grade	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

32. Please check the box that indicates your years of teaching experience.

<input type="checkbox"/>	0-5 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	6-10 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-15 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	16-20 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	21-25 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	26-30 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	More than 30 years

33. Please check the box that indicates the highest degree you have obtained.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Bachelor's Degree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Master's Degree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doctoral Degree

34. Please check the box next to each music activity that you experience during your leisure time.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Sing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Compose music
<input type="checkbox"/>	Listen to recorded music
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attend live musical performances
<input type="checkbox"/>	Play an instrument (please specify): _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other activity (please specify): _____

35. Please indicate activities in the other arts areas (dance, visual arts, or theater [drama]) that you experience during your leisure time.


**Thank you for completing this survey.**