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Christopher B. Gelb

*Eastern Illinois University*

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Cross-age and Peer Tutoring in the Music Classroom

(TITLE)

BY

Christopher B. Gelb

**THESIS**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Masters of Arts in Music

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

2010

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Cross-age and Peer Tutoring in the Music Classroom

Christopher B. Gelb

Eastern Illinois University

August 2010



### Abstract

This is a study on the effects of a Cross-age Tutoring program implemented into a beginning band classroom. High school students worked with small groups of beginning band students. The tutoring sessions were 45-minute sessions on an every-other-day rotation. Supervising teachers provided articles and demonstrations to assist the high school-aged tutors in working with different techniques unique to each instrument. Resources for the tutoring sessions included the Essential Elements 2000 band method book and the Music Ace computer program. The high school and middle school band directors supervised the tutoring sessions and were available to answer questions and develop lesson plans with the high school tutors. Results for the beginning band students showed an increase in skills and a positive affective disposition towards playing and practicing. Results for the high school tutors showed an increased appreciation for the educational process and greater awareness of the importance of basic skills when developing as a musician.

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## **Chapter I: Introduction**

### **Need for Study**

Retention of music students from year to year is a normal challenge for band instructors. Students that do continue are most often the students that are successful and find satisfaction in making music. An article written by Steven P. Katzenmoyer (2007) provides several reasons beginning students give for ending their involvement after their first year. Examples include, "Music is too hard;" "I am bored;" "I don't like the instrument;" "I don't like to practice;" "I don't like the music teacher;" "It is not cool to be in band;" and "My friends are not in band." In addition, frequently cited reasons include cost of activity, schedule conflicts, lack of parental support, and fear of failure. Students that are successful at playing an instrument develop a sense of value for music. These students and their families are willing to devote time, energy, and resources to the band program when they see positive results. (Katzenmoyer, 2007)

Cross-age Tutoring, also referred to as Peer Tutoring or Mentoring, is a method of instruction that has been successful in other subject areas improving both academic progress and affective disposition toward the content (Alexander, Dorow, 1983). By implementing a Cross-age Tutoring program in the beginning instrumental classroom, it may be possible for students to acquire skills more quickly, engage in meaningful music making, and provide built-in musical role models. There is a need to study and research the benefits of Cross-age Tutoring in respect to the instrumental music classroom.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Can Cross-age Tutoring assist beginning band students in developing their skills, knowledge and affective dispositions, thereby increasing retention from one year to the next? Can Cross-age Tutoring assist high school tutors in developing their own musical progress through developing skills in leadership, reinforcing basic musical skills through their teaching, and improve the tutors' disposition about music by being involved in the instruction process?

### **Hypothesis**

The implementation of a Cross-age Tutoring program will result in beginning students achieving elevated levels of skill, knowledge, and an increased affective disposition in their first year, thereby, increasing retention from one year to the next. The implementation of a Cross-age Tutoring program will result in increasing the tutors' musical knowledge, skills in leadership, and affective disposition towards music?

### **Action Proposal**

I proposed to show a mentoring class scenario and explain benefits West Vigo High School achieved through offering a mentoring program between the high school band program and the middle school beginning band program. Following is information on what was involved in the mentoring class, how the program developed, tools used, and affects they had on the music program.

### Definitions of Terms

Academic year – the year beginning on the first day of school and ending on the last day of school

Affective Dispositions – feelings, emotions, interests, and motivations

Beginning student – a sixth grade student

Cross-age Tutoring – instruction implemented by a student or individual of a different age and/or grade

Directors – teachers of instrumental music in the West Vigo school system, located in West Terre Haute, Indiana.

Engaged – the act of being fully involved in an activity

Facilitator – a person who helps others solve problems by the use of indirect instruction and by encouraging group members to help each other

Interpersonal dynamics – the different ways people react with one another in various situations

Learning Environment – the atmosphere in which people have the opportunity to explore new information

Mentee – a student who is under the guidance of another student

Mentor – an influential student that acts as a guide to other students

Mentoring Class – the name of the course in which West Vigo High School band students enrolled, allowing them to act as mentors to beginning band students

Mentor sheet – a form filled out each day by the mentor evaluating beginning band students and documenting problems and accomplishments

Peer Tutor – a person of the same age or status responsible for educating another individual

Peer Tutoring – individual instruction implemented by a fellow student of the same age or status

Structured Cooperative Learning Groups – a group of people who are given direct instruction about working with others in a group

Supervising Teacher – High school and/or middle school band instructor

Trimester – 12-week trimesters, three per school year, five classes per day for one trimester, referred to as the 3X5 schedule, two official grading periods per trimester at the sixth and 12th weeks, 70-72 minute periods of instructional time.

### Goals

Supervising teachers created the following goals to guide the implementation of a Cross-age Tutoring program in the West Vigo school system:

1. Cross-age Tutoring will positively affect the learning progress of beginning band students in the areas of skill development, knowledge, and affective dispositions.
2. The increase in ability of beginning band students will help in retention from the first to second year.
3. Peer tutors will work with the beginning students using skills addressed by supervising teachers in so doing increasing skills, knowledge, and affective dispositions.

### Delimitations

1. Project Site, West Vigo Indiana public school instrumental music program.
2. The researcher had little control over enrollment of Peer Tutors, other than they had previous musical experience in instrumental or vocal music classes.
3. Peer Tutors had to work within the confines of their class schedule.
4. Previous retention information not recorded. Estimations of retention were provided by the middle school band director.
5. The program consisted of one academic year.
6. Beginning band students met every other day for 45 minutes. First week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday; second week: Tuesday and Thursday.

## Chapter II: Review of the Literature

A search of published literature revealed research on Cross-age Tutoring and Peer Tutoring in many disciplines including: math, science, reading, and geography. Studies of Cross-age and Peer Tutoring in these disciplines report wide ranges of benefits including increased knowledge, retention of content, work ethic, and affective disposition. To date, little information is available concerning effects of Peer Tutoring in a music classroom. Reading and math seem to encompass the majority of research with reference to Cross-age and Peer Tutoring. There are similarities between the skills needed for reading and mathematical processes, and those needed for reading music. Skill sets necessary for reading, mathematical processes, and other subjects parallel those needed for music. (Hanson, Bernstorf, 2002; Boettcher, Hahn, Shaw, 1994) Therefore, examples of Cross-age and Peer Tutoring from other disciplines are included in the literature review.

Hashimoto, Utley, Greenwood and Pitchlyn (2007) discovered unexpected results while studying a third grade classroom. Reading and spelling scores demonstrated that peer-led instruction did not result in better retention of spelling and word meanings for their study. This study covered various measurements of reading including mastery of unknown words and loss of known words. Interesting points in this study are the variables that influence the outcomes between two different classrooms. Noted in the research is the willingness or unwillingness of supervising teachers to work with the Peer Tutoring concept and how this affected the outcomes. Other variables such as poor handwriting skills may have also affected testing outcomes.

Topping (2004) examined students of age seven and 11 taught paired thinking skills to use while reading and compared this to students focused on paired reading skills.

After 10 weeks, student pairs were switched from paired thinking skills to paired reading skills with the difference being a focus on the reading not the material relating to the students' real life circumstances. In paired reading, the act of reading the text is most important. In paired thinking, it is going beyond what the author meant and how it relates to the present lives of the tutor and tutees. Toppings discovered that paired thinking groups gained better understanding for the content read. Paired reading groups enjoyed the process more because there were fewer interruptions in the flow of their reading.

Topping (2004) investigated Cross-age Tutoring in an elementary science classroom. A group of seven and eight year old tutees paired with a group of eight and nine year old tutors gained a better understanding of basic concepts and scientific keywords. After an eight-week period, tutees reported a more positive attitude towards interactive science. Teachers of the science classes agreed to implement the same procedures for future classes based on the positive results of the study.

Maheady, Mallette, and Harper (2001) discuss four different Peer Tutoring models and how they affect diverse learning groups and reading in the classroom. The models include Juniper Gardens Children's Project, The George Peabody College Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies, the START tutoring program from The Ohio State University, and Classwide Student Tutoring Teams. This article includes a brief description of each model followed by similarities and differences between the four methods. Maheady provides information on implementation and effectiveness of the Peer Tutoring models and encourages additional research into Peer Tutoring.

Fuchs, Fuchs, Mathes, and Simmons (1997) researched the effectiveness of Peer Tutoring on three different learning types: low achievers with disabilities, low achievers

without disabilities, and average achievers. The experiment consisted of 20 teachers implementing Peer Tutoring over 15 weeks as 20 other teachers acted as the control group. Three students per classroom represented each learner type. Using the Comprehensive Reading Assessment Battery, an instrument designed by the researchers to test reading comprehension, the researchers collected and recorded documentation for 15 weeks. The control group of non-tutored students performed at a lower level than the experimental group of students receiving Peer Tutoring.

Gyanini (1995) studied Peer Tutoring in a geography classroom setting. In the experiment, students worked with each other in small groups with one student acting as tutor. Students achieved higher levels of success with this method. Gyanini observed that students of the same age level would use similar language allowing better understanding of content. This method also decreased the perception of a teacher-dictated classroom, creating a student-led learning environment, increasing discussion among students, and improving the overall classroom climate.

Sharpley (1983) examined results from a study in a math class where fifth and sixth graders tutored students in grades two and three for 30 minutes, four days per week, over five weeks. This study included an experimental group of students that received tutoring and a control group of non-tutored students. In the study, the ability level of the experimental group increased significantly over that of the control group. Sharpley warned that any teacher or administrator interested in developing a tutoring program must pay careful attention to details of planning, preparation, supervision, and recording of sessions.



Sharpley, Sharpley, and Irvine (1983) studied Cross-age Tutoring in an elementary math classroom. This study consisted of 51 sixth grade and 25 fifth grade children used to tutor 51 third grade and 25 second grade children. The study took place 30-minutes per day, four days per week and lasted five weeks. The study also consisted of a control group of similar size. The fifth and sixth grade experimental tutors achieved superior scores in math operations as well as other mathematical skills in comparison to those students in the control group. Experimental tutees also outperformed the control group in math operations.

A study on causal attribution for performance by Cross-Age Tutors and Tutees conducted by Medway and Lowe (1980) found that students blame their own efforts for their failures and credit the effort of the tutors for their successes. The information was collected using 122 students that had participated in previous studies on Cross-age Tutoring.

### **Cross-age and Peer Tutoring in the Music Classroom**

Fifth grade students received private lessons from high school students in a study by Staley (2004). This Peer Tutoring model featured high school students giving 30-minute private lessons to fifth grade beginning band students. Lessons were set up to emphasize how to practice at home. Peer Tutors prepared and used positive reinforcement vocabulary instead of negative reinforcement vocabulary. "Student teachers are also taught that the difference between a criticism and a suggestion often lies in the tone of voice or facial expression" (Staley, 2004, p23). It is clear that Staley's methods are to educate both the tutor and the tutee through his educational philosophy.

Deborah Sheldon (2001) presented how Peer Tutoring can benefit both the music teacher and the music students as they learn to work with each other. Sheldon recognized benefits including increases in achievement, problem solving skills, and independent thinking for both tutees and tutors. Sheldon includes a guide on creating a Peer Tutoring program, which uses assessments on student leadership, program styles, use of time, rehearsal space, and suggestions when matching tutors and tutees for the program.

Lucille Alexander and Laura G. Dorow (1983) compared music performance of beginning band students using Peer Tutoring as part of the classroom environment. This study compared the pre- and posttest music performances of beginning band students in tutor and tutee pairs with students in regular band class instruction. All groups, except control tutees, showed significant gains over the course of the study. Secondary investigations showed that there was a noteworthy connection between the tutors' posttest scores and the number of exercises completed by their tutees.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

A review and analysis of existing material confirms that Cross-age and Peer Tutoring is a valuable educational tool in a variety of subject areas. The literature also provides insight in tutoring among diverse age groups and various ability levels.

The literature shows how Cross-age Tutoring has helped develop reading comprehension in low achieving students in first and second grade (Toppings, Bryce, 2004). Another study of second and third grade students showed their ability in math increased with tutoring from fifth and sixth grade students (Sharpley, Sharpley, and Irvine, 1983). Students introduced to experimental tutoring consistently outperformed students in control groups using ordinary educational models. Tutoring methods can be

effective among varied student populations assisting low achieving students with learning disabilities, unmotivated students, remedial students, students with behavior disorders, and students of differing socioeconomic backgrounds (Hashimoto, Utley, Greenwood, Pitchlyn, 2007; Fuchs, Fuchs, Mathes, Simmons, 1997; Sharpley, Irvine, Sharpley, 1983).

In addition, researchers found additional benefits to Cross-age Tutoring. Tutors develop an increased self-importance and confidence level, an increase in leadership qualities, and increased understanding of content. Interaction among students also changes the climate of the educational experience in a positive manor. Increases in self importance, confidence, leadership potential, understanding content, and working within a positive educational environment increase a student's desire to learn (Sheldon, 2001; Staley, 2004).

Deborah Sheldon's outline shows how to use the Peer Tutoring model in the music classroom (Sheldon, 2001). Charles Staley created a successful system of Cross-age Tutoring between his high school students and the elementary feeder program. Beginning students were able to learn essential skills as well as gain a positive perspective of the music program (Staley, 2004). If students are able to develop an appreciation for learning music, they will find a way to stay involved.

### **Chapter III: Action Project Design and Procedures**

#### **Typical Beginning Band Setting vs. Cross-age Tutoring**

A beginning band class consists of simultaneous large group instruction of concert band instruments. The band director is responsible for demonstrating and teaching each instrument as the students watch. Students are required to observe instruction that does not pertain to the instrument on which they are working. Music educators often equate this to a teacher trying to introduce the beginning concepts of English, Math, Science, and Social Studies simultaneously, to students of varied ability levels.

A more efficient model has an improved student-to-teacher-ratio. In this model, teaching instrument-specific classes will limit distractions of irrelevant information. Students having trouble with certain skills can be isolated without embarrassment in front of the class, eliminating feelings of insecurity in front of other students. A less intimidating environment may positively affect students' future involvement.

#### **Project Design Overview**

The action research project examined the impact of Cross-age Tutoring on the beginning band class. The subjects of the project were sixth grade beginning band students grouped by instrumentation. The tutors were comprised of high school students from the high school music program. Placement in the Mentoring Class included students that signed up for band, string, or choir classes, but were unable to schedule into those specific class periods. This created a class of students with diverse primary instrumentation. The high school mentoring class met every day for 70-minutes. The

sixth grade tutees from the beginning band, received instruction on their instrument every other day for 45 minutes.

All the tutees used the Essential Elements of Music 2000: A Comprehensive Beginning Band Method Book (1999). Directors monitored each tutee's progress on a chart in the room. In addition to the method book, students were required to test using the Smart Music Practice Studio (1999) software. The progress noted on the chart was compared to progress from past beginning band classes to evaluate the effectiveness of Cross-age Tutoring in the beginning band class.

### **Subjects**

The subjects involved in the project were sixth graders who voluntarily signed up for the band program at the end of the previous academic year. All sixth grade band students participated in the Cross-age Tutoring project.

### **Tutors**

The high school students used as tutors in the Cross-age Tutoring project could not schedule into the appropriate band, string, or choir classes due to other curricular classes meeting at the same time. Tutors elected to participate in the tutoring class or the counselors placed them into the class without their consent. A small number of tutors assigned to the class had no previous high school music experience, but did have other musical experience such as piano lessons.

### **Equipment and Materials**

#### **Equipment and Materials Used By Subjects**

The sixth grade band used the Essential Elements 2000 (1999) method book, which included a CD and DVD for practice purposes. Students could work easily at home

listening and playing along with the exercises. This also provided a practice tool for the testing method used to evaluate readiness for the next skill level.

Supervising teachers added a computer component to the class using a bank of five computers and the Music Ace (2002) program. A previously purchased site license helped in the selection process for the Music Ace (2002) program. The purpose of the computer program was to reinforce concepts displayed in the Essential Elements 2000 (1999) book. The supervising teachers selected the exercises that best correlated with the Essential Elements 2000 (1999) band methods books.

Each sixth grade student taped a nine-week practice log and a skill level sheet into his or her Essential Elements 2000 (1999) book. The skill level sheet informed the student which exercises to work on for moving to the next skill level. It also included specific exercises and games chosen from the Music Ace (2002) program to correspond with the Essential Elements 2000 (1999) book.

Students used the Smart Music Practice Studio (1999) to test skill levels. Equipment utilized in testing student skill level included two computers, clip-on microphones, and headphones.

#### Equipment and Materials Used By Tutors

The tutors used instrument mouthpieces and instruments for demonstration purposes. Tutors also read and discussed articles found in music education journals to help increase their own vocabulary and skill sets as educators. An evaluation form helped tutors and supervising teachers assess the progress of beginning students day to day. These forms also helped formulate a lesson plan for the following day of instruction. In

addition, tutors researched educational topics on the internet and used a daily discussion time to ask questions of the supervising teachers.

### **Schedule**

The middle school schedule was traditional with the year divided into two 18-week semesters. New classes began each semester with each semester divided into two nine-week grading periods. Tutees then had a rotating daily schedule with an A day and B day. On the A day the tutees reported to music class and on the B day to physical education class. The beginning band students were scheduled into two separate classes. On A days, all woodwind students met in one class consisting of flute, clarinet, and alto saxophone players. On B days, all brass and percussion students met in classes consisting of trumpet, trombone, baritone, drum pad, and bells. Classes met for 45 minutes with approximately 30 students assigned to each class. (Appendix I, table 1)

The high school was on a trimester schedule that included three 12-week semesters. Classes met for 70 minutes every day, and the day consisted of five class periods. One of the periods includes an extra 20 minutes extending the period to 90 minutes to accommodate two lunch periods. New classes began each trimester. The Cross-age Tutoring period met during the extended third class period of the day, the same time as the beginning band classes. (Appendix I, Table 2)

### **Procedure**

The high school Cross-age Tutoring period coincided with the 45-minute middle school band period. In our model for a Cross-age Tutoring program, tutors began with discussion of the activities for the day. Discussion included what the sixth grade tutees were working on in the books and on the computers. Supervising teachers assigned

readings covering topics relevant to teaching beginning music students with discussion on these topics during this time. Tutors received the mentoring instruction and reflection form to take notes before teaching. Tutors then moved to the middle school band room.

Class began with tutors and tutees meeting together for a brief discussion after which the supervising teachers assigned tutees to the tutors in small groupings. On some days, this beginning time allowed for a group warm-up. Supervising teachers initially divided the tutees by instrumentation. Once the tutees began working on their own within the system, the supervising teachers divided them up by achievement levels. Grouping students of similar ability and motivation levels allowed for a more productive learning environment. Supervising teachers circulated around the practice areas and monitored progress during the instruction time.

The Music Ace (2002) theory program offered a change of pace for the tutees. The assignments covered topics such as note reading, rhythm reading, aural training, music writing and some motor skills. The lessons on the computer were reinforcements of the method book lessons.

After the middle school class period the tutors had approximately 10 minutes to complete a daily mentoring instruction and reflection form. Tutors analyzed the progress the students made during their instruction and developed plans to solve future problems they faced during the mentoring session including possible scenarios that could help the situation or problem. Tutors talked about this information in open discussion sessions to assist others in their tutoring.



Table 1. Cross-age Tutoring Class Schedule

Time	Location	Activity
10:44am	High school band room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tutors meet with supervising teacher to discuss activities for the day</li> <li>2. Review Assignments</li> <li>3. Respond to challenges from previous days activities</li> </ol>
11:15am	Depart for middle school band room	
11:20am	Middle school band room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tutors sit with Tutees during warm ups</li> <li>2. Supervising teachers discuss the day's activities</li> <li>3. Tutees are placed into smaller groups               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Tutor-led practice groups</li> <li>b. Computer-centered groups</li> <li>c. Testing rooms with computer and supervising teachers</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
12:06pm	Middle school band room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. End of Class Bell</li> <li>2. Tutors fill out daily reflection form</li> <li>3. Respond to challenges of that days activities</li> </ol>
12:15pm	Depart for Lunch	

### Analysis

Analysis of the project concluded that Cross-age Tutoring did positively affect the learning progress of beginning band students in skill development, knowledge, and affective disposition. As projected, the tutees' positive musical experiences resulted in increased retention into the second year of band. Supervising teachers determined the number of tutees continuing in the band program the second year and found all but three continued out of the 48 that started with the band program. The tutors increased their own skills, knowledge and affective disposition about the music program as they tutored the younger students. The evaluation of individual abilities determined by progress shown on the chart of accomplishments helps support the findings of this project. Supervising

teachers also documented observations of students' general attitudes throughout the project in order to compare attitude to change in skill level.

## **Chapter IV: Results**

The supervising teachers evaluated the results of the Cross-Age Tutoring Project based on goals established for the project. Data from the Cross-age Tutoring project answered the following questions. Did Cross-age Tutoring positively affect the learning progress of beginning band students in the areas of skill development, knowledge, and affective disposition? Did the increase in ability of the beginning band classes help in retention from the first year to second year? How did the tutoring experience affect the high school students' content knowledge, musical skills, and affective disposition?

### **First Trimester**

The concept of the Cross-Age Tutoring Project developed in response to the need for more individual instruction for beginning band students and the need to increase retention of students from one year to the next. The program was a success in that it allowed more individual instruction time to tutees with improved student to teacher ratios. The tutees were able to spend more time working with their instrument from the first day and had little non-instructional time. Tutees interacted with the tutors in a positive manner that encouraged and promoted excitement during the first weeks of band.

The tutors taught and monitored the assembly phases and care of the instrument as the directors worked with individual problems or concerns including locker assignments, late sign-ups, wrong classroom assignments, and students with no means to purchase an instrument. The classroom ran smoothly and tutees quickly moved on to learning the first notes.

Tutors effectively taught tutees about the embouchure and talked about their own personal experiences with playing their instruments. There were moments of non-playing time but the conversation would typically revolve around music-related topics.

Tutors spent a great deal of time working on tone production using exercises from the method book. Having the tutors running small sectionals allowed the supervising teachers to walk around the groups to listen and reinforce playing techniques. This insured that all tutees had the chance to create a proper tone on their instrument while learning proper techniques reinforced by the tutors. Tutees spent more time playing their instrument rather than waiting on a turn to play as others were struggling.

All tutees tested on the Smart Music (1999) program beginning in the fourth week of the program. By using a mixture of computer testing and in-class testing, tutees moved quickly through the exercises in the method book. Motivated tutees were able to pass multiple exercises each day while others having problems or less practice time moved at a slower pace. Supervising teachers adjusted group placement based on ability level. Many tutees used this as a motivation to work on specific exercises in order to jump to a new group. Although not quantifiable, there seemed to be a definite boost of learning, ability, and curiosity during the first twelve weeks of the school year in comparison to levels attained in previous years.

### Second Trimester

During the second trimester, the sixth grade class began full band rehearsal during which tutors worked with students needing individual instruction in private lessons. In the full group setting, less advanced tutees were able to benefit from hearing other tutees demonstrate how the music sounded. At that time, supervising teachers introduced the first full band arrangements including independent parts.

Tutees continued working in small groups, adding instruction in music theory when possible. The Music Ace (2002) program reinforced theory concepts from the method book. Tutees had their first concert, which featured many tutees as soloists and small groups developed during the first trimester. The introduction of a concert to the tutees spiked another level of enthusiasm for their instruments as shown by increased progress on the class progress charts. An increase in student productivity spiked as tutees wanted to play solos and small ensembles featured at the concert.

Instrument changes were required during the second trimester as we evaluated the progress made by certain tutees. The tutoring program made it easier to evaluate and find the tutees having trouble on their instrument and find another instrument that may fit them better. Specifically, two tutees changed from trombone and trumpet to baritone, which may have saved frustrated tutees from quitting the program. Documentation showed that some of the tutees were not progressing because of their embouchure or inability to understand the slide positions. Since tutees changing instruments had more one-on-one time and a solid beginning on their first instrument, they switched very easily to the new instrument.

### Third Trimester

During the last 12 week mentoring session, tutees were once again testing at a rapid pace with tutees setting their own goal to get to the end of the book. At this time, tutees had a successful concert, and continued to progress at a quick pace through the method book. Supervising teachers attributed this to the positive start each tutee had received. Tutees had fewer embouchure problems and most tutees were using substantial air in their playing. Supervising teachers selected ten tutees to be part of the Middle School Festival Concert Band made up of select eighth and seventh graders. Directors presented this opportunity to only a few select first year students in previous years. As the end of the school year approached, many beginning tutees were finishing their levels for the first year methods book and had successfully completed the Music Ace (2002) theory program.

During the final trimester, the supervising teachers encouraged some tutees to switch instruments based on the needs of the performing groups for the next year. Tutees were excited about playing instruments such as the tuba, tenor sax, bass clarinet, and oboe. Supervising teachers did not offer these instruments to beginning band students when initially signing up for band.

At the end of the school year, tutees were playing with good tone and technique due to the tutors reinforcing positive concepts through a variety of testing methods in addition to the full group setting instruction. Supervising teachers recommended all tutees to continue in band their seventh grade year and all but three signed up for the band program for the following school year. Tutees not continuing with band cited dislike of their instrument along with peer pressure to join other activities for not continuing. Past

years showed decreases of 25 to 35 percent of beginning students not returning to the band program after their first year as estimated by the middle school band director.

### **Development of High School Tutors**

The high school tutors received first-hand experience regarding what goes into an educational plan. Tutors increased their understanding of the educational process as shown by developing a lesson plan, incorporating standards into the evaluation process, and comparing program standards with Indiana Academic Standards. We hope to have given each mentor an idea of what it is like to be an educator.

Tutors reinforced their own skills, techniques, and knowledge related to their instruments and ensemble playing. The teaching process reinforced the tutors' own sense of accomplishment through teaching musical skill sets to beginning band students; explaining concepts while utilizing references and quotes from their own band experience on a daily basis.

The tutors developed patience and tolerance as they worked with younger students as observed by instructors during peer tutoring sessions. Tutees tested them and pushed their boundaries allowing the tutors to deal with real situations in education. Supervising teachers taught skills and qualities used in leadership positions to deal with discipline and motivation in the classroom setting. The tutors developed pride in the program and in their personal ability as player and teacher.

All the tutors came away from this experience with a positive attitude about teaching. At the end of each semester, tutors were required to write reflections on the Cross-age Tutoring program identifying how the tutees were able to benefit from the program as well as how the tutors benefit from their teaching experiences. Tutors

developed leadership skills while in a position of authority and responsibility. Some tutors showed interest in pursuing a career in education, and others were re-enforced in their belief that teaching was not for them. Tutors also made recommendations on how they would change the tutoring process. This created more pride in the tutors by contributing to the development of the program.



## Chapter V: Summary

The primary reason for this action research project began with the concern over retaining music students. Problems were evident concerning students dropping out after their beginning year of band. Lack of ability level in the students that were dropping out played a role in their decision. The current method of instruction for beginning students was not reaching all students.

The supervising teachers theorized increased knowledge and ability on the students' assigned instrument might encourage them to stay in the band program. Supervising teachers also theorized the students' ability to read and play music independently in their early stages of development promotes students practice habits and desire to pursue higher levels of musicianship.

The beginning band classes begin with many shortcomings that are counter-productive to a good educational experience. The beginning class is one of the larger groups a band director works with. These students typically know nothing about their instrument and very few are knowledgeable about music. It is during this first year that it is important for students to learn proper basic skills on their instrument. It is difficult for students to unlearn bad habits. Unfortunately, in most cases, a single director teaches a large class of students who have never worked together. This leaves very little time to address all problems of the beginning band student.

The sixth grade beginning band program, which starts between 50 and 65 students, was experiencing a rapidly declining retention rate from the first to the second year. A contributing factor in poor retention included low achievement levels on assigned instruments. Most notably, a student that was not able to play the music of the first

concert did not remain in the program. At this age level, discipline issues created from boredom affected the desire to be part of the band. Students that were not able to get the music in class and were unwilling to practice fell behind. Common discipline issues in class arose from these students taking away from valuable instruction time. These discipline issues and extra class time taken to work with lower achieving students often held students back that did have the ability to progress forward.

High school tutors learned being in charge of a controlled lesson environment offered a number of positive experiences. The tutor learned responsibility, a new set of teaching skills, reinforcement of basic music concepts, and many pros and cons of the music education profession.

When tutees worked with their peers, there was a less intimidating atmosphere than when a teacher was working with the whole group. More individual or small group instruction allowed for faster progress. Supervising teachers' tracked students in a more individualized self-guided system, with more topics covered including theory and history. Students needing to switch instruments received the time and attention needed to make the change effective.

From the perspective of the tutor, Cross-age Tutoring has the potential to improve many traits related to their own musical progress and character growth. The tutor will have a chance for extra social interaction allowing greater social development. Tutors will also reinforce their own basics of musical understanding. Cross-age Tutoring also affects the tutors' involvement within their personal music programs. Finally, this opportunity may open the tutors' eyes to other opportunities including teaching as a possible occupational field.

### **Challenges to Implementation**

Through the course of the mentoring program, students experienced some challenges with the system.

#### **Tutees**

The sixth graders become dependent on certain tutors and had a difficult time working for others. This required close monitoring by the supervising teacher. Tutees had a difficult time in the group settings because of the differing playing levels created in the “at your own pace” atmosphere. Some tutees spent extra time working on the tested skill levels, thereby ignoring untested exercises. These tutees needed extra guidance in order to cover all skills introduced in the beginning band book.

#### **Tutors**

Tutors experienced difficulty with discipline. Supervising teachers had to put a discipline policy into place for the tutors that would assist them in their teaching. Some tutors experienced challenges with verbalizing their ideas with the tutees. Discussion times allowed for recommendations on how to demonstrate and verbalize instruction. Tutors found their skill set for communicating instruction increased the longer they taught the tutees.

#### **Supervising Teachers**

It was important to document progress and actions for the sixth graders and the tutors. Forms had to be revised a couple of times to simplify and guide the educational process for the tutors. Finding related articles and creating an expectation of the writing component for the mentoring class was a unique challenge. Documenting and promoting

the program in order to continue the program as a class was an important responsibility for the supervisors.

### **Benefits**

#### Tutees

After offering the mentoring class for one year, supervising teachers noted the self-paced approach increased the tutees progress on their instruments more-so than in previous years when taught exclusively in a large group setting. All tutees in the beginning classes were able to achieve some level of success. Tutees were able to interact with the high school tutors and make a connection with a peer music student. The beginning band students exhibited pride in their accomplishments and enjoyed the music-making relationships established with their tutors. Through this program, the beginning band rehearsal became a positive experience and allowed for individual interaction and support.

#### Tutors

Developing life skills was an important part of the tutors' experience. These tutors learned to express ideas, develop relationships, and creatively process and solve problems. The tutors saw the positive influences they had on the beginning band members. Tutors also developed an understanding of how their individual work with the tutees could help the entire band program in the future. The tutors gained an appreciation for the teaching field, and some opted to pursue teaching programs at the University level.

### Supervising Teachers

Supervising teachers were able to interact with each tutee in small group lessons creating a more productive process in teaching skills on each instrument. Problems traditionally overlooked in a large group setting surfaced quicker with small group instruction. Problems discovered included reading rhythms and notes, posture, embouchure, and blowing air. Documentation of progress for each individual allowed better decision-making on helping with strengths or fixing weaknesses.

With a better understanding of what goes into teaching, the tutors gained an appreciation for the teaching occupation. Supervising teachers observed an increase in leadership traits in the tutors. These leadership traits may translate into a stronger program at the high school level.

### Why Use Cross-age Tutoring in Music Classes

There are a number of reasons that band directors are fighting a tough battle in order to retain beginners. It is important to solve as many of these problems as we can in order to keep strong numbers in our programs to offer the chance of a musical education to those who choose instrumental music as their vehicle. If students drop out of band and lose a year of music education, they could be lost to the joys of music making and learning. Therefore, a clear need exists for finding alternate ways to educate and retain beginning students. Cross-age Tutoring has had positive effects on the curriculum and outcomes of many general education courses. Many band programs already successfully use some form of Cross-age Tutoring within their own programs. The smaller group instruction that Cross-age Tutoring offers is an ideal setting to promote the instruction and learning of instrumental music to beginning students.

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Appendix A:  
Tutor Daily Reflection Form

Tutor Daily Reflection Form

Tutor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Tutees you worked with:	Current Level achieved	Did the Tutee achieve their next level	
1		Yes	No
2		Yes	No
3		Yes	No
4		Yes	No
5		Yes	No

List Activities for today (skill levels / assignments):

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What skills do the tutees need to possess to perform today's activities? (Hint, Look at previous skill levels)

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List the two most recent new notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Write out any new rhythmic figures:

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List any definitions or theory symbols: \_\_\_\_\_

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Describe progress made in your tutoring session:

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Describe any problems you faced during the tutoring session:

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**Appendix B:**  
**Assignments for Level 1 in Band Book 1**

## Band Book 1      Level 1

**Playing – Play for your teacher or on Smart Music (score at least 80)**

**Vocabulary – Write in the definition for each vocab. word as you go**

Page	Ex #	Vocabulary	Score
2-3	The Basics	Posture, Breathing, Tone, Staff, Ledger Lines, Measure, Bar Line	
4	6	Beat Quarter Note Quarter Rest	
5	10	Double Bar Repeat Sign	
5	12	Clef Time Signature	
6	14	Sharp Flat Natural	
6	16	Half Note Half Rest	
6	18	Breath Mark	
7	21	Whole Note Whole Rest	
7	22	Duet (Play this exercise together with a friend)	
7	23	Key Signature	

**Written Assignments in the Book – Follow the directions**

Page	Ex #	Description	Done
5	13	Write in the note names	
6	16	Draw in the notes	
7	26	Draw in the bar lines	

**Music Ace – Do the lesson, and then play the game. Record your score.**

Session	Title	Lesson	Score
1	Introduction to the Staff		
2	Introduction To the Piano Keyboard		

**Doodle Pad – Copy each exercise from the book into Doodle Pad**

Page	Ex #	Title	Done
4	4	Two's A Team	
6	17	Hot Cross Buns	
7	25	Lightly Row	

Appendix C:  
Assignments for Level 2 in Band Book 1

## Band Book 1 Level 2

**Playing – Play for your teacher or on Smart Music (score at least 80)**

**Vocabulary – Write in the definition for each vocab. word as you go**

Page	Ex #	Vocabulary	Score
8	27	Fermata	
8	30	Harmony (Play this exercise together with a friend)	
9	33		
9	36	Pick-Up Note	
9	38	Dynamics Forte Mezzo Forte Piano	
10	41	One Eighth Note Two Eighth Notes	
10	42		
11	47	Two-Four Time Signature	
11	49	Tempo Allegro Moderato Andante	
11	51	Crescendo Decrescendo	

**Written Assignments in the Book – Follow the directions**

Page	Ex #	Description	Done
8	32	Draw the symbols	
9	39	Write in the counts under the notes and rests	
10	43	Write in the counts under the notes and rests	
11	48	Write in the counts under the notes and rests	

**Music Ace – Do the lesson, then play the game. Record your score.**

Session	Title	Lesson	Score
3	Beat and Tempo		
4	Playing with Pitch		

**Doodle Pad – Copy each exercise from the book into Doodle Pad**

Page	Ex #	Title	Done
8	29	Remix	
9	34	Doodle All Day	
10	45	William Tell	

Appendix D:  
Assignments for Level 3 in Band Book 1

## Band Book 1    Level 3

**Playing – Play for your teacher or on Smart Music (score at least 80)**

**Vocabulary – Write in the definition for each vocab. word as you go**

Page	Ex #	Vocabulary	Score
14	59	Tie	
14	61	Dotted Half Note	
14	63		
15	67	Three-Four Time Signature	
15	71	Accent	
16	73	Accidental	
16	75		
16	76	New Key Signature 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ending	
17	80		
17	82		
17	85	Improvisation	

**Written Assignments in the Book – Follow the directions**

Page	Ex #	Description	Done
14	65	Write in the pitch names	
15	72	Write the rest of the music and play	
16	74	Write in the counts under the notes and rests	
17	84	Write in the counts under the notes and rests	

**Music Ace – Do the lesson, and then play the game. Record your score.**

Session	Title	Lesson	Score
5	The ABC's of the Keyboard		
6	Hearing Rhythms		

**Doodle Pad – Copy each exercise from the book into Doodle Pad**

Page	Ex #	Title	Done
14	62	Camptown Races	
15	69	Morning	
17	83	Down by the Station	



Appendix E:  
Assignments for Level 4 in Band Book 1

## Band Book 1    Level 4

**Playing – Play for your teacher or on Smart Music (score at least 80)**

**Vocabulary – Write in the definition for each vocab. word as you go**

Page	Ex #	Vocabulary	Score
18	88		
18	90	Theme and Variations	
18	91	D.C. al Fine	
19	92		
19	96	Slur	
20	99		
20	100	Phrase	
20	102	New key Signature	
20	103	(Play this duet with a friend)	
21	105	Natural	
21	106		
21	107		

**Written Assignments in the Book – Follow the directions**

Page	Ex #	Description	Done
18	87	Write in the counts under the notes and rests	
20	104	Write the time signature and the bar lines	
21	108	Write the note names under the notes	

**Music Ace – Do the lesson, and then play the game. Record your score.**

Session	Title	Lesson	Score
7	More Piano Key ABC's		
8	The ABC's of the Staff		

**Doodle Pad – Copy each exercise from the book into Doodle Pad**

Page	Ex #	Title	Done
19	93	The Music Box	
21	108	On Top of Old Smokey	

**Appendix F:**  
**Assignments for Level 5 in Band Book 1**

## Band Book 1 Level 5

**Playing – Play for your teacher or on Smart Music (score at least 80)**

**Vocabulary – Write in the definition for each vocab. word as you go**

Page	Ex #	Vocabulary	Score
22	111	Dotted Quarter Note	
22	112		
22	117		
23	118	Accompaniment (Find the piano accompaniment on your CD and play along with it)	
24	119	(Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, and Tenor Sax only)	
24	Special Exercise	(Brass only) Lip Slur	
24	121		
24	123	(Clarinet, Bass Clarinet only)	
25	126	(Clarinet, Bass Clarinet only)	
25	128	(Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Sax only)	
25	129		
25	130	(Clarinet, Bass Clarinet only)	

**Written Assignments in the Book – Follow the directions**

Page	Ex #	Description	Done
22	113	Write in the counts under the notes and rests	
24	125	Write in the intervals	
25	129	Write the note names under the notes	

**Music Ace – Do the lesson, and then play the game. Record your score.**

Session	Title	Lesson	Score
9	Basic Rhythm Notation		
10	The ABC's of the Treble Clef (Treble Clef instruments only)		
19	The ABC's of the Bass Clef (Bass Clef instruments only)		

**Doodle Pad – Copy each exercise from the book into Doodle Pad**

Page	Ex #	Title	Done
22	114	Scarborough Fair	

Appendix G:  
Assignments for Level 6 in Band Book 1

## Band Book 1    Level 6

**Playing – Play for your teacher or on Smart Music (score at least 80)**

**Vocabulary – Write in the definition for each vocab. word as you go**

Page	Ex #	Vocabulary	Score
26	135	Common Time	
27	138	(Clarinet and Bass Clarinet only)	
27	139		
27	142		
27	143	(Clarinets and Saxophones only)	
27	145	(Clarinets only)	
28	149	Scale Arpeggio	
30	155		
40	1-4	(Concert Bb) Rubank Scale and Arpeggio Studies	
40	1-4	(Concert Eb) Rubank Scale and Arpeggio Studies	

**Written Assignments in the Book – Follow the directions**

Page	Ex #	Description	Done
26	137	Create your own variation	
28	151	Write in the note names before you play	

**Music Ace – Do the lesson, and then play the game. Record your score.**

Session	Title	Lesson	Score
12	The Quarter Rest		
11	More Treble Staff (Treble clef instruments only)		
20	Above the Bass Staff (Bass clef instruments only)		

**Doodle Pad – Copy each exercise from the book into Doodle Pad**

Page	Ex #	Title	Done
26	133	Austrian Waltz	
27	146	Full Coverage	

Appendix H:  
Assignments for Level 7 in Band Book 1

## Band Book 1    Level 7

**Playing – Play for your teacher or on Smart Music (score at least 80)**

**Vocabulary – Write in the definition for each vocab. word as you go**

Page	Ex #	Vocabulary	Score
31	159	Eighth Note Eighth Rest	
31	162	Off the Beat	
32	165		
32	166		
33	169	Enharmonics	
33	171		
33	174	Chromatic Notes	
34	175		
35	179		
41	1-4	(Concert F) Rubank Scale and Arpeggio Studies	
40	1-4	(Concert Ab) Rubank Scale and Arpeggio Studies	

**Written Assignments in the Book – Follow the directions**

Page	Ex #	Description	Done
31	163	Write in the counts under each note and rest	
32	168	Write in the counts under each note and rest	
33	172	Write in the note names	

**Music Ace – Do the lesson, and then play the game. Record your score.**

Session	Title	Lesson	Score
13	Keyboard Review		
15	Melody		

**Doodle Pad – Copy each exercise from the book into Doodle Pad**

Page	Ex #	Title	Done
33	173	Notes in Disguise	
35	180	Wayfaring Stranger	



**Appendix I:**  
**Middle School Yearly Schedule**  
**High School Yearly Schedule**

**Table 1: Middle School Yearly Schedule, Traditional Two Semester**

Semester 1		Semester 2	
1 <sup>st</sup> nine-week grading period	2 <sup>nd</sup> nine-week grading period	1 <sup>st</sup> nine-week grading period	2 <sup>nd</sup> nine-week grading period
<b>Tutees (Sixth Grade) Middle School Daily Schedule</b>			
A Day		B Day	
Time	Class	Time	Class
8:05am-8:50am	First Period	8:05am-8:50am	First Period
8:54am-9:39am	Second Period	8:54am-9:39am	Second Period
9:43am-10:28am	Third Period	9:43am-10:28am	Third Period
10:32am-11:17am	Fourth Period	10:32am-11:17am	Fourth Period
11:21am-12:06pm	Woodwinds / Brass and Percussion at PE	11:21am-12:06pm	Brass and Percussion / Woodwinds at PE
12:10-12:40pm	Lunch	12:10-12:40pm	Lunch
12:44pm-1:29pm	Sixth Period	12:44pm-1:29pm	Sixth Period
1:33pm-2:18pm	Seventh Period	1:33pm-2:18pm	Seventh Period
2:22pm-3:10pm	Eighth Period	2:22pm-3:10pm	Eighth Period

**Table 2: High School Yearly Schedule, Trimester**

Semester 1		Semester 2		Semester 3	
1 <sup>st</sup> six-week grading period	2 <sup>nd</sup> six-week grading period	1 <sup>st</sup> six-week grading period	2 <sup>nd</sup> six-week grading period	1 <sup>st</sup> six-week grading period	2 <sup>nd</sup> six-week grading period
<b>Tutors High School Daily Schedule</b>					
Time			Class		
8:10am-9:21am			First Period		
9:27am-10:38am			Second Period		
10:44am-12:15am			Mentoring Period		
12:15am-12:45pm			Lunch		
12:50pm-1:59pm			Fourth Period		
2:05pm-3:15pm			Fifth Period		

**Appendix J:  
Discipline Request Form**

### Log Request Form

Date: \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

Mentors Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Request:

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### Log Request Form

Date: \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

Mentors Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Request:

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### Log Request Form

Date: \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

Mentors Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Request:

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