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A study into year 8 student motivation to continue class music in Perth, Western Australia

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A STUDY INTO
YEAR 8 STUDENT MOTIVATION TO CONTINUE
CLASS MUSIC
IN PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

PREFACE

I have been involved in music education for many years, including as a professional musician, an instrumental teacher, a classroom music teacher, an ensemble director, a Head of Department, and as the Executive Director of a large community arts organisation. I have always been passionate about music education, and I have been particularly interested in teaching lower secondary school students. It is these students who ultimately become the backbone of any school music programme in time, and who's collective experiences shape the musical 'wellness' of society.

From past observation, I have watched many students struggle in lower secondary school music programmes to maintain enthusiasm for their music studies. I feel empathy for them, for I too had nearly quit music at school, bored by uninspiring and unimaginative teaching. I feel that many music teachers, lacking knowledge and the motivational skills to teach lower secondary students, cannot wait to get rid of these classes, so they can focus upon their upper school classes where the 'real' musicians are. Through a process of attrition, they whittle down the numbers in elective lower school classes to small, manageable groups of gifted upper school students.

My empathy is not with the talented few, but with the rank and file. Too often I have heard tales of woe from parents at parent teacher nights bemoaning music teaching practices when they were at school. Their experiences appear to have driven them from becoming active participants in a musically healthy society, and I see this cycle being repeated in many current school music programmes.

My desire to help initiate a change in lower school teaching practices in Western Australia is the driving force behind this study. From my early teaching experiments with curriculum reform to my recent curriculum publishing activities, this study represents in many ways a culmination of formalising my beliefs through the research process.

Knowing that for this study to have credibility with regards generalisability within the profession, I have attempted to take a dispassionate and largely objective view of the topic, in the interest of informing third parties – teachers, education policy makers and change agents, – and limit my own subjective beliefs, if possible, while allowing the students' voices to be heard.

This study has been a long time in coming, and it has been a labour of love. If it contributes towards changing the way just one teacher operates, then I will consider it a success, because just one teacher can have an enormous impact upon successive generations of students.

Geoffrey Lowe

ABSTRACT

Post compulsory music education courses in Western Australia have undergone major curriculum reform. Reform has included a shift from a prescriptive curriculum based upon the Western canon to a more embracing practical and creative one, due for full implementation in 2009. As the numbers of students undertaking elective post compulsory music in Western Australia has been traditionally low, education authorities anticipate that more students will elect to undertake the new course. However, given previous research into motivational issues associated with the transition to secondary school, low post compulsory enrolment numbers may be reflective of retention issues arising from lower secondary class music, as much as the previous post compulsory course structure. Large numbers of students opt to discontinue music studies beyond their first year in secondary school.

This study examined the motivation of students to elect to continue class music studies beyond their first year in secondary school (Year 8). Following an extensive review of the current literature on achievement motivation in education, the study employed Expectancy-value theory as its theoretical basis for examining the values and competence beliefs of 276, Year 8 students across eight secondary schools in Perth, Western Australia. The study included the development of an instrument to examine student values and beliefs towards class music activities at the commencement and conclusion of Year 8. In addition, for triangulation, the study employed focus groups to examine issues arising from findings associated with the instrument.

The study found that while Year 8 student values declined over the course of Year 8, their beliefs remained relatively stable. These findings implied that in many instances, students increasingly devalued the activities they undertook in class music over the course of the year, regardless of their competence beliefs. This in turn impacted upon their subsequent enrolment choices into elective music courses from Year 9. Therefore, declining valuing of class music in lower secondary school may be the major determinant of enrolment numbers in post compulsory class music, as values have been demonstrated in previous research to be accurate predictors of subsequent enrolment decisions.

The implications of this study suggest that curriculum reform may not necessarily succeed in increasing participation rates in post compulsory music education courses in Western Australia until motivational issues associated with the teaching of class music in lower school are addressed.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

i. *Incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree of diploma in any institution of higher education;*

ii. *Contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or,*

iii. *Contain any defamatory material.*

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Ongoing music education curriculum reform has generated considerable discussion in Western Australia (Pierce, 2007; Hardy, 2007). Given that class music is an elective subject in Western Australian secondary schools, the role of motivation is fundamental in an elective setting yet has been noticeably missing from curriculum reform discussions, particularly during development of the new W.A. Certificate of Education (WACE) music course designed to replace the traditional post compulsory Tertiary Entrance Exam (TEE) music course from 2009.

This study investigates the motivational effects of learning activities, designed within the context of the current Western Australian curriculum framework, upon Year 8 (age 12) music students in their first year of secondary school. The study has been undertaken based upon the premise that any curriculum reform in secondary music education cannot succeed unless music teachers are aware of the underlying impact of their learning activities upon student motivation to continue class music studies, from the very beginning of secondary school.

1.1 Background

Class music in Western Australia has low post compulsory (TEE) participation rates (age 16). Over the past 10 years, while enrolments have increased marginally, they still constitute only 3% of the total State post compulsory cohort.

Table 1.1 *Total TEE state cohort, TEE music cohort, and TEE music percentage of total cohort.*

Year	Total cohort	Music cohort	% of total cohort
1998	11,843	338	2.85
1999	11,959	350	2.92
2000	11,986	322	2.68
2001	12,042	340	2.82
2002	12,272	322	2.62
2003	12,426	341	2.74
2004	11,652	328	2.81
2005	11,610	358	3.08
2006	10,953	352	3.21

Note. From *Secondary Education Statistics, www.curriculum.wa.edu.au*

Reasons cited for low participation rates have included student misconceptions of the degree of difficulty and breadth of the subject (class music has a classroom component and an external instrumental performance music component), and a narrow Western classical canon curriculum and contracting teaching time in schools (Stevens, 2005; Montague, 2004; Smith & Southcott, 2004; Swanwick, 1996). Of concern, however, has been the 3% music cohort average as against over 8% for art and drama which face similar pressures. Because music is an elective subject in lower secondary school, low post compulsory enrolments may also be reflective of low student retention rates for class music prior to the commencement of the post compulsory music course.

Low levels of post compulsory involvement in Western Australia concur with international research which have indicated enrolments of around 2% in the United Kingdom (Bray, 2000) and 5% in North America (Walker, 2003). More importantly, international findings have reported high attrition rates from the first year of secondary school which then continue throughout secondary school (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005; Downs, 2003; Wigfield, 1999; Wigfield, Eccles, MacIver, Reuman & Midgley, 1991). Given the broadly similar participation rates reported by Bray (2003) and Walker (2003), Western Australian enrolments appear to confirm international trends of an ongoing high drop-out rate from the first year of, and throughout, secondary school.

The reasons for high attrition rates following the transition into secondary school in Western Australia are not currently known because most comparable research investigating the phenomenon stems from the instrumental music field (O'Neill, 1999: O'Neill, 1996), or from North America which operates a philosophically different class music programme based around the practical and large group based 'band methodology' (Austin & Vispoel, 1998; Asmus, 1994). Inferences for a high attrition rate can be drawn from the fact that the School of Instrumental Music with the Education Department of Western Australia commences over 5,000 instrumental students in upper primary school annually (Pascoe, Leong, MacCallum, Mackinlay, Marsh, Smith, Church & Winterton, 2005), while others are started within the private sector. However, only about 350 students across both sectors continue on to complete the current post compulsory music course which has a major instrumental performance component.

Past studies into a range of endogenous and exogenous variables have indicated that learning activities undertaken in class music have the greatest impact upon student motivation to continue class music, ultimately affecting enrolment decisions (Eccles, 2005; Wigfield & Wagner, 2005; Handford & Watson, 2003; Sloboda, 2001; Ross, 1998; 1995). This impact is felt from the very beginning of secondary school (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005). However, the relationship between learning activities and the formation of student values and beliefs towards class music has not been formally examined in any setting.

1.2 Problem Statement

The problem is that students do not choose to continue class music in significant numbers in Western Australia as reflected in low post compulsory music participation rates. Importantly, the role of learning activities in influencing ongoing student enrolment decisions in Western Australia is not known.

1.3 Significance of the Study

By not engaging in ongoing class music programmes, the majority of Western Australian students are not experiencing the considerable benefits associated with an effective music education across physiological, psychomotor, emotional, cognitive and behavioural spheres (Pascoe et al., 2005; Sloboda, 1992). Music is described by Gardner (1983) as a separate form of intelligence and the Gulbenkian Report (1982) lists six general benefits from music education. These include:

- the development of the full variety of a student's intelligences;
- the development of the capacity for creative thought and action;
- the education of feeling and sensibility;
- the exploration of values;
- the understanding of cultural change and differences; and
- the development of physical and perceptual skills.

In particular, recent biological research has indicated the importance of music education in the development of left and right brain hemisphere coordination (Parson, Fox & Hodges, 2000). Other benefits include ensuring the health and breadth of music

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making in the community, the transmission of cultural heritage and general community 'wellness' (Pascoe et al., 2005).

This study is significant because it offers music teachers an understanding of the relationship between the learning activities they design and deliver and student motivation. Additionally, it offers a theoretical framework for assessing the impact of learning activities upon the motivation of younger students to continue class music beyond Year 8. As a result, the study provides a framework for teachers to assess the motivational impact of their learning activities. The ultimate aim of this study is to inform and improve practice, and increase the retention rate in class music programmes in Western Australia for the benefits of the students themselves.

1.4 Research Question

The following primary research question was examined.

How do class music learning activities impact upon Year 8 students' motivation to continue class music in Perth, Western Australia?

From the research question, three secondary questions were investigated.

1. How do class music learning activities impact upon music students' values and beliefs over the course of Year 8?
2. What is the impact of specific types of class music learning activities upon students' values and beliefs?
3. What are the motivational parameters in which class music learning activities might operate?

1.5 Organisation of the research

This study recognised the need for the research questions to determine the design and methodology of the study. The research questions implied:

- the need for a rigorous theoretical framework as a foundation for investigation grounded in the field of psychology, as motivation is a psychological construct;
- the need for a mixed method approach to gain contextual data regarding Year 8 values and beliefs towards class music, then more detailed, first hand data on how values and beliefs were shaped by interaction with learning activities;
- the need for a longer study as values and beliefs change over time with experience, interaction and age; and
- the need for a broad scale study with a statistically large cohort to be able to confidently offer generalisability across systems and settings.

Accordingly, a two step investigation process was employed.

Step One

Step One employed a survey questionnaire to collect data on student motivation at the commencement of Year 8. The questionnaire was administered to 276 music students in eight secondary schools representing a probabilistic (stratified, random) sample of systems and settings across the Perth metropolitan area in February, 2007.

The same questionnaire was re-administered at the end of Year 8 (November, 2007) to 222 of the same students across the same eight schools to allow comparisons of results against data collected from the pre-test stage.

Step Two

The study required richer data for examination of the research questions, and accordingly, 45 students in seven focus groups drawn from seven of the sample research schools were interviewed. These were conducted between September and October, 2007.

1.6 Organisation of the study

The organisation of the study is set out below in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 *Organisation of the study*

Chapter	Content
1	sets the study in its background context, outlines its aims, describes the research methods and offers an overview of the thesis structure
2	explores current literature on motivation drawn mainly from psychology in music education, with the aim of locating a suitable theoretical framework to underpin the research
3	outlines the methodological assumptions underpinning the research process, and the methodologies employed at each research stage, including analysis of data
4	presents the findings across the various data collection stages
5	discusses the research findings and examines their implications in relation to the research question
6	summarises the study, outlines the limitations and considers implications for future research

1.7 Coda to chapter one

With music curriculum reform currently topical in Western Australia, the need to investigate the effects of motivation upon the class music enrolment decisions of Year 8 students assumes importance. Without a basic understanding of the impact of learning activities upon motivation to continue class music from the commencement of secondary school, any attempt at post compulsory curriculum reform in Western Australia will not necessarily lead to increased participation rates as motivational issues associated with learning activities are simply transferred from the old curriculum to the new (Sloboda, 2001; Ross, 1998; 1995).

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Chapter one identified the problem that post compulsory class music programmes in Western Australia have low participation rates. It further suggested that this may be the result of motivational issues associated with class music learning activities used by teachers from Year 8 in secondary school. Chapter two now explores literature on this issue and develops a potential theoretical framework to underpin the study. The chapter is divided into two parts.

Part one examines in general the relationship between young people and music at school and then presents an overview and assessment of previous international and local research which attempts to explain why participation in class music programmes is low. The chapter then critically reflects upon the research in this area.

Part two locates and outlines a suitable theoretical foundation for this study. The chapter concludes by making a case for utilising the theoretical framework for theory verification and expansion specifically for the class music setting.

PART ONE

2.1 Students and music

The importance of music in the life and culture of young people has been well documented. Young people use music as a badge which communicates values, attitudes and opinions to others (Hargreaves & North, 1996; Zillman & Bhatia, 1989), and activities involving music occupy a large percentage of young people's leisure time (Frith, 1981). These levels increase significantly into adolescence, a time of identity formation (Erikson, 1968). Research suggests that music may be the single most important leisure activity young people engage in (Lowe, 2007; Lowe, 2001; Wigfield, O'Neill & Eccles, 1999; Fitzgerald, Joseph, Hayes & O'Regan, 1995).

A 2003 national report (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cultural Ministers Council – The Arts, 2003) found that nearly 21% of students aged 14 – 17 in Western

Australia were actively involved in playing musical instruments compared to a national average of 17%. Of this 21%, nearly 80% had formal instrumental lessons either at school or with private teachers.

Therefore, students engage in relatively high levels of elective formal involvement with music. However, this contrasts with their attitude towards music at school. Indeed, past authors have described a perceptual divide between 'school' music and 'real' music in students (Vulliamy & Shepherd, 1984b).

2.2 Students and class music

Research into the relationship between students and music at school has been an enduring and controversial topic notably in the United Kingdom (Handford & Watson, 2003; Sloboda, 2001; Plummeridge, 1997; Gammon, 1996; Ross, 1998; Ross & Kamba, 1996; Ross, 1995; Hannam, 1992; Ross & Witkin, 1971). While often not specifically directed towards investigation of rates of participation or assessment of the value of learning activities in class music, this research gives insights into students' global beliefs about music at school. Class music in the United Kingdom, before the introduction of the English National Curriculum (ENC), was based upon the Western classical canon and was described by a majority of secondary students in the School Council's report (1968) as the most boring and useless subject in the curriculum. Ross & Witkin (1971) found music ranked tenth out of ten on a student based league table subject popularity index.

Since the introduction of the ENC in 1992, further assessment of student attitudes towards class music have claimed that attitudes remain unchanged, despite curriculum reform. Replication by Hannam (1992) and Ross & Witkin (1996) of Ross & Witkin's original study found that class music still languished in popularity (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 *League table popularity index findings from Ross & Witkin (1971), Hannam (1992) and Ross & Kamba (1996)*

Subject ranking	Ross & Witkin (1971)	Hannam (1992)	Ross & Kamba (1996)
1	Crafts	Crafts	Technology
2	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
3	English	English	English
4	Science	Mathematics	Mathematics
5	Art	Drama	Art
6	Drama	Art	Science
7	Mathematics	Science	Drama
8	Humanities	Humanities	Geography
9	Foreign Languages	**Music**	History
10	**Music**	Foreign Languages	Foreign Languages
11	N/A	N/A	**Music**

Note: Music highlighted using bold print

In addition, music failed to rank in the top five most popular arts subjects (NFER Harland, Kinder & Hartley, 1995) and in 2000, the NFER report 'Arts Education in Secondary Schools: Effects and Effectiveness' (Harland, Kinder, Lord, Stott, Schagen and Haynes, 2000) described class music as 'the most attitudinally problematic and vulnerable artform' (p.568). These findings have occurred after the introduction of a progressive, presumably motivating, curriculum in 1992. Significantly, Harland, Kinder & Hartley (1995) reported that musical involvement was rated more highly by students outside of school. Sloboda (2001) also highlighted a decline in attitudes towards music in schools. While taking a wider sociological view of the failure of school music to engage large numbers of students, Sloboda noted that classroom practices may not have changed in the United Kingdom, despite curriculum reform. Understanding of the practical implications of curriculum reform may not have occurred at the classroom level.

2.3 The Australian experience

A search of the Biography of Australian Music Education Research (BAMER) data-base revealed no formal research into the phenomenon of low participation rates or the motivational impact of learning activities in class music programmes in Australia. Most motivational research has been conducted within the instrumental music domain (Merrick, 2006; McPherson & McCormick, 2006; McPherson & Zimmerman, 2002; McPherson & Renwick, 2001). However, Rosevear (2003) reported a dichotomy in students' passionate interest in music outside school and low Year 12 participation rates in music in South Australia. Rosevear questioned the

relevance of current school music programmes in not capitalising upon adolescent interest in music. A survey of post compulsory class music participation rates in Western Australia since 1998 reveals an average annual music cohort of around 2.8 - 3% as opposed to over 8% for art and drama (Table 2.2). These figures would appear to compliment Rosevear's South Australian findings that the current post compulsory music course in Western Australia may also not be capitalising on student interest in music.

Table 2.2 *TEE music numbers across the three major arts from 1998 – 2006 and % of the state cohort.*

Year	State cohort	Music	% of cohort	Drama	% of cohort	Art	% of cohort
1998	11,843	338	2.8	-	-	1149	9.7
1999	11,959	350	2.9	643	5.3	1091	9.1
2000	11,986	322	2.6	922	7.7	1085	9.0
2001	12, 042	340	2.8	1015	8.4	1077	8.9
2002	12, 272	322	2.6	1000	8.1	1076	8.8
2003	12,426	341	2.7	1087	8.7	1061	8.5
2004	11,652	328	2.8	956	8.2	917	7.8
2005	11,610	358	3.0	972	8.3	926	8.0
2006	10,953	352	3.2	925	8.4	810	7.4

Note. From *Secondary Education Statistics, www.curriculum.wa.edu.au*

2.4 The North American experience

Researchers in North America have reported discrepancies between attitudes towards music, and attitudes towards music at school. Both Austin & Vispoel (1998) and Asmus (1994) reported that while motivation for learning declined in adolescence in general, motivation for class music declined more than for any other subject. Pogonowski (1985) reported consistent research from as far back as 1961 (Broquist, 1961) that attitudes towards music at school declined sharply across upper primary school, particularly among boys. However, while also reporting that boys' motivation declined more than girls, Boswell (1991) stated that attitudes did not uniformly decline across all settings because the type of the learning activity was the most significant factor in determining motivational levels.

Walker (2003) reported that only 5% of North American students continued music studies into college. However, care is required when comparing North American findings to an Australian setting because school music in North America operates

within a different philosophical framework based around the concept of 'band', resulting in a unique set of student values and beliefs.

2.5 The transition into secondary school

While reported post compulsory class music participation rates are low in the United Kingdom, Western Australia and North America, in general terms the first year of secondary school has been identified as the time when student attitudes towards all school subjects exhibit a sharp decline (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005; Harter, 1990). Declining attitudes at this time can have a significant impact upon all post compulsory subject choices and participation rates (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005; Eccles, 2005).

Harter (1990) described the biological onset of adolescence for students entering secondary school as an emotionally turbulent time, resulting in changes in thinking and behaviour. More significant are the environmental changes experienced by students, such as:

- disruption of social networks as students move to different schools;
- larger and less personal school bureaucracies;
- less personal relationships with teachers; and
- ability streaming in many subjects.

Eccles & Midgeley (1989) stated that students at this age (about age 12) are growing cognitively and emotionally and require greater freedom and autonomy, but school environments do not always provide these opportunities or promote these qualities.

Importantly, Wigfield & Wagner (2005) noted that increasingly negative student attitudes from the commencement of secondary school are often the result of instructional practices as students do not find topics and materials interesting, in part due to the nature of the topics, and in part due to a growing interest in activities outside school. Therefore, the disruptive change to secondary school can have a negative impact upon student attitudes in general, and attitudes formed at the commencement of secondary school can become increasingly entrenched with each successive year (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005).

2.6 Why class music participation rates remain low

Problematic student attitudes towards school music programmes in the United Kingdom have been described by Sloboda (2001), Swanwick (1996), Hargreaves (1986) and Rainbow (1985) as arising as a result of:

- methodological confusion - competing teaching methodologies resulting in lack of continuity;
- a narrow curriculum still centred largely upon the Western classical canon;
- over-dependence on non-contextualised skill acquisition; and
- lack of understanding of the creative process in music.

These issues appear to have persisted despite curriculum reform and the move towards a progressive, practical and creative curriculum since 1992. Ross (1995 & 1998) argued that music teaching has been impervious to the creative developments in other arts disciplines. In comparing his 1971 study with his 1996 study, he concluded that:

> Whilst on the evidence of the present study, remaining the weakest of the arts, music does, nevertheless show signs of increasing student support. It is more interesting and more helpfully taught than it was, however, the enjoyment factor remains unchanged and disappointingly low. (p. 260)

Sloboda (2001) took a broader view. He stated that students saw music as an extra, a hobby, and that they may not actually enjoy a formal school approach to the study of music. In addition, he stated that students chose to listen to musical genres which suited their psychological needs and that these were not always compatible with the choices teachers made. Further, many music teachers were classically trained. Their musical values and beliefs did not match their students', and when they tried to introduce more popular programmes, they lacked the teaching methods and practical means to do so.

> One cannot just insert a popular genre into a set of classroom practices that have been developed with classical music. (p. 248)

Finally for Sloboda, the subcultural associations surrounding popular music were as important as the music itself, and this was difficult to convey in the classroom

situation. While refuting many of Sloboda's criticism of teachers, Handford & Watson (2003) did support his call for a radical rethink on how class music should taught, in particular the need to review teaching strategies and techniques. These included the need for teachers to improve their presentation skills, greater use of audio-visual equipment and technology and the need to look and learn from teaching/learning experiences in other subject domains. In this, Handford & Watson agreed with Sloboda and Ross in attributing much of the problem of problematic students attitudes to past teaching practices.

Bresler (1998) philosophically summarised the problem of largely unchanged student attitudes by stating that while curriculum change has been focused towards guiding student self-expression and developing idiographic meaning, many music teachers still dwell in a past paradigm of formally cultivating mind and spirit. Therefore, many music teachers still attempt to impose values and beliefs upon students, rather than guide students towards the formation of their own values and beliefs.

2.7 Criticism of past research

Past motivational research in the United Kingdom has endured considerable criticism (Plummeridge, 1997; Gammon, 1996, Handford & Watson, 2003) over the use of small samples and resulting lack of generalisable findings. All of the preceding authors have claimed that not all schools are failing. Plummeridge and Gammon criticised Ross's use of a ranking table methodology. They claimed that ranking tables implied winners and losers, and that lower rankings did not always imply failure. They noted that in Ross's 1996 study where music was ranked last (11th) on the popularity index, 30% of participants indicated unhappiness with class music, implying that 70% were happy. Further, Ross's ranking criteria was never published making it difficult for other researchers to verify his results.

Gammon (1996) and Handford & Watson (2003) noted little delineation between class music and instrumental music in either Ross's or Sloboda's criticisms. Both claimed that instrumental findings were contextually relevant but were not the same, and were indicative of general trends only. Therefore, Ross's and Sloboda's

conclusions have been questioned upon the grounds of methodology, interpretation and generalisability (Handford & Watson, 2003; Plummeridge, 1997; Gammon, 1996).

North American research has been undertaken within a completely different teaching 'band' methodology where music is taught in a large ensemble group setting of up to 50 students at a time. Therefore, the direct relevance of North American research to Western Australia both in terms of research methodologies and findings can be questioned. Further, music education researchers in North America have been concerned almost exclusively with students playing an instrument (Hallam, 2002). Classroom music teaching has been largely ignored.

Finally, it was apparent in the context of this study that much international research in music education has been undertaken within theoretical frameworks based around investigation of the construct of attitudes (Ross, 1998; 1995; Boswell, 1991; Pogonowski, 1985). This raised a number of fundamental questions over the definition of attitudes which are addressed in the following sections of this chapter.

2.7.1 Definitions of attitudes in music education research

There has been no standard accepted definition of attitudes in music education research. Research has been conducted largely around a broad construct defined in general terms as 'interest and enjoyment'. Stahlberg & Frey (1988) reported the Rosenberg & Hovland (1960) definition of attitudes as "a predisposition to respond to some class of stimuli with certain classes of response" (p.143), with three components: affective (like/dislike), cognitive (beliefs) and conative (behavioural outcomes). This contrasted with a standard one-dimensional definition by Petty & Cacioppo (1986) as "a general enduring disposition (positive or negative) about some person, object or issue" (p.143). Petty & Cacioppo's definition differentiated between beliefs and overt action.

Stahlberg & Frey (1988) discussed the conflict between the two definitions above, with the Rosenberg & Hovland model offering a strong behavioural outcomes based definition, and the Petty & Cacioppo model offering a general affective definition. In attempting a degree of consensus, Schlegel (1975) and Breckler (1984) suggested that attitude dimensionality may vary with the kind of object being studied,

and with the complexity and intensity of attitudes – therefore, the stronger the attitudes, the greater the number of assessable dimensions and the greater likelihood for resulting behavioural outcomes.

Schlegel & DiTecco (1982) suggested that attitudes based upon first-hand experience, such as students in a class music programme, had a strong cognitive component which needed to be considered when examining the affective component. For example, students may not find mathematics 'interesting and enjoyable' but would elect to continue studying mathematics if they perceived it to be important. This suggests, therefore, that even if the cognitive component runs contrary to the affective component, it needs to be acknowledged within a framework for investigation. Affective measurement alone does not always reveal the cognitive picture and highlights the danger in global assessments based around a one-dimensional construct based upon affective 'enjoyment'.

Examination of past research in music education suggested that research had focussed upon an affective, one-dimensional model (Ross, 1998; 1995; Boswell, 1991; Pogonowski, 1985). Attitudes have been assessed upon a narrow affective like/dislike continuum. The role of beliefs in shaping attitudes has largely been ignored in favour of the emotional connection to the stimuli. Other cognitive components such as importance (Schlegel & DiTecco; 1982) have not been acknowledged. Given the reported strength and breadth of student feelings towards music outlined in 2.1 (p.7), researchers may need to consider the dimensionality of their conceptual frameworks, as the number of assessable dimensions may increase with the intensity of feelings (Breckler, 1984; Schlegel, 1975). Further, there may be other fundamental issues to be considered when researching the construct of attitudes, as follows.

2.7.2. Attitudinal dimensionality

Attitudes are a hypothetical construct and are difficult to assess. Stahlberg & Frey (1988) noted the more complex the stimuli, the more likely cognitive beliefs influencing attitudes were to be numerous, contradictory and complex. Therefore, the one-dimensional model may be simplistic in that it does not reveal all dimensions. Other researchers have acknowledged the actual difficulty in differentiating and measuring the affective, cognitive and conative dimensions of the multidimensional

model (Reiss, 2007). Riess has proposed up to 16 components within the cognitive/affective dimension of attitudes which guide meaningful behaviour, including power, independence, curiosity, acceptance, order, saving, honour, idealism, social contact, family, exercise and tranquillity. While not all components may be relevant in a music education setting, Reiss's proposed components illustrate the possibly complex nature of attitudes as a construct.

2.7.3. Attitudinal stability

Much research has relied on the basic underlying assumption that attitudes are relatively stable and can be measured. However, student attitudes are less stable, and while acknowledging the value-expressive function of attitudes in reflecting central values or self-concept, student attitudes can change rapidly through contact with stimuli such as specific learning activities, feedback and other environmental factors (Stahlberg & Frey, 1988). Further, Stahlberg & Frey (1988) have reported that attitudes strengthen over time with experience and exposure to stimuli, implying that Year 8 students may simply not have had enough exposure to class music to formulate clear, affective stable responses. In addition, the assumption in attitudinal research has been that students are able and motivated to disclose true attitudes. Students may not have clearly defined attitudes towards class music, in terms of like and dislike, and measurement forces them to create one (Stahlberg & Frey, 1988). Finally, young participants in research may simply not be able to articulate their thoughts clearly.

2.7.4. Attitudes and action

Researchers have argued as to whether attitudes actually guide behaviour. Huitt (2001), in support of Petty & Cacioppo (1986), claimed that attitudes were an affective subjective disposition which did not necessarily have a behavioural orientation. Therefore, even if attitudes could be effectively measured, did they indicate action? Ajzen & Fishbein (1984) stated that any correlation between attitudes and action needed take into account:

- what the action was;
- at what was the action directed;
- in what context was action framed; and

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- how often and how long the action was undertaken.

Further, Ajzen & Fishbein (1984) stated that any correlation between attitudes and behaviour exhibited a strong degree of specificity and should not be employed in global assessment, or if so with care in interpretation. Weston, Burton & Kowalski (2006) concurred that although attitudes led to a behavioural disposition, they have not been demonstrated to consistently predict overt behaviour, such as, student decisions to continue in class music programmes. Students may like class music but not continue with it because it does not fulfil other needs or competing beliefs. Finally, Reber (1985) noted that the constructs of attitudes and emotion were intimately twined with motivation – emotional states had motivational properties, and the energising elements of motivation often had a strong emotional undertone. It was evident that past frameworks, while examining attitudes themselves, offered limited scope to investigate the cause of attitudes – the emotional state at the core of attitudes. Without a clear framework for investigation, there was potential for confusion.

The above indicated that for this study, the construct of attitudes as previously conceived in much music education research, did not offer a reliable or stable enough theoretical foundation for further detailed examination of the relationship between students and class music. This was particularly the case in relation to learning activities and rates of participation, because:

- by only reporting the affective component as a global definition based upon 'interest and enjoyment', it largely ignored the cognitive component of beliefs which may offer a contradictory explanation of resulting action;
- the link between attitudes and resulting behaviour was not theoretically strong enough for researchers to confidently state that attitudes were a direct cause of low rates of retention in class music programmes; and
- attitudinal frameworks offered a limited view of what students currently felt and lacked the rigour to further explore how feelings and beliefs were shaped and developed.

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Despite limitations associated with the construct of attitudes, it has still provided researchers with grounds for describing the global behavioural outcomes of a range of exogenous and endogenous influences upon student beliefs towards class music.

2.8 Exogenous influences

Exogenous influences are defined in this study as influences beyond the control of the school. Teo (2005), Pogonowski (1985) and Frith (1981) investigated the effects of socio-economic status and reported inconclusive findings – socio economic status appeared to have no impact upon attitudes towards music at school. Similar results were reported for musical aptitude (O'Neill, 1999; Pogonowski, 1985; Shuter-Dyson & Gabriel, 1981). These are not further addressed in this study.

Attitudes and gender is a well researched area in music education. Researchers have traditionally described female attitudes towards class music as being consistently more positive than boys (Teo, 2005; Lowe, 2001; Colley, Comber & Hargreaves, 1994; Boswell, 1991; Pogonowski, 1985). Within class music, Phillips (1995), Crowther (1982) and Abeles & Porter (1978) reported singing and playing musical instruments such as the flute and violin to be perceived as feminine activities, and male attitudes towards the subject improved when computer based music software technology was introduced (Comber et al., 1993). However, gender distinctions towards particular instruments are blurred in schools with contemporary music programmes, possibly because there are fewer gender stereotypes in popular music (Lowe, 2001, Duveen & Lloyd, 1986) and because students are more likely to learn popular music instruments to reinforce badge identity (O'Neill, 1999), for example, to appear 'cool'. The previously reported traditional gender differences appear to be less relevant with the rise of contemporary based music programmes.

Findings on peers suggest that while student attitudes and actions are tempered by a desire for social acceptance and peer expectations (Christenson & DeBenedettis, 1986) and are both stronger in boys (Hallam, 2002), these decline when learning activities are absorbing (Maehr, 1983). Thus potential attitudinal problems decrease when all students are involved and enjoy what they are doing. Similarly, findings for parents indicated that, while they affected initial attitudes towards music, the effects

tended to decline with prolonged task exposure and age (Gregory-Hurley, 1995). Wigfield & Wager (2005) noted the declining influence of parents on attitudes, particularly with regard to schooling, as students entered secondary school. Further formal investigation of the role of peers and parents is not further addressed in this study.

2.9 Endogenous influences

Endogenous influences are defined within this study as influences generated by the school environment. Findings by Brand (2004), Hallam (2002) and Sims (1996) suggested that teacher personality affected the immediate attentiveness of students but did not affect long term attitudes towards class music. Thus students may engage with a popular music teacher but still largely dislike the subject. Research into classroom management (Gordon, 2002) suggested that management had its own unique dimensions which impacted on the quality of teacher/student interactions but this area is still largely under researched in the music teaching domain.

More importantly, researchers have described the impact upon student attitudes of the institution, through both the unwritten status granted to class music, and the status of the music teacher. Hallam (2002), Cady (1992) and Hunt & Sullivan (1974) all noted the powerful mediating effect of the institution in reflecting its own and broader cultural views towards the value of music education. Olsson (1996) stated that this was manifested in resources, facilities and staffing levels in school music programmes. Hodge (1994) noted the generally low social status of music teachers with few occupying positions of higher authority. Given this, student attitudes may be affected negatively by perceptions of the low social status of the music teacher and the quality of the physical resources (Hodge, 1994).

However, importantly for this study, the literature review revealed learning activities to have the strongest influence upon student decisions to continue class music studies. In general terms, learning activities were central in all cognitive motivational theories in education because of their role in stimulating thinking and feelings, and not just developing learned behaviours (Weston et al., 2006; Zimmerman, 2000; Schiefele, 1999; Bandura, 1997; Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Asmus, 1986a; Weiner, 1974).

In music eduction, this is further reinforced by the current constructivist philosophical belief surrounding the importance of developing idiographic meaning – that knowledge of music is a constructed reality on the part of students, not just a discovered one (Bresler, 1998). Learning activities are central in facilitating the construction of idiographic meaning, based upon the assumption that each learning activity helps add to the construction of an understanding of music by extending students abilities. Further, successive learning activities lead to a transformation of existing knowledge, as activities are memorized and processed (Smith & Ragan, 1999). While various constructivist perspectives hold different views on the construction of learning activities, the centrality of the learning activity in stimulating thinking and feelings remains the same (Smith & Ragan, 1999).

From an attitudinal perspective, learning activities impact largely upon the value and competence framework of students (Smith & Ragan, 1999). Smith & Ragan have paraphrased values as 'why it is worth doing', and competence as 'how to do it' (p.252). Further, while values and competence beliefs are cognitive constructs, Smith & Ragan (1999) noted that they are mediated by the social learning context and the affective, emotional preparation to learn, often framed by past engagement. A significant body of researchers within music education concur (Merrick, 2006; Hallam, 2002; McPherson & Renwick, 2001; O'Neill, 1999; Ross, 1998 & 1995; Boswell, 1991; Pogonowski, 1985). In particular, Eccles & Wigfield (2002) and O'Neill (1999) have drawn upon 10 years of research into values and competence which has demonstrated a correlation between declining values for playing a musical instrument and decreasing enrolments in instrumental music programmes. Further, both Boswell (1991) and Pogonowski (1985) described a positive change in attitudes among upper primary school students when music learning activities were changed from a formal, theoretical model to a process oriented, creative model.

In summary, learning activities impact upon the development of student values and beliefs as student consider what they are doing and whether they can successfully complete them.

2.10 The definition of learning activities

For the purpose of this study, the term 'task' is employed interchangeably with 'learning activities'. This is because while the term 'learning activities' is currently accepted in educational practice, it is not widely used in psychological research, particularly in relation to attitudes and motivation. However, both 'task' and 'learning activity' are, for the purposes of this study, merely labels assigned to purposeful interaction between teachers and students. Of greater importance is the operational definition assigned to the joint terms.

Within this study, the terms 'learning activity' and 'task' have been employed as an inclusive term associated with the process of design, delivery and evaluation of learning activities, from the student perspective. They encompass terms such as technique, content, strategy, instruction and activity. The researcher acknowledges the unique nature of each of these components (Smith & Ragan, 1999; Driscoll, 1994; Tait, 1992; Constanza & Russell, 1992) but employs an umbrella term because:

- the broader term acknowledges and accommodates a wide range of music teaching methods likely to be encountered in Year 8 class music across settings, including Kodály, Orff, Dalcroze, traditional and contemporary pragmatic based approaches;
- the aim of the study is to examine Year 8 student perceptions of the overall impact of tasks, and not the isolated impact of the design, delivery and evaluation components within tasks;
- Year 8 students may not easily distinguish between the acts of planning, delivery and evaluation. For them, they comprise part of the act of 'being taught' and operate on a time continuum of being introduced to the activity, undertaking the activity and gaining feedback on their performance within the activity; and
- the term 'task' conforms to definitions of task employed in past attitudinal/motivational theoretical frameworks within the field of psychology.

Having used the term in a broader context, this study acknowledges the distinction between the term 'curriculum' and 'learning activities/tasks' in general education. The term curriculum is used in the specific context of a prescribed course of study involving outcomes usually mandated by the State (Bartel, 2001; Smith & Ragan,

1999; Abeles, Hoffer & Klotman, 1995) while learning activities/tasks are used in the context of student's perceptions of individual teacher constructed, delivered and evaluated activities (Smith & Ragan, 1999).

In conclusion, given the variety of issues raised by past research into the meaning of attitudes as a construct, for the purpose of this study, it was necessary to examine the potential for other theoretical foundations to underpin an investigation of the impact of learning activities. Further, it was noted that terms such as values and competence, used to describe the cognitive and affective impact of learning activities upon student beliefs, were widely associated with motivation research. Accordingly, motivational theories were examined, as follows.

PART TWO

2.11 Background definitions of motivation

Motivation is a definitionally elusive term and stems from the Latin root 'to move'. Therefore the study of motivation is the study of readiness for movement. Motivation was defined by Reber (1985) as an internal state that impels or drives an action, and as an energiser of behaviour. It was summarised by Cardwell (1996) as "Why organisms act as they do" (p.148). Reber described two broad views of motivation as 1) general arousal without a specific goal, and 2) specific to particular drives and needs. The second view suggested that motivation could be analysed in terms of specific goals and directionality.

While motivation has been characterised by the general premise that a behavioural tendency occurs because of a guiding readiness state, other variables are involved, such as:

- need or drive level;
- incentive value of the goal;
- expectations;
- availability of appropriate responses (learned behaviours); and
- the presence of conflict and unconscious factors.

The most important of these variables is the concept of needs which Reber (1985) defined as "a state of affairs which at present would improve the well being of an organism" (p. 484).

Maslow (1954) formulated a hierarchy of needs on a five-level scale ranging from basic physiological drives such as the drive to eat, through to more complex psychological and cognitive needs. The five levels are:

- Level 1 – basic life needs (biological and physiological);
- Level 2 – safety needs;
- Level 3 – belongingness and love needs;
- Level 4 – esteem needs; and
- Level 5 – self actualisation.

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Maslow stated that higher level needs could only be fulfilled once needs on the preceding levels had been met. Huitt, (2001) noted that later researchers have added additional levels to Maslow's original structure based around aesthetic, cognitive and transcendental needs. However, while there is ongoing debate within the research community as to identification of basic human needs and how they are ordered, Maslow's five-level hierarchy represents a convenient model for locating the need to achieve within the context of this study (Huitt, 2001).

2.12. Three broad orientations of research

Reber (1985) describes three broad motivational research orientations. Each one is now considered in turn.

2.12.1. Physiological

Physiological research has involved the analysis of neurological and biochemical underpinnings of motivation, and has been limited to so 'so called' primary drives such as hunger, thirst, pain avoidance and sex. It has been based around understanding the importance of internal drives (Cardwell, 1996) to satisfy basic needs. When physiological needs have been satisfied, motivation wanes (Hull, 1943). Music education research does not appear to have been undertaken in this area.

2.12.2 Behavioural

Behavioural research has been concerned with drive theories and learning theory related to incentives (extrinsic motivation). It was originally very popular in general education but research has moved beyond this position which Reber (1985) reported was being criticised as early as 1948 as being simplistic. Behavioural motivation is largely triggered through learning and interaction with the external environment. Thus, the importance of the external environment is stressed through rewards and punishments, with positively rewarded behaviour likely to be repeated while punishment is avoided (Hallam, 2002). While uncommon in contemporary general education, it was noted that behavioural based research is still undertaken in music education research, particularly with regard the teaching of skills acquisition and feedback in instrumental performance (Belcher, 2007; Duke & Henneger, 1998; Hargreaves, 1986).

2.12.3. Psychosocial

Reber (1985) described psychosocial research as being oriented towards complex, learned human behaviours, but apart from shared basics around the concept of cognition, research in this area has been extremely varied. Early research was undertaken by Freud who explained behaviour as an internal energy system driven by sexual and/or aggressive drives operating in the pursuit of pleasure (Hallam, 2002). Later theories expanded this and stressed the drive towards growth and self-development. More humanistic theories have stressed the freedom of the individual to choose a particular course of action (Hallam 2002). Murray (1938) originally listed twenty motives (drives), and of these, four have received considerable research attention: 1) the need for achievement, 2) the need for affiliation, 3) the need for hierarchy/power, and 4) the need for self-determination (Hallam, 2002). These motives generally correspond with Level 4 needs found within Maslow's hierarchical model.

Modern theories of motivation take into account cognition and constructed perceptions of events, how interpretation of events change perceptions of self, the ability of the individual to determine their own behaviour while recognising the role of the environment in rewarding or punishing and subsequently affecting future action, and more recently, time scale – how motivation evolves over time. At the highest level, motivation in adults may be driven by personality and life goals (the need for self-actualisation), but for students in the school setting by pragmatic goal orientation, the need for competence and self-worth and the demands of the environment (Hallam, 2002).

Bandura (1997) summarised modern social cognitive motivation theories within the psychosocial research orientation as an individual's interpretation of situations or events, their expectations, and the goals that mediate and regulate behaviour. In the context of this study, this equates to how students' interpret the value of musical learning activities, their self-beliefs in relation to learning activities and long and short term personal and pragmatic goals. These are all mediated by the social environment of the school, the classroom and past experience, and by the overarching need to achieve.

2.13 Achievement motivation

One of Murray's original motives, this has been an enduring research area, and was defined by Reber (1985) as "the desire to compete with a standard of excellence, or a personal motive manifested as a striving for success" (p.6). It is based upon the belief that humans are proactive organisms who are motivated to extend their capabilities and interact with their environment effectively, and is relevant in the context of this study given findings previously reported in 2.1 (p.7) that students strive to engage and interact with music during adolescence. While an assumption might be drawn that that students would also strive to engage with class music, post compulsory enrolment numbers in Western Australia outlined in 2.3 (p.9) suggest that this does not appear to be the case.

Researchers such as Hallam (2002) have described achievement motivation as a socially characterised need with two critical components:

- a set of internalised standards that represent personal achievement (internal state); and
- motivating conditions that compel the person to meet these standards (stimulus).

Atkinson (1957) stated:

> An individual's expectancies for success and the value they have for succeeding are important determinants of their motivation to perform different achievement tasks...individuals anticipate that their performance will succeed or fail, therefore the value is defined as the attractiveness of succeeding or failing on a task. (p. 360).

There are many research perspectives within this broad research umbrella. Some of the most enduring research paradigms associated with achievement motivation include:

- intrinsic motivation – striving to achieve for reasons internal to the person, such as challenge, enjoyment (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci & Ryan, 1985);
- extrinsic motivation – striving to achieve for external reward (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci, Neslek & Sheinman, 1981);

- goal orientation – desired end states such as competence, mastery and flow (Ford, 1992; Csikszentmihalyi, 1988); and

- personality – individual differences (Kemp, 1986).

These differing research perspectives incorporate a variety of different constructs including motive dispositions, attributions, evaluation anxiety, goals, competence perceptions and values.

According to Elliott & Dweck (2005), therein lies an inherent weakness in achievement motivation research because there is no broadly articulated, consensually shared understanding of how achievement should be conceptualised. For them, achievement motivation research has lacked coherence and clear parameters. This has had implications for theory development and research, and these implications are addressed in the following sections.

2.14 Achievement motivation and related theories in education

Achievement motivation has been a popular research topic in education. Asmus (1994) reported that no less than 4,000 completed studies had been conducted in North America alone, but very few in music education. However, much of the achievement motivation research undertaken within music education has been undertaken within the instrumental music field which offers limited transferability to the classroom music domain, especially in Western Australia (McPherson & Rewick, 2001; O'Neill, 1999; O'Neill, 1996). Teaching methodologies in instrumental music are based around a one to one or small group (< 5) teacher/student teaching ratio, and involves very specific learning activities directed towards high level physical skills acquisition. Therefore, achievement motivation research within the class music domain is a relatively under-researched field.

As in general achievement motivation theories, the student is seen in educational research as a rational decision maker but, according to this theoretical position, motives are less stable and enduring, as motivation is more strongly influenced by stimulus related factors such as past experience, perceptions of the

subject and the learning activity, the role of the teacher, and interpretation of feedback (Stahlberg & Frey, 1988). These factors can change rapidly. Eccles & Wigfield (2002) reported that motivational theories in developmental and educational psychology have centred upon student beliefs, values and goals with action. Elliott & Dweck (2005) noted that research in education has been directed through the lens of competence, giving it a much clearer focus than general achievement motivation research. Taking a slightly wider view, for the purposes of this study, a review of motivational literature in education was grouped into four broad research orientations:

- theories focused upon competence/expectancy;
- theories focused upon reasons for engagement (values);
- theories integrating competence/expectancy and value constructs; and
- theories integrating motivation and cognition.

While agreeing with Elliott & Dweck (2005) that competence has been central and offered a degree of uniformity, it was important to acknowledge other constructs which operated in conjunction with, or parallel to competence within the achievement motivation umbrella.

2.14.1 Expectancy based theories

A large number of theories have focused upon student beliefs about their competence and efficacy for success or failure, and sense of control over outcomes. Some beliefs relate to the fundamental question 'Can I succeed on this task' (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005). When the answer is yes, students perform better and are more motivated to attempt challenging tasks (Eccles, 2005; Bandura, 1986).

Self-efficacy

Bandura (1986) defined self-efficacy as "people's judgements of their own capabilities to organise and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (p.391). The statement "organise and execute a course of action" within the definition implied not just what students thought about their ability to complete a task but the result of undertaking it. Self-efficacy relates to specific goals as determined by the task, individual or environment, and includes outcome

expectations which are beliefs about ability to complete a task (similar to expectancies), and beliefs about resulting grades, or praise, rewards or self satisfaction (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Thus, self-efficacy research examines readiness for action against resulting behaviours. High efficacy means students believe they can achieve and so will attempt difficult tasks, and relates to quality and quantity of effort and resulting self-satisfaction, leading to self-regulated learning (Merrick, 2006).

Self-efficacy presented a compelling foundation for this study because it offered observable and measurable outcomes, and was well suited to investigation of broad based expectancies towards specific goals. However, it is more focussed upon students' own perceptions of competence and success in relation to a set task, and not generalised, comparative assessments of competence or value judgements of the subject or task itself. It has been popular in instrumental music research in Australia (Merrick, 2006; McPherson & McCormick, 2006; McPherson & Zimmerman, 2002), particularly in relation to older students and the potential of high efficacy to lead to the development of self-regulated music learning through performance and composition related tasks. The ability for detailed self disclosure relating to outcome expectations and resulting task related grades suggested the need for an intensive methodology not as well suited to broad based research requiring assessment of the value of learning activities by Year 8 students. Pintrich & Schunk (1996) also claimed that self-efficacy research was better suited to smaller scale, intense research related to specific set tasks, not larger broad scale studies examining the cumulative and comparative effects of past experiences upon current task perceptions and beliefs.

Self Perceptions of competence & ability

Competence based expectancies derive from Harter (1982) and are defined as generalised cognitive evaluations of ability across domains such as 'I can do tasks' (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). In this framework, self perceptions of competence are more related to personal identity and affect than task related expectancies or actual achievement. Early research within this construct was based upon competence components across all school subjects grouped as:

- academic - student self-perceptions of competence across all academic tasks;

- social - student self-perceptions of competence in interactions with others; and

- physical - student self-perceptions of competence in sport and physical activities.

Pintrich & Schunk (1996) noted a growing acknowledgement that the academic, social and physical components may be more differentiated within subject domains, and the theory has been expanded to include a mediating general expectancies component which is defined as a student's perceptions of general school aptitude across all subjects. However, as Pintrich & Schunk (1996) noted, researchers have yet to concur on the extent to which competence within this framework can be shown to be domain specific. They described issues to be resolved as:

- how cognition affects competence;

- the relationship between competence and self-esteem (self-esteem is a global assessment of competence); and

- the accuracy of the reporting of competence – competence is rated against actual achievement, raising the question of whether achievement influences competence or whether competence influences achievement.

Self perceptions of competence offered a more problematic theoretical foundation because beliefs within this framework have not been demonstrated to link with resulting action. Research appeared focussed upon current beliefs and not future outcome behaviour. It was also one-dimensional in the context of this study because it looked at the end product of competence beliefs, and did not formally examine the nature or role of the stimulus (task) in developing competence beliefs. Importantly however, while this theoretical position had not been explored in music education research, the differentiated nature of competencies within this broad framework offered a compelling foundation for reporting aspects of competence within a domain specific expectancies construct. This will be examined in 2.16.2.

Expectancies

An education specific definition of expectancies was presented by Eccles (1983) as 'Am I able to do this specific task?' (as opposed to Harter's generalised 'I

can do tasks'), and was closer to Bandura's outcome expectancies definition. However, Eccles has applied expectancies in a comparative, more generalised way in domain specific terms, rather than to specific tasks in isolation. By inference, a more generalised understanding of expectancies within this framework has an obvious academic evaluative component as well as environmental and social implications which can be paraphrased as 'Am I able to do this task as it is presented in this setting', because the environment and social setting mediates not only the ability to complete the task but a student's self evaluation in comparison to others. Tasks in class music are not undertaken in isolation as in an instrumental music lesson, but often in a group learning or comparative, evaluative situation. However, expectancies are generally reported as a domain centred, global construct based around an individual's self perception of their own competence and ability to succeed in the future. The degree to which expectancy beliefs are influenced by the environment is present, but not at the forefront in expectancies models.

Eccles noted that the type of task plays a part in developing expectancies (Eccles, 2005; Pintrich & Shunk, 1996), and that expectancies are closely related to actual achievement. They are influenced by self-concept (closely related to competence) and most importantly, are cumulative in that they are informed by past experience. Therefore, for Eccles (2005), expectancies are formed after repeated task exposure, and are not generally reported in relation to specific tasks. Thus, they were well suited to generalised, longitudinal examinations of the cumulative impact of learning activities.

Control theories

Control theories state that success is mostly dependent upon the extent to which people feel in control of success and failure (Skinner, Zimmer-Gembeck & Connell, 1998; Randall, 1965, Rotter, 1966 in Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). They encompass the basic needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness. According to this theory, students who control their learning environments should feel more competent. When learning needs are fulfilled, students will be engaged in learning. While acknowledging the centrality of tasks in facilitating the development of control, including the social aspect of relatedness, in the context of this study, it was determined that these theories

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were better suited to small scale studies with older students, as the method of inquiry required a degree of self-awareness and self-disclosure possibly not yet available to 12 year olds. In addition, it was also determined that felt that the theoretical framework was not quite broad enough to encompass a full examination of the nature of the task in facilitating control. However, it is acknowledged that a student's need for competence and autonomy are important internal states, and that learning activities play an important role in enhancing these needs.

2.14.2 Theories focused upon the reasons for engagement

Eccles & Wigfield (2002) noted that while theories dealing with competence, expectancies and control beliefs provide detailed explanations of student performances on different kinds of learning activities, these theories do not necessarily systematically examine the reasons why students engage in a task. Even if students feel they can complete a task, it does not necessarily mean that they might want to. The following theories focus on the reason why this is the case.

Self-determination (intrinsic motivation)

Similar to control theories, self-determination theory states that students are motivated to maintain an optimum level of stimulation, and have a basic need to feel competent at whatever task they undertake (Deci, Vallerand, Peletier & Ryan, 1991). Therefore, students will seek stimulation and challenge to develop competence. Within class music, self-determination operates within individuals as either introjected, identified or integrated states (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002):

- the introjected student is driven by an internal feeling that they just have to engage in the activity;
- the identified student is driven by the belief that the activity is useful for external purposes (extrinsic motivation); and
- the integrated student feels compelled to engage in the activity by feelings that the activity is valuable and importance to self (intrinsic motivation).

This theory closely resembled other value constructs, but no research could be located in this area in music education.

Flow theory

Flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988) maintains that intrinsic motivation stems from stimulating task engagement resulting in 1) a holistic feeling of immersion in an activity, 2) the merging of action and awareness, 3) a focus upon a limited stimulus, 4) a lack of self-consciousness and 5) the individual feeling in control of actions and environment. Flow occurs when opportunities for action match the ability to master challenges and is an internal reward that ensures that individuals will seek to increase competence.

Flow theory has been widely applied in instrumental music research, often when investigating the self-regulating behaviour of gifted and highly motivated students (Kemp, 1986). However, it was reasoned that flow was unlikely to be occurring among Year 8 students within this research context given teaching time constraints and access to facilities, and this view was supported by previous attitudinal findings which implied that students in general were not becoming immersed in class music (Sloboda, 2001; Ross, 1998; 1995). However, this study will examine the conditions under which flow might be encouraged, through examination of the means by which learning activities might encourage task immersion.

Trait theories (Individual difference theories)

These theories have focussed upon personality, and are based upon the premise that people are driven by preferences for hard and challenging tasks, by curiosity and interest, or by striving for competence and mastery (Schiefele, 1996). Eccles & Wigfield (2002) summarised these theories as having two broad components:

- Individual interest – described as a relatively stable orientation towards a subject domain. Individual interest can be based upon feelings such as love of the subject, or based on the personal significance of the subject such as it's importance; and

- Situational interest – described as an emotional state aroused by a specific activity or task. Situational interest can be based upon personal relevance, novelty, the level of required involvement and comprehensibility.

In the context of this study, the nature of trait theories offered a useful foundation for potentially explaining why students choose to engage in an activity. However, the theory was not encompassing enough because it focussed solely upon the individual and did not formally acknowledge the wider social environment. However, the theory had value as part of a larger, broader framework for investigation.

Goal theories

Goal theories are concerned with student achievement goals and their relation to achievement behaviours, and there have been a number of different research approaches investigating this relationship. Bandura (1997) demonstrated that specific and challenging tasks promote self-efficacy and improved performance. Other researchers have taken a wider view. Dweck (1999) and Nicholls (1984) described two motivational goal orientations:

- Ego involved – students seek favourable evaluations of competence and minimise negative evaluations of competence; and
- Task involved – students focus upon the mastering tasks and increasing competence.

Ames (1992) reported very similar orientations:

- Performance goals – students try to outperform others; and
- Mastery goals – students are more focused upon their own progress.

Ford (1992) defined goals as desired end states people try to attain through cognitive, affective and physical regulation of their behaviour. He outlined an extensive taxonomy of 24 goals, but broadly catalogued them as 'within person' and 'person-environment' goals. Eccles & Wigfield (2002) suggested that in reality, students only demonstrate a few of these, as described below by Wentzel (1994).

Wentzel (1994) focussed upon the content of goals, and listed both social and academic goals relating to adolescent behaviours. For lower secondary students, prosocial goals included helping others, academic prosocial included sharing learning with others, peer social goals included following through on promises with friends, and academic responsibility goals included following teacher's instructions. Interestingly, academic responsibility goals related negatively to peer acceptance but positively to acceptance by teachers (Wentzel, 1994).

2.14.3 Theories integrating expectancy and value constructs

Attribution theory

Attribution theory is concerned with how students attribute success and failure upon the undertaking of a task. Attributions were described by Weiner (1974) as either stable or unstable, internal or external and were based around four categories: 1) ability, 2) effort, 3) task difficulty and 4) luck. If failure was attributed to something unstable such as bad luck, expectations of future success were unaffected, but if failure was attributed to a stable factor such as lack of ability, then there was an expectancy for continued failure via the cycle of action – outcome – attribution – effect.

A music specific attribution model was developed by Asmus (1994). It was based upon Weiner's general model but contained five categories: effort, background, classroom environment, musical ability and affect for music. Asmus's model has been effective in explaining motivation in relation to specific tasks such as an instrumental performance, and suits North American class music models based upon 'band' methodologies. However, for this study, Amus's theory does not address in sufficient detail values relating to the task (stimulus) itself, only the resulting attributions and environmental factors associated with success or otherwise in completing the task – thus, the theory appears more concerned with internal states and not so much evaluation of the qualities and dimensions of the stimulus impacting the internal state. Despite this, the researcher found the centrality of the social dimension of the classroom in Asmus's model to have appeal, given that the classroom environment impacts greatly upon design, delivery and feedback with a learning activities framework.

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Expectancy-value theory

Expectancy-value theory was developed by Atkinson (1957) and was based around the constructs of expectancies, which he defined as the probability for success, and values, which he defined as incentives. Eccles' (1983) model was developed specifically to explain adolescent motivation for mathematics, and is broader than the Atkinson original in that Eccles acknowledges the mediating effects of the broader cultural milieu and socialiser beliefs and behaviours (parents and teachers) at the forefront of the model. In the Eccles expectancy-value model, motives are tied into the stimulus (differentiated beliefs about the task) and competence/expectancy beliefs, based upon social norms, goal orientation and previous experiences. Therefore, values and beliefs are mediated by the social setting, personality traits and past achievement. Eccles broadly defines expectancies as 'Am I able to do this task', and values as 'Why should I do this task' (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005). Eccles (2005) reported that values and beliefs are positively correlated; students value tasks they do well in, rather than the reverse. The theory effectively acknowledges the strong relationship between learning activities (tasks) and their cumulative impact upon beliefs. Expectancy-value theory has been widely applied in the subject domains of mathematics, English, sport, science, languages and instrumental music (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005; DeBacker & Nelson, 1999; O'Neill, 1999; Wigfield, 1994).

Self-worth theories

Although not formally associated with values and expectancies, a link was noted between the value assigned a task and resulting achievement behaviour. Covington (1992, 1998) defined the motive for self-worth as the tendency to establish and maintain a positive self-image, and postulated that students spend a considerable amount of time in the classroom where they are regularly evaluated according to school requirements, subject to social comparisons and subject to competition. Students need to believe they are academically competent to protect self-worth, at least at school. Accordingly, most students try to maximise or protect their sense of academic competence by attributing success to effort and ability, and failure to not trying.

In protecting their perception of self-worth, students may engage in strategies such as procrastination, making excuses, challenge avoidance and not trying. Covington maintained that even high achieving students can avoid challenge to maintain comparative standing within the class, and that to help maintain self-worth, learning activities need to focus upon effort, mastery and personal improvement.

Some researchers have questioned whether academic competence is the strongest determinant of self-worth (Eccles, 2005; Harter, 1998). Harter (1998) reported physical appearance and social competence to be just as important for students. Eccles (2005) claimed that students may lower the value attached to a particular task to protect self-worth. Nevertheless, self-worth theories had the potential to link values and beliefs with resulting classroom achievement behaviours.

2.14.4 Theories integrating motivation and cognition

Some researchers have examined the links between motivation and cognition and how motivation is translated into behaviour.

Cognitive Dissonance theory

Developed by Festinger (1957), this theory stated that beliefs and action are correlated. When beliefs conflict with action, the individual acts to resolve conflict and discrepancies. Thus, if teachers can change student beliefs about a subject, students will adjust their resulting actions. Research relating to this framework has been undertaken in music education in the areas of preference modification and familiarity. Researchers have attempted to change student beliefs regarding classical music by subjecting them to prolonged exposure to selected classical musical works (Shehan Campbell, 1985; 1984; 1982; 1979). The results were somewhat ineffective as far as resolution of conflicting beliefs was concerned: students demonstrated positive preferences for the taught selections but still indicated dislike for classical music as a whole. Therefore, students in the studies appeared to compartmentalise their beliefs about the taught classical selections within their existing belief structures without altering their basic belief frameworks.

Self-regulation theories

Zimmerman (1989) defined self-regulating students as being metacognitively, motivationally and behaviourally active in their own learning processes and in achieving their own goals. However, the educational context was important because some learning environments did not permit much latitude in the choice of activities or approaches. Zimmerman (1989) described three characteristics of self-regulated learners as:

- they use active learning processes involving agency and purpose;
- they believe they can perform well and improve; and
- they set themselves numerous and varied goals.

According to Zimmerman (1989), self-regulated learners accomplish this through three important processes; 1) monitoring of their own activities, 2) applying self-judgements and 3) self-reflection.

Schunk & Ertmer (2000) described the interrelationship between goal setting, self evaluation and self-efficacy. When goals are proximal, specific and challenging, they are most effective in motivating behaviour and increasing self-efficacy. Further, self-efficacy is higher when learning activities emphasise mastery goals.

In summary, self-regulation emphasises students engaging in a task, monitoring their own behaviour and reacting to those outcomes to regulate what they do. Research in Australia has been undertaken by Merrick (2006) with older students in the instrumental music field, but not in the class music domain.

2.14.5 Conclusion of achievement motivation theories

In examining the range of motivational theories within the achievement motivation umbrella, with the exception of cognitive dissonance, expectancies based and flow theories, most theories have not been widely applied in music education research. Many studies were perceived to utilise theoretical parameters best suited to research in specific situations, the effects of specific tasks or smaller scale, intense studies. Further, in many cases, theoretical frameworks implied the use of qualitative

methodologies which are better suited to small scale intense studies of individuals and situations rather than a broader generalised study. Finally, some theories required a level of self awareness and disclosure that may not simply be possible with 12 year olds (Eccles, 2005).

Despite discounting many existing theories because they did not offer a broad enough foundation for this study, a review of theories was important in providing valuable divergent avenues for examination within the complex construct of motivation. In particular, it was noted that a number of theories reinforced the centrality of the learning activity (stimulus), namely its ability to develop feelings of competence and autonomy, be comprehensible and to generate a sense of enjoyment and importance in the activity. It was also noted that a number of theories focussed upon the difference between individual perceptions of self in relation to tasks, and the social dimensions of self with regard the environment and the need for relatedness. Significant in the context of this study was the emerging question generated by the review of the degree to which students, especially Year 8s, might be driven by a strong and innate need to achieve, and the degree to which they might rely upon learning activities to stimulate a desire for achievement.

In summary, this study required an underpinning theoretical framework which was:

- broad enough to accommodate both stimulus related values and personal beliefs;
- had a well established research history in education, and particularly music education;
- was flexible enough to accommodate perspectives identified in the review of other achievement motivation theories; and
- offered the potential for domain specific expansion in relation to class music.

2.15 The chosen framework for this study - Expectancy-value theory

Expectancy-value theory (Eccles, 2005; Eccles, 1983) was chosen as the theoretical foundation for this study for the following reasons:

- it acknowledges both the role and dimensionality of the stimulus and the internal state (values and beliefs), mediated by the affective state (feelings). Thus, it is broad and encompasses a range of constructs which are specific to other theories;

- it is enduring and had been used extensively across domains in education (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005; Eccles, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; DeBacker & Nelson, 1999; Wigfield, O'Neill & Eccles, 1999; Wigfield, Eccles, Kwang, Harold, Arbreton, Freeman-Doan & Blumenfeld, 1997; Wigfield, 1994);

- it was developed specifically to explain adolescent motivation for mathematics (Eccles, 1983), and had been widely applied in the domains of mathematics, English, sport, social studies, languages and science (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005; DeBacker & Nelson, 1999; Wigfield, 1994);

- it has been widely used in music education, namely instrumental music research (McPherson & McCormick, 2006; McPherson & Zimmerman, 2002; McPherson & Renwick, 2001; O'Neill, 1999; 1996);

- its construct parameters are broad and flexible, and therefore well suited to larger scale investigations (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996); and

- the size and nature of past research offered generalisability.

However, the most compelling reason was that Expectancy-value theory has proven to be an accurate predictor of student future enrolment decisions across all subject domains where it has been applied. Specifically, Eccles (2005) and Eccles & Wigfield (2002) stated that the values component predicted course plans and enrolment decisions, while expectancies predicted future performance. Given that a core aim of this study was to determine how tasks influenced the future enrolment decisions of Year 8 class music students, the theory was ideally placed to underpin this study. Further, Eccles (2005) and Eccles & Wigfield (2002) stated that values and

expectancies were task specific, and by implication domain specific, allowing the potential for close scrutiny of these constructs as they applied to class music.

Current expectancy-value theory (Eccles, 2005) proposes that educational and other achievement related choices are most directly related to two sets of beliefs: a student's expectations for success, and the value the student attaches to learning activities in terms of their importance, interest and usefulness. Eccles' 2005 version of the model is presented in Figure 2.1.
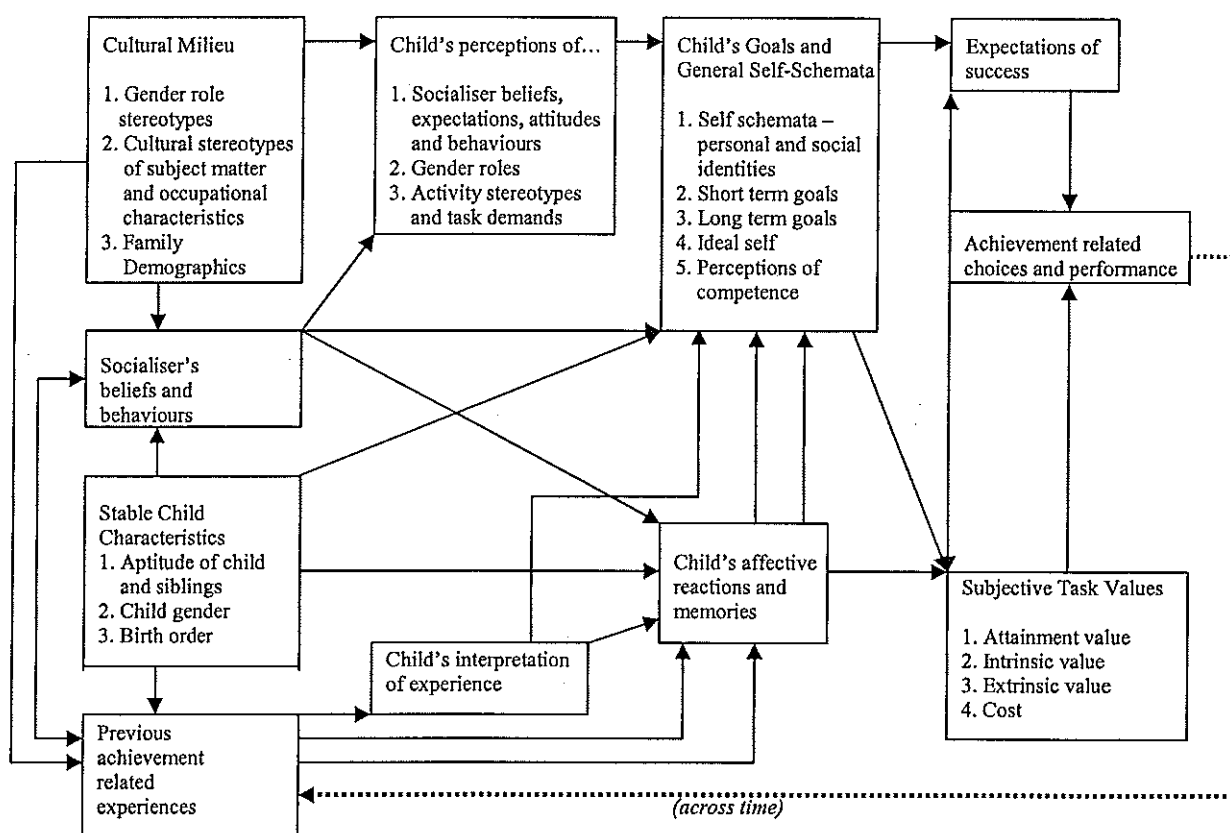
Figure 2.1 Expectancy-value model, Eccles, 2005

The model presents the processes involved in the formation of student values and expectancies, leading to achievement related performances and choices. Arrows indicate the directional flow of influences at each stage in the process, while the dotted line indicates the overarching influence of previous task experiences.

In specific terms, tasks generate values and belief responses, leading ultimately to behavioural choices. Student perceptions of tasks are influenced by the components to the left of the model including the cultural milieu, socialiser beliefs, characteristics of the student and previous experiences. These are then filtered by the student's goals, sense of identity, competence and affective reactions and memories, and manifest themselves in expectancies and subjective task values as set out to the right of the model. Thus values and beliefs relating to tasks are mediated by the generalised components to the left of the model and manifest themselves in more specific task values and expectancies to the right of the model which in turn influence achievement related choices and performance.

As the aim of this study was to examine the effects of learning activities upon values and beliefs, a detailed examination of values and expectancies, as they are conceptualised within the model, is now presented, commencing with values and it's attendant components.

2.15.1 Task values

Wigfield & Wagner (2005) paraphrased task values as deriving from the fundamental statement 'Why do I want to do this activity'. Therefore, task values are concerned with the purpose for engagement. As they are feeling related and personal, they are described as subjective task values. Within the Expectancy-value model, subjective task values have four components formulated by Battle (1965). The four components are presented in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 *Definition of the components of values (Eccles, 2002)*

Values component	*definition*
Attainment value (Importance)	*The personal importance of doing well, including the challenge and relevance of the task to the individual. Tasks have a higher attainment value if they conform to student beliefs about the subject.*
Intrinsic value (Interest)	*The inherent enjoyment the individual gets from undertaking the task, and the subjective interest in the task.*
Extrinsic value (Usefulness)	*How well the task conforms to current and future goals, and relates to extrinsic factors including short term goals.*
Cost	*What an individual has to give up to undertake the task. If the amount of anticipated effort necessary to succeed increases in relation to the amount of effort considered worthwhile, the task value decreases.*

Eccles (2005) has attempted to reconcile perspectives within achievement motivation research by acknowledging the links between subjective task values and constructs central to other motivational theories. Eccles acknowledges that while they come from different philosophical backgrounds, there is a broad degree of similarity between the constructs. The similarities are addressed in a closer examination of each values component in the following sections.

Attainment value

Attainment value is defined by Eccles (2005) as the personal importance attached to doing well on a given task. This component is closely linked with identity. Tasks are important when students view engagement as central to their sense of self because the task provides an opportunity to express or confirm aspects of self.

Eccles (2005) noted the similarity of the underlying assumptions of this component with the work of Deci & Ryan (1985) who made the link between motivation and engagement by the extent to which tasks fulfilled the basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. In this sense, Eccles acknowledges the importance of a 'good fit' between opportunities provided by the learning environment and the needs of the individual. This also includes the need for respect within the social group.

The individual's need for competence has been a popular research area (Ryan & Deci, 2005; Asmus, 1994; Ames, 1992; Bandura, 1986; Harter, 1981) as is the role of tasks in generating a mastery orientation. Success enhances perceptions of competence, leading to internalised feelings of pleasure and increased mastery motivation. Failure lowers perceptions of competence leading to anxiety and lower mastery motivation.

Eccles takes a slightly wider view by stating that attainment value is influenced by the ability of tasks to fulfil a whole array of personal needs and values based upon images of who individuals are and what individuals want to do. Eccles notes the link with research into goal orientations (Elliott & Dweck, 2005; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002;

Dweck, 1999; Dweck & Elliott, 1983; Nicholls, 1984) whereby achievement tasks vary along two dimensions:

- the extent to which personal mastery is stressed; and
- the extent to which doing better than others (ego) is stressed.

Some students are oriented towards mastery and others towards competition, while others to neither or both. Which, if any, aspect is of greater importance will depend upon the goal orientation of the student, and the nature of the task in encouraging either orientation.

Eccles (2005) also noted the link between Ford's (1992) 'within person' goals and attainment value, namely through affective goals such as happiness, cognitive goals such as intellectual curiosity and subject organisational goals such as unity. In practical terms, Eccles (2005) described the role of learning activities as being challenging to the individual to stimulate mastery and relevant to generate 'within person' goals, such as happiness and curiosity.

In summary, attainment value is concerned with the how students seek to confirm task characteristics central to self-image. Eccles (2005) noted the importance of providing a variety of tasks to provide different opportunities for this to occur. In the context of this study, attainment value would be mediated by:

- whether learning activities challenged students and were achievable in developing goal oriented feelings of competence and the desire for mastery; and
- whether learning activities were relevant to meet students' personal 'within person' needs such happiness, curiosity and relevance.

Further, given Eccles (2005) assertion that values and beliefs are mediated by cumulative and comparative experiences across domains:

- whether learning activities were perceived to be as challenging and relevant as in other subjects.

Intrinsic value

This component is largely associated with interest and enjoyment. The demonstrated strongest construct of all the values components, Eccles (2005) stated that there are two dimensions to enjoyment. These are:

- the enjoyment gained from undertaking the task; and

- the expected enjoyment based upon past experience while doing the task.

Eccles (2005) noted that in this sense, intrinsic value bore a strong resemblance to some elements of Flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988) whereby intrinsic motivation is viewed in terms of the immediate subjective experience that occurred when students were immersed in the activity. However, Eccles (2005) noted that challenges and skills needed to be relatively high before a flow experience could be generated.

As in trait theories (p.33), Eccles (2005) described interest as comprised of two states:

- individual interest – stable feelings towards certain subject domains; and

- situational interest – emotional states aroused by features of a specific task.

Further, individual interest may be further subdivided into 'feeling related' and 'value related' interest (Schiefele, 1996). 'Feeling related interest' refers to feelings that are associated with the activity itself, such as stimulation and flow, while 'value related interest' refers to the personal significance or importance of the activity. Eccles (2005) noted that both feeling and value related interest are directly related to the activity rather than to the comparison of the activity with others.

Eccles (2005) conceded that researchers know little about the origins of interest other than that they are undoubtedly linked to core aspects of self, such as temperament, personality, motivational orientations and past learning experiences. More is known about the task characteristics associated with situational interest. These include: personal relevance, familiarity, activity level and comprehensibility. Eccles (2005) also reported an empirical link between both individual and situational interest, and comprehensibility and deep level learning.

In summary, Eccles (2005) noted that intrinsic value, as defined within Expectancy-value theory, has more to do with the origins of the decision to engage in an activity, rather than the external source of the activity's value. In this sense, it is slightly different to Deci & Ryan's conceptualisation of intrinsic motivation. In the context of this study, intrinsic value should be mediated by:

- whether students enjoyed class music (feeling related individual interest);
- whether students found learning activities in class music to be fun, comprehensible and immersing (situational interest);
- whether students found the learning activities in class music to be relevant, familiar, and appropriate (value related individual interest); and
- whether enjoyment was mediated by past experiences with learning activities in class music.

Extrinsic value

Extrinsic value (formally called Utility value by Eccles, 1983) is largely concerned with how tasks fit into future plans. This component is paraphrased as 'usefulness'. Therefore, this value component is similar to extrinsic motivation in that it is concerned with means to an end rather than an end in itself. It also relates to personal goals such as getting a certain job. In this sense, Eccles (2005) acknowledged its links with Deci & Ryan's (1985) concept of introjected value. Eccles (2005) stated that the relationship between attainment value and extrinsic value is similar to introjected behaviour regulation and integrated behaviour regulation in that both long and short range goals become part of an individual's identity and needs. Tasks that fulfil these needs have both importance and usefulness.

In the context of this study, extrinsic motivation would be mediated by:

- whether learning activities were perceived as useful in achieving short term personal and practical goals;
- whether learning activities were perceived as useful in achieving longer term personal and practical goals; and
- how useful tasks appeared in relation to activities in other domains in achieving these goals.

Cost

Eccles (1983) stated that the value of a task is mediated by the cost of participating in the activity. Cost can be influenced by two broad dimensions – personal beliefs about the cost of participation, including anxiety, fear of failure and fear of a loss of self-worth, and physical cost - the time commitment or energy which needs to be invested into a task. By implication, cost is mediated by what the individual has to give up through investment. This can be both real and anticipated. Eccles (2005) stated that this can be as simple as "Do I do my homework, or do I call my friend?" (p.113). Eccles (2005) stated that cost can be heavily impacted by gender and socio-cultural beliefs.

Eccles (2005) noted that cost is based around the notion of choice. All choices are influenced by positive and negative task characteristics and have cost implications because often one choice eliminates other options.

Eccles (2005) further noted the similarity between personal cost and Covington's (1992) self-worth theory. Students spend a considerable amount of time in the classroom where school evaluation, competition and social comparison are inevitable, making it difficult for some students to maintain a sense of academic self-worth. While effort is emphasised as important in education literature, Covington (1992) described it as a 'double edged sword', because when effort is put in and the student still fails, it becomes difficult not to conclude that the student lacks ability. Therefore some students will avoid challenging experiences to minimalise or avoid a sense of failure. At this point, the link between personal cost and attribution should be noted, in that choices related to personal cost may be the manifestation of competence beliefs surrounding effort and ability.

In Western Australia, most Year 8 students undertake class music as an elective subject, thus compelling them to choose it from a range of other options. Class music often involves greater investment as it operates as a year long option rather than a semester long taster as in many other subjects. Therefore students can lose further elective options. Finally, class music is often undertaken in conjunction with instrumental music lessons and a commitment to performing in school ensembles. Thus, music students are often asked to make a large time commitment to school music

programmes. Unless the attainment, intrinsic and extrinsic values associated with this time and energy investment are strong, then physical cost could become a major reason for declining enrolments.

In the context of this study, cost would be mediated by:

- the physical cost of engagement, relating to time, commitment and choice; and
- the personal cost of engagement, relating to effort, attribution and the protection of self-worth.

Overall, the values components can be summarised as:

- perceptions of the importance of tasks to self (attainment value);
- perceptions of the interest and enjoyment of the subject and tasks (intrinsic value);
- perceptions of the usefulness of tasks to long and short term personal and practical goals (extrinsic value); and
- what has to be sacrificed to undertake the task (cost).

For this study, it was rationalised that subjective task values offered an extensive framework for examination of student perceptions of class music and it's associated learning activities. The role of expectancies is now considered in greater detail.

2.15.2 Expectancies

As previously noted (p.30), expectancies are defined by Eccles (2005) within this framework as 'Am I able to do this task'. Expectancies are mediated by goals, past affective experiences and competence beliefs. Expectancy findings have indicated that despite current positive or negative competence beliefs, young people remain largely optimistic about their abilities to succeed at future tasks. They generally believe they will succeed at future tasks although expectancies and actual achievement begin to converge with time and age as students become more realistic in assessing their abilities (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005; Wigfield, O'Neill & Eccles, 1999). While not having been demonstrated to directly affect enrolment decisions, expectancies

influence values particularly through competence beliefs in relation to effort and past task exposure. Therefore expectancies have an indirect influence upon enrolment decisions.

Within Expectancy-value theory, expectancies are a generalised construct. This is in contrast to the differentiated values components, which can be further broken down into dimensions such as challenge and relevance within the attainment component. Expectancy-value theory has proved to be adaptable for different subject domains, being successfully used in mathematics, English, sport, social studies, languages, science and instrumental music. The theory therefore appears to have the potential to be adapted specifically for class music, and expectancies appear to be the area of the model offering the greatest scope for domain specific investigation because of the specialised nature of tasks undertaken within class music. The researcher reasoned that music specific tasks would result in expectancy beliefs specific to class music. Further, these might be differentiated because of the way tasks are presented and experienced. The potential for investigation at this level of detail has been acknowledged by Wigfield & Wagner (2005) and Eccles & Wigfield (2002). A more deferentiated expectancies construct may provide a greater understanding of the relationship between beliefs and values in the class music domain, which in turn, influence future enrolment choices.

2.16 Extending expectancies

Expectancies derive largely from competence beliefs related to past experiences with tasks. However, as an identified research aim of this study, what types of class music tasks impact upon expectancies?

For Hallam (2002), task related beliefs are not formed in isolation but in conjunction with the way and the place in which tasks are experienced as well as the task itself. In Western Australia, class music is generally undertaken in large groups of between 15 to 25 students. In this context, tasks are often broken down into smaller group activities involving three to four students per group, and often involve practical assessments and solo or group performances in which other members of the class act as audience. Tasks may be creatively based, thus offering a high degree of subjective

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collective involvement, and are often mediated by the skills which members of the class can bring to group work and employ to realise their creative ideas. As noted by Hallam (2002) and Rosevear (2003), a student's motivation to continue music is often dependent upon the skill level they bring to realise their creative ideas. These can be physical skills related to playing instruments, as well as theoretical understanding of how music works and social skills relating to co-operative music making in groups.

Varying musical experiences in primary school can result in divergent levels of physical ability, technical musical understanding and social skills in Year 8 classes which impact upon beliefs, particularly in performance settings. These were recognised in part by Asmus (1994) in his music specific attribution model which included background, the classroom environment and musical ability. Therefore, the specific nature of tasks in class music, combined with the way they are undertaken and assessed suggested that expectancies in class music might be framed by multiple dimensions within the musical tasks themselves. These ideas have not been tested in instrumental music research because instrumental lessons are generally undertaken in a one-to-one setting where social skills are less relevant, and physical skills and musical understanding are closely interwoven in the learning process.

For this study, the potential for expectancy differentiality was examined using Harter's competence labels as 1) academic, 2) physical, 3) social and 4) general expectancies because in the current music classroom, learning activities are multidimensional. Secondary class music encompasses a distinctive theoretical/academic component based around the cognitive understanding of musical concepts, such as rhythm, pitch and harmony, a strong skills based practical and performance component and a mediating social component because many tasks are facilitated through subjective, creative small group composing activities and resulting group performance assessments. The researcher included a construct of general expectancies to examine whether class music expectancies could be differentiated from more general expectancies towards school, as Wigfield & Wagner (2005) and Eccles & Wigfield (2002) had stated that expectancies are influenced by comparative evaluative assessments of competence.

Class music learning dimensions broadly corresponded with Harter's broader groupings in that academic ability broadly corresponded with beliefs regarding the understanding of core musical theoretical concepts, physical ability broadly corresponded with beliefs regarding physical coordination and the ability to 'perform' vocally or on instruments, social ability broadly corresponded with beliefs regarding the ability to work successfully and comparatively with others, while general ability might operate as mediating global beliefs about school related abilities. For this study, the following working definitions of differentiated expectancies were applied:

- academic expectancies – I can succeed because I understand the musical concepts associated with this task;
- physical expectancies – I can succeed because I am physically able to undertake this task;
- social expectancies – I can succeed because I am able to successfully interact with others to complete this task, and
- general expectancies – I can succeed in completing tasks across all subjects.

Some limited support for the ability of students to differentiate class music components came from the findings of Rosevear (2003). She found that Year 12 students in South Australia clearly distinguished between academic and physical components in relation to the valuing of activities, with 54 respondents (N=112) indicating a dislike of academic based activities (music theory) while 57 (N=112) liked performing. Of significance, 43 listed performing in groups in class music as their favourite activity. However, Rosevear's study was based upon attitudinal assessments of the value of class music activities, not student expectancies for success.

It was reasoned that a differentiated expectancies framework would not alter the nature of the expectancies construct, but rather the way in which expectancies were reported. Along with its explanatory power, a strength of Expectancy-value theory has been its adaptability to different subject domains, and the intention while examining the research questions was to explore the potential for reporting motivation to continue within an expanded framework specific to class music.

2.17 Assumptions and critique of Expectancy-value theory

Cognitive motivation theories assume that the individual is a rational decision-maker able to make choices. Eccles (2005) Expectancy-value model would appear to assume that students can make conscious choices at each stage within the model, leading to rational achievement related behavioural outcomes. While the notion of a Year 8 student as a rational decision-maker at each level within the model may be challenged (Stahlberg & Frey, 1988), Eccles (2005) stated that this was a matter of the language in which the theory is framed rather than an inherent weakness within the theory. Eccles stated that students make choices at both the conscious and unconscious levels with subconscious choices framed by socialiser pressures and cultural norms ultimately impacting upon conscious behavioural choices. Therefore, while task values and beliefs derive from current and anticipated future task interaction, they are informed by subconscious choices and past experiences as identified within the model.

Eccles (2005) noted general criticism levelled against achievement motivation theories in that they ignore other motivational rationales. According to Eccles (2005), however, students are often unaware of other option choices. Values and beliefs are most often framed by pragmatic decisions such as career aspirations, even if these include inaccurate assessments of what constitutes elements of the career, and self related beliefs such as perceptions of ability and personal satisfaction derived from engaging in an activity.

Eccles (2005) also maintained that students are constantly presented with value related choices which are often made in conjunction with other types of choices. What becomes important is the relative personal value placed upon choices. Therefore, task values operate in a hierarchy of needs for the individual rather than as a set of absolutes, and task values are framed against competing task value judgements in other areas; hence Eccles definition of them as subjective task values.

Expectancy-value theory assumes that the motivation process is developmental and dynamic. The model operates as a snapshot of a process leading to the formation of task values and beliefs, and ultimately choices, and is comprehensive in trying to link all elements. A student's values and beliefs change across time in response to

cumulative experiences with specific tasks, changing cognitive abilities and interpretive beliefs, changing socialising pressures and changing socio-cultural influences. Further, dimensions within the values and expectancies components will change developmentally and across subject domains with internalisation, maturation and life-stage (Eccles, 2005).

While acknowledging that the model is dynamic, Wigfield & Wagner (2005) reported the growing stability of values and beliefs over time and with age. They reported values and beliefs to be highly changeable in primary school, but noted a growing stability once students entered and progressed through secondary school.

This finding reinforced the significance of this study, because it implied that values and beliefs formed in Year 8 would become increasingly entrenched and less likely to change in successive years. Values and beliefs formulated in the first year of secondary school would continue to influence performance and enrolment decisions in later years. This warranted a detailed examination of findings within the Expectancy-value research framework.

2.18 Findings within the Expectancy-value framework

The developmental and dynamic assumptions of Expectancy-value theory derive from Werner's (1957) widely held assumption that different characteristics change from a global to a differentiated state with age. Expectancy-value researchers have examined this assumption, and research has been based around the following questions:

- are task values and expectancies clearly distinct constructs, and if so, when do students start to differentiate task values and expectancies;
- when do students start to differentiate the components of task values, and between competence and expectancies;
- how do task values and expectancies change over time;
- what is the relationship between task value components and expectancies; and
- how do task values and expectancies relate to achievement behaviours.

Much of the initial empirical research was undertaken in the 1980s and 1990s in North America. It has largely confirmed the underlying framework of the theory and provided later researchers with a strong basis for further domain specific investigation.

2.18.1 Construct differentiation

Task values and expectancies differentiation

Both Eccles et al., (1993a) and Wigfield et al., (1992) examined whether task values and competence/expectancies formed clearly distinct factors within the domains of mathematics, English and sport across all years of primary school. They compared confirmatory factor models including competence beliefs and task values on one factor within each domain with models where competence beliefs and task values were separated as two factors. The two factor models in each domain indicated significantly better fit indices than did one factor models, and the distinction was evident even for Year 1 students. Wigfield (1994) concluded that students can distinguish between what they like and what they think they are good at, indicating that the two central constructs of Expectancy-value theory are valid.

Task values differentiation

Central to this study is the understanding that Year 8 students can distinguish between the different task value components. Wigfield (1994) examined the task values differentiation of Grade 5 – 12 students (ages 9 – 16) in mathematics, and found that the attainment, intrinsic and extrinsic components were clearly detectable in factor analysis. Further, Wigfield reported no difference between the strength of the constructs between students in Grades 5 – 12, suggesting that the task value differentiation observed was strongly established at an early age.

Competence differentiation

Harter (1983) stated that students have a broad idea of whether they are 'smart' or 'dumb' and that this becomes refined into subject domains with age. In 1982, Harter's Perceived Competence questionnaire assessed different subject domains of competence in Year 3 – 9 students. Factor analysis found that students distinguished competence in different domains from as early as Year 3 (age 7). Marsh, Barnes,

Cairns & Tidman (1984) examined student competence beliefs across mathematics, reading, sport and general ability via a Self-Description Questionnaire, as well as a range of other personal beliefs. Factor analysis indicated clear differentiation across subject domains from grade 2 (age 6).

Competence and expectancies differentiation

Given the theoretical similarities between competence and expectancies, Wigfield et al., (1992) examined whether they were distinguishably different constructs. Factor analysis revealed that they were not empirically distinguishable within a given activity domain in primary school students. The implications of this finding will be examined later in the chapter.

2.17.2 Changes in the mean level of task values and competence / expectancies

Task values

Researchers have also examined the changes in mean levels of student values and beliefs. In general terms, Eccles & Midgeley (1989) reported that task values for certain subjects decline as students get older. Eccles et al., (1993) found that older primary school students valued reading and instrumental music less than younger children while the valuing of sport rose. More specifically, Wigfield et al., (1993) reported that while beliefs about the importance and usefulness of mathematics, reading, instrumental music and sport decreased over three years of late primary school, only in reading and instrumental music did interest decline. Interest in sport and mathematics did not decline. Importantly, and central to this study, Eccles et al., (1989) and also Wigfield et al., (1991) found that values across all subjects decline following the transition to secondary school.

Competence

Eccles & Midgeley (1989) and Dweck & Elliot (1983) reported that student competence beliefs decline across primary school and into lower secondary school. Wigfield et al., (1993) reported this was the case specifically in mathematics, reading, instrumental music and sport. Nicholls (1979a) found that nearly all very young students rated themselves as near the top of the class in reading ability, but there was

no correlation between their ability rating and actual performance. By age 12, rating were more accurate with correlations consistently around 0.70.

Expectancies

Wigfield (1994) reported that Year 4 and 5 students were still largely optimistic. In general, despite failure on previous tasks, students still think they will succeed on the next one. Stipek (1984) stated that young students' expectancies reflected what they hoped to achieve rather than reality, but Dweck & Elliot (1983) countered that actual task performance ability on tasks increases rapidly with age so expectancies may be realistic.

Wigfield (1994) reported that over the course of primary school, students' expectancies increasingly correspond to previous performance as students become more aware of previous successes and failures. In general, expectancies decline. However, given the emotional attachment of young students to success and failure, the prevalence of self-report methods in this area may not be the most valid form of investigation as Wigfield (1994) claimed that students tend to overestimate optimism.

2.18.3 Relations among task values and competence related beliefs

Task values

Both Battle (1966) and Wigfield & Eccles (1992) reported that competence and expectancies correlate positively to task values. This was different to Atkinson's (1957) original assertion that the most valued tasks were the most difficult ones. Wigfield (1994) reported that the positive correlation increases across successive school years. In the early years, the two constructs are quite independent, as younger students pursue activities regardless of whether they are any good at them or not. Wigfield (1994) stated that with time and age, students become more likely to value activities they do well on. Values and beliefs then mutually start to predict performance and choices.

Eccles et al., (1983) reported that the strongest relationship in the early years is between competence and intrinsic value. As students get older and start to think about the future, their beliefs about importance and usefulness start to correlate more closely

to competence beliefs. Wigfield (1994) reported this correlation starting to emerge from Year 5 students (age 9).

Competence and expectancies

Eccles et al., (1983) reported that competence beliefs and expectancies were positively correlated. Thus, students who believed that they were competent at a certain task believed that mastery in the future was quite possible, while students with low competence beliefs had lower expectancies for success. As noted earlier in a number of studies, factor analysis did not distinguish between the two in empirical terms. However, because competence is viewed as a general belief while expectancies are specific to tasks and domains, Wigfield (1994) stated that competence beliefs causally precede expectancies as presented in the model. This was confirmed by Meece, Wigfield & Eccles (1990) in lower secondary mathematics students.

2.18.4 Relations of student's values and beliefs to achievement behaviours

Expectancy-value researchers have also examined age related changes in task values and beliefs against performance and activity choice. Both Stipek (1984) and Nicolls (1979) found that competence/expectancies became more closely related to performance with age. Further, Eccles et al., (1983) and Eccles et al., (1984), using path analysis of student values and beliefs together with school achievement and enrolment records, showed that task values were the strongest predictor of future enrolment, while competence beliefs was the stronger predictor of grades. These findings emerged across Year 5 – 12 students. Wigfield (1994) reported that competence beliefs in students as young as Year 5 predicted their grades up to eight years later.

Wigfield (1994) reported that the intrinsic value based around enjoyment of learning activities to be the strongest predictor of choice in younger students. However, as students progress into upper primary school, importance and usefulness assume greater importance, and by lower secondary school, usefulness may be the strongest predictor, although for mathematics, importance value remained strong. Importantly in the context of this study, Wigfield and Eccles (1989) found both interest and usefulness to be the best predictors of enrolment intentions in lower secondary school.

2.19 Summary

Chapter two has identified and reviewed research indicating that students enjoy music but not necessarily at school, as evidenced by low post compulsory participation rates. It has also revealed that research into student attitudes towards music at school is limited and in many instances based upon loosely conceptualised theoretical foundations. The chapter has identified problems with attitudinal based research in general, and suggests that the research field of achievement motivation may offer a more theoretically sound basis for investigation of this study's research questions.

A review of achievement motivation theories indicates the appropriateness of Eccles' (2005) revised Expectancy-value model as the theoretical foundation for this study. Eccles model was originally developed specifically to explain adolescent beliefs and values for mathematics, has since been widely used in educational research including instrumental music, is suited to large scale study and has the potential for development into a music domain specific model. Importantly, Eccles' model has the potential for wide generalisability and offers a broad view that considers both the role of the stimulus (task) in contributing towards motivation to continue as well as the internal state (values and beliefs). Central to this study, the theory has been demonstrated in a number of studies to accurately predict future enrolments decisions.

2.20 Conclusion

This chapter has established a case for a suitable theoretical foundation for investigation of student motivation to continue class music. It has noted the complexity of current theories, that theories are dynamic and evolving and that they often appear difficult to interlink. However, as Eccles (2005) states, "as each one of the theories *becomes more complex, they also become more similar" [Italics added]* (p.119), indicating a growing understanding of broad commonalities across theoretical perspectives, and the need to accommodate these within a research framework. While Expectancy-value theory offered the basis for a large scale study which had the potential for comparability and generalisability, it is noted that this study is examining the values and beliefs of students, not objects. It was important, therefore, to consider the nature of psychological research in education and the role of data and theory within an examination of human behaviours.

Chapter three accordingly explores the ontological categories and epistemological implications for a researcher examining human behaviour. It also attempts to link methods of inquiry traditionally associated with Expectancy-value theory and educational psychology in general, with qualitative methods used in human research. Most importantly, the above are considered in the light of the fundamental assumption that ultimately, the research question shapes the method of inquiry.

CHAPTER THREE – METHOD OF INQUIRY

PART ONE

3.0 Introduction

While chapter two outlined the theory which underpins the study, chapter three describes the methods of inquiry. It is noted that the methods of inquiry must acknowledge the previous methods of data collection that support the theoretical framework in order to allow comparability, but also that methods need to be able to gather data to suit examination of the research questions within a context of human behaviour. This study employs a mixed method approach to answer the research questions by adopting the value position that experimental and observational methods alone do not necessarily provide a complete picture into students' underlying values and beliefs.

The chapter discusses fundamental premises which relate to the research method used in this study and details why a mixed method approach was adopted. It considers the arguments which surround investigation of human behaviour, including the ontological implications of the positivist/constructivist paradigm divide, the quantitative/qualitative epistemological divide over validity, objectivity, status, and etic and emic perspectives on the nature of the research itself. The study is bound by the understanding that researcher assumptions shape the methodology.

3.1 The definition of research

The definition of research for this study derives from Punch (1998) who defined it as "the use of data and theory to build knowledge about the real world" (p. 8). For the purpose of this study, the applied definition was "the use of data and theory to build of explanatory knowledge about Year 8 students and their motivations through investigation of the impact of learning activities upon their values and beliefs". The key word in this extended definition was the word 'explanatory', as building knowledge involves an attempt to explain phenomena, not just to describe them. Both description and explanation are important because description is the basis from which explanations are drawn. Descriptions involve drawing a picture of what is happening, and "attempting to make complicated things understandable" (Punch, 2000, p.15).

Explanation involves the 'how' and, depending upon the research context, has the potential to predict and possibly control a situation in the future. It is important to examine the 'how' as well as describing the 'what'. In this study, the research questions implied the need to describe what was happening with Year 8 student motivation over the course of Year 8, in the light of low post compulsory participation rates, as well attempt an explanation of how learning activities were possibly shaping motivation.

The role of theory is acknowledged in not just describing but explaining human behaviours, and explanation is, in turn, tied back to theory in a process whereby theory underpins the explanation, which in turn informs the theory. Miles & Hubermann (1994) described two basic approaches to theory - theory verification and theory generation. They stated that the choice of approach could depend upon the amount and quality of prior research in the research field. While theory generation is valuable, theory verification, and by implication, consolidation and extension, is equally important. Within the context of this study, the literature review examined the extensive range of theories within the field of achievement motivation, and this study was guided by the decision to undertake a theory verification approach.

In addition to theory, Miles & Hubermann (1994) acknowledge the centrality of the data collection process, for they place sound empirical evidence at the core of credible social science research regardless of the research paradigm. Strauss & Corbin (1997) stated that all methodologies have value because they offer different ways of viewing the world, and lead to theory building. However, before considering the methods of inquiry, Guba & Lincoln (1998) emphasised the importance of considering the ontological implications of the various research paradigms to anchor the method of inquiry, data collection approach and subsequent reporting of findings.

For the purpose of this study, the definition of ontology is derived from its philosophical application within the applied sciences. Specifically, it is defined in this context by Corazzon (2008) as "a method or activity of enquiry into philosophical problems about the concept or facts of existence" (p.8). In the following sections, it is discussed in relation to the conceptualisation of existence associated with the positivist, constructivist and post-positivist paradigms.

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3.2 The positivist paradigm

Expectancy-value theory is derived from the field of psychology and involves psychological constructs. Psychological constructs represent an attempt to ascribe meaning to human values, beliefs and resulting behaviours. The central role of theory is to provide a foundation for research, but theory can also be seen as a convenience; an attempt to make sense out of a given phenomenon (Burnard, 1999).

Much psychological research, as a branch of science, has been undertaken within a positivist, quantitative framework of experimental and related methods. Results have traditionally been statistically analysed and reported as trends and numeric variables. Phenomena have then been reported as 'fact', based upon the assumption that reality exists and can be reported. Guba & Lincoln (1998) describe the positivist paradigm as being associated with prediction and control, and with verifiable or falsifiable knowledge. Positivism is associated with a certain view of rigour – internal validity, generalisability, reliability and perceived objectivity.

For Burnard (1999), an objectivist view of a 'rational ediface' of human behaviour sees theory reduced to the simple study of relationships between variables. Particularly in education, an objectivist 'quantitative view of human behaviour', while helping to explain 'what' is happening, might not help explain the mechanisms and processes by which the relationship between variables are shaped. It does not necessarily accommodate the 'how'. There lies a danger in simply describing a phenomenon and not effectively attempting to explain it. This can particularly be the case when working from an existing theory which is not necessarily seeking validation, but application in a real world setting. The question becomes whether an assumed objective, empirical approach can do justice to human behaviour, or simply provide a description based upon 'facts' and resulting empirical generalisations.

The objective approach has broader etic and emic implications. Although the cause of some debate as to their exact meaning and resulting application (Lett, 2007), emic has been defined in epistemological terms by Lett (2007) as 'accounts, descriptions and analysis expressed in terms of conceptual schemes and categories that are appropriate to the insiders under study' (p.2) while etic has been defined as 'accounts, descriptions and analysis expressed in terms of conceptual schemes

appropriate by the community of scientific observers' (p.2). By implication, the etic perspective should be precise, logical, comprehensive, replicable and observer independent – traits consistent with the positivist tradition and empirical reporting methods normally associated with Expectancy-value theory within the field of psychology where the researcher is perceived to be the expert in the process.

For Schwandt (1998), much positivist research in psychology has been focussed upon method in an abstract, formal sense. He cautions that all that has been important for some researchers is the correct application of the method. The danger, therefore, is that researchers can become guided by the method and not by the subject of their research. In this sense, a predetermined method can be imposed upon a research context, rather than being informed by subtleties within it. Etic process become more important than emic understanding of human behaviours.

3.2.1 Criticism of the positivist paradigm

Guba & Lincoln (1998) have summarised objections to the positivist tradition within human research as:

- context stripping – it is impossible to factor out all other variables, and if attempted, reduces the relevance of the research because it becomes removed from a real world context;

- purpose – human research cannot be understood unless an attempt is made to understand the purpose behind human activities;

- etic/emic dilemma – the etic theory behind the research may actually have little connection within an emic research context. Further, etic generalisations then have no meaning to individuals within the research context; and

- exclusion of discovery – an *a priori* hypothesis can gloss over the discovery element in research in the quest for theory verification or falsification.

Guba & Lincoln (1998) also stated that because data and theory are interdependent, whatever is reported as 'fact' is only fact in the context of the theoretical framework, and therefore the notion of an objective reality is undermined. Because facts are determined by the 'theory window', different theories might support the same facts.

While it might be theoretically possible to arrive at a coherent set of facts, it is impossible to arrive at a single agreed irrefutable theory. Also, theories themselves are value laden, and therefore any reported facts viewed through any theory window are value laden.

While it appeared appropriate at first consideration to dismiss the positivist paradigm in the basis of this study, Kemp (1992) stated that it is common for educational research to overlap other disciplines such as philosophy, psychology and sociology. There is a need to be sensitive to paradigms in which these fields operate. However, it is also important to be aware of the power of thinking, insight and dialogue to deepen rather than flatten any understanding of human behaviour. These considerations were particularly pertinent to this study given the need to examine the 'how' element of the research questions, namely, how learning activities shape motivation.

It became increasingly difficult to ascribe motivation for class music to objective fact but as human actions with a real world setting. The aim of this study was not to merely describe motivation towards music at school, but to attempt to explain the cumulative impact of learning activities upon Year 8 student values and beliefs. The study, therefore, required an attempt at a degree of emic understanding. By Eccles (2005) own admission, Expectancy-value theory is effectively a positivist, 'neo-behavioural' adult constructed set of beliefs about adolescent motivational behaviours, but to what degree could an *a priori* adult construct accurately examine human behaviour in the localised context of this study? To be able to attempt to explain the research question from the perspective of a degree of human action, the researcher needed to review the constructivist research paradigm.

3.3 The constructivist paradigm

The constructivist paradigm holds that what is believed to be objective truth is the result of perspective; that concepts and ideas are invented but have some relevance in the real world (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). This view of existence bares some resemblance to the positivist paradigm, because even positivist devices are human inventions (Schwandt, 1998). However, the constructivist process of inquiry is not a matter of attempting to confirm existing realities but to constantly create new versions of perceived reality. While Guba & Lincoln (1998) described the underlying premise of positivism as concerned with a universal 'reality', they describe constructivism as being concerned with 'relativity'. Goodman (1978) stated that "worldmaking as we know it always starts from worlds already on hand; the making is the remaking" (p.6).

Central to the constructivist paradigm is the fundamental assumption that there is not a discrete set of facts to be discovered by the researcher, but that to understand is to interpret. Therefore, meaning becomes a researcher derived construct which originates in the act of data interpretation. Schwandt (1998) stated that emic understanding within this paradigm was associated with the acts of watching, listening, asking, recording and examining. For Schwandt (1998), constructivism was not associated with a particular method. Rather, method was determined by the purpose underpinning the research.

Constructivism differentiates research from the positivist scientific explanation, and understanding of the meaning of a social phenomena (Schwandt, 1998). It argues for the uniqueness of human inquiry, and holds that the mental and cultural sciences are different from the natural sciences. Whereas the goal of naturalist science is scientific explanation, the goal of the mental and cultural sciences is grasping or understanding of the meaning of social phenomena. Interpretivists describe the aim of this process as *Verstehen*, or developing understanding of the meaning of social phenomena (Schwandt, 1998). They celebrate first-hand, subjective experience.

3.3.1 Criticism of the constructivist paradigm

While the constructivist paradigm offered an alternative to the 'objective ediface' of positivism and neo-behaviourism often associated with research in educational psychology, it too had its critics (Schwandt, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

In the absence of some set of judging criteria, findings grounded in interpretation could be dismissed upon the grounds of solipsism (they are only my accounts) and relativism (all accounts are equally good or bad). Schwandt (1998) stated that most constructivists would claim that there are no unquestioned foundations for any research and have given up on the quest for objectivity. Guba & Lincoln (1989) believed that this problem may be resolved by judging the quality of the interpretation on the strength of its procedural criteria. Therefore, it is the quality and rigour in the context of the methodology that gives credence to the findings.

Research within this paradigm has also been criticised upon the grounds of social realism centred around the notions of intuition and truth, and multiple realities. Hammersley (1992b) argues that there can be:

> Multiple, non-contradictory descriptive and explanatory claims about any phenomenon without denying that if those interpretations are accurate, they must correspond in relevant aspects to the phenomenon described. (p.135)

He claims that ultimately, as for positivist research, interpretivist/constructivist approaches need to be judged on the pragmatic grounds of whether they are useful, fitting and generative of further study. The paradigm has also been criticised upon the grounds of critical purpose in that interpretivists lack the ability to critique the very accounts they produce. Schwandt (1998) stated:

> The individual-as-social-scientist operates with the attitude of disinterested observer and abides by the rules for evidence and objectivity within the scientific community. Whereas the individual-as-citizen legitimately has a practical sense, pragmatic, interested attitude, the individual-turned-social-scientist brackets out that attitude and adopts the posture of objective, disinterested, empirical theorist...Critics hold that it is precisely because of this distancing of oneself as inquirer that interpretivists cannot engage in an explicitly critical evaluation of the social reality they seek to portray. (pp.247 – 248)

This criticism had particular resonance for this study where the issue became not whether a researcher could, despite his subjective passion for a research topic, adopt the role of dispassionate researcher, but whether a researcher could still critically self-evaluate the quality of his research, given his empathy for the participants.

Schwandt (1998) also claimed that the act of interpretation vests too much power in the hands of the researcher, and further, that there are epistemological implications. Knowledge is not something that exists in the real world beyond the mind of the knower. The process of constructing meaning cannot be connected with an independent world but rather with the researcher's constructing processes. Guba & Lincoln (1989) stated that:

> If constructions are resident in the minds of individuals - that is, they cannot be said to exist outside the self-reflective capacity of an individual mind – then how is it possible that they can be extensively shared? (p.71)

Therefore, to what degree can any researcher-constructed meaning within this paradigm have the same meaning to others? What implications did this have for the longer term aims of generalisability and comparability for this study?

3.4 The post-positivist paradigm

In seeking an alternative philosophical basis for this study beyond the apparent opposing viewpoints of positivism and constructivism, the researcher examined the potential of the post-positivist paradigm. According to Guba & Lincoln (1998), post-positivism represents an attempt to address the past criticisms labelled against positivism.

In terms of ontology, Guba & Lincoln (1998) stated that post-positivism is based around the key concept of 'critical realism'. For findings to have any relevance, this paradigm acknowledges that some form of reality exists but cannot be fully comprehended. Therefore, findings are probably true but require close and ongoing critical examination. Further, post-positivism acknowledges the value of qualitative methods in helping build knowledge of critical realism. Within a post positivist approach, Expectancy-value theory, as a widely applied framework, could provide a basis for examining an assumed reality, but would require constant critical reflection, reappraisal and refining in the light of the data collected.

In terms of epistemology, objectivity within a post positivist paradigm, becomes a 'regulatory ideal' in that the researcher adopts an objective stance while acknowledging subjective elements within the research. Post positivism acknowledges the value of pre-existing knowledge, as opposed to the constructivist desire for constant reinvention, and acknowledges that replicated findings are probably true, within the confines of a critical realism. Guba & Lincoln (1998) noted that the philosophical stance adopted by the researcher can be influenced by the type of audience to which the study is directed. The researcher as 'disinterested scientist' can be better suited to informing third parties such as decision makers, policy makers and change agents, rather than transforming the participants themselves.

Guba & Lincoln (1998) also noted that post-positivist methodologies acknowledge the use of more natural settings, situational information, and attempt to solicit emic viewpoints in determining meaning and purpose ascribed to human actions.

3.5 The conceptual basis for this study

It is important to be as explicit as possible in outlining the underlying conceptual framework of the methods adopted, because this impacts upon every aspect of the research process. In this study, the researcher chose to base the study within a post-positivist research paradigm.

One of the stated aims of this study was generalisability; to be able to use the findings as the basis for explaining the motivation of Year 8 students in an Australian metropolitan area as a whole. To do this, a degree of realism needed to be accepted. Therefore, the collective similarity of experiences of the participants must mean something beyond the mere construction of the researcher. Commonly reported experiences, if the research cohort is large enough, must be indicative of some form of 'shared reality', albeit imperfectly comprehended by the researcher.

The target audience of the results of this study was teachers and education policy makers – third parties. The aim of this study was not to directly transform the participants during the study – transformation would hopefully occur through the intervention of the third parties as a result of the findings of this study. Therefore, given the nature of the target audience, this study then required a degree of objective analysis because the study is concerned with the positivist notions of prediction and ultimately, manipulation. However, it was also important to acknowledge the real world setting of the research context, and to solicit emic viewpoints in answering the research questions.

The research questions had cause and effect implications. The study involved examination of a cause – learning activities – and their effects upon student motivation to continue class music. This potentially implied an experimental methodology which has already been criticised in human research in terms of examining human behaviour. The opportunities provided by a wider variety of methods associated with post-positivism included the grounding of research within natural settings, and the importance of a degree of emic understanding in broadening research from a purely experimental research design. Therefore, it was reasoned that the post-positivist paradigm allowed examination beyond description and cause/effect in attempting to ascribe a degree of purpose.

The paradigm acknowledged the value of pre-existing theories to guide but not constrain research, and acknowledged the need for ongoing critical reassessment, evaluation, expansion and refinement of the underpinning theory in the light of research findings in an attempt to build a greater comprehension of critical realism. The importance of flexibility was stressed by Guba & Lincoln (1989) who stated that:

> It is not possible to pursue someone else's emic construction with a set of predetermined questions based solely on the inquirer's etic construction. (p.175)

Finally, there is acknowledgement of the critical difference between the words 'explain' and 'understand', central to definitions of the purpose of research within paradigms and explored at the start of the chapter. This chapter has argued that the term 'explain' is associated with an objective, largely positivist approach in which the search for evidence is largely determined by empirical and observational methods, or by the broader range of methods available within the post positivist approach. To explain is to examine the 'what' and 'how'. This implied a certain detachment, evident in the research question guiding this study. Guba & Lincoln (1998) stated that this can be an important consideration when the aim of research is generalisability and the researcher is the only person in a reasonable position to maintain a global overview of research, particularly given the intended audience of the study.

To 'understand' has subjective implications and is associated with 'why'. To understand implies the need to attempt an intuitive emic understanding of the minds of the participants. Strauss & Corbin (1996) stated that understanding involves "methods of data collection sensitive enough to capture the nuances of human living" (p.28). To understand implies a constructivist approach which can lack generalisability and transferability as understanding becomes deeply context specific and driven by interpretation. Understanding can become a more subjective researcher construct and can lack the objectivity required for the projected target audience (Schwandt, 1998).

While assumptions about the nature and needs of this study shaped ontological considerations, it was also important to examine the resulting epistemological implications for the methods of inquiry.

3.6 Research design implications

Historically, tensions have existed regarding the selection of methods of inquiry (Punch, 2000; Hughes, 1997; Mason, 1994; Miles & Huberman, 1984b). For example, traditional quantitative methods have been criticised for decontextualising the researched phenomena by not acknowledging human actions. In this sense, qualitative methods had value in exploring the personal and socially constructed impact of learning activities at the centre of this study. However, the value of quantitative methods were acknowledged in providing a sense of large scale structure and etic generalisability against which research data could be reported. According to Hughes (1997), this apparent tension need not be viewed as problematic because quantitative and qualitative methods can complement each other when the purpose of each method is understood within the context of the research questions. They can provide a hierarchical complimentary process for exploring different aspects of the research questions from both emic and etic perspectives. In defending the mixed method approach, Miles & Huberman (1984b) noted:

> It is getting harder to find any methodologists solidly encamped in one epistemology or the other. More and more 'quantitative methodologists', operating from a logical positivist stance, are using naturalistic and phenomenological approaches to complement tests, surveys and structured interviews. On the other side, an increasing number of ethnographers and qualitative researchers are using pre-designed conceptual frameworks and pre-structured instrumentation, especially when dealing with more than one institution or community. (p.20)

The research questions guiding this study implied a duality, with the need to contextualise 'what' was happening with Year 8 students as well as examining 'how' learning activities impacted upon them. This suggested the potential for a developmental approach to methodology, whereby one form of inquiry 'described the scene' while the other sought a deeper explanation. The research questions implied the need for an etic overview as well as a degree of emic examination, thereby allowing a more complete account for a critical assessment of realism. Mason (1994) stated that different methodologies in a developmental approach were not designed to validate each other, but rather ultimately to validate the research questions by approaching the questions from different perspectives.

When selecting the methods of inquiry, Punch (2000), from a pragmatic perspective, asked that the following be considered:

- the degree of logic involved, as the framing of the research question defined the methods; logic should flow through the design, sampling, data collection and data analysis stages;
- the predominant methods associated with the theoretical framework and practical research considerations;
- what fitted the researcher's personality and personal style; and
- the basic methodological consideration which can sometimes be reduced back to the simple need of whether 'to measure or not to measure'.

Other considerations impacted upon the choice of method. Much music education motivation based research has been experimental or descriptive, and has been criticised on the conceptual and methodological grounds of over generalised conclusions drawn from one dimensional or possibly flawed research designs (Plummeridge, 1997; Gammon, 1996). The methodology for this study therefore had to be suitable for use across multiple settings while still allowing examination of the intricacies of human behaviour within the chosen theoretical framework. This warranted further examination of the implications of the quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry.

3.7 The rationale for quantitative research methods

Quantitative methods are defined by Strauss & Corbin (1996) as research where findings are derived from statistical procedures or other quantifiable means. In broad terms, Hughes (1997) has stated that quantitative methods are associated with notions of 'objectivity' and 'detachment' between researcher and researched, external checks, generalisability and statistical validation. Kemp (1992) stated that objective data collection attempted to prevent contamination from either the participants, the researcher or other competing variables. In general, quantitative methods included questionnaires, standardised measuring instruments, ad hoc rating scales and observation schedules.

3.7.1 Strengths of the quantitative research method

Fiske (1992) claimed that quantitative methods allowed comparisons with greater precision and objectivity than could be informally measured. They allowed accurate analysis leading to more accurate predictions of future impact, and carried more weight because they were perceived as scientifically valid. Fiske (1992) also stated that quantitative methods were about thinking logically and systematically. Parker (1994) noted that quantitative methods were good for describing qualities common to a group. For Punch (1998), it was effective for examining issues related to the scaling of data where data could be viewed as part of a continuum. This was particularly the case in motivational research where the affective could be viewed as ranging from 'positive' to 'negative'. The fundamental premise was that affective continuums exist in real life allowing researchers to be systematic in thinking, while permitting systematic comparisons. In summary, quantitative measurement has been described as a tool of convenience which allows researchers to convert data into a manageable entity for systematic and precise comparisons.

3.7.2 Weaknesses of the quantitative research method

Punch (2000) noted problems within quantitative research in that attempts to control or manipulate a variable so that the outcome (effect) had only one explanation (cause) could make the data simplistic and unreflective of real world settings. He also questioned whether variables could be separated out anyway. It was not always possible or desirable to set up controlled situations in schools, and this raised ethical issues of manipulation, deception and control in education research.

Fiske (1992) questioned the intelligibility of research involving numbers. While the data appeared 'factual', it still required interpretation. Parker (1994) claimed that quantitative methods ignored the gap between data and the 'real world', resulting in a crisis in psychological research in the late 1960s and early 1970s as it became increasingly impossible to ignore the role of data interpretation. While Parker acknowledged that not all quantitative research was based upon the positivist desire to ascribe cause and effect, he listed six problems for consideration:

- ecological validity – it was important to look for generalisability beyond the boundaries of the study and to look for the variables in real world settings. If not, research could become unnatural and deceptive;

- ethics – deception was a methodological and moral issue. Are subjects in research 'objects' or people? Therefore, tension could exist between the between researcher and participants as to how much participants should know;

- demand characteristics – participants were often anxious to confirm research outcomes. Therefore, participants were often too compliant;

- volunteer characteristics – compliant participants were often the most enthusiastic, and might not offer cross-sectional validity as a result;

- experimenter effects – researchers were anxious to achieve good results and this could be transmitted to the participants; and

- language – there may be the problem of meaning once participants started to talk and guess work became involved in understanding meaning. The reverse could be the case when there was lack of language.

These issues will be addressed in relation to this study in the second half of this chapter.

3.8 The rationale for qualitative research methods

Strauss & Corbin (1996) defined qualitative research as any research which produced findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or quantifiable means. Hughes (1997) stated that one of the aims of qualitative research was to get close to participants via traditional methods of observation and interview, while Punch (2000) associated it with naturalistic research where the aim was to study a phenomenon in detail, holistically and in context, focussing on interpretations and processes.

In justifying this form of research, Burnard (1999) stated that "experience can be constructed from reflection – why do I think like I do – what has shaped my experiences" (p.79) and could be drawn out at interview. Parker (1994) goes further and stated that experience and actions were the source of personal theories which became explanations of behaviours. Therefore, qualitative methods acknowledge that experiences can be drawn out and become the basis for theory building. Objects only make sense by what they mean to individuals. Burns (1990) stated that:

Qualitative research is concerned with understanding the process which underlie various behavioural patterns. Qualitative research is primarily concerned with the how and why.

Strauss & Corbin (1996) described the purpose of qualitative research as the discovery of concepts and relationships, and their resulting organisation into an explanatory scheme. They noted three important stages in research:

- the data itself;
- the process of categorising and coding data; and
- the written report.

They stated that qualitative research involves critical and creative thinking, and that analysis involves the interplay between researcher and data.

3.8.1 Strengths of the qualitative research method

In considering its strengths, Strauss & Corbin (1996) stated that:

- qualitative research attempts to understand the emic perspective;
- qualitative research attempts to obtain intricate details about phenomena such as feelings and thought processes which are not necessarily quantifiable;
- data comes from the participants. Therefore, theory often emerges from the data and therefore potentially more closely resembles reality; and
- researcher preference – qualitative research better suits the personality of some researchers, and is better suited to some fields of inquiry, such as anthropology.

Denzin & Lincoln (1998) described the strength of qualitative research as revolving around the ability of the researcher to select from a wide range of interconnected methods to get a 'better fix' on the subject matter at hand.

Qualitative methods are therefore well suited to exploration of the personal, social and immediate world experiences of students in school settings. Parker (1994) surmised that these methods allowed for exploration, elaboration and systemisation of the importance of a phenomenon, and permitted illuminative representation of the meaning of the issue or problem.

3.8.2 Weaknesses of the qualitative research method

Qualitative data has been accused of being soft and subjective (Hughes 1997). Further, it is only relatively recently that qualitative methods have been accepted as a viable alternative in psychological research. Shulman (1986) listed four problems to be considered when employing qualitative methods:

- ambivalence when generalising from setting to setting in the wider world;
- the need to incorporate contexts beyond the immediate setting for generalisability;
- the pathway from data analysis to conclusions is not always clear; and
- the need for precise documentation on the methods used for data collection to inform the reader of the interpretative role of the researcher.

Shulman (1988) asserted that when not linked to a theory, qualitative methods were akin to groping in the dark. Parker (1994) highlighted the danger of over simplification in the process of reducing data to manageable proportions. He also questioned the nature of interpretation because there is always the potential for alternative explanations, and the need for awareness of the gap between the object of the study and how it is represented. Finally, researchers have to understand that the process of interpretation keeps changing. Parker posed four problems:

- indexicality – the problem of ecological validity and reliability. To what extent was the research an accurate picture of what was being examined, and to what extent would the same results be obtained if the research was repeated;
- inconcludability – it was always impossible to exclude influences beyond the phenomena. Results were always provisional and open to alternative explanations;
- reflexivity – the role of the researcher. There was the need to be as objective as possible in examining the subjective nature of the research by acknowledging different meanings, not screening them out; and
- language and truth – despite concerns over methods, much qualitative research was still presented in a quantitative manner. If not acknowledged otherwise, the language employed in presentation could bring about judgements against a 'scientific' model.

3.9 The research methods for this study

This study was guided by the need to let the research question help determine the choice of methods. For this study, two methods as part of a mixed method approach was deemed appropriate because:

- an quantitative approach would allow wider generalisability and comparability, and accommodate the 'what';
- a qualitative approach allowed a degree of emic examination to build a more complete picture of motivation, and accommodate the 'how'; and
- a mixed approach offered data triangulation.

Therefore, a mixed methods approach was adopted, but there were still epistemological issues to be resolved, particularly in relation to validity and objectivity. Hughes (1997) stated that in the past, the choice of either quantitative or qualitative methodologies was seen as a political act. Hughes claimed that quantitative methods have been largely associated with a masculine view of research, and qualitative with a feminist view. Hughes (1997) claimed that it could be good to have different perspectives from different epistemological viewpoints. Researchers should not make the mistake of attempting to merge the data, but use quantitative and qualitative methods to complement each other; it is the method of reporting that is important.

Strauss & Corbin (1996) reiterated that the issue was not about how to link qualitative and quantitative data, or whether educational researchers should use either methods because in the end, instruments were only instruments. The over-riding issue was the usefulness of each position. Methods might be combined for supplementary, complementary, informational or developmental reasons. Strauss & Corbin (1996) noted that this was not new and made reference to Lazerfeld & Wagner who back in 1958 had discussed the value of using interviews to create surveys.

Strauss & Corbin (1997) stated that imposition of one method over another could restrict choices and discount complexity. While knowing the problem in advance, multiple methods kept options open because the researcher did not know all the conditions in advance. Therefore mixed approaches could accommodate unknown research conditions. Given that motivation is a complex construct, a mixed method

approach would be appropriate for investigating the problem while allowing for the unexpected.

For this study, a pre and post-test questionnaire was employed to contextualise the research question, and focus group interviews employed to solicit a degree of emic understanding from the perspective of the participants. The questionnaire sought to mostly describe the 'what' over time, while the focus groups sought to mostly examine the 'how'.

3.10 The principles underlining questionnaires

Questionnaires represent a standard form of data collection in psychological research. They offer ease in converting large amounts of data into statistics and are especially useful for obtaining a broad picture from a large research cohort (Burns, 2000). They can be used across a variety of settings making them good for comparability and generalisability provided the sample is large enough. Finally, they offered ease of large scale data collection given time and cost factors. This method was well suited to probabilistic sampling as the researcher sought to generalise findings to a wider Australian metropolitan school setting.

A questionnaire was deemed useful for examining components within the theoretical framework, and component changes over time. In this study, it was the identification of the components of Expectancy-value theory and their related changes over time that were important in contextualising the research question.

3.11 The principles underlining focus groups

The researcher considered focus groups appropriate because of the need for richer data not available through survey or experimental methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1996). The process has been described by Stewart & Cash (1997) as an "interactional communication process involving a sharing of feelings and beliefs" (p.17) and thus was considered appropriate for gaining a degree of understanding from the participant perspective. Further, focus groups offered the potential for a wider range of responses than individual interviews.

Meill & Wetherall (1998) cautioned the potential for socially desirable responses, the issue of interviewer expectations, the ability of the interviewer to draw out responses and the stability of responses over time. Nachmias (1996) summarised disadvantages with focus group interviews as:

- high cost – they can be time consuming in recording and transcribing;
- interviewer bias – the controlling nature of the method leaves room for interviewer personal influence and bias, and might give accidental clues to participants eager to please the interviewer; and
- lack of anonymity – participants can feel threatened or intimidated, especially if the questions are sensitive.

Nachmias (1996) did note, however, that if all participants had broadly similar experiences, the situation could be analysed prior to the interview in light of introductory questionnaire findings. The interviewer could then guide the respondents within a framework while allowing them considerable liberty to express themselves. He stated that the process should be "malleable enough to follow emergent leads and standardised enough to register strong patterns." (p. 231)

Focus groups were considered to be less threatening to Year 8 student participants than individual interviews in a potentially intimidating one-on-one situation with an adult. The researcher would be able to indicate a personal interest in responses making the method more conducive for true self disclosure (Stewart & Cash, 1997). Nachmias (1996) summarised the advantages of focus group interviews as:

- flexibility – the interviewer can work with set questions derived from an *a priori* framework but is able to probe for additional information which may lay outside the theoretical framework;
- control of the interview situation – participants respond in an appropriate manner which is particularly important when dealing with Year 8 students who may lack self discipline and knowledge of how to respond in an orderly manner; and
- supplementary information – the interviewer can get more detail and explore personal characteristics, spontaneous reactions and background details.

3.12 Summary of Part One

The aim of chapter three so far had been to examine ontological and epistemological issues related to the conceptual framework underpinning the methods of inquiry which inform this study. In acknowledging the importance for the method of inquiry to be guided by the research question, it is also important to be aware of the traditional, positivist approaches associated with Expectancy-value research, and the value and relevance of soliciting a degree of emic understanding in human research. Accordingly, a two-step, mixed method, approach was selected to explore elements of 'what' and 'how' implied within the research question. The second part of chapter three now locates the methods of inquiry specifically within the research setting and provides details on the participants and schools involved in this study. It also describes how data collection and reporting was constructed in order to answer the research questions.

PART TWO

3.13 Background

The aim of this study was to investigate Year 8 student motivation to continue class music studies, and was guided by the primary question: How do class music learning activities impact upon Year 8 student motivation to continue class music? The following section presents information on how the sample for study was selected and the methods used to obtain and analyse collected data.

3.14 The research setting

3.14.1 Sample size

In selecting the size of the sample for this study, issues for consideration included the need for:

- level of precision – estimates of the range of the true value of the population;
- confidence level – that the average values obtained from the sample population be as close to the true population value as possible; and
- degree of variability (P) – that the values obtained from the sample match normal population distribution.

According to the Department of Education, Western Australia (DETWA) website, it is estimated that approximately 15,000 students enrol into Year 8 in any given year. Approximately one quarter of those enrol in Year 8 class music. As no official figures exist on total class music enrolment numbers in music in Year 8, this estimate was based upon discussions with senior staff at the School of Instrumental Music (SIM), DET. SIM staff are involved in school staffing and have a good knowledge of school music programmes. A published table (Israel, 2003) was used to calculate adequate sample size. According to the table, a sample size of over 194 based upon a total population of approximately 4,000 would yield a sample with a generally accepted level of precision of plus/minus 7%, and a confidence level of 95% (p =.05) (Israel, 2003). Based upon this figure, it was determined that at least eight schools with at least 25 students each (total = 200) enrolled in Year 8 class music would be sufficient for this study.

3.14.2 Selecting the sample

The research question required a sample of Year 8 students be generated because as stated by Miles and Huberman (1984), "You cannot study everyone everywhere doing everything" (p.27). The sample required a degree of representativeness so data could be generalised from the sample back to the general Year 8 population and beyond. This implied the need for a probability sample rather than a targeted, purposive sample.

This study utilised a stratified, random sample technique. This involved a two-stage process:

- As there was the need for the sample to be representative of the metropolitan area, the metropolitan area was divided into eight regions based upon geographical features and rough population size (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). The ABS regions were: north coastal, inner north, outer north, south coastal, inner south, outer south, east and hills.
- From there, a random selection of one school per region was undertaken with the over-riding consideration of selecting a mixture of both government and private schools, including coeducational and single sex schools.

The resulting sample included:

- five government co-educational secondary schools;
- one private boys secondary school;
- one private girls secondary school; and
- one co-educational catholic private school.

Formal approaches were made to each school principal for permission to undertake research in their school, and for permission to approach their music teachers. Having received their approval, approaches were then made to all music teachers, followed by face to face meetings to explain the nature of the research and the school's level of involvement. All selected schools and music teachers indicated a willingness to participate.

3.14.3 Participants

Year 8 students were selected because they were in the first year of secondary school in Western Australia when values and beliefs towards school subjects have been identified as declining (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005; Downs, 2003; Wigfield, 1999). Data collection was undertaken in 2007 and involved 276 Year 8 students aged between 11 and 12 at the pre-test stage, drawn from the eight schools, and 222 students from the same schools at the post-test stage. All students were studying music in elective class music programmes. All students filled in a pre-test questionnaire in February 2007 at the commencement of Year 8 in order to determine their values and beliefs upon entry into their Year 8 class music programmes, and the majority completed the same questionnaire again in November at the end of Year 8 to examine changes in values and beliefs over the course of the year.

From the research cohort, seven focus group interviews were conducted from September to October, 2006 (one group per school). One school withdrew from the focus interview stage because the researcher could not negotiate a suitable time to conduct the interviews with the school. A total of 45 students participated in the focus group interviews, comprising: school 1 – five students, school 2 – six students, school 3 – five students, school 4 – eight students, school 5 – eight students, school 6 – seven students and school 7 – six students. Information regarding the selection of focus group members is contained in 3.16.2 (see p.93).

3.14.4 Ethics

Full ethics clearance was obtained from the Edith Cowan University Human Research Ethics Committee prior to the commencement of the study. All correspondence relating to ethics are contained in Appendices A, B, C and E.

3.15 Step One – the questionnaire

3.15.1 Background

As the research questions implied the need for a broad overview of the impact of learning activities, a questionnaire was selected as Step One because:

- questionnaires are a reasonably consistent, efficient and inexpensive method of obtaining contextual information (Burns, 2000);
- they permit the researcher to make comparisons and generalisations (Herlity, 2001);
- participating students could respond at their own pace, researcher recording mistakes would be omitted and anonymity and confidentiality would be preserved (Burns, 2000); and
- they were considered time efficient by the researcher in not intruding too much on class teaching time in the sample schools.

Accordingly, an instrument based upon differentiated components of Expectancy-value theory (Eccles 2005) was constructed especially for use with Year 8 students. The instrument included questions examining the potential for differentiated expectancies components as discussed in the Literature Review.

The limitations surrounding questionnaires are:

- there would be no guarantee that all questions would be understood by the participants, or that all participating students would be fully literate;
- responses would be accepted on face value with no chance for an immediate follow-up (Burns, 2000); and
- questionnaires can be susceptible to over and under rating tendencies, with some students giving consistently high or low ratings.

These considerations will be addressed in succeeding sections of this chapter.

3.15.2 Construction

The questionnaire comprised a series of closed statements, with students being asked to rank responses on a 5-point Likert scale. Closed statements were considered suitable for obtaining student assessments of the impact of learning activities. In addition, closed statements were selected because they offered an improved consistency of measurement, better reliability, the answers would fit the categories, and for ease of coding (Burns, 2000). Further, Likert scales have been acknowledged as an enduring and popular form of measurement within psychological research (Stahlberg & Frey, 1988) and would allow a degree of comparability against international findings within Expectancy-value research which employed a similar scale. While acknowledging the potential for a degree of superficiality in the use of closed statements, it was recognised that more detailed examination would occur in Step Two focus group interviews.

Burns (2000) recommended a series of technical considerations when constructing questionnaires, namely:

- group like questions together;
- ensure the smooth transition between groups of items;
- number all items to avoid confusion; and
- mark all the pages.

The instrument contained a total of 32 statements comprising four statements per Expectancy-value component. This included four statements per component relating to the proposed differentiated expectancies constructs. Due to the age of the students (age 12), there was the potential for respondent fatigue with an overly long instrument. Therefore, four items per component were considered sufficient for a broad assessment of dimensions identified in the literature review within each theoretical construct. To avoid potential issues surrounding student literacy levels, the wording of each statement was kept relatively simple for Year 8 comprehensibility. The 32 statements were grouped as recommended by Burns (2000) as follows in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1 *Questionnaire construction framework*

Expectancy-value component	Item number	Dimension assessed
Attainment value	1	global importance
	2	goal orientation (challenge)
	3	'within' person relevance
	4	in relation to other subjects
Intrinsic value	5	situational interest
	6	situational interest
	7	individual interest
	8	individual interest
Extrinsic value	9	skills (long term personal)
	10	career (long term practical)
	11	relation to other subjects (short term personal)
	12	within subject usefulness (short term practical)
Competence	13	global musical competence
	14	challenge
	15	comprehensibility and understanding
	16	physical ability
Academic expectancies	17	global musical expectancies
	18	past experiences
	19	comprehension
	20	goal orientation
Physical expectancies	21	global physical expectancies
	22	past experiences
	23	goal orientation
	24	physical competence
Social expectancies	25	outward focus (self in relation to others)
	26	outward focus (self in relation to others)
	27	inner focus (others in relation to self)
	28	inner focus (others in relation to self)
General expectancies	29	competence
	30	competence
	31	goal orientation
	32	past experience

Cost value statements were not included on the questionnaire. Given the specific nature of potential cost dimensions in relation to class music and the lack of research in this area on which to base questionnaire items, it was decided to explore cost independently within the focus groups.

Students were asked to circle their responses in relation to each statement corresponding to 1) strongly disagree, 2) disagree, 3) neither disagree or agree, 4) agree, 5) strongly agree. A sample statement for goal orientation (challenge), within the attainment value component from the questionnaire is as follows:

I think that the sorts of activities I do in class music are challenging.				
strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

While responses were anonymous, respondents were asked to indicate their gender at the start of the questionnaire for the purpose of possible future analysis at a later stage.

3.15.3 Validity

The following sections discuss the need for both internal and external validity. Internal validity can be defined as whether the instrument measures what it intends to measure, and external validity as how generalisable findings are to other groups and settings.

Content validity

Content validity is concerned with how representative, comprehensive and accurate the instrument is (Burns, 2000). It is concerned with the degree to which a test measures an intended content area, but is not statistically measurable.

For this study, the instrument items were constructed after a very detailed examination of the dimensions of the components of Expectancy-value theory contained in the literature review, and additional literature relating to the original 1983 model, the 2002 revision, and the latest published model in 2005. As dimensions within the components of the theory were broad and multidimensional, these considerations were at the forefront of item construction. Question dimensionality was also discussed with a fellow music education researcher based in Sydney involved in related self-efficacy research during the process of question formation. The result was a series of items clearly organised and worded to reflect the constructs and dimensionality of Expectancy-value theory.

For face validity, the completed instrument was shown to both university supervisors involved with this study. In addition, the completed instrument was shown to three 12 year olds known to the researcher. They were asked to complete the questionnaire and were asked whether they understood all the questions. All stated that the questions were clear and comprehensible.

Construct validity

According to Garson (1998), construct validity has to do with "the logic of items which comprise measures of social concepts" (p.1). He stated that "a good construct has a theoretical basis which is translated through clear operational definitions involving measurable indicators" (p.1). For this study:

- all items derived from an extensive review of Expectancy-value theory as outlined in chapter two;
- all items conformed with operational descriptions supplied by Eccles (2005) and contained within the literature review; and
- all items derived from constructs widely used and validated in previous Expectancy-value research.

In addition, Cronbach's alpha was used to establish internal consistency construct validity (see 3.15.5).

3.15.4 Piloting the questionnaire

The instrument was piloted to assess the validity and reliability of the questions. Piloting was considered important to determine the time taken to complete the questions, the clarity of instructions, whether the questions were clear, and to determine if there were any problems with the layout. As this was a new instrument, two pilot studies were originally planned, with the second designed to validate any changes from the first. However, the high internal consistency and lack of problems (see 3.15.5) made a second pilot unnecessary.

Burns (2000) noted that any pilot study should be conducted with a sample as alike as possible as those to be surveyed. Fetherston (2001) stated that a minimum of 30 responses was required to calculate useable reliability indices with this number of questions.

Accordingly, the pilot study was conducted in November, 2006 with a convenience sample not involved in the main study. Forty questionnaires were administered to two separate Year 8 classes and results recorded and analysed. At the time of testing, participants were asked whether they understood the questions. As the questionnaire recorded a high reliability rating, only minor wording changes were made to enhance the clarity of some questions. A copy of the instrument is contained in Appendix D. Minor wording changes were made to questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 15, 17, 31 and 32 from the original piloted version.

3.15.5 Reliability

Reliability is defined as the extent to which an instrument will give similar results from repeated uses. Burns (2000) noted three sets of attributes associated with reliability, namely:

- the characteristics of the questionnaire items and the questionnaire itself;
- the subjects being tested; and
- issues relating to administration of the questionnaire.

To account for characteristics of the instrument, including internal validity, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated on the 40 piloted questionnaires. Sekaran (1984) stated that results less than 0.6 were considered poor, 0.7 − 0.8 were considered acceptable, and over 0.8 were considered good.

This instrument returned a high overall reliability of 0.92. All items were of high reliability, and therefore none were omitted.

To negate any potential issues relating to administration of the instrument by a third person, the questionnaire was personally administered by the researcher at both the pilot and study data collection stages (see 3.15.6).

3.15.6 Procedures

The researcher personally administered the questionnaires in February, 2007 in all eight schools, and again in November, 2007. These months were close to the start and end of the Western Australian academic year. Student participants were given a brief explanation of the nature of the study and verbal instructions prior to completing the questionnaire, in addition to written instructions on each questionnaire. Teachers in participating schools were not involved in the data collection process at any stage.

Participants were asked to be as honest as possible in responding to questionnaire statements, as their responses were anonymous. Participants were asked to work quietly and independently, while the researcher remained on hand to answer privately any questions participants had about any aspect of the questionnaire. Volunteer characteristics were not considered relevant as all music students in all schools participated en masse.

3.15.7 Coding and analysis

Responses were entered onto SPSS Base 14 software. Given that most questions examined a different dimension within each component, all four questions per component were reported independently. Thus, for example, the attainment values component was reported as four separate items. An explanation of the component dimensions examined by each question, along with the finding, is provided in the results chapter.

Factor analysis

Expectancies pre-test and post-test data was first subjected to factor analysis to determine the viability or not of reporting expectancies as a differentiated construct. As discussed in the Literature Review, the presence of factors within the expectancies construct could be useful in providing a structure in the reporting of findings, as well as add greater detail to the findings.

Percentage of frequency and mean scores

As total cohort numbers differed from pre-test to post-test, data was presented in percentages of frequency tables followed by mean scores for all statements. Mean differences between pre and post-test items were also presented to allow easy examination of changes across both stages.

Parametric tests

Parametric tests, comprising two-tailed paired samples t-tests, were undertaken to compare the significance of the differences between pre and post-test data. Results were presented in the same tables as means and mean differences. T, df and significance were also reported (Allen & Bennett, 2008; Stahlberg & Frey, 1988).

3.16 Step Two – focus groups

3.16.1 Background

The aim of Step Two was to examine in more detail how learning activities impacted Year 8 student motivation to continue class music. The purpose was to follow up and explain the questionnaire findings. A focus group inquiry method was selected as an effective way of gaining vivid and rich descriptions from the perspective of the participants themselves. Atwater (in ASA, 1997) stated that:

> the conversations in focus groups gives ... [the researcher] a sense of what makes people tick and a sense of what is going on with people's minds and lives that ... [the researcher] simply can't get with survey data (p.1).

Advantages of this method included its ability to gather a wide range of information in a relatively short space of time, and its flexibility in exploring related but unanticipated topics as they arose. Potential disadvantages included lack of representativeness within the selected groups, and the quality of responses give the age of the participants. These issues will be addressed in the following sections.

3.16.2 Focus group size and selection

Size

The American Statistical Association (ASA) stated that the ideal focus group should contain six to twelve participants (ASA, 1997). They stated that smaller groups could be dominated by individuals or fail through lack of contributors while large groups could lack cohesion, break up into side conversations, or lead to frustration as people waited their turn to speak. Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Robson (2001) described six to eight participants per group as the optimum group size, although they cited research involving groups ranging in size from three to fourteen. They too described the problem of a lack of depth and range of responses, intimidation and domination by one participant in small groups, and highlighted the problem of a point of 'diminishing return' where too many participants added nothing new in large groups. They also described six to eight participants as practical when it came to logistical considerations such as selecting mutually convenient meeting times, and the appropriateness and intimacy of meeting venues.

When considering the value of multiple convenings of the same focus groups, Bloor et al., (2001) highlighted problems such as student absences and more importantly, the rapidly changing social dimensions within school groups affecting levels of disclosure.

When considering the number of focus groups required to provide sufficient coverage of the topic, Morgan (1998) stated that three to five focus groups were generally sufficient where the assumption is that groups are moderately diverse and the topic is only moderately complex. Morgan (1998) also noted a point of diminishing return; that theoretical saturation could occur because new groups yielded no new information. Given that focus groups in this study were working within the relatively complex theoretical framework of Expectancy-value theory and that the level of disclosure would not be as detailed per group as for adults, the researcher reasoned that slightly more than three to five focus groups would be required for this study.

Based on the above considerations, for this study:

- focus groups were based upon five to eight participants;
- focus groups were conducted once only in each setting; and
- eight groups were planned, based around one per participating school.

Selection

Bloor et at., (2001) and Morgan (1998) stated that focus groups usually required purposive sampling because their aim was to target specific populations or topics, such as reflecting upon responses from a survey. Random sampling was less important because the aim was usually not generalization of findings. However, Morgan (1998) noted that systematic or selective random sampling could be used when working with a pre-existing sample. Bloor et al., (2001) stated that:

> Where focus groups are used in conjunction with a survey, respondents can be randomly selected from the survey sample to participate in focus groups. In a design study of this type, focus group participants can be randomly selected from the survey sample based upon any combination of specific data that has been collected in the survey. (p.30)

Bloor et al., (2001) stated that in an education setting, screening within a pre-existing sample can be done via random sampling of class lists, or via an intermediary in a better position to help make a judgement selection. Because this study was working from an existing pool of participants and that participants represented the 'typical case' category described by Patton (Zelna, 2007), the researcher approached participant school music teachers to help in selection. Bloor et al., (2001) noted the value of using an intermediary acquainted with the required characteristics of group participants. The required characteristics for participating in focus groups in this study were:

- roughly equal numbers of boys and girls to avoid gender bias;
- mixed academic ability for class music to gain a range of views from different competence perspectives: and
- openness to talk to and not be intimidated by an adult.

The last consideration was an important one because Morgan (1998) noted that given the age and education levels of participants, not everyone may be equally able to talk fluently about the topic. Given that all students were already engaged in class music, there was already a degree of homogeneity within each setting, thus already meeting many of the requirements of purposive sampling.

Using teachers as intermediaries in the focus group selection process would help ensure the social dimension of compatibility within groups, as Bloor et al., (2001) noted the value of groups where participants were on good terms with each other. They highlighted the danger of lack of cohesion in groups where students did not get along, leading to lack of comfort and openness. Music teachers were in a good position to judge the social 'mix'.

Accordingly, focus groups in this study were convened employing teachers as intermediaries with a more intimate knowledge of the required characteristics for each group. Selections were made in conjunction with the researcher, and letters seeking parental consent were send home, stating that participation was entirely voluntary and confidentiality would be protected. Nine letters were sent per prospective group, based upon the premise that some students would not be interested or forget, or that some parents may refuse permission. A copy of the letter to parents is contained in Appendix E.

3.16.3 Principles guiding the focus group

Structure

In structural terms, Zelna (2007) described three types of focus group approaches, namely:

- unstructured, whereby questions evolve from general discussions within the group as themes emerge;

- semi-structured, whereby the researcher approaches the focus group with a series of *a priori* questions, but acknowledges that all themes cannot be known in advance and so generates further questions based upon the group discussion; and

- structured, whereby the researcher adheres to a strict *a priori* set of questions.

The focus groups in this study utilised a semi-structured approach. While each focus group was approached with a series of questions which derived from the theoretical framework and were informed by findings from the pre-test questionnaire, the semi-structured approach still gave the flexibility to explore emerging themes which may have had special relevance to participants in individual settings.

Questions

In general terms, the ASA (1997) stated that focus group questions needed to be open ended, clearly formulated, easily understood, neutral so that they did not influence the answers, carefully sequenced and ordered so that more general questions preceded the more detailed ones. Zelna (2007) stated that questions had to constructed in language appropriate to the group members.

With the above in mind, focus groups questions were carefully sequenced into three stages as recommended by the ASA (1997), Creswell (1998), Meill & Wetherall (1998) and Stewart & Cash (1997). They comprised:

- generic icebreaker questions based upon an Expectancy-value component designed to ease students into the discussion process;
- guiding questions based upon dimensions of the other components from Expectancy-value theory; and
- follow-up questions, designed to explore the potential for other emergent themes.

Ice-breaker questions were based upon the intrinsic value component of interest and enjoyment because intrinsic value had been identified in the literature review as the strongest of the values constructs offering easy concepts to get students talking. Although usually presented in Expectancy-value models as the second task values component, it was reasoned that commencing discussions with this component would not alter task value findings.

The three ice-breaker questions were:

1. Describe some of the activities students find interesting and enjoyable in class music.

2. What are some of the aspects of class music that Year 8 students generally don't find interesting and enjoyable - why?

3. What could be done to make class music more interesting and enjoyable for all students, especially those who don't like it?

The remaining focus group questions are contained in Appendix F. In addition, two guiding questions were included regarding music task difficulty in both primary school and secondary school. This was based upon the premise that an examination of perceptions of task difficulty may help ascertain possible reasons for potential changes in values and beliefs in Year 8 students. Task difficulty is integral to Expectancy-value theory, but is not located at the forefront of the model. Rather, it operates as a mediating influence upon values and beliefs.

Finally, a concluding open ended question was asked regarding possible motivational influences not covered within the Expectancy-value framework. The question was intended to examine whether other influences beyond the theoretical framework might be identified by focus groups. This question is also contained in Appendix F.

3.16.4 – Focus group procedures

Seven focus groups comprising five to eight students each (numbers varied slightly from group to group depending upon the return of consent forms) from each school were convened, with time and administrative pressures not allowing an eighth school to participate (see 3.14.3). Interviews were undertaken from September - October 2007 within each school, and were conducted at times convenient to the schools. Interviews were undertaken in private, quiet locations provided by each school with no distractions, as required by Zelna (2007). Chairs were arranged in a circle with the researcher as moderator within the circle at the same level as the participants and as part of the group.

The researcher was aware that his role as moderator was to keep the group focused and to tailor his moderating style to the age and behaviour demands of the group (ASA, 1997). Accordingly, the following procedures were adhered to for each interview:

- at the start of each focus group, the researcher introduced themself;
- the purpose of the research was succinctly explained;
- basic ground rules, including the appropriate manner of response, were set down;
- participants were reassured about the voluntary and confidential nature of their participation; and
- the purpose of the researcher's note taking and recording was explained.

Focus groups were then conducted upon the models recommended by Creswell (1998), Meill & Wetherall (1998) and Stewart & Cash (1997). All were audio-taped.

Once the purpose of the interviews had been explained to students, few problems were found in eliciting responses. While some students had more to say than others, the process was controlled by encouraging quieter students to join in. As the moderator, the researcher was aware that the aim was to generate discussion within the groups and encourage students to react to each other (ASA, 1997). Eye contact was maintained with students, students who gave particularly thoughtful answers were acknowledged, and an interest was demonstrated in all responses. As a result, students spoke freely and at times passionately.

While the ASA recommended two hour sessions as an optimal length, given the age and concentration span of the students and curriculum time pressures from within each school, all groups in this study were convened for approximately one hour only. This length of time was appropriate because as the moderator, the researcher could sense the concentration of the students starting to wane towards the end of the hour.

At the conclusion of each focus group, all participants were thanked, and all were given chocolate frogs as a reward for participating. Interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriber and the transcriptions checked by the researcher against the original interview tapes. Interview transcriptions are provided in Appendix G.

3.16.5 *Coding and analysis*

Before describing the method of coding and analysis of focus group data for this study, it was important to consider the principles behind qualitative analysis. Marshall & Rossman (1999) stated:

> The researcher does not search for the exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories of the statistician but, instead, identifies the salient, grounded categories of meaning held by the participants in the setting. (p.154)

Siedel (1998) described qualitative analysis as a process of noticing, collecting and thinking but noted that it was not a linear progression:

- it is iterative – the analysis process is a cycle that keeps repeating itself. As the researcher thinks, they start noticing new things, and therefore, the process is an infinite spiral;

- it is recursive – one part of the process can return the researcher to a previous part. As the researcher collects, so they notices new things to collect; and

- it is holographic – each step contains the entire process. As the researcher first starts noticing things, they are already mentally collecting and thinking about these things.

Siedel's ongoing analysis process of noticing, collecting and thinking was at the forefront in the collection and sorting stages of this study. In procedural terms, Zelna (2007) described five steps in the analysis process:

- step 1 – familiarisation with the purpose of the study, or 'what do I need to know' to avoid side tracking;

- step 2 – verification of the transcripts by listening and checking against the original recordings and notes;

- step 3 – re-reading of the transcripts and preliminary organisation of categories relating to each question by highlighting relevant quotes;

- step 4 – re-reading and coding in greater detail within the identified categories; and finally

- step 5 – reassembling the text according to themes.

Siebel (1998) defined coding and categorising as the process of noticing, naming, collecting and sorting. In describing the process, Schneider (2005) emphasised the importance of coding and indexing as necessary for systematic analysis. Schneider defined a code as a label which tags a concept or value, and described the need to systematically scan all the text and tag all occurrences and recurrences. He described three approaches to coding:

- Code book – based upon examination of categories within a pre-existing theoretical framework;
- Induction – based upon the principle associated with emerging grounded theory in that categories gradually emerge from the data; and
- Ontological categories – based upon the principle that categories can be examined within a pre-existing theoretical framework informed by context, situation, perspectives and relationships. As such, ontological categories represent a compromise between theory driven and grounded theory approaches.

Zelna (2007) and Schneider (2005) described coding as originating from key words, and the meaning behind words. Coding derived from the frequency and extensiveness of key words and meaning which have special importance. In practical terms, Schneider (2005) stated that the safest way to code was via software, that codes should be kept short, that codes should be hierarchical (not flat), and that all relevant information should be coded to ensure reliability.

Further, Schnieder (2005) described two distinct purposes behind coding:

- Simple – the function of coding data with the aim of creating discrete categories; or
- Patterned coding – the function of coding data which ultimately can be used to look for patterns across categories.

In constructing categories, Marshall & Rossman (1999) reminded the researcher that they are no more than 'analyst constructed typologies' grounded in the data but not necessarily used explicitly by the participants. In this sense, they would appear to be conceptual and are no more than researcher representations of participant experiences. However, Jorgensen (1989) noted the value of thorough coding and categorizing:

> [coding and categorising] is a breaking up, separating or disassembling of research materials into pieces, parts, elements, or units. With facts broken down into manageable pieces, the researcher sorts and sifts them, searching for types, classes, sequences, processes, patterns or wholes. The aim of this process is to assemble or reconstruct the data in a meaningful or comprehensible fashion. (p.107)

In this sense, coding and categorising is important in the process of managing data, and presenting it in ways that are meaningful in terms of answering the research question.

In terms of analysis, Siedel (1998) stated that it was more than simply coding and sifting. It involved thinking to:

- make sense of each collection of categories;
- look for patterns and relationships; and
- make general discoveries.

Siedel (1998) stated that analysis involved comparing and contrasting categories in order to discover similarities and differences, build typologies, or find sequences and patterns. However, both Siedel and Agar (1991) highlighted a danger that could arise from an over-reliance on coded data in the analysis process. They described this as 'finding the codes but losing the data' (p.7). Agar (1991), in referring to the value of intensive examination of small bits of data stated:

> That critical way of seeing, in my experience at least, comes out of numerous cycles through little bits of data, massive amounts of thinking about that data, and slippery things like intuition and serendipity. For that, you need a little bit of data, and a lot of right brain. (p.194)

This study was guided by Siebel's (1998) reflective process of noticing, collecting and thinking, and constantly moved backwards and forwards between the transcripts, the theoretical framework, the coding and categorising, and resulting analysis. In procedural terms, Zelna's (2007) recommended approach was adopted. The research questions were constantly at the forefront during the checking of transcripts, preliminary coding on the transcripts themselves, and during the more formal process of segmenting, collecting and sorting the information.

As this study was grounded in a clear and detailed theoretical framework, a 'code book' approach (Schneider, 2005) was adopted whereby structured categories were coded under the overarching components within Expectancy-value theory. Coding was based upon the frequency of key words and meanings behind words. However, there was also the need to examine ontological categories within the data as described by Schneider (2005), namely context and perspectives:

- context – that each setting was different and brought different dimensions to the focus groups as determined by their lived experiences; and
- perspective – that the researcher was examining values and beliefs within the theoretical framework as lived by the student participants, not adults or experienced researchers.

While categories were structured around the components of Expectancy-value theory, the decision was made to code conceptual categories as determined by the participants and compare them against the theoretical framework, rather than the reverse. It was considered important not to force the data to fit the theory, and also be aware of the problems of linking student derived categories to the components of the theory. Therefore, the presentation of focus group data in the results chapter contains many representative quotes from the participants themselves to illustrate the construction and meaning assigned to the categories.

Participant quotes presented in the following chapter are unedited. Each quote was prefixed by a school assigned code (each school was numbered from 1 – 8), and a within group code. Thus, 7S2 indicates school 7, student number 2. The selected quotes are representative of categories across the range of sample schools.

Coding was undertaken directly from the transcripts, with initial coding completed in the margins of copies of the completed transcripts. Detailed coding was then undertaken using Nvivo7 software.

Initial coding was simple, hierarchical, and underwent a number of stages:

- data was grouped according to the Expectancy-value components as determined by the icebreaker, general and follow-up questions;
- data was coded, collected and sorted into conceptual categories of student derived meaning associated with each Expectancy-value component; and
- further coding collected and sorted data into sub-categories associated with the dimensions of the components of Expectancy-value theory.

In this sense, initial analysis was relatively straight forward as its purpose was to make sense of the categories in relation to the theoretical framework to answer the research question. The process is set out in Figure 3.1.

DATA	CODING	CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES	SUB-CATEGORIES
Data grouped according to the components of Expectancy-value theory.	Coding based upon numerical frequency and meaning behind participant responses.	Conceptual categories labelled according to collective meaning attributed to participant coded responses.	Sub-categories labelled according to dimensions within Expectancy-value theory identified within each category.

Figure 3.1 *Simple coding and categorising of focus group data*

The process highlighted in Figure 3.1 outlined the process by which student derived conceptual categories were created within the theoretical framework. However, as an aim of this study was to inform teaching practice, conceptual categories were then re-examined for evidence of the impact of specific learning activities. The aim was to crosstabulate references to specific class music activities against dimensions within the theoretical framework, ultimately to lead to a series of recommendations for practice. This was done by:

- the creation of descriptive matrices, based upon Schneider's (2005) model;

- a separate matrix was constructed for each Expectancy-value component;

- dimensions within each Expectancy-value component were listed on the X axis;

- all focus group references to specific class music tasks were listed on the Y axis;

- references to component dimensions within specific learning activities were marked with an X in each matrix box;

- overall positive and negative comments, based upon numerical frequency, were indicated by (+) or (-);

- where comments were equally divided, both (+) and (-) were indicated; and

- where no reference was made to specific learning activities, boxes were left blank.

A sample matrix for intrinsic value is presented below as Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 *Learning activities matrix for intrinsic value.*

Intrinsic task value	Situational interest	Individual interest – feeling related	Individual interest – value related
Aural activities	X(-)		
Composing & experimenting	X(+)	X(+)	X(+)
Composing in groups			
Games	X(+)		
Performing – solo		X(+)	
Performing – groups	X(+)	X(+)	X(+)
Practical	X(+)		X(+)
Projects / research			
Theory / notation	X(-)	X(-)	X(-)

Learning activity types were derived from student descriptions provided in this study. Accordingly, issues of validity and reliability are considered in the next section of this chapter.

3.16.6 Validity and reliability

Before describing validity and reliability for the focus group data, it is important to consider briefly the implications of both terms. Validity and reliability in quantitative research are concerned with stability, replicability, accuracy, generalisability, and are focused upon the quality of the instrument (Golafshani, 2003). However, these terms do not necessarily apply in the same way in a qualitative setting. Validity and reliability in qualitative research are concerned with illumination, understanding and extrapolation to other settings. The researcher is effectively the instrument (Golafshani, 2003). She stated that validity and reliability are not treated separately in qualitative research. Instead, terminology that encompasses both, such as credibility, dependability, confirmability, authenticity, replicability, transferability and trustworthiness is used.

Lincoln & Guba (1985) stated that the key to validity and reliability lies in the question "How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?" (p.290). Maxwell (in Huberman & Miles, 2002) described it more succinctly as "Why should we believe it?" (p.37). While some researchers describe the need for validity and reliability from a pseudo-positivist perspective, others have rejected the terms as being not applicable in qualitative research (Golafshani, 2003). However, all researchers recognise the need for some sort of quality check to establish confidence in the findings. Further, Lincoln & Guba (1985) stated that "since there can be no validity without reliability, a demonstration of the former is sufficient to establish the later" (p.316).

In general, validity in qualitative research has been discussed in terms of research quality but is not a single, fixed or universal concept. Maxwell (in Huberman & Miles, 2002) described it as a quality rather than a technique (as in quantitative research) based upon deeds rather than words. Validity is concerned with understanding how findings have been derived.

In general terms, Patton (2001) noted the value of strengthening findings by combining methods, or by triangulation. While the value of mixed methods was discussed earlier in the chapter, Patton (2001) stated that combining methods for triangulation offered multiple perceptions about a single critical realism. In practical

terms, Ratcliff (1995) described the value of converging data with other data sources via triangulation, comparisons with the literature, and the extensive use of participant quotations.

In noting the divergent writings concerning validity and reliability in qualitative research (Huberman & Miles, 2002), it was decided to describe the terms in relation to the model presented by Maxwell (2002). In doing so, it should be noted that the role of validity is not concerned with establishing an absolute truth by which this study can be compared against others. This study is based upon the notion that a critical realism can be described and examined; therefore, validity is concerned with the process by which the conclusions, based upon an interpretation of critical realism, have been reached. Quality is derived from the account itself and the resulting inferences drawn from it.

Descriptive validity

Maxwell (2002) described this as reportage at the operational level, in terms of being as clear and explicit as possible. This study has been explicit about the way in which focus groups were organised, conducted and analysed. In analysing the data, the numerical frequency of responses has been reported, and included them at the forefront of findings in chapter four. In this sense, data has been presented as far as possible in an etic, objective way. Maxwell (2002) described the similarity between this form of validity and construct validity in quantitative research.

Interpretative validity

Maxwell (2002) described interpretative validity as being more concerned with mental understanding rather than physical description. This study has attempted to respect the participant perspective by providing many quotes, grounded in the language of the participants. In doing so, the reader is able to gain a clear picture of the process of inference from the words of the participants to the researcher's categorising of their responses. Extensive quoting of students also indicated respect for the role of the participants in constructing the critical realism at the heart of this study.

Theoretical validity

This is defined by Maxwell (2002) as taking the data one step further in an attempt to explain rather than just describe. In this sense, it is close to the quantitative concept of internal or critical validity. In this study, interpretation and inference is based upon the clear theoretical framework of Expectancy-value theory. Data is grouped according to the theoretical framework, and both discussion and interpretation is undertaken via constant reference back to the framework. The theoretical framework as presented in the literature review provides the basis for the researcher's explanations. In this sense, the quality of this study can be judged by comparing what is presented with past explanations within Expectancy-value theory.

Generalisability

While noting that generalisability has not been a goal central to past qualitative research, Schofield (2002) noted a growing interest in this area. Scholfield noted that the term is best applied to notions of conceptual generalisability, and 'fittingness'. In practical terms, this involved 'studying the typical', the use of multiple sites and acknowledgement that similar phenomena can exist in other settings, and can be particularly valuable when studying concepts associated with the need for change in education research. In this study, the eight selected schools were 'typical schools' and 'typical students' in Year 8 music classes. The students were not special cases. The study involved multiple sites, and one aim of the study was to examine concepts associated with learning activities with a view to making recommendations for change. Thus, generalisability is expressed in conceptual terms rather than physical terms.

Evaluative validity

Maxwell (2002) described evaluative validity in terms of embracing possible explanations rather than ruling out alternatives. In this sense, a researcher acknowledges that their account is one account, and not the only account. In this study, these considerations are outlined in the limitations section in the final chapter. In addition, it is noted that evaluative validity is not the judgement of the researcher to make. Rather, it rests with the reader who bases their evaluation upon the quality of what is presented. For a positive judgement to occur, an attempt has been made to be as explicit as possible at all stages of the research process.

3.17 Chapter summary

The first part of chapter three discussed ontological and epistemological issues associated with research in psychology and education which had implications for the method of inquiry. While addressing these issues, the study was ultimately guided by the need for the research questions to determine the method of inquiry. Accordingly, a mixed method inquiry was chosen offering a two-step developmental approach to the research question, grounded in the theoretical framework. The Step One quantitative questionnaire was designed to gather data which described 'what' was happening to Year 8 values and beliefs at pre and post-test stages, while the Step Two qualitative focus groups were designed to gather data to examine the impact of learning activities from the perspective of the participants. It aimed to determine how learning activities impacted upon values and beliefs within the boundaries of the theoretical framework.

The second part of this chapter has outlined the research setting and specific details of the methods of inquiry. It has introduced the reader to the research methods in detail, the participants and the research setting, and the principles and techniques of data analysis.

3.18 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study is valid and reliable because:

- it is grounded in a well established and comprehensive theoretical framework;
- it is based within a paradigm which offers a degree of generalisability and objectivity while acknowledging naturalistic settings and a degree of emic understanding;
- it employs mixed methods to allow for triangulation in a wider examination of the research questions;
- it employs an instrument which has been piloted, offers high reliability and good internal validity; and
- research procedures have been explicitly explained at all stages in the design and implementation of this study.

Chapter four now presents findings framed by the above considerations.

CHAPTER FOUR - RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

Chapter four presents the results from data gathering outlined in chapter three. It presents Step One questionnaire data in frequency tables and as mean scores, and the findings of the paired sample *t*-tests used to compare the pre and post-test data. It also presents Step Two focus group responses grouped according to categories derived from student responses and the components of Expectancy-value theory. Step One questionnaire and Step Two interview data are presented hierarchically under headings arising from Expectancy-value theory, with quantitative 'what' data preceding the elaborative qualitative 'how' data.

The chapter includes findings regarding the potential for expectancies to be reported as a differentiated construct. It also reports additional data from focus groups regarding task difficulty and the transition to secondary school, and other possible influences outside the theoretical framework as identified by the participants themselves. Findings on each Expectancy-value component, and individual items, commences with findings for intrinsic value as it formed the basis for focus group ice-breaker questions (see 3.16.3, p.95)

4.1 Intrinsic value (items 5 – 8)

Four statements comprised this component. Statements 1 and 2 corresponded to situational interest and statements 3 and 4 to individual interest (Eccles, 2005; Schiefele, 1991). The statements were:

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1. I think the range of activities I do in class music are enjoyable (situational).

2. I think the sorts of activities I do in class music are interesting (situational).

3. In general, I find class music activities fun (individual).

4. In general, I find class music activities interesting (individual).

Intrinsic value results are presented as percentages of frequency in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 *Pre and post-test percentages of frequency for intrinsic task value*

Intrinsic value N = 222	% Strongly disagree		% Disagree		% Neither agree nor disagree		% Agree		% Strongly agree	
	pre	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*
Intrinsic 1	0.7	5.9	4.0	12.2	25.4	36.0	48.6	33.8	21.4	12.2
Intrinsic 2	0.4	3.6	4.0	12.2	27.9	34.7	50.4	41.0	17.4	8.6
Intrinsic 3	1.1	3.6	4.0	14.0	28.3	34.2	47.5	35.1	19.2	13.1
Intrinsic 4	1.8	4.1	3.3	10.4	26.4	32.4	53.6	45.0	14.9	8.1

All of the above four items indicated a decline in agree and strongly agree responses, and a corresponding increase in disagree and strongly disagree at the post-test stage. Data was subjected to a two-tailed paired samples *t*-test. Results, including mean and mean difference, are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 *Mean, mean difference and significance for intrinsic task value*

Intrinsic value N = 222	Pre-test		Post-test			
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean diff.*	*Significance*
Intrinsic 1	3.85	.82	3.34	1.03	-.51	.001*
Intrinsic 2	3.80	.78	3.38	.93	-.42	.001*
Intrinsic 3	3.79	.83	3.40	1.00	-.39	.001*
Intrinsic 4	3.76	.80	3.42	.92	-.34	.003*

For item 1, t = 5.505, df = 221, $p < .001$ (two tailed).
For item 2, t = 3.979, df = 221, $p < .001$ (two tailed).
For item 3, t = 3.470, df = 221, $p < .001$ (two tailed).
For item 4, t = 2.986, df = 221, $p < .003$ (two tailed).

There was a statistically significant decline in the mean for all four intrinsic value items from pre to post-test. These results indicated that Year 8 students saw class music learning activities becoming less interesting and enjoyable over the course of the year.

4.1.1 Focus Group responses for intrinsic value

Three ice-breaker questions were asked. The first question contained a situational interest orientation while the other two contained an individual interest orientation. All three questions generated animated responses from all groups. The questions were:

1. Describe some of the activities students find interesting and enjoyable in class music.

2. What are some of the aspects of class music that Year 8 students generally don't find interesting and enjoyable?

3. What could be done to make class music more interesting and enjoyable for all students, especially those who don't like it?

Enjoyable

Despite the situational interest orientation of this question, students answered in general terms. Four categories based upon the frequency of responses emerged across all focus groups, and are presented in Table 4.3. Of these, composing and performing emerged as the most enjoyable categories.

Table 4.3 *Conceptual categories relating to enjoyment within the intrinsic value component*

Enjoyable	No of responses	Indicative quotes
Composing / experimenting	13	4S1: We like...when we do the...where we get to play our own music in a certain form.
Computers	8	7S6: I enjoy the, yeah, the computer kind of learning because I think it's just proven that kids learn a lot more when they're actually doing things and just mucking around with the instruments, and it's just...and like you're writing with your friends so you can kind of talk while you're doing it and stuff like that.
Performing	14	6S6: I think people enjoy playing in duets or trios, with themselves during class, and possibly doing covers or original stuff.
Projects	2	6S5: The rock music [project] we just did was quite fun. The rock music one was quite fun to do.

Composing was seen by a number of students as a value related means of self expression.

4S2: Yeah, I mean it's cool because you like get to create your own music and stuff and get to express yourself.

Composing was described as feelings related fun regardless of perceptions of ability.

5S6: I'm not very good at composing things but I find it fun, though.

Others preferred a less structured, experimental approach:

8S2: Just trying out different chords, different minors and majors.

Computers were seen as 'feelings related fun', not only as a means in themselves, but as a link between composing and performing in terms of situational interest:

7S2: Well, I like going on the computers because you like just press a button and it sounds like an instrument.

Responses about computers were setting specific with all responses coming from a school with a dedicated music computer laboratory, and the respondents were all boys. Performing drew the most feeling related responses.

4S5: I think it's good because it's fun and you get to do, like, fun stuff and play lots of different instruments.

One student commented on the social aspect of performing in both situational and individual interest terms.

8S1: Things that I find interesting are the group activities where we like play instruments and stuff.

Games were described in terms of situational interest.

6S2: Games.
I: What kind of games?
6S2: Oh, I don't know, like clapping games and rhythm games.

Class based performances were described in feelings related terms.

6S7: I found it fun to do/play music together as like the whole class, because that's what we did in class.

One student acknowledged the value of performing as another form of learning.

7S2: Yeah, it's real fun, interactive – I am a kinaesthetic learner so I enjoy it.

In summary, the majority of students in all focus groups responded in terms of feelings related individual interest revolving around creativity and practical involvement, with technology as a means of engaging in these activities. In terms of Expectancy-value theory, this suggested that the majority of students responded with regard to their perceptions of the subject as a whole, rather than with regard to specific activities they had undertaken.

Not enjoyable

Despite the more generalised nature of this question, student answered in more situational task specific terms. Students described the least enjoyable aspects of class music as tasks relating to music theory, teacher attitude and the pace and degree of difficulty of tasks. These conceptual categories, grouped according to frequency, are set out in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 *Conceptual categories relating to not enjoyable within the intrinsic value component*

Not enjoyable	No of responses	*Indicative quotes*
Music theory	14	*4S2: I don't really like it when we have to like work out, do scales and stuff.*
Teacher attitude	5	*2S6: Getting lectured by the teachers if you do something wrong.*
Degree of difficulty	3	*5S6: I'm not very keen on like...finding key signatures and that. I just think it just gets like really confusing.*
Pace of work	6	*8S7: It's just like, some people, they don't really know, they've never done it before and we just like go straight into it, it's sort of hard to do.*

Learning activities related to music theory drew a universally negative response across all focus groups. Comments ranged from finding it easy and boring, to finding it difficult and confusing. One student commented upon the repetition involved:

5S5: Theory because it's boring and we just keep doing it over and over again.

Situational interest responses made reference to the manner in which theory tasks were presented.

> 6S4: I don't think we really enjoy doing a lot of the theory where you just copy down from the board. We enjoy more hands-on.

These responses implied that music theory tasks were undertaken as academic exercises with little apparent practical application or performance outlet. With regard to teacher attitude, the discrepancy between student perceptions of enjoyable tasks and teacher perceptions was made clear and expressed in both situational interest and individual value related terms:

> 7S3: As number two said, the teachers are very enthusiastic but when the teacher is enthusiastic they're not enthusiastic about what we like to do -- they like enjoy writing more than computers. We're a lot more passionate about using the computer but they enjoy doing more written work.

Situational interest responses regarding the pace of work and degree of difficulty indicated that students with little background in music theory or aural dictation faced a challenge to keep up. This suggested an ability divide in classes, and a lack of graded activities.

> It's just like, some people they don't really know, they've never done it before and we just like go straight into it, it's sort of hard to do it.

More enjoyable

When asked what could be done to make class music more enjoyable, student responses covered a wide range of topics from physical tasks to teaching strategies and teacher attitude, and included both individual interest and situational interest perspectives. Some conceptual categories overlapped. For example, one response about more equipment overlapped a desire for greater practical involvement. The conceptual categories, based upon the frequency of responses, are set out in Table 4.5.

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Table 4.5 *Conceptual categories relating to more enjoyable within the intrinsic value component*

More enjoyable	No of responses	Indicative quotes
Equipment	3	7S6: Yeah, like guitars. Like an instrument for each...sort of like two cheap guitars, two half drum sets, bass guitars.
Games	2	5S1: Learn while playing games instead of just talking through on the board, like doing more worksheets and games.
Greater choice	2	3S1: I think that maybe they should ask those students, like 'what don't you like' and 'what would you prefer to do in that time'.
Group composing	3	4S5: It's fun like doing class compositions when everyone's in groups and they do different types of music.
Practical involvement	12	7S6: I reckon they should actually get some instruments in the work, like school instruments.
Relevance	2	5S2: We were once, we were learning about the different types of music like...no, no, the three types that we're doing the Harry Potter thing for...
Teacher attitude	6	2S5: The teachers should know a bit more about music and teach us how to play certain things.

The principal responses revolved around the situational interest in greater practical involvement. This included a desire for more computers to be used to create music, the value of games as a learning strategy and greater practical involvement through group composing.

6S6: More, yeah, hands-on, composing on like computers and actually physical instrument playing rather than having like six lessons where you just learn off the board and then one lesson maybe where you rush it at the end where you get to play something.

One student commented on the reason for more practical involvement, in value related terms, which in turn highlighted the importance of practical activities.

7S6: Most people when they grow up, like they know a lot about the music but they really can't play, and it's kind of like when you do music you kind of really want to learn how to play and not just like what it consists of.

The role of technology as a valuable teaching tool and in practical involvement was also stressed.

7S1: I reckon that it would be pretty good to get real instruments and record them so you know what you're playing and then if you've done something wrong, then you can record...like do it again because it sounds on the copy because you can record them and listen to them again, but if you play them real, like on a real instrument, you can't just like go straight back to it and see what you've done wrong.

Classroom behaviour management, in terms of the relationship between the teacher and tasks drew a situational interest response.

3S2: Some of the...when we...people mucking around, we had to a whole lesson of theory, which is all written work, when the teacher gets kind of really mad.

The above response indicated that music theory tasks were used by one teacher as a behaviour management tool, potentially reinforcing already problematic attitudes towards music theory tasks. Although potentially successful as an immediate behaviour management strategy, this approach appeared to further emphasise music theory as a de-contextualised activity, leading to a further decline in student interest in music.

In summary, students described intrinsic motivation in predominantly individual interest terms of the types of activities they did and did not generally find fun. This had strong implications for specific learning activities.

4.2 Attainment value (items 1 – 4)

Four statements comprised this component. Statement one was global, while statements two and three related to the dimensions of challenge (goal orientation) and relevance ('within person' goals) within the component (Eccles, 2005), while the fourth statement sought to compare the relative importance of class music activities against other subjects. The statements were:

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1. I think that it is important to be good at doing class music (competence).

2. I think that the sorts of activities I do in class music are challenging (goal orientation).

3. I think that the activities I do in class music are relevant to me ('within' person goals).

4. Compared to other subjects, I think that the sorts of activities I do in class music are important.

Attainment value results are presented as percentages of frequency in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 *Pre and post-test percentages of frequency for attainment task value*

Attainment value N = 222	% Strongly disagree		% Disagree		% Neither agree nor disagree		% Agree		% Strongly agree	
	pre	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*
Attainment 1	0.7	1.4	3.3	10.4	30.8	34.7	45.3	44.1	19.9	9.5
Attainment 2	0.4	2.3	1.8	6.8	19.2	27.0	56.2	51.8	22.5	12.2
Attainment 3	0.0	0.9	1.8	4.5	11.2	15.8	48.9	51.4	38.0	27.5
Attainment 4	1.1	3.2	11.2	20.3	42.0	41.9	38.8	30.2	6.0	4.5

In general, responses decreased from pre to post-test, although not as much as for intrinsic value. Item 4 scores were consistently lower than items 1 to 3 at both the pre and post-test. Data was subjected to a paired sample *t*-test. Results, including mean and mean difference, are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 *Mean, mean difference and significance for attainment task value*

Attainment value N = 222	Pre-test		Post-test			
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean diff.*	*Significance*
Attainment 1	3.80	.81	3.50	.85	-.30	.001*
Attainment 2	3.98	.72	3.64	.86	-.34	.000*
Attainment 3	4.23	.71	4.00	.83	-.23	.007*
Attainment 4	3.39	.81	3.12	.89	-.27	.013*

For item 1, $t = 3.331$, $df = 221$, $p = .001$ (two tailed).
For item 2, $t = 4.090$, $df = 221$, $p < .000$ (two tailed).
For item 3, $t = 2.699$, $df = 221$, $p = .007$ (two tailed).
For item 4, $t = 2.492$, $df = 221$, $p = .013$ (two tailed).

There was a statistically significant decline in the mean for all four attainment value items from pre to post-test, indicating that Year 8 students saw the range of class music activities as declining in importance over the course of the year. Further, class music activities were seen as less important than other subjects at both the pre and post-test stages.

4.2.1 Focus Group responses for attainment value

Three guiding questions explored the same component dimensions as the questionnaire, namely challenge (goal orientation), relevance ('within' person goals) and understanding (competence building). The questions were:

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1. Would most students find class music activities challenging? Which sorts of activities?

2. Do most students find class music activities relevant to their lives? Which sorts of activities?

3. Is it important to understand how music works? Do the tasks undertaken in class music achieve this?

Challenge

As an overall theme, a difference emerged in responses across all settings between focus group members who indicated that they played classical instruments and read music, and those who either did not learn an instrument or learned by ear such as drummers and guitarists. Those learning classical instruments had been learning for two years or more, and were generally fluent music readers. Indicative responses from those students who played instruments and already read music included:

3S1: I find it fairly easy because I did theory out of school so I learned most of the things she's teaching.

8S1: I don't reckon much of it is challenging.

8S7: I think they're practically...cos like, cos most of the stuff is to do with, like the piano, and I play the piano and stuff, so it's easy to play. There are people in our class who don't know how to play and have never done it before, so they know nothing about it.

Learning activities for these students did not appear to promote a mastery orientation and all were regarded as too easy. For these students, theory based activities appeared to provide little mastery challenge because much of the content had already been covered in instrumental lessons. For those who found class music tasks challenging, responses revolved around the categories set out in Table 4.8.

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Table 4.8 *Conceptual categories relating to challenge within the attainment value component*

Challenge	No of responses	*Indicative quotes*
Note reading	4	*3S4: I don't play an instrument so it's harder to understand it because I don't put it into practice like at all. So someone who plays like the cello, they know more about certain key signatures and they're easier to identify for them.*
Theory	12	*4S1: Some kids find writing the scales out and finding the key signatures and stuff hard.*
Aural	2	*4S2: When we have to work out a certain type of rhythm after [the teacher] plays it, and we have to work out a certain pattern. I think that's hard sometimes.*
Performing	*4*	*2S3: When we've got to play the piano with both hands, that gets tricky.*

From the number of responses relating to music theory related tasks across all settings, it was evident that according to focus groups, most teachers within the study placed a strong emphasis on music reading and theory skills. Relatively few responses related to aural activities or performance. This suggested that most teaching programmes contained a high degree of theory related activities with fewer aural or performance outlets, and less able students found this challenging.

3S2: It's like...with the music and stuff, the theory and that, like...if the book's ok, because you like learn stuff, like it's from easy and then at the end of the book it's harder. So like with the tests and stuff, they do it really hard and...I haven't learnt music before, I'm just learning with the book, and it's like harder, and I haven't gotten up to that, so we didn't know it was.

The reported difference in levels of challenge between fluent readers and non readers suggested that few teachers graded tasks in accordance with a student's levels of ability. This was confirmed when focus groups were asked directly whether their teachers graded teaching tasks according to student ability.

8S7: Yeah, they are all doing the same stuff.

From the focus group responses, it would appear that many teaching tasks offered little challenge to fluent music readers, but too much challenge for non music readers. As a result, responses suggested that tasks were not inducing mastery related orientations in either group as tasks were perceived to be too easy or too hard. While not intentionally promoting a competition orientation, students were conscious of the ability divide and judged themselves accordingly.

Relevance

Students were equally divided on whether they found class music tasks relevant or not. Indicative statements relating to relevance and happiness included:

7S3: Very relevant to my life because I enjoy it so much, it's like…I reckon…it's not so much as important than English or maths but I reckon it's more important to me because I enjoy it a lot more than other subjects.

This contrasted with statements indicating a lack of content curiosity and personal relevance:

8S4: It has pretty much no relevance to my life. I don't listen to classical music out of school.

While considered relevant by some students, class music activities were still not regarded as personally important as other subjects such as mathematics and English. Conceptual categories associated with relevance are set out in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 *Conceptual categories relating to relevance within the attainment value component*

Relevance	No of responses	*Indicative quotes*
Relevance to career	5	*8S1: Unless you are going to be a musician, I don't think it has any relevance whatsoever.*
Relevance to later life	5	*7S5: I think music would be important in everyday life because after a day you could just go away and like have a break by playing music.*
Relevance to performing	9	*4S2: I think that most of it is like relevant because when we like do the…live numbers and stuff, it's hard yeah, but you like learn new rhythms and stuff and you might need to play them when you do your instrument and stuff.*
Relevance of repertoire	25	*4S5: I think most people rather popular songs because they're more fun and it's not like cool to like do classical at all.*
Relevance in the short term	2	*2S5: Oh, because if we want to write our own songs, then it teaches us…say you've got a song on the guitar, the notes you play, it's got the same notes as on piano, that you could probably play the same song on the piano.*

Students who commented with regard to career saw class music as personally important only for those contemplating it as a career. They displayed no curiosity for general music knowledge. A few saw class music tasks as important in developing life

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skills, offering an escape from the pressures of life and adult emplyment. Of note was the connection between relevance and happiness. Music was seen as a fun life skill.

7S1: Yeah, its sort of just to... for both because you want to have fun and you want to learn it so you know what to do when you come back to it in your life.

Many students saw the relevance of tasks in terms of supporting their performance studies on instruments. For these students, theory, while regarded as tedious, was personally important. However, most saw research based activities as largely irrelevant.

3S2: But like lots of the research and stuff, its like we're never going to use it, like for playing and instrument or whatever. It's just like tomorrow.

Over 25 responses described the lack of relevance of content repertoire. It was evident that many students were engaged in classical based class music programmes, and students generally struggled to see the personal importance of this music to their own lives. For them, repertoire was associated with their personal happiness and image, with classical music being described as 'uncool'. Where popular music had been included in programmes, comments were uniformly more positive.

6S2: We've recently been learning about rock and that's more what we like and we can relate to that.

In summary, students took a short term view of relevance. While they saw the personal importance of tasks in relation to supporting their instrumental music studies, most described the tasks they did in class music as having little future long term relevance in their lives, and the primary reason for this was content related. Content was not seen as having personal relevance in terms of happiness or image, and nor did it stimulate curiosity.

Understanding (competence building)

This question generated fewer responses that the questions for challenge and relevance, so a separate table outlining responses was considered unnecessary. Only

two conceptual categories were coded, with the first category relating to task content and the second category to learning strategies. Surprisingly, given the previously reported range of negative comments, theory and task content related to music reading were seen as central to developing an understanding of music. An indicative comment included:

7S6: I think it [theory] is really important because if you don't really know how to read the music or write down the music, you're really not going to...if someone says, 'oh, can you play that?' and put a piece of music sheet paper in front of you. If you just know how to play songs that have been taught to you, you're not really going to know what to do.

While students had previously indicated a dislike for music theory, they did acknowledge theory related tasks as being important in developing an understanding of the workings of music. More significantly, six students across all focus groups commented on the manner in which tasks were presented in class. An indicative comment included:

7S4: I think that when you're learning theory you should maybe just do a couple of weeks on it, at the start maybe, and learn some of the notes, otherwise like we're doing, we just keep going and going, like every week and we just repeat the same thing. There are only a few scales that we need to learn but we keep on going over them and having tests again and again on the same thing.

The above response suggested a connection with challenge and relevance in that while students acknowledged the importance of theory related tasks in developing an understanding of music, the learning strategies employed were often described as neither challenging nor relevant. Tasks, described by students as important, did not generate mastery responses or responses relating to personal importance or happiness.

4.3 Extrinsic value (items 9 – 12)

Four statements comprised this component. Each statement related to a different dimension of usefulness, with items 1 and 2 related to personal and practical usefulness in terms of life skills, item 3 related to usefulness compared with other subjects and item 4 related to the usefulness of the activities undertaken in developing an understanding of music. Thus, items 1 and 2 related to long term goals, and items 3 and 4 to short term goals. The statements were:

1. I think that the activities I do in class music are useful for when I leave school.

2. I think that the things I learn in class music will be useful for getting a job.

3. I think that compared to other subjects, the activities I do in class music are useful.

4. I think that the activities I do in class music are useful in helping me learn about music.

Extrinsic value results are presented as percentages of frequency in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 *Pre and post-test percentages of frequency for extrinsic task value*

Extrinsic value N = 222	% Strongly disagree		% Disagree		% Neither agree nor disagree		% Agree		% Strongly agree	
	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post
Extrinsic 1	1.8	4.1	5.4	15.8	26.4	30.6	43.5	33.8	22.8	15.8
Extrinsic 2	3.6	5.0	8.3	20.7	48.9	41.0	24.6	23.9	14.5	9.5
Extrinsic 3	2.5	5.4	11.6	19.4	42.8	43.7	33.0	26.1	10.1	5.4
Extrinsic 4	0.7	0.0	1.4	6.3	6.5	9.9	52.2	50.9	39.1	32.9

These items produced more varied results, with the lowest overall ratings in terms of agreeing occurring for item 2, and the highest rating occurring for item 4. Data was subjected to a two-tailed paired samples t-test. Results, including mean and mean difference, are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 *Mean, mean difference and significance for extrinsic task value*

Extrinsic value N = 222	Pre-test		Post-test			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean diff.	Significance
Extrinsic 1	3.80	.91	3.41	1.05	-.39	.000*
Extrinsic 2	3.38	.95	3.12	1.00	-.28	.051
Extrinsic 3	3.36	.90	3.06	.94	-.30	.006*
Extrinsic 4	4.27	.71	4.10	.82	-.17	.105

For item 1, t = 3.545, df = 221, $p < .000$.
For item 2, t = 1.960, df = 221, $p = .051$.
For item 3, t = 2.758, df = 221, $p = .006$.
For item 4, t = 1.630, df = 221, $p = .102$

There was a statistically significant decline in the mean for items 1 and 3 from pre to post-test. These results indicated that Year 8 students saw class music activities as

decreasing in long term usefulness and in comparison with other subjects, but a statistically insignificant decrease in terms of the usefulness of tasks in learning about music.

4.3.1 Focus Group responses for extrinsic values

Two guiding questions were asked. They were:

1. Would most students find class music activities useful? Which ones?
2. How might they be useful in later life?

The first question was worded generally and the second made reference to longer term goals. Responses from students were less spontaneous than for the two preceding values components. Students generally took more time to think and consider their answers to these questions. Conceptual categories, grouped by frequency, are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12 *Conceptual categories relating to the extrinsic value component*

Extrinsic value	No of responses	*Indicative quotes*
Building confidence	7	*2S5: Yeah, because if we perform in front of the class, then it builds self confidence*
Developing music skills	4	*6S6: One of the benefits that I have found is that when you learn about intervals and chord structures, all that, and then you go home and listen to the radio and you suddenly think 'oh, now I know what they're doing' – you've always wanted to hear something on there and now you're actually able to because you've learnt how to do it in class.*
Transfer knowledge	12	*6S5: I think learning the theory really helps a lot of students, like if they want to pick up another instrument and they know how to read the notes and stuff already, then that just helps them kind of get the instrument a lot faster.*
Career related	5	*3S7: I think that music only really helps you if when you get older, you want to be something like a musician or something, because if you want to get a job as a lawyer or something, and then you know heaps about music but not much about anything else, you're not really going to...it's not really going to help you much to get that job.*

The four conceptual categories coincided exactly with extrinsic value dimensions presented in the literature review, with category 1 (building confidence) corresponding with long term personal usefulness, category 2 (developing music skills) coinciding with short term personal usefulness, category 3 (transfer knowledge) corresponding

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with short term practical usefulness, and category 4 (career related) corresponding with long term practical usefulness. Responses for long term personal usefulness all related to building confidence, and all were associated with performing in front of the class.

6S1: Like when you perform you get to know how it feels, like, you know, if you...how you can perform...how to perform in front of people.

One student referred to the value of performing in groups.

8S7: I guess when we do group things, it's good for teamwork and stuff, yeah. I think it's in a way, it sort of builds character.

Some students noted the long term personal usefulness of activities for developing compositional skills. These skills were described in relation to composing within a specific genre.

6S4: I think the composition is quite useful because that's a direction that a lot of people want to head in, their own music, and that way, it's easier for them because they know the basic components of how to write a song.

The majority of students across all focus groups commented on the short term practical usefulness of activities in transferring knowledge across to performance on their instrument.

5S2: I think theory's important because it's something that you can remember for most of your life and when you play an instrument you can find it rather useful.

The transferability of activities to musical activities beyond school was also noted with regards short term personal usefulness.

4S2: Well, we learnt like little rhythms and stuff, the 12 bar blues and things, and when I got home I did it on my electric guitar, and that was good.

With regards career, student responses echoed previous sentiments that activities undertaken in music class had no longer term practical use except for those planning to be professional musicians.

7S3: Well, there is a reason why we've picked music as an elective. It's because we want to do it maybe to help our careers in the future for some reason. It's useful for us in our perspective but it maybe wouldn't be useful to someone who picks like business as their elective, because they might not use it in the future, so it might not be relevant to them.

In summary, students indicated some longer term personal usefulness for music tasks in building confidence, and some short term usefulness in terms of knowledge transferability. The frequency of responses however indicated that students generally took a short term view of extrinsic value, with class music tasks supporting their instrumental studies.

4.4 Cost

Because of the more domain specific and less formalised nature of this component, it had not been included on the questionnaire. However, Expectancy-value theory indicated that the personal and physical cost associated with involvement in class music could be an important component in determining motivation to continue. Therefore, the researcher decided to examine class music specific dimensions of cost within the focus groups. Students were asked two guiding questions. They were:

1. Why do some students quit class music?

2. Do students have to give something up to do class music?

The first question was a general one for music students, while the second was framed with the knowledge that many students already had separate instrumental music lessons at school and were involved in school instrumental and choral programmes. Therefore, the researcher anticipated that physical cost may be salient to class music students.

Quit class music

When asked an open question regarding why students dropped out of class music programmes, four conceptual categories were generated, with three relating to

effort, self-worth, and enjoyment and relevance while the fourth related to teacher personality. These are presented in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13 *Conceptual categories relating to quitting class music within the cost value component*

Cost	No of responses	Indicative quotes
Boredom	9	*8S7: I guess they find it boring or they don't want to do their instruments anymore.*
Degree of difficulty	4	*3S2: Because it's really hard and like...if you're not doing well and stuff, and if you don't want to be a musician later in life, you decide you want to do something else, then you'd quit.*
Long term relevance	5	*4S4: It could be because they don't want to continue with music, like, they don't want that as like a job when they're older and so they sort of...they don't really find much point in doing it.*
Dislike of teacher	7	*8S7: The teacher might be like really strict on how you...I don't know, do something and like...you just feel like you don't want to do it anymore because you don't want someone like standing over you here and telling you like every mistake you've done.*

When the category of boredom was examined, comments relating to boredom were associated with lack of effort possibly suggesting a desire to protect self-worth, the incompatibility of tasks with student learning styles, and task content, and are presented below. Lack of effort was associated with laziness.

7S2: I reckon it's because they just don't want to put the hard work in to get some fun stuff out and they're lazy.

Music theory was identified as contributing to boredom. However, it was unclear whether lack of effort associated with music theory tasks was due to a desire to protect self-worth (tasks were too challenging), or simply that tasks were not interesting.

7S5: Perhaps they don't like it because they find doing the scales theory a bit boring and they don't actually want to like learn, like bass clef, treble clef, all the different notes and names and other technical stuff.

One student suggested that boredom was a result of uninteresting task content and uninteresting teaching strategies.

7S3: Maybe because they don't...I reckon maybe because they don't enjoy it or they find it boring, because maybe it doesn't suit their style of how they learn or what they want to do. But there's a reason why we all like to do it – because we enjoy music and the way it's made and everything.

The links between effort and degree of difficulty were stressed by one student.

7S6: Because I play guitar, right, well...a lot of people that I know had quit guitar because when you learn how to play an instrument, the basics are always the hardest bit. But once you get over that, it really becomes fun and like you really start enjoying it. But most people I know can't get past that, that mental area.

Music appeared to many students to be a difficult subject which required a lot of effort to achieve success. This had implications for relevance.

3S4: I find it gets tedious because I don't go around analysing everything that I listen to, and I don't get it on a piece of paper and everything, so I don't...

While not directly associated with activities, the subject of teachers drew a number of responses across four focus groups, particularly with reference to their approach to selecting content.

4S3: If you've got a teacher that you don't like then you don't enjoy it, like because you might have a fun teacher and then you're doing more like sort of fun stuff. But otherwise you just do all theory, if you have a bad teacher.

Teacher personality was inferred by students from task content. Students associated fun activities such as performing and composing with fun teachers, and associated boring activities like theory and writing with strict, 'bad' teachers.

Individual responses across focus groups not formally categorised (lack of numerical frequency support) included the lack of challenge for high achievers, the problem of transporting instruments to and from school and the lack of tangible items to take home from class music. These provided some unique perspectives:

3S5: Also you don't get something to take home, like in food tech, you have food to take home, and I've just bought home a clock from d-tech, but with music you don't really get anything to take home except the theory book.

In summary, responses from many students suggested that the personal cost of undertaking class music in conjunction with other music commitments was outweighing the value in undertaking the activities. Further, learning activities impacted upon self-worth and interest primarily through the perception that activities were often boring, difficult and irrelevant for later life. However, it was important to note that not all students felt this way personally. Many of them enjoyed class music, and their responses regarding what contributed to students dropping out were based upon their general impressions of others.

Commitment (physical cost)

Fifteen responses regarding physical cost across six of the seven focus groups made specific reference to time commitment and the loss of elective subject choices. It was apparent that in some schools, Year 8 class music ran as a year long elective resulting in loss of elective choices. Students may have been unaware of the implications of this when choosing elective subjects before entering secondary school.

3S1: Yeah, we do lose one space in our timetable for music, every Monday and Tuesday. And I would like to be doing other things in that space like metalwork or woodwork but I have to do music.

For students in the private schools, those on music scholarships had no choice.

5S2: But like with the subject choice and stuff, if you want to do something else, if you're on a scholarship you have to do music, so you've only got two other electives to pick.

Many students were not just concerned with the loss of elective choices. Students noted that they were already committed to their instruments with expectations for instrumental practice.

3S2: My friends and I, we wanted to do dance and I know other people wanted to do like LOTE and language and that, and um...music is in the same area as lots of things that people are interested in. So people decide that they would rather do the other things and they quit, and yeah, we lose out on a lot of our time with practice and stuff, and some people find like homework difficult because we have to practice like 30 minutes a day, and then we don't have time to do other things that we need to.

In addition, many indicated involvement with school music ensembles, involving further time commitments.

3S4: We have to...it is a big deal we have to sacrifice in order to do our things, because like we have lessons for our instruments during one part of the period and then we have music which we have to...we did for the whole year, so we gave up like metalwork and that so we didn't get to that, and we have band so we sacrifice our afternoon time with our friends. So yeah.

In school seven, where class music was a semester long elective and did not involve loss of elective choices, physical cost was non existent and did not appear to influence motivation to continue.

I: And do you lose option choices if you do it [class music]?
7S6: No.
I: So it [class music] doesn't affect your other choices?
      [students answer no]
I: Do you just do this for a semester?
      [students answer yes]
I: At this stage, who is thinking of maybe doing it next year?
      [all students answer yes]

In summary, the majority of responses, while not relating to specific activities undertaken in class music, still indicated a general disposition that the physical time commitment to class music was of concern. Where the time commitment was viewed by students as less demanding, motivation to continue appeared to be higher.

4.5 Relations between class music specific tasks and dimensions within task value components

4.5.1 Intrinsic value

A matrix was created to crosstabulate all focus group references to specific class music tasks against the dimensions of the intrinsic task values component of the theoretical framework. Findings are presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 *Crosstabulation of references to specific tasks and dimensions within intrinsic task value.*

Intrinsic task value N = 45	Situational interest	Individual interest – feeling related	Individual interest – value related
Aural activities	X(-)		
Composing & experimenting	X(+)	X(+)	X(+)
Composing in groups			
Games	X(+)		
Performing – solo		X(+)	
Performing – groups	X(+)	X(+)	X(+)
Practical	X(+)		X(+)
Projects / research			
Theory / notation	X(-)	X(-)	X(-)

Table 4.14 indicated that in general, task specific situational interest was best generated by activities involving performances of some type, games and composing. Individual interest was also stimulated by performing and composing, while all three value dimensions were lowered by music theory and related activities. These results suggested that high intrinsic value was associated with practical and creative activities. Students were particularly attracted to specific performing and composing tasks.

4.5.2 Attainment value

A matrix was created to crosstabulate all focus group references to specific class music tasks against the dimensions of the attainment task values component of the theoretical framework. Findings are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15 *Crosstabulation of references to specific tasks and dimensions within attainment task value.*

Attainment task value N = 45	Challenge (goal orientation)	Relevance ('within' person goals)	Understanding (building competence)
Aural activities	X(-)	X(-)	
Composing & experimenting		X(+)	
Composing in groups			
Games			
Performing – solo	X(-)	X(+)	X(+)
Performing – groups			
Practical	X(-)		
Projects / research		X(-)	
Theory / notation	X(-)		X(-)

Table 4.15 indicated that in broad value terms, attainment value was also associated with practical and creative activities associated with performing and composing. These activities built feelings of personal importance, competence and happiness. Again, music theory and related activities lowered attainment value beliefs, particularly with regard to challenge and task mastery orientation. In general, no activity identified by any focus group in this study appeared to be associated with a challenge related mastery orientation.

4.5.3 Extrinsic value

A matrix was created to crosstabulate all focus group references to specific class music tasks against the dimensions of the extrinsic task values component of the theoretical framework. Findings are presented in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16 *Crosstabulation of references to specific tasks and dimensions within extrinsic task value.*

Extrinsic task value N = 45	Long term personal	Long term practical	Short term personal	Short term practical
Aural activities				
Composing & experimenting	X(+)		X(+)	
Composing in groups				
Games				
Performing – solo	X(+)	X(+)	X(+)	X(+)
Performing – groups	X(+)			
Practical				
Projects / research				
Theory / notation				X(+)

Table 4.16 indicated that in general, performing and composing were viewed as useful life skills in both the long and short terms, while theory related activities had some value in terms of knowledge transfer to aid in instrumental performance. This finding suggested the importance to students of music theory activities having a practical application.

4.5.4 Cost

A matrix was created to crosstabulate all focus group references to specific class music tasks against the dimensions of the cost values component. Findings are presented in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17 *Crosstabulation of references to specific tasks and dimensions within cost value.*

Cost N = 45	Effort	Self worth	Relevance (interest)	Physical cost (time)
Aural activities			X(-)	
Composing & experimenting				
Composing in groups				
Games				
Performing – solo		X(-)		X(-)
Performing – groups				
Practical				
Projects / research				
Theory / notation	X(-)	X(-)	X(-)	

Table 4.17 indicated that in general, theory related activities had the strongest impact on personal cost. Music theory required effort and had little perceived relevance, and comments connected with boredom may have implications for the protection of self-worth. In addition, students described their physical time commitment invested in music programmes through their instrumental and ensemble involvement. Time commitment and issues associated with music theory were the primary contributors to the cost component.

4.6 Competence (items 13 – 16)

Four statements relating to competence comprised the construct. Item 1 related to global competence beliefs surrounding the word 'clever' as an encompassing term. Item 2 related to the competence and challenge, item 3 to competence and comprehension and item 4 to physical competence. While competence is reported within Expectancy-value theory as a global construct, the researcher noted the slight differences between the various orientations of competence, as applied by different researchers and research perspectives, in the literature review. In particular, the link between competence and challenge resembled elements of Eccles' (2005) attainment value construct. The statements were:

1. I think I am clever at class music activities (global).
2. I think the activities I do in class music are easy (challenge).
3. I think I understand all the activities I do in class music (comprehension).
4. I think I am good at doing activities in class music (physical).

Competence results indicated a less dramatic downward movement than for values, and are presented as percentages of frequency in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18 *Pre and post-test percentages of frequency for competence*

Competence N = 222	% Strongly disagree		% Disagree		% Neither agree nor disagree		% Agree		% Strongly agree	
	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post
Competence 1	0.7	2.7	1.4	13.1	6.5	40.1	52.2	32.4	39.1	11.7
Competence 2	0.7	2.7	6.2	10.4	51.4	50.0	33.7	30.6	8.0	6.3
Competence 3	1.4	3.6	7.6	13.1	30.8	34.7	47.1	36.9	13.0	11.7
Competence 4	0.4	2.3	4.0	5.9	32.2	37.4	51.8	47.3	11.6	7.2

All of the above items decreased slightly from pre to post-test. A clear shift was detected within item 1 from agree and strongly agree to neither agree nor disagree. While considerable variation appeared between items at both stages, results appeared less variable than for values. Data was subjected to two-tailed paired samples t-tests. Results, including mean and mean difference, are presented in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19 *Mean, mean difference and significance for competence*

Competence N = 222	Pre-test		Post-test			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean diff.	Significance
Competence 1	3.52	.78	3.37	.83	-.15	.515
Competence 2	3.42	.75	3.27	.94	-.15	.196
Competence 3	3.62	.85	3.40	.97	-.22	.112
Competence 4	3.70	.73	3.51	.80	-.19	.126

For item 1, t = .652, df = 221, p = .515 (two tailed).
For item 2, t = 1.298, df = 221, p = .196 (two tailed).
For item 3, t = 1.594, df = 221, p = .112 (two tailed).
For item 4, t = 1.535, df = 221, p = .131 (two tailed).

While competence beliefs declined marginally, there was not sufficient change for them to be statistically significant, accordingly to the paired samples *t*-tests.

4.6.1 Focus group responses for competence

Students were asked the following guiding question:

> Is it important for students to feel that they understand and can do the tasks in class music? Why or why not?

There was general agreement across focus groups that it was important and three clear conceptual categories emerged, of which fear of failing was the major one. Many responses were focused upon the negative implications of feeling incompetent and were not activity specific. Students spoke in broad terms and responses are presented in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20 Conceptual categories relating to competence within the competence component

Competence	No of responses	Indicative quotes
Enjoyment	3	*7S3: It would be more effective if you do know what you're doing but even if you don't know what you're doing, it can still be fun and enjoyable because you've still got music to listen. You want to go anywhere, of course you're going to have to be good at it but you can always improve anytime in doing music.*
Fear of failure	8	*8S1: I think it's pretty important because I think you'd feel pretty stupid if you don't understand, because everyone will guess you're uncertain and they're not understanding, you'd be pretty embarrassed.*
Need to understand	6	*6S7: Well, it's pretty important because we're here to learn and if you don't understand something, well how are you going to learn more because that may just be the basic foundation of what you need to do, and then it gets more advanced and then you're like... 'oh my goodness, I can't do this, help'.*

Enjoyment

Competence appeared linked with enjoyment because students worked harder to achieve in activities they enjoyed. The following quote illustrated the point:

5S2: I don't know if it's as much as like whether you think you're good at it or not, I reckon it's like if you enjoy it, because if you like it, you want to do it.

There was a clear link between competence and effort, relating back to values responses regarding challenge and enjoyment whereby students made an effort in activities they valued. It appeared that when students did not value activities, they put in little effort, resulting in reduced feelings of competence. Thus, activities may have affected competence beliefs via the extent to which they were valued and the effort expended accordingly.

Fear of failure

Nine responses regarding a fear of failure alternated between feelings of personal failure and failure to gain good grades. The majority of responses concerned personal failure and resulting embarrassment. Social standing within the class was important for many in the sense of not being made to feel 'dumb' in front of others.

8S1: I guess if you don't know how to do it, like you wouldn't feel like going, because then everyone else can and you'll feel really dumb and stuff, like, you know, you haven't got it or you realise you can't so yeah...

In some cases, students acknowledged the difficulty of finding appropriate help, given the specific nature of the subject.

5S6: I think it's important that you feel confident because if you don't, like if you feel like you're kind of lagging behind and then you feel like you have to do so much more homework to catch up, and if you have any questions, like while you're at time, you can't ask like your parents because my parents aren't very musical, so you get kind of stressed, you need to, yeah...

Given that the majority of these responses were concerned with the fear of appearing to fail in front of others in the class, it suggested that class music programmes may not contain enough competence affirming activities – activities that were achievable and confidence building in nature. This may be important given the previously identified ability divide located in responses about challenge within the attainment values component.

Extrinsic factors such as school grades were cited as another aspect of failure, as the following quote illustrated:

3S2: We lose out on our music grades if we don't understand so we need to work out and find out what things mean so we can keep our grades up.

The implications for motivation to continue became obvious when students felt they were not competent.

8S2: I think there's no point in studying music if you don't understand what you're doing at all so...

Understanding

The third conceptual category involved the relationship between the need to understand now as a basis for understanding in the future. This provided a link into expectancies, and offered further insights into why many students did not continue with class music, as the following quote illustrated:

4S2: I think it's... you have to understand because if you don't, then I think that might be why people are quitting – because they don't understand the music and like, they don't understand they can't do it properly and then it's just no fun.

In addition, one student noted the importance of teachers in giving encouragement to develop competence beliefs.

5S4: I think motivation and encouragement make you feel like you are better at the subject so you're more likely to excel in it. Like if the...because some teachers, they focus on the better students and they ask them the questions and they'll pick them to answer, so the other students don't really get a chance.

In summary, competence was described by students as being important, but was discussed in generally more negative terms than positive. While less central to the Expectancy-value model in terms of its immediate impact upon motivation to continue, it is still an important construct. In particular, student responses indicated considerable overlap between values and expectancies components, and indicated a strong link between enjoyment, effort and competence.

4.7 Findings for differentiated expectancies

The literature review identified the potential of expectancies to be differentiated along subject specific lines. Given similarities between components of Harter's Theory

of Self perception of competence (Harter, 1982) and the type of activities undertaken in class music, it was reasoned that Harter's components may provide a basis for reporting potential factors within learning activities which in turn impact upon Year 8 student values and beliefs.

Pre-test questionnaire data from the 276 participants was subjected to principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation. Three factors (eigenvalues > 1) were identified. In total, these factors accounted for over 60% of the variance in the questionnaire data, and results are presented in Table 4.21. Given the age of the students and that there is no commonly agreed loading level within the social sciences, a high factor loading of .5 was accepted as indicating significant loading of a factor at this stage (Allen & Bennett, 2008).

Table 4.21 – *Principal component analysis – Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization, pre-test data*

Expectancies items (Pre-test) N = 276		Component		
		1	2	3
Academic 1	(item 17)	.630	.251	.272
Academic 2	(item 18)	.778	.109	.166
Academic 3	(item 19)	.812	.015	.069
Academic 4	(item 20)	.635	.273	.256
Physical 1	(item 21)	.734	.256	.240
Physical 2	(item 22)	.519	.400	.286
Physical 3	(item 23)	.371	.517	.268
Physical 4	(item 24)	.429	.531	.275
Social 1	(item 25)	.468	.582	.111
Social 2	(item 26)	.448	.575	.169
Social 3	(item 27)	.076	.840	.136
Social 4	(item 28)	.034	.803	.164
General 1	(item 29)	.142	.168	.800
General 2	(item 30)	.113	.151	.647
General 3	(item 31)	.302	.119	.813
General 4	(item 32)	.236	.218	.742
Percentage of variance		42.75	51.69	60.44

Note: Significance loadings are indicated using bold print.

While the three factors did not reach the generally accepted levels of 70% of explained variance (Allen & Bennett, 2008), 60% was encouraging and warranted reporting at this early stage, pending post-test analysis. The factors which emerged did not clearly load according to the proposed expectancy constructs. Post-test data for 222 participants is presented in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22 *Principal component analysis – Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization, post-test data*

Expectancies items (Post-test) N = 222		Component		
		1	2	3
Academic 1	(item 17)	**.751**	.155	.249
Academic 2	(item 18)	**.742**	.118	.019
Academic 3	(item 19)	**.741**	.049	.034
Academic 4	(item 20)	**.750**	.160	.205
Physical 1	(item 21)	**.767**	.148	.283
Physical 2	(item 22)	**.679**	.208	.092
Physical 3	(item 23)	**.652**	.022	.396
Physical 4	(item 24)	**.664**	.252	.368
Social 1	(item 25)	.449	.209	**.583**
Social 2	(item 26)	.396	.174	**.662**
Social 3	(item 27)	.077	.185	**.836**
Social 4	(item 28)	.137	.153	**.826**
General 1	(item 29)	.085	**.831**	.147
General 2	(item 30)	.126	**.727**	.077
General 3	(item 31)	.169	**.858**	.170
General 4	(item 32)	.246	**.797**	.241
Percentage of variance		42.80	55.70	64.44

Note: Significance loadings are indicated using bold print

As for the pre-test, three factors (eigenvalues > 1) were identified. In total, these factors accounted for around 65% of the variance in the questionnaire. The loadings were considered sufficient for the reporting of expectancies as three factors within this study. Given these findings, the researcher relabelled factor 1 as 'musical expectancies', factor 2 as 'social expectancies' and factor 3 as 'general expectancies'.

4.8 Musical expectancies (items 17 – 24)

Following factor analysis, eight statements were grouped into this construct. The statements were based around Eccles (2005) assertion that expectancies were informed foremost by ability beliefs, and goal orientation and past experiences. They were grouped into four academic and four physical statements based upon the original premise that musical expectancies were differentiated into academic and physical components. They were:

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1. I think I will get better at class music activities (competence).

2. I think what I learn in class music will make more sense in the future (past experiences).

3. I think class music will be easier to understand in the future (competence).

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4. I think I will get better at remembering things I have covered in class music (goal orientation).

5. I think I will get better at doing class music activities in the future (physical competence).

6. I think it will become easier to play classroom instruments in the future (past experience).

7. I think I will really like to participate in class music practical activities in the future (goal orientation).

8. I think I will be good at doing class music in the future (physical competence).

Musical expectancies results are presented as percentages of frequency in Table 4.23.

Table 4.23 *Pre and post-test percentages of frequency for musical expectancies*

Musical expectancies N = 222	% Strongly disagree		% Disagree		% Neither agree nor disagree		% Agree		% Strongly agree	
	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post
Musical 1	0.4	1.4	1.4	4.5	8.3	13.1	56.2	55.0	33.7	26.1
Musical 2	1.4	3.2	2.5	2.3	25.7	22.5	46.0	50.9	24.6	21.2
Musical 3	1.4	3.6	3.3	4.5	23.7	23.9	47.8	48.6	23.6	19.4
Musical 4	0.4	1.8	1.8	5.4	18.5	25.7	62.7	53.6	16.7	13.5
Musical 5	1.1	2.3	2.5	5.9	16.7	18.9	58.3	59.0	21.4	14.0
Musical 6	1.1	1.8	2.5	5.0	18.5	17.6	50.4	52.3	27.5	23.4
Musical 7	2.2	4.1	2.9	10.4	30.1	33.3	40.2	35.1	24.6	17.1
Musical 8	0.7	4.5	1.4	4.5	24.3	27.9	53.3	48.2	20.3	14.9

All items displayed a greater decrease from pre to post-test than for competence. In general, items 5 – 8 (physical) showed a slightly stronger decrease than items 1 – 4 (academic). However, items 4 and 7 (goal orientation) showed the greatest overall pre to post-test decreases, and items 2 and 6 (past experiences) the smallest decreases. Data was subjected to a two-tailed paired samples t-test. Results, including mean and mean difference, are presented in table 4.24.

Table 4.24 *Mean, mean difference and significance for musical expectancies*

Musical expectancies N = 222	Pre-test		Post-test		Mean diff.	Significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Musical 1	4.21	.68	4.00	.83	-.21	.040*
Musical 2	3.90	.83	3.84	.88	-.06	1.00
Musical 3	3.88	.85	3.75	.93	-.13	.466
Musical 4	3.93	.67	3.71	.83	-.22	.050*

Musical 5	3.96	.76	3.76	.84	-.20	.170
Musical 6	4.00	.81	3.90	.87	-.10	.805
Musical 7	3.82	.91	3.50	1.02	-.32	.006*
Musical 8	3.90	.75	3.64	.94	-.26	.024*

For item 1, t = 2.064, df = 221, p = .040 (two tailed).
For item 2, t = .000, df = 221, p = .874 (two tailed).
For item 3, t = .731, df = 221, p = .466 (two tailed).
For item 4, t = 1.972, df = 221, p = .050 (two tailed).
For item 5, t = 1.378, df = 221, p = .170 (two tailed).
For item 6, t = .247, df = 221, p = .805 (two tailed).
For item 7, t = 2.798, df = 221, p = .006 (two tailed).
For item 8, z = 2.276, df = 221, p = .024 (two tailed).

There was a small but statistically significant decrease for both goal orientation items, mixed results for competence items and virtually no change for the items relating to past experience. Overall findings suggested that while all musical expectancies items declined, items pertaining to goal orientation displayed the higher rates of decline, competence related items displayed smaller rates of decline and items related to past experience displayed minimal change.

4.8.1 Focus group responses for musical expectancies

Four guiding questions were asked. Two questions related to whether students thought they would get better at understanding class music concepts and two related to getting better at playing and performing. Even though academic and physical factors had not emerged in factor analysis as separate constructs, differences between these items in the questionnaire findings warranted further examination. The overall aim was to examine the dimensions of the construct as this would be important for explaining musical expectancies task orientations. The questions were:

1. Do most students think they will get better at understanding how music is put together and works?

2. Given the sorts of tasks done in class music, do most students think these tasks will help them get better at understanding music in the future?

3. Do students get to make music in class music? If so, what sorts of activities?

4. Do students think they will get better at doing these practical activities in the future?

Differentiating musical concepts and performance

As inferred from focus group responses to the values components, students distinguished between the written side of class music (theory) and the practical side (playing instruments). Students associated class music with theory (academic) based activities, and performance was seen as an adjunct activity done away from the music class i.e. an instrumental lesson. Based upon the type of activities described by students, class music was not largely seen as a physical, practical subject, as the following quote illustrates:

8S1: Every once in a while we get to like, if we have a concert or something coming up or if we have a special festival or something...

Practical work was associated with formal performance activities such as concert practice, whereby students presented prepared works on their instruments. However, these were seen as instrumental activities brought into the class music setting, not as integral class music activities, as the following specific quote illustrates:

5S2: We don't do much in class, like we only do it once a term for concert prac or whatever. But you can do it at assemblies and stuff if you really want to.

Even working on computers was not described as 'practical music making', as commented by one student.

7S3: I've always wanted to play instruments in music but it's not actually music, It's music technology, so it's all about the technology of music, it's not so much playing it. That's what sort of music, like music lessons are for, that's so we can actually play an instrument for a whole 30 minutes non-stop.

When practical activities were undertaken, they were limited in scope.

8S7: Well, what we do on the keyboard...we do end up going on the keyboard, we don't actually do that much...

When discussing this construct, it became clear from focus groups that by musical expectancies, most students meant 'improving at theory'. Physical expectancies were

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seen as 'improving at playing an instrument', an activity that student responses did not appear to associate with class music.

Reasons for improvement

Coding of focus group responses relating to how improvement would come about within this component indicated three conceptual categories based upon the numerical frequency of key words. The three categories are set out in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25 *Conceptual categories relating to reasons for improvement within the musical expectancies component*

Musical expectancies	Numbers of responses	*Indicative quotes*
Experience / repetition	4	*Well, if you...it's like practice makes perfect. If you do it loads and loads of times, well, obviously you're going to get better, you're going to get more confident.*
Effort	13	*I think most of the students believe that if they try hard enough, they'll progress significantly and get to a higher level...*
Natural improvement	4	*I think that the more people learn and the more concepts they get together, the more they start to understand because everything sort of fits together, and once they've got the basics they can learn more.*

While these conceptual categories were derived from the student responses, they coincided exactly with dimensions of competence and expectancies previously identified by Eccles (2005) as efficacy, goal orientation and competence.

Efficacy, described by students as experience and repetition, was an element in student expectancies. Responses indicated that less experienced students would have lower expectancies, reinforcing the role of competence in informing expectancies as within the Expectancy-value model.

6S5: It depends upon the student's confidence levels and also how advanced they are in their instrument, because if they've only just started then they're not going to be as confident as someone who's been doing it for a few years.

Most responses revolved around recognition of the need for effort on the part of the individual for improvement to occur (goal orientation). However, students asserted that effort and mastery orientation came from stimulation. They externalised the

responsibility for their effort, rather than internalising it as an intrinsic state coming from within the individual, as the following quote typifies:

3S2: If they think like they continue but some people aren't really interested anymore because what we do in class music is really boring.

Stimulation, via learning activities resulted in positive or negative frames of mind, as stated by the following student.

6S4: It would because the more positive frame of mind you're in, the more willing you are to absorb the knowledge and to learn, whereas if you've got a negative attitude towards it, you're not going to want to learn anything. So that's...your frame of mind towards how much you will learn.

Many focus group responses suggested that students felt the need to be stimulated to make the effort to improve. The issue of stimulation operating at different levels for different student levels of ability was raised, as the following quote revealed.

2S5: In my case, it's too easy because I have a tutor out of school, and I basically just play what I want to learn or what I'm learning from the tutor.

This contrasted against a statement from another student:

2S3: I'm just ok. I just sort of teach myself a bit and get help from the teacher every now and then and stuff.

Focus groups made reference to the fact that students who dropped out made no effort because they were not stimulated (as opposed to motivated), or 'bored'. Apart from continuing the trend whereby competence and expectancies were described in negative language, it indicated a strong positive relationship between values and expectancies – expectancies were framed by values relating to challenge, interest and possibly the protection of self-worth. Four students felt that improvement would come naturally, as indicated by the following quote:

8S6: I think you'll probably improve if you continue doing it...

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They did not see improvement as a state requiring conscious effort or experience, but rather a naïve, natural occurrence resulting from increasing maturity and repetition.

The role of learning activities in musical expectancies

Given that the majority of focus group responses indicated a desire for learning activities to stimulate them for future success, student responses were re-examined to determine how stimulation might occur. Re-coding revealed four conceptual categories. They are presented in Table 4.26.

Table 4.26 *Conceptual categories relating to the impact of learning activities within the musical expectancies component*

Learning activities	No of responses	Sample quotes
Need for variety	9	*2S5: Basically we perform a song and we do research with something to do with it – like maybe the band that does the song. But we just keep doing that. It would be good if the teacher could show us something new.*
Value of practical application	21	*5S4: Because when you apply it more, it sort of sticks there and you'll get it. Like, if you do a little bit of theory and then you put it into practice, I think we're more likely to understand it because we can see where it's applied and we could recognise it more.*
Need for skills development	4	*8S6: It wouldn't be too bad if they taught us how to use the pianos and stuff, but they don't, they just sort of expect you to know how to and then say you're pretty right with that one...and I've learned the notes on a keyboard but I still can't play it, like the others.*
Relevance	*4*	*3S4: Yeah, because we're learning about musicians – it's not like we're learning about real music, we're learning about everyone else that has composed music and not particularly the one sort of musician.*

Student responses suggested a degree of repetition and predictability about the class music activities they were engaged in. In some instances, initial enthusiasm and variety gave way to routine and a degree of complacency, as typified by the following quote:

3S2: Last term we used to bring our instruments in every Tuesday and we'd do like music but now we just do class music stuff and its really boring, like we get worksheets, and every now and then we get to play on the piano, but not much.

The value of a variety of teaching approaches to assist learning was raised, as illustrated by the following quote:

5S5: I think if it keeps being explained differently every time then eventually you'll catch on to it. If you say exactly the same thing every time, you stop really listening and then you don't understand it.

An example of this was described by one student in competence and interest terms.

5S2: I reckon, because one lesson we stood around the piano and we all sung to learn about the textures and things, and I thought that really helped me understand things. And it made it fun too.

The majority of responses described the value of more practical activities in building musical expectancies. Most focus groups agreed that greater opportunities for practical application of theoretical knowledge would enhance learning and lead to increased understanding in the future. However, a few students across focus groups did recognise the need for a balance between theoretical and practical activities, as the following typical quote revealed:

4S2: I think that everyone would like to do more like playing and stuff but I think it's important that we have to do theory to like understand how to play something.

Greater emphasis on practical activities was also recognised as attractive for motivation as well as learning.

6S4: Yeah, I've known people at other schools and from my primary school, who had that sort of mind – you know, they want to be able to play and, you know, they don't really want to go learning theory...

The category of skills development appeared problematic not only for the few students with little or no experience on instruments, but for those already playing instruments which did not fit well into the classical class music programme.

8S1: I struggle because I don't play piano and stuff, like I play the bass guitar so I'm in a totally different range than pianos and stuff because they...I use the bass clef and they use a different kind of clef.

Finally, the category of the relevance of some activities re-emerged across focus groups. Students appeared to have a clear idea of what to them constituted 'core' music learning. This did not include what they considered peripheral information about composers. Relevance also included learning strategies employed for some activities; for example, for one student, learning strategies for composing differed from student perceptions of how music was created.

8S4: Basically when we have to make up our own music, we write it down and then like a couple of days later then we get to try it on the keyboard. We don't just like, we don't always get to go and sit at the keyboard and make it up.

In summary, focus groups described class music as primarily an 'academic' subject. Students acknowledged the need for tasks to stimulate them for future success, and a majority acknowledged the importance of having greater opportunities for the practical application of theoretical concepts, as well as the need for a greater variety of learning strategies. Musical expectancies, especially goal orientation, appeared strongly connected with learning activities.

4.9 Social expectancies (items 25 – 28)

Four statements comprised this construct. Each statement was designed around the social dimension of Harter's perceived social competence component relating to interaction and social skills. Items 1 and 2 had a clear 'outward' focus i.e. whether students felt they would get better at working with others in the future, and items 3 and 4 had a clear 'inward' focus relating to self-esteem i.e. whether students felt that others would get better at working with them. Both focuses were researcher dimensions drawn from the literature review, and derived from self-efficacy (outward focus) and self-worth (inner focus). The statements were:

1. I think I will get better at working with others in class music (outward focus).

2. I think it will become easier working with others in class music in the future (outward focus).

3. I think that other students will want to work with me in class music in the future (inner focus).

4. I think that other students will listen more to my ideas in the future (inner focus).

Social expectancies results are presented as percentages of frequency in Table 4.27.

Table 4.27. *Pre and post-test percentages of frequency for social expectancies*

Social expectancies N = 222	% Strongly disagree		% Disagree		% Neither agree nor disagree		% Agree		% Strongly agree	
	pre	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*
Social 1	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.8	13.0	16.7	64.1	57.2	20.7	23.0
Social 2	0.7	1.8	1.1	2.3	19.9	18.9	55.4	56.8	22.8	20.3
Social 3	0.7	2.7	2.2	2.7	45.7	38.7	38.4	41.4	13.0	14.4
Social 4	0.4	3.6	4.3	2.3	43.1	44.1	42.8	39.2	9.4	10.8

All the above items revealed little change from pre to post-test. Notably however, the two 'outward' focused items rated more highly than the two 'inward' focussed items. Mean scores at pre and post-test suggested that student confidence in the ability of others to interact with them was lower than their perception of their own ability to interact with others. Mean scores for all items at pre and post-test were lower than for musical expectancies. Data was subjected to a two-tailed paired samples t-test. Results, including mean and mean difference, are presented in Table 4.28.

Table 4.28. *Mean, mean difference and significance for social expectancies*

Social expectancies N = 222	Pre-test		Post-test			
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean diff.*	*Significance*
Social 1	4.02	.69	3.98	.76	-.04	.491
Social 2	3.98	.73	3.91	.79	-.07	.743
Social 3	3.60	.76	3.62	.86	.02	.227
Social 4	3.56	.73	3.51	.85	-.05	.697

For item 1, t = .689, df = 221, p = .491 (two tailed).
For item 2, t = .328, df = 221, p = .743 (two tailed).
For item 3, t = 1.210, df = 221, p = .227 (two tailed).
For item 4, t = .390, df = 221, p = .697 (two tailed).

While social expectancies decreased on the percentages of frequency table, decreases were not statistically significant.

4.9.1 Focus group responses for social expectancies

For investigating the possible dimensions of social expectancies, two guiding questions were asked to establish the frequency and dimensions of group activities within the focus group sample, and student perceptions of working in groups. The questions were:

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1. Is there much group work undertaken in class music? What sort of activities are done in groups?

2. How important is it to get on with others in the group? Is this something that will improve in the future?

Frequency and dimensions of group activities

Responses were coded according to whether students undertook group activities, and if so, the sort of activities and size and frequency of groups. It became clear that, from the student perspective, group work was not a commonly used learning strategy in some schools. Students from two schools stated that they never undertook group work, students from three schools indicated occasional (once or twice per term) group work, and students from two schools indicated it was a commonly used learning strategy.

Responses indicated a recurring range of activities associated with group activities mainly comprised of whole class performances, games and projects. There were few references to small group performances, composing or other creative activities. Groups ranged in size from pairs and groups of four, to whole class groups. The size of groups varied from school to school, but tended to be consistent within settings. Thus where groups were utilised, they tended to be the same size each time.

Student responses to group activities

Responses were categorised into whether students enjoyed group based activities and the issues they faced when in groups. Students were generally in favour

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of group based activities, but enjoyment was often linked to the type of activity, as illustrated by the following quote:

8S7: I'm not sure if it was this term or last term...we had to do a radio station and stuff and everyone had to contribute, like we got into groups, and so that was pretty fun because you like, you've never done it before. So that was pretty fun.

Again, practical approaches featured heavily in enjoyment.

6S7: During our class at this, like now, present, well we've got a group, like a whole class group activity going, where we're performing a song, so that's really good.

Some students found working with others actually improved their marks, as the following quote illustrated:

8S6: We've done a fair bit, we've maybe done one or two assignments per term with like groups or partners or something. And I don't know whether it's important or not, it's sort of usually...that part of our marks that we sort of go good at.

Responses from those who enjoyed group activities came from the schools where group activities were undertaken regularly. Responses from those who did not enjoy group work came from schools where group activities were not undertaken regularly. This suggested that familiarity with this learning strategy played a role in whether group work was enjoyed or not. Typical quotes regarding group work included:

2S4: It was too hard to do it, just because I like learning by myself more than doing it with another person.

2S5: Because like I would like to do some things on my own and not have someone else doing it with me.

When evaluating group activities, the importance of the social group was emphasised.

3S2: ...I know some people that are...we don't really talk at all and we kind of have the...we don't have a really good friendship at all so it's better to work with people that you get along with so you can get on top of the work.

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The recurring issue of collective effort was raised.

4S3: If people don't practice all the time, like, they don't think music is very important but they're just doing it because they have to, because they can't really drop out now, so they don't put in as much effort and stuff.

The level of trust within the group was another concern.

5S4: Extremely because if you don't trust that person enough, they might...and you get really conscious of it and you get worried about it, because you're not sure if they will complete this, so you over-compensate it and it's like you sort of stand over them and you watch what they're doing for every second.

However, while agreeing that differing standards within a group could be problematic, one student identified the value of learning to work with others as part of developing general social skills.

6S6: I find in our class and in other classes, friends do work and if they're good musicians they work a lot better but it is a skill to learn in music that sometimes you won't always be with people you want, and if you learn to play with people who share the same passion for music but are not necessarily on the same level as you, then that won't necessarily work, but if we share the same passion and same standard then I find we get along pretty well.

In summary, those who undertook group activities tended to enjoy them and recognised their value in developing social skills, while issues associated with group activities revolved around group compatibility, effort and levels of trust. The value of group activities as a motivational learning strategy, especially when associated with performance, may have been undervalued by class music teachers within this study.

4.10 General expectancies (items 29 – 32)

Four statements comprised this construct. Given that Harter's definition was global with regard to all school subjects, the four general expectancies items were based upon expectancies dimensions described by Eccles (2005) as competence, goal orientation and past experience. The statements were:

1. I think I will get better at most school subjects in the future (competence).
2. I think that most school subjects will become easier in the future (competence).

3. I think I will improve my marks in most subjects in the future (goal orientation).
4. I think that compared with the past, I will be better at learning new things in the future in most subjects (past experience).

General expectancies results are presented as percentages of frequency in Table 4.29.

Table 4.29 *Pre and post-test percentages of frequency for general expectancies*

General expectancies N = 222	% Strongly disagree		% Disagree		% Neither agree nor disagree		% Agree		% Strongly agree	
	pre	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*	*pre*	*post*
General 1	0.0	0.9	1.8	3.6	15.9	13.5	52.9	49.1	29.3	32.9
General 2	1.4	3.6	6.5	8.1	25.0	20.3	44.6	43.7	22.5	24.3
General 3	0.4	0.5	1.1	5.0	15.2	13.5	54.3	55.4	29.0	25.7
General 4	0.0	1.4	0.4	1.8	13.0	14.9	54.7	50.5	31.9	31.5

All the above items displayed virtually no change from pre to post-test. Items 1 and 2 (competence) increased marginally at the post-test 'strongly agree' level while there was a small decrease in the more specific item 3 (goal orientation). Overall ratings were higher than for musical expectancies at pre and post-test, indicating that expectancies for other subjects remained higher than class music. Data was subjected to a two-tailed paired samples *t*-test. Results, including mean and mean difference, are presented in Table 4.30.

Table 4.30. *Mean, mean difference and significance for general expectancies*

General expectancies N = 222	Pre-test		Post-test		Mean diff.	Significance
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*		
General 1	4.09	.71	4.09	.82	0.00	.000*
General 2	3.80	.91	3.77	1.02	-.03	.008*
General 3	4.10	.71	4.00	.79	-.10	.043*
General 4	4.18	.65	4.09	.80	-.09	.244

For item 1, t = 6.666, df = 221, p = .000 (two tailed).
For item 2, t = 2.676, df = 221, p = .008 (two tailed).
For item 3, z = 2.039, df = 221, p = .043 (two tailed).
For item 4, z = 1.168, df = 221, p = .222 (two tailed).

Mean scores reflected little or no change, and the stability of results from pre to post-test was confirmed for three of the four items.

4.10.1 Focus group responses for general expectancies

Two guiding questions were asked seeking to clarify why general expectancies emerged as a clear factor in both the pre and post-test factor analysis. The questions were:

1. Do most students think they are going to get better at all school subjects, but not class music?

2. Do some students think they might get better at class music, but not other school subjects?

Analysis was aimed principally at examining how students differentiated musical and general expectancies. Categories were based upon whether students did or did not distinguish between musical and general expectancies, and results are presented in Table 4.31.

Table 4.31 *Conceptual categories relating to general expectancies*

Are musical expectancies different	No of responses	*Indicative quotes*
Yes	19	*4S2: Well, with music you have to practice more, like you have to practice every day. But with other subjects, yeah, you just don't have to...you do homework but you don't have to practice as much so, yeah, all music is like hard work.*
No	6	*3S1: You can get better at all your subjects if you try hard at them.*
Qualified	5	*5S4: I also think it depends on the amount of focus you put into it. Like, if you think more about maths than you do about music, obviously you're going to try harder at maths. So then your music might fall behind a bit if you don't focus on it enough.*

Nineteen students indicated that they saw class music as being quite different to other subjects, as the following quote illustrated:

3S1: I think it's quite separate. It's only got like a little connection with maths because you have to add all the beats together and stuff.

Responses suggested that student perceptions of both expectancies constructs were bound up in their perceptions of the types of learning activities of subjects themselves. In addition, differences between the constructs were interwoven with beliefs regarding perceptions of the workload required between class music and other

subjects, effort and enjoyment. Students acknowledged that class music carried a different sort of workload, as the following quotes illustrated:

4S4: With music, if you want to be good at it, you have to push yourself to practice. You have to decide you are going to practice.

7S6: No, I don't think having any academic knowledge – it can help a little but academic knowledge doesn't really help you in music.

Workload responses indicated students equated it with instrumental practice, despite instrumental lessons being conducted separately from class music. This reinforced earlier descriptions that students saw class music as merely supporting instrumental music studies. Others saw expectancies differentiation as dependent upon motivation and effort, as typified by the following response:

6S4: It actually depends because if the people are good at the other subjects, then that usually means that they've got a willingness to learn and that means that they will probably carry that into class music. So people who are good at other subjects would probably be just as good at music.

Effort was closely associated with enjoyment, emphasising the positive relationship between values and expectancies.

6S8: To get better you have to like enjoy the subject and you have to put the effort into it but if you don't then you won't get better at it.

5S3: Yeah, I think it depends on what subjects you actually enjoy and want to get better at.

General expectancies had emerged as a small but distinct factor during factor analysis, and focus groups confirmed that a majority of students did distinguish between musical expectancies and general expectancies. While time did not permit the opportunity to seek further clarification as to why this factor emerged, one student provided a timely reminder of the nature of research within the social sciences.

8S2: Everyone is different so everyone will be good at certain things, so I don't think everyone will have the same ideas about every subject they have.

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This response indicated the need for further exploration of domain specific expectancies as constructs.

4.11 Relations between class music specific tasks and dimensions within competence / expectancies components

4.11.1 Competence

A matrix was created to crosstabulate all focus group references to specific class music tasks against the student derived dimensions of the competence component of the theoretical framework. Findings are presented in Table 4.32.

Table 4.32 *Crosstabulation of references to specific music tasks and dimensions within the competence component.*

Competence N = 45	clever	challenge	comprehension	physical
Aural activities				
Composing & experimenting		X(-)	X(-)	
Composing in groups				
Games				
Performing – solo		X(-)	X(-)	X(-)
Performing – groups				
Practical				
Projects / research				
Theory / notation	X(-)	X(-)	X(-)	

In general, this was the most difficult matrix to construct because focus groups generally discussed competence in broad, negative terms, rather than in relation to specific tasks. However, analysis undertaken directly from the original transcripts identified general references to frustrations associated with not understanding music theory, and the resulting frustrations of not being able to put this knowledge into practice when composing and performing. Focus groups spoke in terms of music theory activities being too frustrating (either little or too challenging), and relevant as they had few opportunities to put theoretical knowledge into practice (comprehension).

4.11.2 Musical expectancies

A matrix was created to crosstabulate all focus group references to specific class music tasks against the student derived dimensions of the musical expectancies component of the theoretical framework. Findings are presented in Table 4.33.

Table 4.33 *Crosstabulation of references to specific music tasks and dimensions within musical expectancies.*

Musical expectancies N = 45	efficacy	goal orientation	competence
Aural activities			
Composing & experimenting	X(-)		
Composing in groups		X(+)	
Games			
Performing – solo	X(-)	X(+)	X(-)
Performing – groups		X(+)	
Practical	X(-)	X(+)	X(-) and X(+)
Projects / research		X(-)	
Theory / notation	X(-)		X(-) and X(+)

In general, students described positive goal orientations towards practical activities and group composing. These were activities they wanted to succeed in. However, their feelings of efficacy were generally low in that they thought they did not have enough skills in these areas to succeed in the future. Music theory was not a task area students felt competent in, although some students acknowledged the importance of increasing competence through practical application. In summary, students wanted to succeed on practical and performance related tasks but felt poorly equipped to do so.

4.11.3 Social expectancies

A matrix was created to crosstabulate all focus group references to specific class music tasks against the student derived dimensions of the social expectancies component. Findings are presented in Table 4.34.

Table 4.34 *Crosstabulation of references to specific music tasks and dimensions within social expectancies.*

Social expectancies N = 45	Outward focus	Inner focus (self esteem)
Aural activities	X(+)	
Composing & experimenting		

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Composing in groups	X(+)	X(+)
Games	X(+)	
Performing – solo		
Performing – groups	X(+)	X(+)
Practical	X(+)	X(+)
Projects / research	X(+)	
Theory / notation		

In general, students indicated the personal and collective value of group work in terms of practical activities such as group performances and other practical activities, and composing. They indicated value in terms of the longer term development of social skills, as well as the fun element of performing with others, but also noted that differences in levels of ability could be the major limiting factor in the success of this learning activity.

4.11.4 General expectancies

A matrix was created to crosstabulate all focus group references to specific class music tasks against general expectancies associated with other subjects. Findings are presented in Table 4.35.

Table 4.35 *Crosstabulation of references to specific music tasks and general expectancies associated with other subjects.*

General expectancies N = 45	Difference between musical expectancies and other subjects
Aural activities	
Composing & experimenting	
Composing in groups	
Games	
Performing – solo	X(-) and X(+)
Performing – groups	
Practical	
Projects / research	
Theory / notation	

The only specific activity consistently identified by focus groups which set musical expectancies apart from general expectancies was the aspect of solo performance. This suggested that again, students saw class music as a subject which basically supported their instrumental studies. Neither class based practical activities nor composing activities were identified as distinguishing class music from other subjects, possibly suggesting a lack of ongoing familiarity with practical and

compositional activities in class music. Class music tasks were identified largely with other theoretical, written subjects. The implications of this finding will be considered in the next chapter.

4.12 The transition into Year 8

Given that previous research within the Expectancy-value framework had identified the transition from primary to secondary school as having a significant impact upon values and beliefs, it was considered appropriate to examine student beliefs about the differences between class music in primary and secondary school within the focus groups. Two guiding questions were asked. The first question related to task difficulty: whether students perceived learning activities to be easier or harder at primary school, and the second related to the range of tasks undertaken in music in primary school. The questions were:

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1. Is class music in Year 8 easier or harder than at primary school?

2. How is it different?

4.12.1 Task difficulty at primary school

Responses to perceptions of task difficulty were coded into three categories. The three categories were whether students found class music easier at primary school, harder at primary school, or had no experiences of music at primary school. The numerical frequency of responses indicated:

- 33 students perceived class music to be easier at primary school;
- 11 students had no musical experiences at primary school; and
- 1 student reported music to be harder at primary school.

Approximately a quarter of those who responded to this question in focus groups indicated that they had no musical experiences in primary school, while virtually all others agreed that music had been easier. In describing the generic level of task difficulty, focus groups concurred that learning activities in primary school tended to

be more practical and included singing, learning to play simple songs and group activities. The following quote illustrated the point:

8S8: Our primary school, we didn't have all these sheets and stuff. We just did like mostly singing and group work. So I reckon primary school is easier.

For some students, success in easier learning activities was equated with enjoyment, as the following quote illustrated:

4S4: I thought it was easier because, well I enjoyed it more because it was easier and I could do it like, just sort of simply.

Where music had been offered in primary school, it was a compulsory activity, whereas music for most in Year 8 was an elective. This offered a partial explanation as to why students found the level of work to be easier at primary school.

5S4: ...it's because last year we all had to do every subject so everyone, even the people who didn't want to, they had to do music. So I don't think they [the teachers] really structured it in a way that actually taught us much because they thought most of...because most of the people don't end up going on with it. Only like a handful of people do so I think this year it's more structured and last year it was a bit more basic.

Task difficulty across the transition to secondary school was summed up by one student in the following quote:

5S3: This year it's a lot harder because at my old school we didn't actually do hardly any music. We had music once a week and that was singing songs and that was about it. And then this year it's a lot harder because we're doing theory and learning about key signatures and everything and we never learnt that in our old school.

However, four students spoke positively about the challenge of class music in secondary school, as the following quote illustrated:

6S8: ...it's a lot harder but it is a lot better because in primary school, we didn't learn much in theory but I personally didn't learn much on my instrument either. Like, we only learnt, like one bar songs, so it's a lot more full-on...

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While task difficulty was not a formal component within the Expectancy-value model, the model acknowledged the mediating influence of task difficulty in cumulative terms in relation to past experience and task demands. In more immediate terms, task demands impacted upon goal orientation and competence beliefs, which in turn impacted upon expectancies and values (Eccles, 2005). Integral to understanding the on-going motivational effects of past class music experiences was examination of the types of tasks undertaken in primary school.

4.12.2 Type of music tasks at primary school

The second question sought to examine the differences in the type of activities between primary and secondary school. Responses were coded into lists of activity types identified by focus group members. Categories are presented in Table 4.36.

Table 4.36 *Categories relating to the type of music tasks at primary school.*

Type of music tasks (primary)	No of responses	Indicative quotes
Videos / listening	7	3S1: *We got to watch a lot of video clips.*
Practical activities	19	7S2: *...last year sometimes we had to like bring in our own kind of things to make noises – like make your own instruments, sort of thing, and that was kind of harder than now...*
Singing	12	6S5: *It's kind of completely different because before this year, we were just kind of singing songs...*
Theory	7	3S1: *it was really easy because we didn't actually...we didn't like read compositions or play music on the pianos at all. We just talked about the notes and how high they were and stuff...*

The majority of students identified a practical approach, as the following quote typifies:

8S4: In my primary school, we had like had a big class of music that all the Year 7s would do music and...we didn't do that much, we just played instruments and worked in groups.

Practical activities for many was associated with fun, as stated by the following student:

4S5: I think it was better because we had quite a fun teacher and rather than sitting down and doing theory work, we normally just went in and like played music.

One student did not consider all practical activities to be fun.

2S3: It depends because at my old school we all learnt the same instrument. So if you didn't enjoy it, then probably you wouldn't try and get better at it.

I: What kind of instrument was it?

2S3: A kind of recorder.

For the above, performance authenticity may have been a factor. For others, the relationship between learning activities and relevance was described in different ways, as in the following typical quote:

4S2: Well, I know in primary school we had a really awful music teacher, she didn't...we didn't really do much music. We just basically, she just basically told us about famous composers and stuff – its music but it's not what we wanted to do.

Where theory based activities were undertaken, they were considered basic, as the following quote illustrated:

6S7: ...music wasn't really music. It was just learning about ta-ta-ti-ta-ta...

In summary, music tasks in primary school were described as being practically based and undertaken at a much easier level. The changes in values and beliefs described in previous research across the transition to secondary school may have stemmed from not only a general change in class music task orientation, but from a sudden increase in the level of task difficulty and higher teacher expectations. Declining values and beliefs may have been the result of a change from familiar tasks to more difficult tasks.

4.13 Other influences

The final guiding question sought to identify possible motivational influences beyond those already covered within the theoretical framework. It was:

Is there anything anyone would like to add that we may have missed about why some students like class music and why others want to quit?

Responses were coded into five categories based upon the numerical frequency of key words, and categories overlapped earlier categories associated with attainment and intrinsic values. They were:

- a desire for more practical activities and greater access to instruments (seven responses);
- a desire for more popular music content (six responses);
- a desire for a greater range of activities (four responses);
- a desire for fewer theory related / assignment based activities (three responses); and
- a desire for activities to be more relevant (two responses).

In addition, ten responses relating to the teacher, located at the forefront of the Expectancy-value model as socialiser beliefs and behaviours, were coded. The role of the teacher had been largely dismissed as a major influence in past music education research, according to the literature review (Brand, 2004; Hallam, 2002; Sims, 1996).

4.13.1 Categories relating to the class music teacher

Responses relating to the teacher were coded into three conceptual categories. These were:

- the need for music teachers to have greater subject knowledge;
- the need for music teachers to be more encouraging and patient; and
- the need for music teachers to be more 'fun'.

While specific issues relating to teachers were isolated to one or two focus groups, students frequently commented on the role of the teacher in some capacity.

Knowledge

The category of teacher knowledge was confined to all participants in one focus group, as the following quote typified.

2S5: I would like the teacher to teach us more stuff.

This response came from a school where class music was taken by an experienced arts teacher with little experience in teaching music. The role of teacher knowledge was summarised by another student as follows:

8S2: If you've got a good teacher and they know what they are talking about, you will improve if you don't know at the start.

Encouragement and patience

The need for encouragement and patience was stressed by students across three settings, and in each group, perceived differences in student levels of musical ability identified in 4.2.1 was a contributing factor.

3S4: Some people aren't as musically talented as other people and they need to build it up, and the teacher needs to be more patient with us because we're not all perfect and some people have only just started doing their music this year.

Another student acknowledged the need for teachers to understand that students learn in different ways.

8S4: I agree a lot with the encouragement but I also think like they have to be nice and kind and they have to be calm about it, because other people have different ways of learning, and they have to work with it so they have to like help other people, say, other people don't know how to read music a lot but they know how to like hear it and then play it. They need to encourage them to keep going because that's the best way of learning it.

The ideal music teacher personality was summarised succinctly by one student.

5S3: Happy, outgoing and doesn't get angry and encourages us a lot more.

Fun

Students in school seven referred positively to teacher personality in relation to fun.

7S2: Probably the teacher has a lot to do with it. Like, if you get a really mean, uncool teacher...then you're not going to like it and people probably would quit. But we have a really funny teacher who always makes jokes and stuff so...

In summary, while the Expectancy-value model did not place the role of the teacher in shaping values and beliefs at the forefront of the model, teachers were acknowledged as a mediating influence upon student goal orientation and self-esteem via their beliefs, attitudes, expectations and behaviours. These in turn have an indirect influence upon student expectancies and values.

4.14 Summary and conclusion

The chapter commenced by reporting the results of paired sample t-tests on the values components at the pre and post-test stages. Within the Expectancy-value framework, all three values components decreased over the course of the year and the significance of the decrease for all except two extrinsic items was confirmed by the t-tests. Further, the cost component, examined in the focus group interviews, revealed a growing physical cost to students of engaging in class music.

The chapter then examined whether expectancies could be differentiated along domain specific lines. After factor analysis, three factors did emerge which were labelled as musical, social and general expectancies. This finding then framed the reporting of expectancies within the chapter.

By contrast to the values components, competence and expectancies ratings remained relatively stable or decreased slightly, and the focus groups revealed potential dimensions within each differentiated expectancies component which in turn had implications for the values components.

Other influences within the Expectancy-value model to emerge included issues associated with the transition to secondary school through an increase in perceptions of task difficulty and a changed learning environment, and the role of the teacher as a socialiser influence upon values and beliefs. The chapter now concludes by outlining these findings in relation to each specific research question from chapter one.

Answering the research questions

1. How do class music learning activities impact upon Year 8 students' motivation to continue class music in Perth, Western Australia?

When viewed through the lens of Expectancy-value theory, this study found that class music learning activities impacted primarily upon the perceived values students attach to activities, in terms of:

- the situational enjoyment attached to specific activities;
- the challenge, relevance and comprehensibility of activities and their resultant impact upon goal orientation and 'within person' goals; and
- the usefulness of activities with particular regard to short term transferability and longer term personal and practical usefulness.

Class music learning activities also impacted in terms of:

- the wider physical cost of engagement;
- competence particularly in relation to enjoyment; and
- the desire to succeed in understanding and doing musical activities in the future.

Further, students indicated that both values and expectancies were mediated by the social environment, by past experience and by teacher behaviours.

2. How do class music learning activities impact upon music students' values and beliefs over the course of Year 8?

This study found that student valuing of class music learning activities decreased statistically significantly over the course of the year while musical expectancies decreased slightly and social and general expectancies remained largely stable.

3. What is the impact of specific types of class music learning activities upon students' values and beliefs?

The study found that:

- learning activities associated with practical, performing and creative activities were described by students in motivating terms; and
- learning activities associated with written, de-contextualised theoretical and aural activities were described by students in de-motivating terms.

4. What are the motivational parameters in which class music learning activities might operate?

Finally, this study found that the motivational parameters in which Year 8 class music learning activities operate are diverse and complex. It found that learning activities not only impact upon student perceptions of the importance, enjoyment and usefulness of activities, but also upon:

- student expectancies for future success in understanding and doing musical activities (musical expectancies);
- the social environment in which musical activities are undertaken (social expectancies); and
- the importance of succeeding in music in comparison to other subjects (general expectancies).

Chapter five now compares the findings of this study with other findings within the theoretical framework and discussing their implications for teaching practice in greater detail.

CHAPTER FIVE - DISCUSSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented in chapter four. It examines the impact of learning activities upon each component within Expectancy-value theory in detail, and compares findings with past research. It also considers the dimensionality of each Expectancy-value component as it operates within class music before presenting a class music specific components and dimensions extension of the theoretical framework.

The chapter then discusses the implications of the findings that specific types of learning activities impact upon student values and beliefs. As the results of the study are intended for teachers and education policy makers, the chapter concludes by presenting a series of recommendations for teaching practice.

5.1 Expectancy-value findings

Expectancy-value theory provided a comprehensive framework for investigating the research questions. Evidence of influences from all components within the Expectancy-value model, as well as perceptions of task difficulty, were found to impact upon student values and beliefs for class music. Task value dimensions described by Eccles (2005) emerged in focus group interviews, as did a range of dimensions associated with a differentiated expectancies framework.

The following section commences with examination of the findings within the intrinsic value component even though it is usually presented second in most representations of the Expectancy-value model. This is because as the strongest of the values constructs (Eccles, 2005), it provided the basis for the initial icebreaker questions in focus group discussions and was presented first in the results chapter. It was therefore also appropriate and consistent that it should lead a detailed discussion of the findings of this study.

5.1.1 Intrinsic value

Findings for intrinsic value were the most uniform in response of all values components, with a mean rating across all four questionnaire items within .09 of each other at pre-test and within .08 at post-test. In addition, all four intrinsic items exhibited the greatest ratings decreases of all the values components across Year 8, as confirmed by means at pre and post-test. These findings supported related finding by Wigfield et al. (1993) that intrinsic value for instrumental music decreased over the first year of secondary school. Class music appeared to follow the trend of instrumental music and reading which continued to decline in intrinsic value throughout lower secondary school, as opposed to mathematics and sport which rose in intrinsic value (Wigfield, 1994). Mean changes for intrinsic value are illustrated in Figure 5.1.
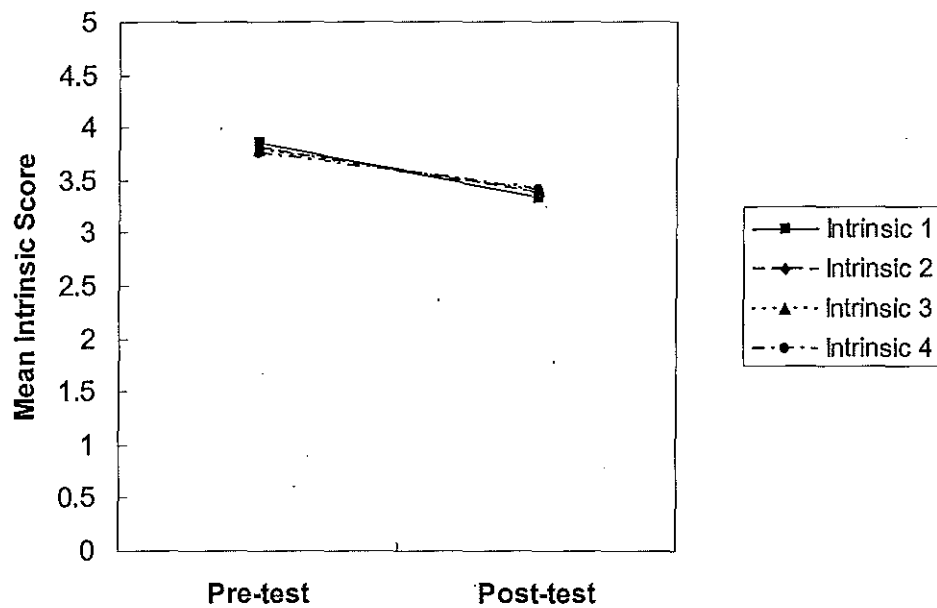
Figure 5.1 Mean change in intrinsic value from pre to post-test

Findings from both data collection stages offered support for the intrinsic value dimensions of individual and situational interest described by Schiefele (1991) and Eccles (2005). The two items pertaining to situational interest displayed a higher mean rating on the questionnaire in pre-test, and a lower mean at post-test. This was consistent across both situational interest items, suggesting that student views on the intrinsic value of specific music tasks declined more than their global valuing of class music as a whole. In terms of intrinsic value as a construct, findings conformed with

Schiefele's (1991) differentiation of interest, and the assertion that individual interest is the more stable belief. It also supported a central premise of this study that learning activities rather than overall perceptions of the subject have the greatest impact upon the development of Year 8 student intrinsic task values.

While situational interest ratings decreased more strongly on the questionnaire, students in focus groups highlighted the importance of the feelings related dimension within individual interest. Most focus groups referred to the feeling related nature of tasks, in that students spoke of the enjoyment associated with the tasks rather than the personal importance of the tasks to self. Recurring themes relating to student perceptions of a lack of practical and creative activities and teacher over reliance on theoretical activities suggested that task immersion, described by Eccles (2005) as deriving from feelings related individual interest, was not occurring for many students.

5.1.2 Attainment value

As with intrinsic value, attainment value decreased across all items. However, unlike intrinsic value, the wider range of mean scores on attainment value items suggested broader dimensions within this component, in line with Eccles (2005). While the paired sample *t*-tests confirmed statistically significant decreases in attainment value items from pre to post-test, the decreases were not as strong as for the four intrinsic value items from pre to post-test. Mean changes for attainment value are illustrated in Figure 5.2.
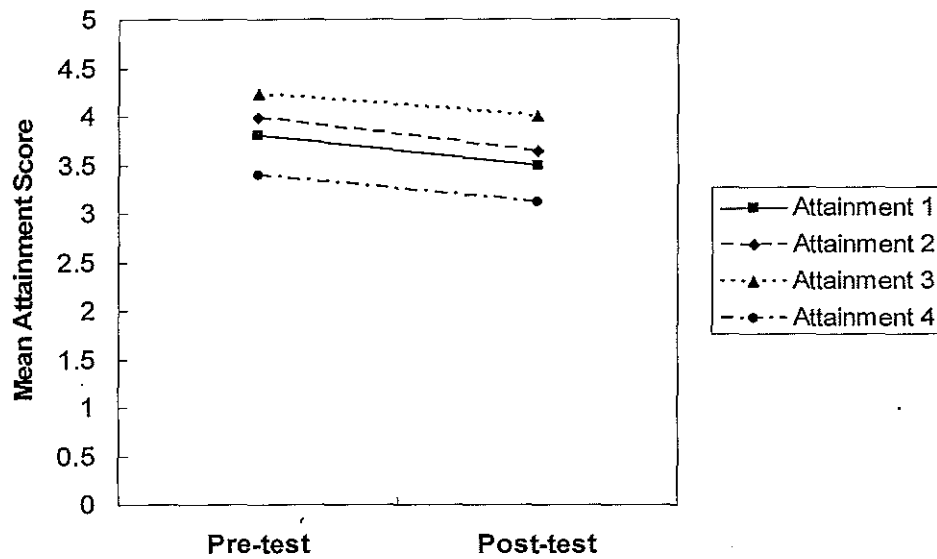
Figure 5.2 Mean change in attainment value from pre to post-test

Different mean ratings for items 2 (challenge) and 3 (relevance) suggested that students differentiated between the two. In broad terms, Eccles had linked challenge with goal orientation (Dweck & Elliott, 1983) and relevance with 'within person' goals (Ford, 1992). These findings offered a foundation for exploration of the component in the focus groups. The lowest ratings from the questionnaire came for the importance of tasks when compared with other subjects (item 4). This suggests the need for some form of acknowledgement of external subject comparisons within the attainment value component. In this sense, importance could not be considered as a concept in isolation, and should be considered as 'important relative to what'.

The higher overall ratings and smaller rates of decrease for attainment value (with the exception of item 4), compared with intrinsic value, suggested that students differentiated the component from intrinsic values, supporting the assertion by Wigfield (1994) that students can differentiate values components from age 9. The overall decline in attainment ratings also supported findings by Eccles et al. (1989) and Wigfield et al. (1991) that attainment value continues to decline over lower secondary school. Finally, findings offered limited support for Wigfield's (1994) finding that attainment value becomes increasingly linked to competence as students get older and begin thinking about their futures. Both attainment value items and competence items showed less decline than intrinsic value items.

Focus groups further confirmed the broad nature of attainment value. Student responses revolved around the dimensions of goal orientation and 'within person' goals, described by Eccles as pertaining to challenge and relevance. With regards to challenge, students described class music tasks as too challenging for non music readers, and too easy for fluent music readers, thus impacting upon student perceptions of competence. As noted by Bandura (1986), lower feelings of competence can sometimes reduce internalised feelings of pleasure, leading to anxiety, avoidance behaviours and lower mastery orientations.

A high number of relevance responses regarding task content (repertoire) and task strategies (how tasks were presented) indicated that tasks were not developing the 'within' person goals of autonomy, intellectual curiosity or relatedness. Task characteristics did not appear to conform with student perceptions of music or how they saw music in their lives. This findings suggested for support for Vulliamy & Shepherd (1984b) who had described a student perceptual divide between 'real music' (the music they identify with) and 'school music' (the music they study at school). In summary, students could not see the personal relevance of many class music tasks, although they did acknowledge the overall value of many tasks in learning about how music works. Focus group responses indicated that tasks in class music were for the most part not meeting student expectations of music.

5.1.3 Extrinsic value

Again, the wider range of questionnaire item ratings at both pre and post-test indicated broad dimensions of beliefs within this component. This was expected as Eccles (2005) had described the extrinsic values component as encompassing both long and short term future plans. Perhaps not unexpectedly, ratings for item 1 regarding the usefulness of tasks in terms of life skills were considerably higher than item 2 regarding the usefulness of tasks to future careers. However, the lowest rating occurred on item 3 when the usefulness of tasks was compared with other subjects. Ratings were similar with ratings for item 4 from attainment value. This had been acknowledged by Eccles et al. (1993) and Eccles (2005) as both items related to short term identity and needs. For both items, lower ratings indicated that class music tasks were neither very useful nor important when compared with other subjects. Mean changes from pre to post-test for extrinsic value are illustrated in Figure 5.3.
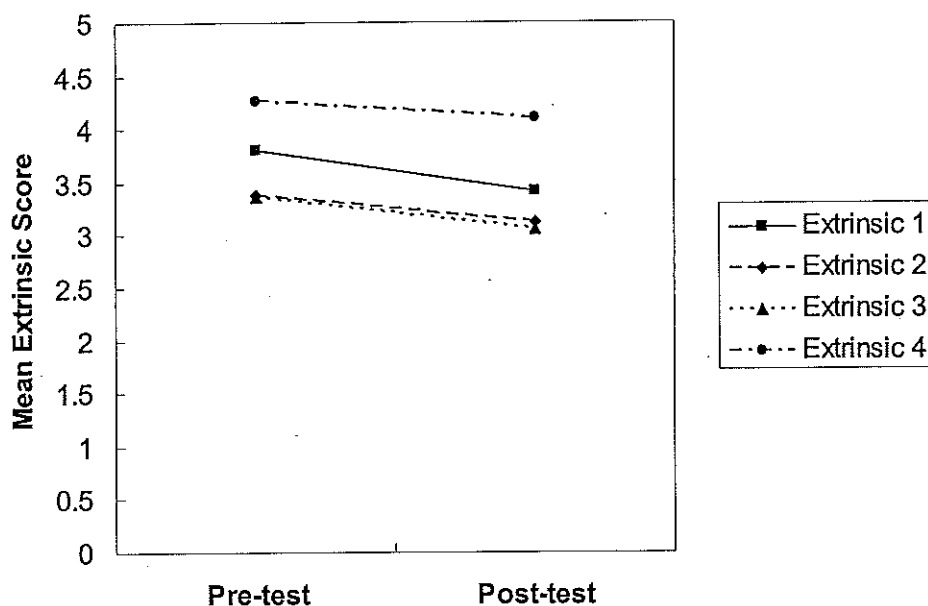
Figure 5.3 Mean change in extrinsic value from pre to post-test

Wigfield (1994) identified extrinsic value as becoming increasingly important in lower secondary school. Students may continue class music if they see it as useful in helping them get a job. The statistically significant decrease from pre to post-test confirmed findings by Eccles et al. (1989) and Wigfield et al. (1991) that extrinsic valuing of music tasks decline across lower secondary school. Class music was seen by students as becoming less useful, especially in relation to career (item 2). When compared against the usefulness of other subjects, where it could be summised that a degree of pragmatic usefulness according to Wigfield (1994) would be starting to develop, the item provided the lowest ratings of all. Item 4 responses indicated that music tasks were only seen as useful in developing knowledge about music. This was the highest rating of all values items, and the only one of two items that did not show a statistically significant decline.

Students in the focus groups described some short term benefits from class music tasks, in line with findings by Sloboda, 2001. These were:

- performing in front of the class - this was seen as useful in building confidence and building teamwork: and

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- knowledge transferability - performing skills and theory knowledge could be applied when playing music at home, or playing an instrument.

Apart from these, few students, except for those contemplating a career in music, indicated any usefulness for class music in terms of longer life goals. In general, student responses stating that class music tasks were not valuable or important to self, bore some resemblance to the constructs of the integrated and introjected student as described by Deci et al. (1991).

5.1.4 Cost

While not formally included in the questionnaire, it became clear in focus groups that perceptions of cost were impacting upon values. Given that students in focus groups spoke about physical cost and personal cost, this indicated general support for the dimensions of the cost component as described by Eccles (2005).

Physical cost

Students in focus groups spoke primarily in terms of the time commitment required to engage in music programmes as a whole, as many cases, students who undertook class music also had instrumental music lessons and were expected to participate in school music ensembles.

Students also spoke of reduced elective subject choices, as class music often ran as a year long elective rather than a semester long one. Those students in private schools on music scholarships had no choice; they had to take class music as a condition of their scholarship. In addition, class music was often timetabled against other popular electives. The strength and frequency of responses, especially those relating to time commitment, appeared to affirm Eccles (2005) assertion that when the cost of engaging is greater than the perceived value of undertaking the task, task values decline.

Personal cost

The principal response relating to personal cost was boredom resulting in lack of effort. This was interpreted in two ways:

- students actually didn't enjoy the activities and therefore did not invest effort; or

- lack of effort resulted from a desire to protect self-worth.

Given student responses describing the degree of difficulty of many class music tasks, findings suggested some potential for Covington's explanation (1992, 1998) that lack of effort may be associated with the desire to protect self-worth, especially when tasks appear too hard. Students in focus groups described the sheer volume of theoretical content to learn, especially for those who had not undertaken music in primary school, and the unnatural nature of music skills. Many physical skills, especially those associated with playing keyboards, are not natural skills. They require constant repetition.

While indicating some support for a potential link with the need to protect self-worth, students in focus groups also suggested that many students simply didn't enjoy the activities. This indicated a clear link back to situational interest, whereby students simply did not enjoy the tasks themselves, and 'within person' goals of relevance, whereby students could not see the point of some tasks. Thus, lack of effort was mediated by lack of enjoyment and relevance.

It was evident that declining values reported in this study were accompanied by perceptions of the increasing cost of engagement.

5.1.5 Competence

Given that the questionnaire items intentionally reflected slightly different orientations within the competence construct, it was not unexpected that the results reflected differences between each item. Challenge (item 2) returned the lowest rating, and physical competence (item 4) returned the highest, suggesting that while most students found activities to be too challenging, they felt more competent when it came to performing. However, the mean for all competence items was closest at post-test. It may be that different ratings reflected differences in the nature of tasks in class music, with higher ratings for physical competence being influenced by associated instrumental music lessons.

Findings indicated only small rating decreases from pre to post-test on all competence items, with the paired sample *t*-tests confirming the decreases to be too small to be statistically significant. Given the reported positive correlation between competence and values (Wigfield, 1994), a stronger decline in competence ratings could have reasonably been expected as students felt less competent in activities they valued less. However, the small decrease did conform with findings by Dweck & Elliott (1983), and Eccles & Midgeley (1989) that competence beliefs do continue to decline from primary school across the early years of secondary school. Mean changes for competence are illustrated in Figure 5.4.
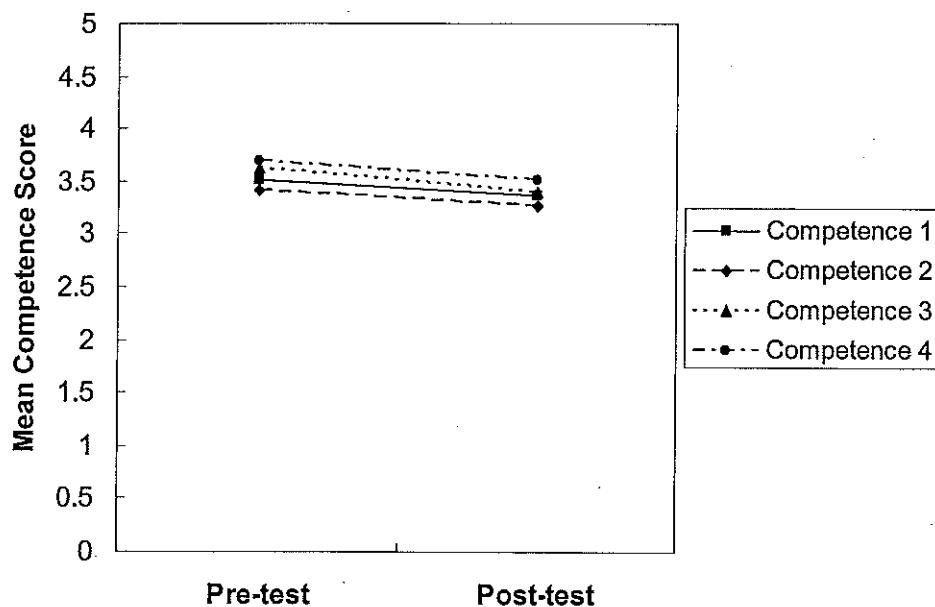
Figure 5.4 Mean change in competence beliefs from pre to post-test

While competence did not decrease in line with values as reported in previous Expectancy-value findings, in most instances, competence presented a lower pre-test mean than for many values components. This suggested that student competence beliefs were not particularly high to begin with, despite the fact that many students in focus groups were already learning instruments, and may have been reflective of the limited or no primary school class music experiences reported by many focus groups.

Wigfield (1994) reported a growing correlation in lower secondary school between competence, and attainment and extrinsic values. In this study, both values

components exhibited a statistically higher rate of decrease (with the exception of extrinsic items 1 and 3) than competence, but were closer to competence than intrinsic value which showed the most significant decline. Findings, therefore, offered limited support for a developing correlation in lower secondary school between personal importance and usefulness of tasks, and ability beliefs. This was reinforced in focus groups where participants described a link between competence, and challenge and effort. Of all values items, extrinsic item 4 (relating to the usefulness of tasks in learning about music) was the closest to competence items in terms of its rate of decline.

Focus groups also revealed a strong link between intrinsic value and competence. Students reportedly made an effort in activities they enjoyed. Increased effort led to increased feelings of competence. Less effort associated with less enjoyable learning activities lead to lower competence beliefs. These findings suggested that situational interest, embedded in the choice and presentation of learning activities, may be more important in class music than in other subjects.

5.1.6 Expectancies as a differentiated construct

Factor analysis suggested that Year 8 student expectancies may be grouped into musical (academic), social and general expectancies within the class music setting. There are a number of possible explanations for why the physical component, proposed in the literature review, did not appear in factor analysis, including:

- lack of class music performing experiences in primary school for many of those tested;
- one dimensional learning experiences in primary school;
- the inability of students to discriminate between the academic and physical components; or
- lack of clarity regarding the wording of academic and physical items on the instrument.

From focus groups, it was evident that few class music tasks involved physical performance opportunities aside from formal instrumental performance assessments. It may be that physical expectancies did not emerge as a clear factor because performance opportunities were not perceived as integral to most tasks. Despite this, the ability to expand expectancies into a three factor construct provided valuable insights into the impact of class music tasks and the relationship between expectancies and task value dimensions.

5.1.7 Musical expectancies

Findings revealed that musical expectancies were higher at pre and post-test than competence, confirming previous expectancy findings in instrumental music by Eccles, Wigfield & O'Neill, (1999). Despite previous reports that there are no empirical differences between the expectancies and competence constructs (Wigfield et al. 1992), findings for this study suggested that differences do exist between student assessments of current abilities and their abilities to succeed in the future. While higher reported expectancies ratings were attributed by Wigfield (1994) to student over-rating of their abilities to succeed in the future, the higher rates of decrease from pre to post-test than for competence suggested a growing match between expectancies and actual achievement suggested by Dweck & Elliott (1983). Overall, results supported findings by Wigfield (1994) that expectancies decline across upper primary school and lower secondary school. Changes from pre to post-test for musical expectancies are illustrated in Figure 5.5.
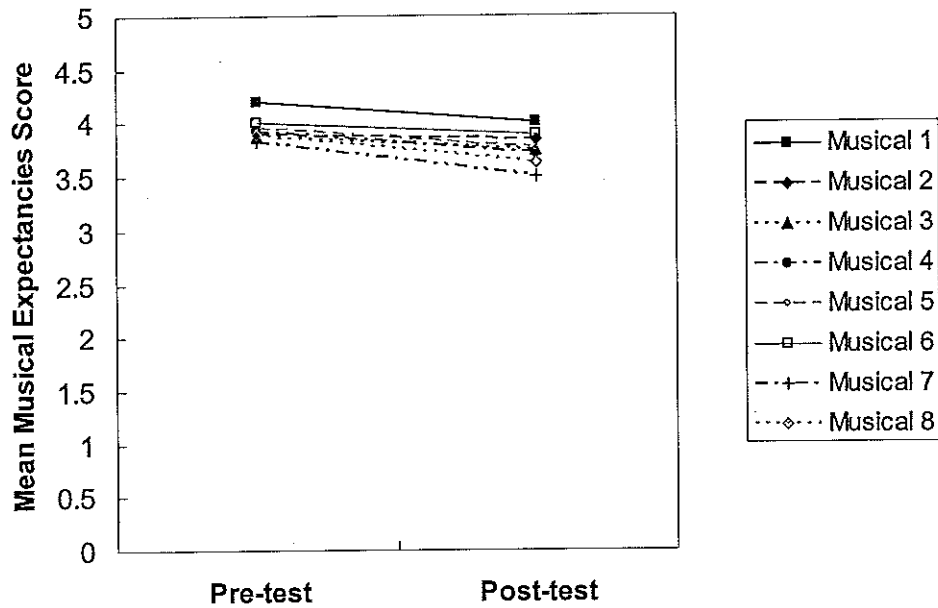
Figure 5.5 Mean change in musical expectancies from pre to post-test

Competence beliefs reported in this study were lower than musical expectancies at both pre and post-test. However, a growing similarity between post-test expectancies and competence ratings offered limited support that competence beliefs precede expectancies (Meece et al. 1990). Overall, while musical expectancies decreased, the rate of decline was not as high as for most task values components.

Although factor analysis for this study indicated that academic and physical expectancies significantly loaded on the same factor, findings within the component suggested some differentiation, with the four physical items showing slightly stronger decreases than the four academic items. This suggested that student perceptions of their abilities to perform on instruments in class based activities decreased more than their beliefs in their ability to understand the underlying musical concepts, possibly due to a student identified lack of performing opportunities.

Items 4 and 7, relating to goal orientation (both academic and physical) revealed a statistically significant decline from pre to post-test similar to results within attainment value. These results were disturbing because they suggested that not only were tasks becoming less important to fulfilling student goals, it was becoming increasingly less important for students to succeed in them. Rates of decline in musical

expectancies ability items were closer to competence beliefs at post-test, while musical expectancies were largely unchanged by past experience. Overall, these findings suggested that it was becoming less important to students to succeed in the future in class music, while their perceptions of their abilities to succeed in class music were becoming more realistic and less affected by past experience.

Focus group discussions confirmed Eccles' (2005) expectancies dimensions relating to goal orientation, competence and efficacy. What differentiated these findings from Eccles' (2005) previous domain related expectancies findings was the division of musical expectancies into academic and physical orientations, with attendant goal, competence and efficacy dimensions. The two items relating to past experience displayed the least decreases from pre to post-test, suggesting that past experience was having less of an impact than previously described by Eccles (2005), possibly due to the newness of Year 8 class music learning activities to Year 8 students.

5.1.8 Social expectancies

Pre-test mean ratings for social expectancies were similar to musical expectancies. However, unlike musical expectancies, social expectancies remained largely stable and unchanged from pre to post-test. This suggested that either the types and structuring of class music tasks were effective in maintaining a high level of social expectancies, or that little group work was actually occurring. Focus groups responses suggested the latter to be the case. Where group work was undertaken, it was within restricted parameters. Results supported expectancies differentiation in that in class music, students differentiate between their abilities to succeed in understanding and doing tasks in the future, and their assessments of self in relation to doing tasks with others. Mean changes from pre to post-test for social expectancies are illustrated in Figure 5.6.
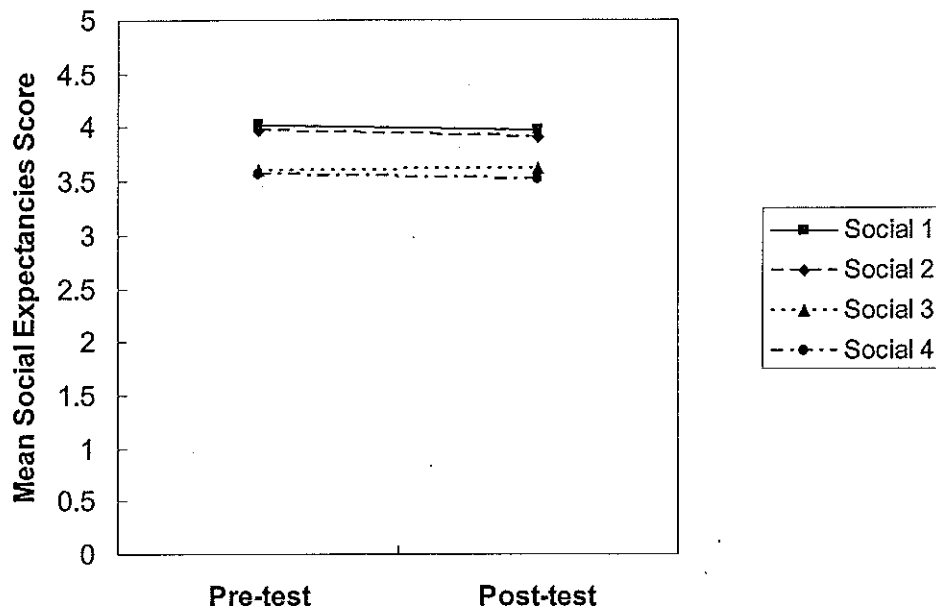
Figure 5.6 Mean change in social expectancies from pre to post-test

Findings suggested that social expectancies had two dimensions. Outward focused items, similar to environmental effects upon self-efficacy as described by Bandura (1997) rated consistently higher at pre and post-test than inner focused items similar to self perceptions of competence, and self-worth (Covington, 1998; Harter, 1982). This indicated that students rated their ability to work with others more highly than the ability of others to work with them.

Wigfield & Wagner (2005) suggested that this may relate to the adolescent process of identity formation. Based upon Erikson's (1968) description of adolescence as a time of developmental negotiation in the formation of a coherent identity, Wigfield and Wagner (2005) suggested low perceptions of social competence and self-worth occur because students have not yet formulated coherent identities. They described adolescents as being engaged in identity exploration which included re-evaluating their self-concept and self-worth as a result of the physical changes they are undergoing.

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5.1.9 General expectancies

As with social expectancies, general expectancies remained stable and largely unchanged. However, unlike social expectancies, items testing dimensionality within this construct produced very similar mean ratings with only a marginal decline in goal orientation, suggesting a more global orientation to this construct. Focus groups suggested that students saw differentiation between general and musical expectancies only in terms of performing on an instrument. Changes from pre to post-test for general expectancies are illustrated in Figure 5.7.
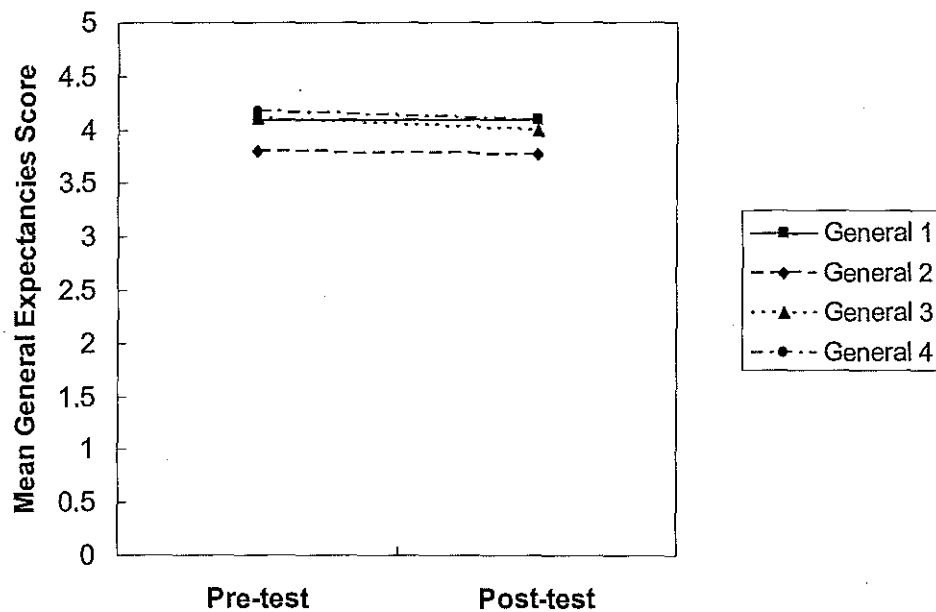
Figure 5.7 Mean change in general expectancies from pre to post-test

General expectancies ratings were higher than for musical expectancies and did not decrease. This finding did not conform to previous findings by Wigfield (1994), Nicholls (1979), and Stipek (1984) who stated that global expectancies continue to decline across lower secondary school. However, this finding may be attributed to the fact that students were inflating their general ability beliefs in relation to class music expectancies. Given many of the negative assessments of class music activities made by students in focus groups, findings may not necessarily reflect higher expectancies in other subjects as much as lower expectancies for class music.

5.1.10 Task difficulty

Task difficulty is acknowledged in the Expectancy-value model as a mediating component which impacts upon goal orientation and competence beliefs. In this study, students indicated that class music was easier in primary school, and more practically based. From this, a number of inferences were drawn.

Firstly, the consensus amongst focus groups that class music was easier in primary school when combined with already identified beliefs that Year 8 class music tasks were too challenging for some, suggested that competence beliefs were strongly mediated by past experiences in primary school. For many students, competence beliefs in Year 8 were founded upon current beliefs about tasks in comparison with primary school experiences.

Secondly, the change from the practical and less formal primary school approach which was generally described as fun, to a formal, written approach indicated support for Sloboda (2001) who had stated that a formal approach to music study was foreign to students because they continue to engage with music out of school in an informal way. Given the observed impact of tasks upon goal orientation, a formal approach reinforced student beliefs that studying music in this way was just not important or relevant to them. Not only did many students feel less competent in music than at primary school, a formal approach appeared to match neither their personal beliefs about music, nor meet their psychological needs.

Approximately one quarter of students in the focus groups indicated no experience with music in primary school. Therefore, for these students, class music was a new experience. This suggested a third issue; that of experience. Students were just not accustomed to a formal, written and theoretical study of music.

In summary, class music was perceived to be more difficult and presented either a very different or new form of study for most Year 8 music students.

5.1.11 Other findings

The other major influence to emerge from focus groups in this study was the role of the teacher in formulating values and beliefs. This added a stronger teacher behavioural element to the findings in this study, and were in contrast to findings by Brand (2004), Hallam (2002) and Sims (1996). Aside from their role in designing and delivering learning activities, the teacher, at least in class music, may play a greater role than originally discussed by Brand, Hallam and Sims.

Teachers are acknowledged within the Expectancy-value model at the very forefront as socialisers, whose beliefs and behaviours are interpreted by students. According to the model, student interpretations of socialiser beliefs and behaviours impact in two ways:

- they stimulate affective reactions and memories which ultimately impact upon task values; and
- they impact upon student competence beliefs and short term goals.

These influences were evident in the focus group responses for this study. Some students expressed a desire for greater encouragement and patience. They struggled with some tasks, suggesting teacher expectations may be unrealistically high for some, and teacher impatience was impacting upon competence beliefs. The desire for teachers to be 'fun' suggested that the formal approach to teaching class music was affecting both situational and feelings related interest through the way tasks were presented, and through the personal quality of teacher/student interactions. The desire for teachers to have greater content knowledge, while confined to one setting, had wider implications, as students needed to feel confident that their teacher knew what they were doing (impacting upon their own perceptions of competence), and upon values in terms of the quality and comprehensibility of tasks which in turn impacted upon all the values components.

While specific categories relating to encouragement, fun and knowledge were identified, an over-riding theme emerged across all values components in that 'bad' teachers were associated with theory and written tasks while 'good' teachers were associated with performance and practical composition tasks.

5.1.12 Summary of Expectancy-value findings

All values components exhibited decreases over the first year of secondary school, in line with previous Expectancy-value findings in instrumental music. Intrinsic value exhibited the greatest decrease, with the less stable situational interest dimension declining the most, suggesting a growing lack of student interest in specific learning activities, and less in the subject itself. Attainment value also decreased, with goal orientation and relevance emerging as the most important dimensions, in line with previous findings (Eccles, 2005). Extrinsic value decreased, particularly when compared with other subjects, suggesting that learning activities in class music were considered decreasingly useful, although performance-based tasks were described as valuable in confidence building.

The physical cost of engaging in class music emerged as many students reported high expectations of commitment to music programmes through instrumental lessons and ensemble commitments. Personal cost suggested a growing disinterest in the learning activities themselves as well as a possible desire to protect self-worth.

Competence ratings were lower across the year than values ratings and exhibited only a small decrease. This did not match previous findings indicating a stronger decrease across the early years of secondary school (Wigfield, 1994). However, a growing similarity in rating levels, between competence and attainment and extrinsic values, was noted at the post-test stage. In addition, students in focus groups indicated a growing relationship between situational interest and competence, namely through interest and effort.

Factor analysis, differences between mean ratings, rating changes over time and focus group discussions appeared to confirm the differentiated nature of expectancies, at least for class music. Musical expectancies declined while social and general expectancies remained largely unchanged. Dimensional differences emerged within musical expectancies, with goal orientation showing the strongest decrease, demonstrating its link to attainment value (Eccles, 2005). Learning activities were seen as becoming less important in themselves, and less important in terms of future success.

Social expectancies suggested two dimensions, with one relating to an outward self-efficacy orientation, and the other relating to an inner self-worth orientation. General expectancies displayed less dimensionality and were higher than for musical expectancies. Students in focus groups largely described higher expectancies in other subjects in comparison with class music.

Other influences from earlier within the Expectancy-value model also emerged. Task difficulty, whereby students perceived tasks to be easier at primary school, may have impacted competence beliefs, although this requires further investigation. The nature of learning activities, when compared with primary school did not appear to conform with student beliefs about how music should be taught, which in turn impacted upon goal orientation. Teacher behaviour emerged as having a stronger impact than in previous studies. Lower competence beliefs may have been reflective of focus group requests for teachers to be more encouraging. In addition, focus groups called for teachers to be more 'fun', and this may have affected intrinsic value, namely situational interest.

5.1.13 Conclusion

Miles & Hubermann (1994) noted the value of research in theory verification and expansion. This study was able to verify and expand upon Eccles (2005) Expectancy-value theory, and produce a class music specific model suitable for examination of student motivation to continue class music studies (see Figure 5.8 below). In doing so, the study has consolidated dimensions within the values components as identified by Eccles (2005), while identifying components and dimensions within a differentiated expectancies construct for class music. Accordingly, the end components and dimensions are presented as a class music specific Expectancy-value model in Figure 5.8.

SUBJECTIVE TASK VALUES

1.	Intrinsic value	⟹ situational interest individual interest (feeling laden / value laden)
2.	Attainment value	⟹ goal orientation (challenge) 'within' person goals (relevance) Competence (understanding)
3.	Extrinsic value	⟹ long term personal (life skills) long term practical (career) short term personal (playing an instrument) short term practical (skill building)
4.	Cost	⟹ personal cost (effort) physical cost (time)
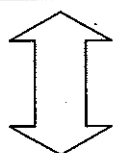
EXPECTATIONS FOR SUCCESS

1.	Competence	⟹ goal orientation (challenge) comprehension physical ability
2.	Musical expectancies	⟹ goal orientation (challenge) competence efficacy (past experience)
3.	Social expectancies	⟹ self-efficacy (outward orientation) self-worth (inner orientation)
4.	General expectancies	⟹ goal orientation (challenge) competence (past experience)
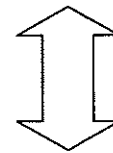
Figure 5.8 Class music specific components and dimensions within the Expectancy-value model

Further, both data collection methods suggested that dimensions within the Expectancy-value theory components do not exist in isolation. This study indicated the potential for correlations between dimensions across both the values and expectancies components which require further, formal examination. The relationship between construct dimensions, as derived from focus group discussions, is set out as a matrix in Table 5.1.

Expectancy – value components		Intrinsic			Attainment			Extrinsic				Cost		Competence			Musical expect.			Social expect		G.E
		Sit	FL	VL	Chall	Rel	Comp	L.T. per	L.T. prac	S.T. per	S.T. prac	Phys	Effort	Chall	Comp	Phys	Comp	Eff	Chall	inner	outer	
Intrinsic	Sit.	.				X					.	X	X		X							
Intrinsic	FL				X	X	X					X										
	VL				X		X	X			X	X										
Attainment	Chall		X	X							X	X	X	X		X			X			
Attainment	Rel	X	X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X								X
Attainment	Comp			X						X		X			X		X			X	X	
Extrinsic	L.T. per				X	X						X	X									
Extrinsic	L.T. prac					X						X	X									
Extrinsic	S.T. per				X	X	X					X	X									
Extrinsic	S.T. prac			X		X						X	X									
Cost	Phys	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cost	Effort	X		.	X	X	.	X	X	X	X	X			X		X	X		X	X	
Competence	Chall				X	X						X										
Competence	Comp	X					X					X	X				X	X	X	X		
Competence	Phys				X							X						X				
Musical expectancy	Comp						X					X	X		X						X	
Musical expectancy	Eff											X	X		X	X					X	
Musical expectancy	Chall	.			X							X			X							
Social expectancy	inner						X					X	X				X					
Social expectancy	outer						X					X	X				X	X				
General expectancy						X						X										

Table 5.1 Relations between dimensions within Expectancy-value components

The components and dimensions identified within this study add a growing level of detail to the Expectancy-value model, and provide a potential framework for teachers to understand the motivational effects of their learning activities upon their students.

While engaged in the process of theory verification and expansion, this study found that student values for class music decreased significantly while competence and expectancies remained largely stable (with the exception of musical expectancies). As repeatedly stated by researchers within the Expectancy-value field (Eccles, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield, Eccles & O'Neill, 1999; Wigfield, 1994), declining values affect future enrolment decisions while expectancies affect performance and persistence. Therefore, it could be reasonably assumed that relatively unchanged competence and expectancies found in this study would not largely affect the overall performance of students, but decreasing values would have a significant impact upon their future enrolment decisions. As a result, it could be reasonably inferred that the significant decrease in the valuing of class music learning activities of the participants of this study would be a major contributor to why post compulsory class music participation rates in Western Australia are low.

Some findings of this study into the impact of learning activities upon Year 8 values and beliefs did not conform to past research findings. Past research had indicated a positive correlation between expectancies and values, with declining expectancies preceding values. Students value less the activities they do not feel competent in. In this study, the reverse appeared to be the case, as students did not appear to value activities regardless of their competence beliefs. Value ratings, especially intrinsic value, decreased significantly, while competence and expectancies (with the exception of musical expectancies) decreased only marginally. It became difficult to avoid the conclusion that students simply did not enjoy many of the learning activities teachers presented regardless of their ability beliefs in relation to the activities. Focus groups suggested that students had clear beliefs about what they liked and what they did not. This conclusion indicated the importance in examining findings against specific class music learning activities.

5.2 The impact of specific learning activities upon values and expectancies

The construction of learning activity matrices presented in chapter four provided insight into the impact of specific activities upon the dimensions and components of values and beliefs. Importantly, a high level of consistency emerged between all focus groups in terms of which activities they found enjoyable, important and useful, and those they did not.

While the construction of the matrices provided insight into the types of activities students preferred, the following discussion relates to the motivational impact of these activities, and does not constitute an educational assessment of their worth. It is beyond the research parameters of this study to evaluate the worth of activities beyond their motivational properties as described by the student participants.

In terms of the construction of the matrices, they are representative of focus group discussions, with activity types defined by the students themselves. In this sense, while small variations occurred between focus groups, the matrices represented the views of the majority, based upon numerical analysis and conceptual interpretation. However, it was evident across focus groups that students had a good idea of what they liked and what they did not like. They held largely uniform views as to what they saw the purpose of class music to be.

5.2.1 Activities that enhanced values and expectancies

From the focus group data, composing and performing emerged as the main activities students valued, and they were described mostly in terms of situational and 'feeling related' enjoyment.

Performing

Performing was described as a feeling related, fun activity. Performing was an activity students simply enjoyed doing and they wanted to improve in, largely confirming the finding of Rosevear (2003) that performing was a favourite student activity among South Australian students, regardless of whether they formally played a musical instrument or not.

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Students spoke positively about both group and solo performance. Group performance may be reflective of their experiential world where they see the majority of music-making occurring in small, rock groups. This concurred with Sloboda (2001) who stated that small groups in a popular music band setting conformed with how students perceptions of music-making in their world. Students also acknowledged the value of group performances in building teamwork and other social skills. This indicated the potential for increasing developing social expectancies through performance, to build self-worth during adolescence.

Solo performing on instruments, while described by some focus group members as challenging in terms of performance anxiety, was described in value-related terms in building confidence at performing in front of others, both in terms of musical performance and as a general life skill. As a majority of students in focus groups saw performing on an instrument as the main rationale for studying music, solo performance was also described as valuable in terms of building skills on their instrument which would remain with them for life.

Performance was also described by some focus group members as an alternative form of learning; as kinaesthetic learning whereby students learned about music by doing it rather than by writing about it.

Composing

As with performing, composing was described as a feelings related enjoyable activity, and as an integral part of music making. This suggested a link back to performing whereby small groups 'create' and perform their own songs. Again, this may be reflective of student experiences of music in their world where they perceive rock groups creating their own songs in a collective setting. Some students spoke of the enjoyment of an informal approach in terms of experimenting with chords.

Composition was also described as value related in terms of self expression. The ability to create music was described as important to self. While this also concurred with Sloboda (2001) in that creating music can fulfil immediate adolescent psychological needs, students described composing as an ongoing life skill.

However, an issue identified by some students in focus groups was a lack of skills at putting compositional ideas into practice. Lack of skills included both theoretical and practical skills. Most students recognised the need to understand the theory behind composing. They also stated that they did not have the physical skills to succeed in specific composing tasks. While this was an ongoing issue, students described the value in group composing whereby they could pool their skills.

Group work

While the value of group work has already been acknowledged with regard to performing and composing, students acknowledged the value of group work across a range of other activities, such as project work and games, in terms of building the ability to work with others. This confirmed findings by Rosevear (2003) that students enjoyed performing in groups.

While students described a range of issues associated with working successfully in groups, in terms of trust and differing ability levels, overall, group work was described as a fun and motivating learning strategy across activities, suggesting the student perception that music is a communal activity. The finding that students were more confident of their ability to work with others than the ability of others to work with them may be reflective of the age of the students and the psychological instability of identity formation during adolescence (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005).

Other activities

Other learning activities described as having value and enhancing ability beliefs included any activity involving a degree of practical involvement. Students in focus groups indicated a clear situational interest in 'doing things'. Specific activities included:

- games which involved a practical component, such as rhythm circle games;
- music theory were it was useful in the short term for helping build performance skills and developing an understanding of music; and
- projects where the content was seen as relevant.

In general terms, learning activities were described by focus groups as having value and enhancing expectancies when they included:

- relevance and familiarity – any learning activity content and strategies involving popular music and the use of computers and technology were described in value related terms;
- achievability – learning activities that students perceived they could succeed in. This included the use of music software on computers to overcome lack of physical performing skills; and
- transferability – learning activities such as theory were described as useful when students perceived a direct application to their instrumental performance. In addition, transferability beyond school was noted when repertoire was relevant. Thus transferability became apparent when class music studies conformed with student perceptions of music from their experiential realm.

5.2.2 Activities that contributed to a decline in values and expectancies

As with motivating activities, students in focus groups described less motivating activities in largely feeling related terms. They described many activities as just not being fun, both in terms of content and presentation.

Music theory and notation related activities

Music theory was described by virtually all students in focus groups as the least enjoyable learning activity. Students described music theory in terms of its effect on competence, relevance, challenge and enjoyment.

Students in focus groups largely described the impact of music theory upon competence beliefs in terms of lack of comprehensibility. Music theory appeared in many instances to be taught in a de-contextualised manner with little opportunity for immediate practical application, leading to a lack of deeper understanding as students could not hear theory in practice. Consequently, many theory based activities were effectively described as irrelevant and pointless.

Lack of comprehensibility impacted upon challenge. Those students with little prior formal musical experience or music reading ability described the pace of theory based learning activities as too challenging, with confusion leading to lack of effort. It was not clear whether lack of effort was associated with the fact that activities were just not perceived as fun, or whether lack of effort was associated with protection of self-worth because activities were considered too challenging.

For students with fluent music reading ability, theory activities were described as not challenging enough, indicating the problem of designing and delivering learning activities to mixed ability classes. For both advanced and inexperienced students, class music theory activities did not appear to promote mastery learning behaviours.

Both comprehensibility and challenge were impacted by relevance. Students just could not see the point of many theory based activities which were based around the need to read musical notation steeped in a Western classical tradition. This again suggested importance in acknowledging the student experiential world whereby the majority of music is constructed and performed within an aural tradition (Sloboda, 2001).

Students also spoke of the sheer repetition associated with many theory based activities. Some described the need for greater variety in terms of repertoire and teaching strategies, while others particularly complained about teacher reliance upon theory worksheets.

Aural activities

Aural activities, particularly melodic and rhythmic dictation, were described by some students as challenging and irrelevant, mainly because they were undertaken in a de-contextualised context. As a result, they did not appear to promote mastery learning. Students indicated that they could not see the point in mastering skills they did not comprehend as relevant to music as they perceived it.

Solo class performance

While performance and learning an instrument were considered the rationale for music studies by the majority of students in focus groups, students described the time commitment involved in learning an instrument and undertaking class music, especially when additional homework was set in class music. Competence and expectancies were largely mediated by perceptions of physical skills on an instrument, and the degree of understanding of the concepts involved in reading and playing.

Other activities

The other less motivating activity described by students was project work where the relevance of the project to learning had not been demonstrated. Students described irrelevance in two ways:

- projects were described as irrelevant when the content did not conform to the student experiential world. Thus, projects on classical composers or orchestral instruments were described as irrelevant, while specific projects on film music (cited by one student in 4.1.1), advertising (cited by one student in 4.9.1) and popular music were described as relevant; and

- projects were described as irrelevant when the purpose of the project appeared superfluous. Thus, projects about the lives of great composers were not seen as helping learn about music. This form of peripheral knowledge was described by Swanwick (1996) as 'knowing about', rather than 'knowing in' music.

In general, learning activities which contributed to the decline in values and expectancies were identified with:

- repetition – students described little variation in the way some activities were presented, leading to monotony and boredom;

- comprehensibility – students described problems understanding de-contextualised activities, particularly where there appeared to be no immediate and obvious practical application;

- relevance and familiarity – students described learning activities and learning strategies not based upon their experiences of music as being irrelevant; and

- achievability — students described many learning activities as either too challenging, or not challenging enough. Issues associated with challenge included the need to understand, and the need to have the technical skills to put understanding into practice.

5.2.3 Summary of the impact of specific learning activities

Students in focus groups stated that class music should be a practical subject. While they indicated that they did not always have the practical and theoretical skills to succeed, performance and composing were activities they described in value terms as being enjoyable, important and useful. Their rationale for the subject indicated that most saw it as supporting their instrumental music studies. In general terms, these findings supported Boswell (1991) and Pogonowski (1985) who reported that student attitudes towards class music improved with the introduction of a creative, process oriented practical curriculum.

Findings regarding music theory suggested that students acknowledged its importance but did not always enjoy the manner in which these learning activities were presented. Students described relevance in terms of content, suggesting the importance of the role of badge identity at this age, and in terms of de-contextualised activities. The problematic nature of de-contextualised music theory learning activities highlighted Sloboda's (2001) statement that many teachers in the United Kingdom did not understand the role of theory in the creative process of music making, particularly with regard to the creation of music within the contemporary music world.

While students spoke of the value of music as a life skill, they described class music activities as useful only for those contemplating a career in music. Further, issues associated with the ability divide in classes potentially impacted upon challenge, effort and the protection of self-worth.

While not related to specific learning activities, it was concluded that class music in Year 8 may have presented a 'culture shock' to some students. Class music presented a new and more formalised approach to the study of music in contrast with informal or non-existent primary school experiences. A formal approach to the study of

music, through written notation and theory, did not conform with student expectations or experiences with music and its creation in their experiential world.

It became evident during focus group discussions that in many instances, many students simply did not enjoy the learning activities as they were being presented. Issues associated with relevance, challenge, enjoyment and usefulness meant that many students described class music learning activities as boring. In this sense, findings concurred with the findings of Ross (1995) and (1998) in the United Kingdom, that the enjoyment factor associated with class music studies in Western Australia may be disappointingly low. Differences between the levels of situational interest and individual interest described by students suggested that while students saw music in general as practical, dynamic and contemporary, learning activities in class music did not, for the most part, meet these expectations.

5.3 Implications for practice

The aim of this study was to examine the impact of learning activities upon student motivation to continue class music studies, with the intention of presenting the findings to teachers and third parties. Therefore, it is important to consider the implications of this study for teaching practice. Accordingly, this study makes six general recommendations, drawn from the questionnaire and focus group data, and following analysis of the motivating impact of learning activities upon student values and beliefs. The six recommendations represent the significant, principal findings of this study.

Recommendation 1 – performing and composing

That teachers understand and accommodate the importance, enjoyment and usefulness to students of learning activities associated with performing and composing.

Students in this study described music as a dynamic subject associated with practical activities. It is recommended that teachers acknowledge the value of performing and composing in terms of confidence building of musical and general life skills, self expression in fulfilling 'within person' psychological goals and sheer enjoyment, and accommodate them in their lesson plans. Students in focus groups

described the situational interest in performing and composing activities as 'just good fun'. In addition, performance and practical based composition represent an alternative form of learning closely associated with 'knowing in' music (Swanwick, 1996), and the notion of musical intelligence (Gardner, 1983).

It is recommended that teachers build upon the value of both solo and group composing and performing, as group activities help develop social skills both for music and life in general, and build self-efficacy and self-worth. In addition, group based activities can be used to overcome physical skills limitations in the creation of music. Activities involving group composing by experimenting (trial and error) and performing equates with student perceptions of music making in their world.

While acknowledging the value of composing and performing, teachers may need to reconsider the role of musical skills acquisition, and design learning activities around the need to build physical skills on selected instruments.

Recommendation 2 – link to instrumental teaching

That teachers understand the student perception that class music supports their instrumental studies, and develop learning activities to accommodate this.

In line with student beliefs regarding music as a practical subject, students in focus groups described playing an instrument as the main rationale for studying music. Therefore, it is recommended that learning activities reflect a higher degree of practical and theoretical relevance and transferability to support their instrumental studies.

Teachers should consider the greater incorporation of student musical instruments into classroom learning activities, aside from formal concert practice. The greater incorporation of instruments into the music classroom may help combat issues surrounding relevance and de-contextualisation in that theoretical activities can be directly applied to instrumental performance.

In addition, the greater incorporation of instruments will aid transferability of musical concepts back to the instrumental lesson, and beyond, to performance in the

wider setting while helping build technical competence and student confidence on their instruments.

Recommendation 3 – practical application of theoretical activities

That music theory and related activities lead to or derive from practical applications.

Students in focus groups described many theoretical activities as being incomprehensible because they did not understand the practical context in which the activities operated. To avoid issues surrounding comprehensibility, teachers should consider the value of closely integrating theoretical activities into a practical setting.

Further it is recommended that teachers reconsider the order in which theoretical activities and practical applications are delivered. Focus groups described the value in experimenting with ideas. In this sense, there may be motivational value in having students identify a theoretical concept through experimental performance, and theorise later. This method is also closer to the way musical meaning is developed in the contemporary music world, as popular musicians experiment with ideas and formalise them after the event. Thus, understanding musical concepts derives from aural exploration, not written theorising.

While again acknowledging the limiting factor of student practical and performing skills, the value of computers, as discussed at length by one focus group where computers were central to their class music studies, needs greater consideration as a tool for the practical realisation of theoretical activities.

Recommendation 4 – review content relevance

That teachers re-evaluate the relevance of music theory, notation and repertoire from the traditional Western classical canon in relation to the student's experiential realm.

Students in focus groups described the need for content and learning strategies to reflect their experiental world, in terms of relevance, usefulness and transferability. With regards content, students live in a contemporary music world and many class music programmes in this study did not appear to accommodate this. Students

struggled to see the transferability of knowledge from class music to their contemporary music world in three ways:

- from classical repertoire to their experiential contemporary music world;
- from theoretically driven learning activities to their understanding of musical process in their contemporary musical world; and
- from theoretically driven learning activities to their instruments.

The literature review identified music as the single most important adolescent leisure activity (Lowe, 2007; Wigfield, O'Neill & Eccles, 1999; Fitzgerald, Joseph, Hayes & O'Regan, 1995). Students use their music as an identity badge to communicate values, attitudes and opinions (Hargreaves & North, 1996; Zillman & Bhatia, 1999). For many students in this study, music beyond their experiential realm has no value to them, and therefore no relevance. In the instances when learning activities did incorporate contemporary music and contemporary music practices, (as in school 2), responses were uniformly more positive and activities valued accordingly.

However, Sloboda (2001) noted that there are issues for teachers to address for the successful inclusion of contemporary repertoire and practices into the music classroom. Teachers need to:

- understand the methods and practices associated with contemporary music;
- understand the sub-cultural associations surrounding contemporary music; and
- understand the values and beliefs students attach to contemporary music.

Sloboda (2001) noted that this information is often absent from teacher training courses and teacher in-service training.

It is beyond the boundaries of this study to examine the philosophical, educational and pedagogical issues surrounding repertoire choice and practice in music education. However, in the context of this study, issues surrounding the Western canon and notation based theory were described as de-motivating by students in terms of relevance, usefulness and transferability in six of the seven focus groups.

Recommendation 5 – accommodate class ability divide

> That teachers acknowledge the diverse range of past musical experiences of Year 8
> students, and plan learning activities accordingly.

Students in focus groups described a variety of different or non existent musical experiences at primary school. Their experiences of class music in Year 8 often resulted in a 'culture shock', as they were confronted with an unfamiliar, formal, theoretical study of music.

In addition, widely divergent primary school experiences resulted in widely differing levels of ability. Focus groups comprised students with little or no formal musical experience, through to students with many years of formal musical tuition. The divide also manifested itself in classes containing fluent music readers and non readers, resulting in a major skills divide in all settings.

This study found that the skills and ability divide effected student perceptions of the degree of challenge associated with activities. In general, less experienced and non reading students found formal learning activities too challenging, while more experienced and fluent readers described little challenge. Both appeared to impact upon student mastery orientation behaviours.

It is recommended that teachers acknowledge the divide and plan learning activities accordingly. Teachers need to investigate methods and strategies which can accommodate a range of skill and ability levels in the same setting, such as the use of group learning activities which accommodate different skill and ability levels in the one activity, and extension activities for more advanced students.

Recommendation 6 – time commitment

> That teachers acknowledge that participation in a school music programme can involve a high degree of time commitment and associated effort, and take this into consideration.

Students in focus groups cited time commitment as a major cost factor for Year 8 music students. Most students played instruments requiring a daily commitment to practice, and many were involved with school music ensembles. With the choice to undertake class music frequently resulting in a loss of other elective choices, many students indicated that they felt overcommitted and unable to pursue other interests. This was not an issue in school seven where class music did not involve loss of elective choices.

The above finding suggested that the time cost component in the majority of settings in this study may be contributing to decreasing ratings for the importance, enjoyment and usefulness of class music. It is therefore recommended that teachers be aware of the cost component, particularly with regard to out of class activities such as the setting of homework.

Teachers may also wish to reconsider the amount of time devoted to class music as a Year 8 elective. While this recommendation may be controversial for some music teachers, it must be remembered that future enrolment choices are affected when the cost of involvement exceeds the perceived value of involvement. Therefore, reducing potential loss of elective time for other subjects in Year 8 may ultimately lead to higher retention rates in subsequent years.

5.4 Conclusion

This study has been based upon the premise that learning activities impact upon student future enrolment decisions, and findings have supported this premise. Learning activities have a considerable impact upon student values and beliefs. In addition, the study found that specific activities impacted in specific ways upon student values and beliefs. However, the study also found that in this study, teacher behaviour and past experience may also be salient.

The findings that Year 8 music student values decreased significantly suggested that issues surrounding the design and delivery of learning activities from Year 8 may ultimately be contributing to low participation rates in post compulsory music courses in Western Australia.

This study has made a series of recommendations for teaching practice. It must be remembered, however, that these recommendations have been framed in the light of findings of this study, and are based upon the desire to improve student participation rates by increasing student valuing of the subject. The recommendations also need to be considered for their educational value and in relation to the mandated aims of the curriculum framework. However, unless the motivational impact of learning activities in class music are considered and acted upon, post compulsory class music participation rates will remain low.

Post compulsory curriculum changes will not improve participation rates in school music programmes unless music teachers acknowledge and address the issues identified in this study surrounding the motivational impact of their learning activities from the very commencement of Year 8.

CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY

6.0 Introduction

This chapter sets out to respond to the aim of the study as outlined in chapter one. It reviews briefly the findings in relation to the problem statement, and comments upon the significance of the findings in relation to the research question. It also sets out the limitations of this study, and makes recommendations for future research. The chapter then presents its concluding remarks before finishing with a coda relating to the ongoing enrolment choices of the participants, post study.

6.1 The aim of this study

This study identified the problem that students do not choose to continue class music in significant numbers in Western Australia as reflected in low post compulsory class music participation rates. The study set out to examine whether the problem was associated with the impact of class music learning activities upon student values and beliefs from the commencement of secondary school (Year 8). It asked the following primary research question:

How do class music learning activities impact upon Year 8 student motivation to continue class music in Perth, Western Australia?

To answer this question, the study examined the impact of learning activities over the course of Year 8, and the impact of specific learning activities unique to class music upon student values and beliefs.

Using Expectancy-value theory as its theoretical base, the study concluded that learning activities did have a statistically significant impact, as student values and beliefs ratings decreased across Year 8. When investigating the parameters of values and beliefs, factor analysis suggested that three expectancies components may apply in class music. This finding offered the potential for the extension of Expectancy-value theory into a class music specific model to help examine the wider impact of specific class music learning activities upon student values and beliefs. Further, according to focus group data, the study found that formal written activities associated with music

theory and related activities may be contributing to decreasing Year 8 values and beliefs.

However, most important was the finding that the perceived importance, enjoyment and usefulness of class music learning activities to Year 8 students exhibited a strong statistically significant decline over the course of Year 8.

6.2 The significance of this study

The findings of this study are significant because declining student values and beliefs in class music from Year 8 will impact upon post compulsory participation rates, as values in particular have been demonstrated in previous Expectancy-value based research to be an accurate predictor of future enrolment choices. As a result, declining values found in this study of Year 8 students infer that a significant number of students will elect to discontinue class music and will miss out on the educational benefits of a sustained music education.

. Focus group findings suggested that the manner in which learning activities are currently presented in Year 8 class music is largely at odds with student stated perceptions of what class music should be. Focus groups described music largely as a practical subject. Students spoke of the importance and enjoyment of performing and composing as the main rationale for the subject. However, their stated beliefs ran contrary to the formal, de-contextualised and theoretical learning activities with which they were often presented. Further, students often struggled to see the relevance of content to their lives.

In this study, student beliefs about their abilities did not decline as significantly as their valuing of activities, leaving the overall impression that students simply did not enjoy many learning activities as they were presented, regardless of their perceptions of their abilities.

If music education in Western Australia is to increase post compulsory class music participation rates, a reframing of learning activities needs to occur from the very start of Year 8, at the beginning of secondary school. The introduction of a

creative and progressive post compulsory WACE syllabus alone will not improve participation rates.

Music teachers need to be aware of the impact of their learning activities upon student values and beliefs, and embrace change from a motivational perspective. Only by accommodating motivation into educational aims can participation rates potentially improve. Accordingly, this study has made a series of recommendations for practice, which can be summarised as:

- the need for more practical, performing and composing learning activities;
- the need for clearer learning activity links to instrumental music teaching;
- the need for immediate and relevant practical application of theoretical concepts in learning activities;
- the need to review content relevance of learning activities for students;
- the need for learning activities to accommodate students of widely differing skill and ability levels; and
- the need to reconsider the time commitment of Year 8 music students to music programmes.

6.3 The limitations of this study

This study has taken a positivistic approach to the research question with the aim of attempting a degree of generalisability and representativeness. However, care is required when applying the findings to a wider setting as class music learning situations change from school to school, depending upon the context in which learning activities are presented. There is the potential for some findings to be taken out of context in some settings. It is acknowledged that there can be issues associated with generalisability and representativeness when qualitative data is included, especially as it applied to interpretation of the impact of specific learning activities upon student values and beliefs as discussed in this study.

The findings of this study represent the views of the majority of the students involved in the focus groups, and the range of different opinions expressed by students

is acknowledged. An attempt has been made to acknowledge the differences and accommodate them in the findings.

While attempting to make the school sample as representative as possible, it was not possible to include all school systems and learning settings. Similarly, when constructing the participant samples, it was not possible to take factors such as gender, cultural background, family background or musical aptitude into account. However, these factors were discussed within the literature review and are acknowledged within the theoretical framework.

As the mixed methods employed in this study relied upon self-reporting, there can be differences between what students say and what students do. The findings represent the researcher's interpretation of their distinctive language conventions, as illustrated in chapter four. Finally, the length of focus group discussions were limited because of the age and concentration span of the participants.

There is considerable value to be gained by lengthening the research timeframe to include examination of Year 9 and Year 10 values and beliefs, leading to a more detailed developmental understanding of how values and beliefs are shaped prior to students entering post compulsory music courses. Further, there would be value in examining Year 8 values and beliefs across successive years to check the consistency of findings.

There are other ways in which the research problem could have been approached. Therefore, this study presents one window on realism based upon participant self-reporting and reflection. In future, it may be useful to employ alternative methods such as observation to see the motivation and behaviour of Year 8 students in practice.

Finally, this study has relied heavily on terms such as values, beliefs, competence, ability, task and learning activities. Although they have been defined in the context of this study, they are frequently used terms in educational research and may be taken in different contexts by readers.

6.4 Recommendations for future research

This study represents a broad overview of the impact of learning activities upon Year 8 student values and beliefs. As little research has been undertaken in this area in music education, there is a need for further research to build upon the findings of this study, to allow greater generalisability and comparability to other places and settings.

Considerable time was invested in the creation of the Step One questionnaire, and it returned high reliability readings. It is recommended that the instrument be used for further investigation of motivation into class music within the Expectancy-value framework, particularly with other year levels in lower secondary school.

This study also reported expectancies as a differentiated construct. It is recommended that this be further investigated to confirm this finding within other year levels, and to clarify the potential dimensions within each differentiated expectancy construct.

It is recommended that future research investigate possible correlations between dimensions within the values constructs, and dimensions within the expectancies constructs revealed in this study, at least in the class music domain.

As this study has attempted to verify and extend Expectancy-value theory into a class music specific model, future research is needed to further clarify the relationship between the components within the class music specific model, and to further examine the manner in which dimensions within each component operate.

Finally, while the self-reporting and self-reflection methods provided valuable insights into student evaluation of the motivating impact of learning activities in class music, it is recommended that future research compare self-reported values against achievement decisions and enrolment behaviours. There is the need for future research to employ different methods, such as observation, to capture student behaviour and motivation in action.

6.5 Conclusion

The aim of this study has not been to discredit music teachers in the research schools, or their teaching practices. Situational differences between each research setting suggested that some students enjoyed class music. Rather, the aim has been to highlight the importance of motivation in an elective subject field, as motivation impacts upon student enrolment decisions. By undertaking research into this field, studies such as this can provide teachers with a framework for understanding the impact of their learning activities. As a result, teaching and learning can be enhanced by the process.

Music is a fundamental human activity with psychological, psychomotor, emotional, cognitive and behavioural benefits. However, present day music teaching practices in Western Australia do not appear to be capitalising upon a well documented adolescent valuing of music in general. It is hoped that studies such as this can have a positive impact upon teaching practice and lead to an increase in participation rates, allowing Western Australian students the opportunity to benefit from a sustained and engaging music education.

6.6 Coda to the study

Data for this study was collected over the 2007 Western Australian academic year. As part of a follow-up process in 2008, participating schools were contacted at the commencement of the following academic year to ascertain class music participation rates for Year 9. Of the 276 students engaged in class music studies at the commencement of Year 8 in 2007, 141, representing just over 50%, elected to continue into Year 9 in 2008. Just under 50% of students engaged in this study elected not to continue into Year 9.

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APPENDIX A – LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

Research Project – A Study into Year 8 Student Motivation to Continue Class Music Studies in Perth, Western Australia.

Dear ,

My name is Geoffrey Lowe and I am a Senior Lecturer from Edith Cowan University, currently undertaking PhD research in music education in the area of music student motivation to continue their class music studies beyond Year 8. I am seeking your consent to involve your school in this project because it is representative of a range of schools found in WA and offers generalisability of findings.

My research project involves examining Year 8 student attitudes towards class music via 2 short questionnaires administered in February, 2007 and in November to map motivational trends of the Year 8 group. Further, a series of interviews with student volunteers will be undertaken later in the year to examine how their motivation towards class music has been shaped and changed. Student interviews will take approximately 45 minutes each to complete and will be tape recorded for data analysis purposes only.

I am seeking your permission to approach your music staff and recruit students to participate in the project. Both teachers and students will be fully informed as to the nature of the research, and I will seek written parental consent for student interviews. I am aware of the perceived extra burden that involvement may seem to place on the music department. However, all testing and interviewing will be undertaken by me as the researcher at times that are convenient to the music department, and cause minimum, if any disruption. All data collected will only be used for the purposes of this research and not disclosed to other parties.

Staff and student responses will be anonymous and confidential: neither your school, teachers nor students will be named in the final report. Participation is voluntary and your staff and students may withdraw from the project at any stage, without explanation or penalty. Copies of the final PhD report will be made available to you upon request at the completion of the project.

This project has ethics approval from Edith Cowan University. If you have any concerns or complaints about the research project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact Kim Gifkins, Research Ethics Officer, Edith Cowan University on 6304 2170, or email research.ethics@ecu.edu.au

The aim of the project is to produce a report which will hopefully shed light on the formation and development of music student attitudes, and inform teaching practice. I hope that you will consent to allow involvement with the project, and look forward to your response. For further information, I can be contacted on 9370 6939.

Geoffrey Lowe
Senior Lecturer in Music Education
Edith Cowan University
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APPENDIX B – LETTER TO MUSIC TEACHERS

Research Project – A Study into Year 8 Student Motivation to Continue Class Music Studies in Perth, Western Australia.

Dear ,

I am writing to formally seek your consent to be involved in my PhD research project, which will be in the area of music student motivation to continue their class music studies beyond Year 8. I have selected your school because it is representative of a range of different schools found in WA and offers generalisability of research findings.

The project will involve me as the researcher undertaking a series of questionnaires with your Year 8 students over the course of the year to examine their motivation to continue class music beyond Year 8: 2 questionnaires will be administered at the start of the year and the final one in November. A group of student volunteers will also be interviewed later in the year with the aim of examining how their motivation towards class music has been shaped. It is anticipated that student group interviews will last approximately 45 minutes each.

As a fellow teacher, I wish to assure you that involvement will not add to your workload in any way. As the researcher, I will undertake the administration of both the questionnaires and the interviews at times that are both convenient to the music department, and cause the minimum, if any disruption. All data collected will only be used for the purposes of this research and not disclosed to other parties.

Staff and student responses will be anonymous and confidential: neither your school, teachers nor students will be named in the final report. Participation is voluntary and you or any of your students may withdraw from the project at any stage, and copies of the final PhD report will be made available to you upon request at the completion of the project.

This project has ethics approval from Edith Cowan University. If you have any concerns or complaints about the research project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact Kim Gifkins, Research Ethics Officer, Edith Cowan University on 6304 2170, or email research.ethics@ecu.edu.au

I welcome your enthusiasm and look forward to working with you and your students. Hopefully this project will help shed light on the formation and development of student attitudes towards class music and inform teaching practice. Thank you in advance for your help and co-operation. If you have any questions or require further information about the research project please contact me on 9370 6939.

Geoffrey Lowe
Senior Lecturer in Music Education
Edith Cowan University
Email: g.lowe@ecu.edu.au

APPENDIX C – INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Research Project – A Study into Year 8 Student Motivation to Continue Class Music Studies in Perth, Western Australia.

Background
My name is Geoff Lowe and I am a lecturer at Edith Cowan University. My job is to help train music teachers for schools. I am also doing some research into class music to find out what kids think of it, so hopefully we can help make it more interesting and fun in the future.

Why Me?
I have approached 8 schools from all over Perth to get feedback from music students as to what they think about music, and music at school. Your school has been specially selected as one of the 8.

What do I have to do?
Back in February, I asked you to fill in 2 questionnaires. Questionnaire 1 asked you about your involvement with music outside school, and Questionnaire 2 asked you about what you think about music at school. The questionnaire about what you think about music at school will be done again in November to see if your thoughts have changed.

For this research to work, all you need to do is answer each questionnaire as honestly as you can.

Will anyone see my answers?
You don't write your name on any of the questionnaires so no-one will know your answers. As the researcher, I will gather up the questionnaires and take them away with me, so even your teacher will not see what you have written. I will not even name your school when I write my final report.

What if I don't want to do it?
You don't have to. Just tell the music teacher and you will be excused from filling in the questionnaires.

What happens next?
In September, I will come back and ask for a group of about 6 volunteer students to chat to about their thoughts about class music. I will send a letter home to parents first to make sure it is OK to chat with some of you. The chat will last about 30 – 45 minutes and we will probably do it during a lunch-hour.

What is the result?
All your answers will help me write a report for other music teachers to understand what kids think about class music and what we can do to make it better. As such, your answers will be very important in helping me find ways to improve class music for the future.

Thanks a lot for your help.

Geoffrey Lowe
Senior Lecturer in Music Education
Edith Cowan University

APPENDIX D – INSTRUMENT

VALUES, COMPETENCE & EXPECTANCIES QUESTIONNAIRE

Are you male or female (please tick one box)   Male ☐   Female ☐

Please read each statement and circle the response which is appropriate for you.

PART 1

1. I think that it is important to be good at doing class music.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. I think that the sorts of activities I do in class music are challenging.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. I think that the activities I do in class music are relevant to me.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. Compared to other subjects, I think that the sorts of activities I do in class music are important.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. I think the range of activities I do in class music are enjoyable.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

6. I think the sorts of activities I do in class music are interesting.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

7. In general, I find class music activities fun.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

8. In general, I find class music activities interesting.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

9. I think that the activities I do in class music are useful for when I leave school.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

10. I think that the things I learn in class music will be useful for getting a job.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

11. I think that compared to other subjects, the activities I do in class music are useful.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

12. I think that the activities I do in class music are useful in helping me learn about music.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

PART 2

1. I think I am clever at class music.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. I think the activities I do in class music are easy.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. I think I understand all the activities I do in class music.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. I think I am good at doing activities in class music.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

PART 3

1. I think I will get better at class music activities.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. I think what I learn in class music will make more sense in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. I think class music will be easier to understand in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. I think I will get better at remembering things I have covered in class music.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. I think I will get better at doing class music activities in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

6. I think it will become easier to play classroom instruments in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

7. I think I will really like to participate in class music practical activities in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

8. I think I will be good at doing class music in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

9. I think I will get better at working with others in class music.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

10. I think it will become easier working with others in class music in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

11. I think that other students will want to work with me in class music in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

12. I think that other students will listen more to my ideas in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

13. I think I will get better at most school subjects in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

14. I think that most school subjects will become easier in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

15. I think I will improve my marks in most subjects in the future.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

16. I think that compared with the past, I will be better at learning new things in the future in most subjects.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

When you have finished, please raise your hand and someone will collect your questionnaire.

Thank you for your help

APPENDIX E – LETTER TO PARENTS

Research Project – A Study into Year 8 Student Motivation to Continue Class Music Studies in Perth, Western Australia.

Dear parent

My name is Geoffrey Lowe and I am a Senior Lecturer from Edith Cowan University, currently undertaking PhD research in music education. My research area is student motivation.

As part of a major research project, I am exploring student motivation to continue class music studies beyond Year 8. This involves interviewing groups of students in a number of schools across the metropolitan area.

Your child has been informed of research and has volunteered to take part in a group interview. Accordingly, I am seeking your written consent to interview your child. Your child will be part of a group of 6 students being interviewed together either during a lunchtime or at another time deemed appropriate by the school which will not affect their studies. The interview will last around 30 – 45 minutes and will be tape-recorded for data analysis purposes.

Questions will focus upon student attitudes towards class music – which type of activities students find interesting and engaging, and which they find less stimulating. The questions will be non intrusive and information gathered through interviews shall only be used for the purposes of this research and not disclosed to other parties.

No students will be identified in the research – all participants will remain anonymous. No student will be identified in the final report and confidentiality and anonymity is assured at all stages. Only myself as the researcher will have access to group interview transcripts, and the project has ethics approval from Edith Cowan University. For confirmation of ethics approval, or if you wish to consult an independent person, please contact Kim Gifkins, Research Ethics Officer at Edith Cowan University, on 6304 2170, or email research.ethics@ecu.edu.au

This project will help identify design perspectives which can enhance the teaching of class music. As such, the interviews will play a pivotal role in the research process. Please do not hesitate to contact me on 9370 6939 should you require any further information on this project.

If you are happy for your child to participate in this project, could you please sign and return the attached slip to the school music department. I thank you in advance.

Geoffrey Lowe
Senior Lecturer in Music Education
School of Education
Edith Cowan University
Email: g.lowe@ecu.edu.au

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM
(Please return to the school music department)

I, ... do / do not (please circle the appropriate response) give

permission for my child to participate in group interviews for the 'Student motivation to continue class music' research project. I have read the preceding information letter

and understand that :

a) this research project involves my child participating anonymously in a focus group interview with the researcher

b) the interview will be tape recorded for data analysis purposes only

c) all information gathered will be kept confidential and only used in the compilation of the final report

d) copies of the final report will be available from the researcher upon request

e) the identity of my child will remain anonymous at all stages of the research

f) my child is free to withdraw from the interview at any stage, should they wish to do so, without explanation or penalty

g) if I have any further questions, I can contact the researcher directly

Signed:... Date: ....

Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation

Geoffrey Lowe
Senior Lecturer in Music Education
School of Education
Edith Cowan University
Phone: 9370 6939
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APPENDIX F – A PRIORI INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – STUDENTS

PROCEDURES
- Greet students and number them for the tape
- Explain that no-one else will have access to their responses so feel free to be honest as they like.
- The purpose of research is to examine what students think about class music in year 8 and whether what teachers can do to make it better

Section A – Ice Breaker Questions (Interest value)
1. Describe some of the activities students find interesting and enjoyable in class music.

2. What are some of the aspects of class music that Year 8 students generally don't find interesting and enjoyable - why?

3. What could be done to make class music more interesting and enjoyable for all students, especially those who don't like it?

Section B – More specific, focused questions
Importance value
1. Would most students find class music activities challenging? Which sorts of activities?

2. Would most students find class music relevant to their lives? Which sorts of activities?

3. Is it important to understand how music works? Do the tasks undertaken in class music achieve this?

Utility value
1. Would most students find class music activities useful? Which ones?

2. How might they be useful in later life?

Cost
1. Why do some students quit class music?

2. Do students have to give something up to do class music?

Competence
1. Is it important for students to feel that they understand and can do the tasks set in class music?

Musical expectancies
1. Do most students think they will get better at understanding how music is put together and works?

2. Given the sorts of tasks done in class music, do most students think these tasks will help them get better at understanding music in the future?

3. Do students get to make music in class music? What sorts of activities?

4. Do students think they will get better at doing these practical activities in the future?

Social expectancies
1. Is there much group work undertaken in class music? What sort of activities are done in groups?

2. How important is it to get on with others in the group? Is this something that will improve in the future?

General expectancies
1. Do most students generally think they will get better in all school subjects, but not class music?

2. Do some students think they might get better in class music, but not other school subjects?

Follow – up Questions
1. Is music in year 8 easier or harder than at primary school?

2. How is it different?

3. Is there anything the students would like to add that we may have missed about why some students like class music and others quit?

APPENDIX G – SCHOOL 1 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview Transcription

GL: Let's get started. Thinking about things you do in class music, not instrumental music, we're just talking about class music, ok. What are some of the activities that students find interesting and enjoyable in class music? Anything?

#1: We like...when we do the...where we get to play our own music in a certain form.

GL: Fantastic. Anyone else think that, anyone else like composing?

#2: Yeah, I mean it's cool because you like get to create your own music and stuff and get to express yourself.

GL: Good point. Anyone else?

#5: I think it's good because it's fun and you get to do, like, fun stuff and play lots of different instruments.

GL: Cool. So do you think that would be the case that most students would enjoy doing a bit of the composing stuff, in your experience?

#5: Yeah.

GL: Ok, cool. What are some of the activities that Year 8 students generally don't find interesting and enjoyable, and why might that be?

#2: I don't really like it when we have to like work out, do scales and stuff.

GL: So, like theory?

#2: Yeah.

GL: Anyone else feel that way?

#4: I don't really like theory either. It sort of gets a bit boring.

GL: Why is it – why does it get a bit boring?

#2: Well, I've done theory since like Year 2 and it just gets really boring after a while. It's just like...

GL: Is it too easy for you?

#2: Not too easy, it's just...um...yeah, kind of, I guess.

GL: Anyone else want to come in on that? Why would other kids find the theory side a little bit boring?

#4: Because we've done it before, done some of that sort of stuff before, because some people don't get it and you have to go over it again, and you've got to do more worksheets on it.

GL: Ok, cool. Does that...other people feel that way?

[students answer yes]

Ok. Are there any other things...any other sorts of activities that you do in class music that you think kids mightn't enjoy? Anything else, just the theory?

[one student answers 'I think so']

Ok, cool. We'll come back to that one. What could be done to make class music more interesting and enjoyable for all students, especially those that don't like it. What sort of things would you really like to do in class music, if you had the choice.

#3: When we get to like...we've had to choose a band and like research about them and stuff, the type of music they did, and then we had to like put down one of their songs and like, yeah.

GL: Cool. So when you were able to do some research into rock bands, something like that.

#3: Yeah.

GL: Anything else?

#5: It's fun like doing class compositions when everyone's in groups and they do different types of music.

GL: Cool. So doing some composition work. Anyone else...well we mentioned that one before, didn't we. Do most people seem to enjoy the composing stuff?

[students answer yes]

Are there some kids that don't enjoy it or...it's not obvious?

#3: Probably like the kids that don't really get it, like that haven't...yeah.

GL: Ok. Let's move on. Do most students find class music activities, you know, the sorts of things you do in class music, do they find them challenging or are they really easy?

#1: Some kids find writing the scales out and finding the key signatures and stuff hard.

#2: When we have to work out a certain type of rhythm after [the teacher] plays it, and we have to work out a certain pattern. I think that's hard sometimes.

GL: That's pretty challenging, yeah. Anyone else – do you think generally it's pretty challenging what you do, or pretty easy?

#4: I think it makes it easy if you practice, like if you've been taught the scales, like all the scales beforehand, and...yeah.

GL: Is there a big difference then in the class, between those kids who find it easy and those kids who find it hard, do you think, in your class? Or are most kids sort of roughly about the same spot?

[most students answer 'about the same']

Ok, cool. What about relevant – do you think the sort of things that you do in class music are relevant? You know, are they sort of really things you might use?

#3: Like...some of the stuff with...when we do like [the teacher] prints out/does a rhythm on the piano or whatever, and then we have to copy it out on our sheet. I think that if you're not going to be like, if you're not going to be write no music or something, then it's kind of...yeah, you're only do it for the class.

GL: Ok. So not all the activities you think you might use may be somewhere else at a different time – it's only stuff that you sort of think is relevant to the music.

#2: I think that most of it is like relevant because when we like do the...live numbers and stuff, it's hard yeah, but you like learn new rhythms and stuff and you might need to play them when you do your instrument and stuff.

GL: What about the sort of music that you cover. Do you do much sort of popular stuff or is it mainly classical?

[most students answer 'mainly classical']

How do you guys feel about that? Do you think that most students are happy doing classical or do you think most students would prefer to do sort of more popular stuff?

#2: I reckon popular stuff. I don't like...I think in the three years I've been playing guitar, I've done one popular song and I mean, I think popular songs are a bit more better.

GL: What do you reckon?

#5: I think most people rather popular songs because they're more fun and it's not like cool to like do classical at all.

GL: Is it just that it's not cool to do classical, or is it more that that's the sort of music that most young people listen to? What do you reckon?

#5: I reckon most of them because...I reckon because people mostly listen to popular music.

#3: I think that it's good that we have a mix...like if we could have a mix between the two, otherwise people that wouldn't listen to classical stuff, they wouldn't like...get to know like...some, yeah...

GL: So it might be a bit limiting?

#3: Yeah.

GL: That's a good point. Do you think it' important for students to understand how music works. So even though the theory stuff is boring, is it important to do the theory to understand how music works, rhythms and all that are put together?

#2: I think it is because like you need to learn, you need to learn the theory to play the music properly and write it properly.

#4: I think it's that you need to learn it because otherwise like there might be something on the music and you won't know, and you've just got to play it.

#1:   Where we get...you have to learn all our tens and signs and then when we go and play our music, you have to read all the stuff and you have to know what it means to be able to play the music right.

GL: Cool. Do all you guys play instruments?

[students answer yes]

    Ok, that's good, so it does make some sense when you then take it to your instrument, you've done a bit of it in class.

[students answer yes]

    Ok, that's good. Do you think most students find the sorts of things you do in class music useful? Like, are there sort of things you do in class music that you might go home and do at home?

#4:   You do like when you practice but I don't really know about just sort of general use.

GL: Anyone else? Is there anything you do in class music that you might go home and go, 'ooh, yeah, I'm going to do a bit more of that myself' or...?

#2:   Well, we learnt like little rhythms and stuff, the 12 Bar Blues and things, and when I got home I did it on my electric guitar, and that was good.

GL: So that was really good?

#2:   Yes.

GL: Ok, excellent. Did you all do the 12 Bar Blues?

[students answer yes]

    What do you think most students thought about that?

#4:   I find it kind of hard to like remember them, like in the right order.

GL: But was it interesting?

#4:   Yeah, it sounds pretty good.

GL: Ok, great. Why do you think some students quit class music – why do you think some students might quit?

#5:   I think most of them quit just because they find it boring and like, they just don't like it in general.

GL: Can we sort of pinpoint it down a little bit – what particular bits do they find boring? Is it what we said before, is it the theory stuff, or what is it that they find boring? We'll keep going with number five for a sec.

#5:   Probably theory mostly.

GL: Anything else you can think of?

#5:   Not really. Perhaps they just don't like the theory and prac, yeah.

#2:   I know some people quit because they don't like the teachers.

GL: **Is that important, do you think? You've got to like the teachers?**

#3:   If you've got a teacher that you don't like then you don't enjoy it, like because you might have a fun teacher and then you're doing more like sort of fun stuff. But otherwise you just do all theory, if you have a bad teacher.

GL: **Is that the same across all subjects, or is that just something like for music? Do you think that would be the case for most students?**

[students answer yes]

        So all subjects – if you like your teacher, that's going to influence how you feel?

[students answer yes]

        Oh, ok, Well, that's an interesting one. Do you guys all do class music as an elective or does everyone do it in Year 8?

#2:   We have to...if we started the music program in Year 6, like if we passed the test and you have to do it, and when we get to high school it has to be one of our choice subjects. It's like compulsory as a subject.

GL: **Do you have to give up something else to do music? What do you give up?**

#1:   You have to give up one of your choice subjects.

GL: **And what sort of choices are those that you lose out on?**

#3:   Like cooking and sewing, woodwork, metalwork, drama, video production...

GL: **Great. Is that the next question then, is that...do you think that's an issue for some students?**

[students answer yes]

        Is it? Ok. Do you think, is that a reason why some students might drop out of music, because they want to go and do other options, or not?

#4:   It could be because like they don't want to continue with music, like they don't want that as like a job when they're older and so they sort of...they don't really find much point in doing it.

GL: **That's an interesting one. So you sort of see doing music as mainly geared towards someone who might want to do music for a job?**

#4:   Yeah.

GL: **Rather than just maybe playing for fun.**

#?:   Well, I do music and I don't really want to like pursue a career in music. I know some like others and they learnt like...does that mean...they have...they like have normal jobs and when they get home they might play because they just...yeah, it just sounds good and when somebody comes over, you can be like, oh, I can play this.

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GL: Cool. Ok, great. Now what about...I'm going to move off into a slightly different area. You guys are really good – great answers so far, thank you. Do you think it's important for students to feel that they understand and that they can actually do the tasks that the teacher sets? Do you think, you know, is it important, you know, it's not just that you have to do and you like it, but you actually understand what you're doing? Does that make sense?

#5: I think it is important because if kids don't like understand it, then they just find it boring and don't want to do it anymore.

GL: Anyone else want to come in on that? So is it important that you feel like you understand what you're doing?

#2: I think it's you have to understand because if you don't, then I think that might be why people are quitting – because they don't understand the music and like, they don't understand they can't do it properly and then it's just no fun.

GL: Is that the same in other subjects, do you think? You know, if you just don't quite get it, that you sort of don't enjoy it then?

[students answer yes]

Is that the case? Ok, cool. Sorry, you were going to say something before...[no answer] – it must have been really important [laughs]. Ok, great. Do you think that most students think they'll get better at understanding how music is put together? You know, the more music you do in class, the more study you do, the better you'll get at understanding it – how it all works?

[students answer yes]

Do you think that's generally the case?

[students answer yes]

So if you did music right through to Year 10, you think you'd get better at understanding how music works and is put together?

[students answer yes]

Ok, good. Given the sort of tasks that you do in class music, do most students think that the tasks that you do, the sorts of things that you do, will help you understand music better? It's a slightly different question, isn't it? Do you think the sort of things that you do in class music will help you understand music more in the future? Or are some of them a bit irrelevant?

[student answers 'most of them will']

So most of the things you do, you reckon are pretty good at focusing you towards the future?

[students answer yes]

Yeah? So it's pretty relevant stuff that you're doing. Ok, cool. What about...do you get to make music much in class – like to actually do much music or is it mainly theory?

#3:   The other class performs once or twice a term and a few weeks back we got to like compose our own program music. So everyone got in little groups and then like chose a bit ▒▒▒▒▒ to do and then we all put it together and then like, play it.

GL: **Fantastic. Was that good, people enjoyed that one?**

[students answer yes]

        Ok, good. So do you get to play or sing or use computers and that, much in class, in class music?

#1:   We...pretty much...every second lesson we get to go to keyboard lab and play on the keyboards and stuff for half the lesson.

#5:   Well...like...we normally do half and half, like we do half theory and half like music, playing music, during the year.

GL: **Do you think most students like that balance? Would you like to do...do you think most students would like to do more practical or do you think maybe you've got the balance as quite good – you're doing about half and half – or do you think students would like to do more theory?**

#2:   I think that everyone would like to do more like playing and stuff but I think it's important that we have to do theory to like understand how to play something.

GL: **Anyone else come in on that one? Anyone else have thoughts about that? Do you think most students would like to do more practical or do you think it's about right what you're doing now?**

#3:   I think it's about right because if you do too much of one thing, it gets really boring.

GL: **Ok, cool. Do you think most students find it easy to play in class – when you're doing the practical stuff – do most students find that stuff fairly easy? Like when you did the program music activity and you had to sort of write about bits of music, work out bits of music. Did most students find that easy or hard doing it?**

#2:   Well, some of the students found it hard to like be creative and find bits of fun sounds that fit in with the story, in their part of the story.

GL: **Anyone else? What about...do you think most students think they'll get better at doing music in the feature – like the playing side, not the theory side – do you think most students think they'll get better at playing or singing or, you know, in the future?**

[students answer yes]

        Most people think they'll improve? Ok, good. Now it's interesting you mentioned that you did some stuff, some group work...what sort of activities do you do in group work?

#2:   We like, we can compose music and stuff. We like work out, do challenges and stuff, oh, not challenges but we like, yeah, we write music and do stuff like that.

GL: **Do you do a lot of group work?**

[students answer 'not much' and 'sort of']

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Just occasionally?

[students answer 'every now and then']

Ok, good. How important is it to get on with the people in the group?

[students answer 'really important']

Why is that?

#1: The end product like might not sound as good if they haven't worked together, to like decide on the singing and stuff.

GL: And anyone else want to come in on that?

#4: You have to like enjoy playing the music otherwise it won't sound good.

GL: And is that a problem if people don't get on in the group, do you think?

#4: Yeah, because...yeah.

GL: What other problems can you run into in a group if the group doesn't work well together?

#3: If people don't practice all the time, like, they don't think music is very important but they're just doing it because they like have to, because they can't really drop out now, so they don't put in as much effort and stuff.

GL: Do you think that most students get on in the groups? Do you see evidence of some groups that don't work very well or do most groups work quite well?

#2: Well, most of the students you like go with people that we get on with, like friends and stuff.

GL: So do you get to choose your groups, do you?

[students answer yes]

Ah, that makes a big difference, doesn't it. Good. Do you reckon that working together in a group will get easier in the future, as you get to know each other better or is...or not really?

[student answers 'probably, I think' and others 'yeah']

Ok. Just a couple more questions. Do you think kids, your attitudes to all the subjects at school, is it the same for all subjects or do you sort of think about music a bit different to your other subjects? Like, is it a case that some students might go, 'oh yeah, school's alright but I really love music' or do most students go, 'oh yeah, music is just another subject that I do at school'?

#2: Well, with music you have to like practice more, like you have to practice every day. But with other subjects, yeah, you just don't have to...you do homework but you don't have to practice as much so, yeah, all music is like hard work.

GL: So most students see music as a little bit differently – they see it as quite a hard subject, you reckon in Year 8?

#4:   Yeah, like, you have to, you like sort of have to do normal homework for normal subjects otherwise you get into like bigger trouble. But with music, if you want to be good at it, you have to practice, like you have to push yourself to practice. You have to decide you're going to practice.

GL: **For sure. I suppose that students think that, 'oh gee, I'm struggling at school, I'm not going to get much at my subjects'. Are there some students though that might really think, 'oh yeah, but I'm going to do really well at music'. Or what about the other way around – someone who thinks 'oh, I'm not very good at music but I'll get better in all my other subjects' – is that something that might happen or do you think, music, once again, it's in the general mix? It's a tricky one, is it?**

[student answers, 'general, I'd say']

      Ok, so music doesn't sort of stick out as being any particularly different from most of your other subjects?

#2:   It's harder but I think it's kind of, it's kind of a general subject but it just takes more work and effort.

GL: **Is it more work or is just more time?**

[students answer 'time']

      Time commitment , is it, because of the practice and all that?

[students answer yes]

      Ok, cool. Look, I've just got a couple more questions to finish off. There was some sort of tricky ones, wasn't there? Never mind. Is music in Year 8 easier or harder than primary school, do you reckon?

[most students answer 'harder' and 'definitely harder']

      Ok. Any specific examples you can give me?

#3:   Like, in primary school, we didn't really do as much theory as we do now. Like, we wouldn't sit down and do worksheets and stuff, we'd just learn off the job and play.

GL: **Was it more fun at primary school? [mixed response] Oh, ok, let's go around the group. Number one, do you reckon it was more fun or not?**

#1:   Not really because some students like couldn't keep up, like they weren't as good at music than others. So sort of like sometimes they got left behind while the teacher concentrated on other people.

#2:   Well I know in primary school we had a really awful music teacher, she didn't...we didn't really do much music. We just basically, she just basically told us about famous composers and stuff – it's music but it's not what we wanted to do.

GL: **What did you want to do?**

#2:   Well, we wanted to like play instruments. Well, our room was full of instruments, we just weren't allowed to play them or touch them – we weren't allowed to do anything with the instruments, weren't allowed to sing or anything, we just did...

GL: **Just sat and listened?**

#2: Yeah.

GL: Number three, what do you reckon?

#3: Like, in primary school I think they're both like...in primary school, you'd get kids that mucked around because it wasn't...it was like you had to do it, like you didn't choose to do music or anything.

GL: So but...do you think it was more fun or was it easier, or was it more fun, was it easier, was it not as much fun for you?

#3: It was probably easier but they're probably about as good as each other, yeah.

GL: Good. Number four, what was your experience?

#4: I thought it was easier because, well I enjoyed it more because it was easier and I could do it like, just sort of simply.

GL: Ok. Number five, what do you reckon?

#5: I think it was better because we had quite a fun teacher and rather than sitting down and doing theory work, we normally just went in and like played music. We did a lot of what we wanted even though we were doing

GL: Ok, cool. Just to finish off: is there anything that we might have missed out on today on what we could do, what you would like to do in class music that might make it more interesting and enjoyable? We sort of touched upon the fact that maybe a little bit more practical would be good, maybe a little bit less theory. Anything else that we could do?

[student answers 'not really']

What about, we mentioned doing a little bit more popular music – is that an issue?

[students answer yes]

Is that a big issue or not really?

?#: When we're actually playing our instruments, like we do more classical music but not in class music.

GL: Would you like to do more popular stuff in class music? Most students would?

#2: When we like, sometimes you like listen to classical music and we write down what type of instruments and we follow music in our books. I think...if we did more popular songs it would be good.

GL: So same sort of activities but just doing it to popular songs? Is that...what do others think? Number five, you look very pensive. Did you want to say something there?

#5: Well, not really, it's just that people have a lot more fun when they're doing stuff that they want to do.

GL: Stuff that they're interested in?

#5:   Hmm.

GL: Anything else that anyone wants to add that we might not have touched on so far –
      things that you really like, most students like doing, things that students don't like
      doing...pretty much it?   Ok, fantastic.   That's it, thank you very much.   This
      interview has finished.

--- END OF INTERVIEW ---

SCHOOL 2 – INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Interview Transcription

GL: What we'll do is I'll just ask you some sort of general questions, really straightforward questions and then we'll sort of work our way into some slightly harder questions. So, can you guys describe, what are some of the activities that most students enjoy doing in class music? Is there anything that you do in class music that most students enjoy doing?

#5: Playing your instrument.

GL: Yeah, cool. Anything else?

#6: Learning each other's songs.

GL: Good answer. Anything else you like doing?

#4: To be able to play the guitar and stuff in class.

GL: Ok, cool. So, again, playing instruments.

#4: Oh yeah.

GL: Ok, well what about...what are some aspects in class music that Year 8's generally don't find interesting or enjoyable, and why? So number one...no, ok, anyone else?

#5: The assignment part, most kids don't like doing the work.

GL: Ok. What kind of assignments?

#5: Research about a band or an instrument.

GL: Cool. Did you want to say something, number two? No, ok.

#6: Getting lectured by the teachers if you do something wrong.

GL: Does that happen often?

#6: Yeah, sometimes if you like play the wrong instrument or something.

GL: Ok. Is there anything else that students don't like doing in class music – anything else that maybe you guys particularly don't like?

[presume students shake their head]

Nice if you actually spoke. Ok, question number three: what could be done to make class music more interesting and enjoyable for all students?

#5: The teachers could know a bit more about music and teach us how to play certain things.

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GL: Ok, yeah, anything else? Nothing you'd like to do to make it more interesting? Ok, cool. What kind of activities do most students find challenging? What are the harder sort of activities that you do?

#6: I think the research stuff.

GL: It's quite hard?

#6: Yeah.

GL: Why is that?

#6: Because you've got to surf the net and look through books and catalogues.

GL: Ok, good. Any other things? Anything else that you find hard?

#3: Getting your assignments done in time.

GL: Ok, yeah, that's a good answer. Anything else? Just assignments or is there anything else that you find quite hard about it?

#3: ▓▓▓▓▓▓ you're doing, like, we need more time to learn our ▓▓▓▓▓▓

GL: Ok, so not enough time?

#3: Yeah.

GL: Ok, that's a good one. Do most students find class music sort of relevant to the musical things they do outside of school? Like, the sort of stuff you do in class music at school, is it sort of relevant to the music that you guys listen to outside of school, or not?

#5: Yeah, it is, because we get to choose our own songs that we perform, and we normally choose what we know, like what we listen to, and the kind of music.

GL: Good, so a lot of the stuff you do in class music does have a relationship to stuff you listen to outside school, that you choose?

#5: Yeah.

GL: Is that the case for all of you?

[some students say yes and no]

No? You don't get to...a choice?

#?: I do, but like...yeah, kind of...

GL: That's ok. Is it important for students to understand how music works – so the theory stuff. Do you do any theory, like writing the music? You guys don't do any?

#3: We did at the beginning of the year.

GL: And was that useful?

[some students say yes and no]

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Ok, let's go around the group. So number five? Why was it useful do you think?

#5: Oh, because if we want to write our own songs, then it teaches us...say you've got a song on the guitar, the notes you play, it's got the same notes as on piano, that you could probably play the same song on the piano.

GL: Great. So you can transfer the sort of information to other instruments?

#5: Yeah.

GL: Number four, you reckon it's not good. Why?

#4: Because I don't really like ▨▨▨ there, I just make stuff up and go by ear, sort of thing.

GL: Ok, so you play it by ear?

#4: Yeah.

GL: And what about you guys, anyone want to come in? No? Ok. What activities would most students find useful? Is there anything you do in class music that is really useful, that you sort of use outside of school?

#3: Practising the music.

GL: Do you play an instrument?

#3: Yeah.

GL: What do you play?

#3: Piano.

GL: Ok, so you get to do some of the stuff you might do in class, you could do it at home on the piano? Anyone else in that situation?

#5: Yeah, because if we perform in front of the class, then it builds self confidence.

GL: Excellent.

#2: I think that it gives us, like, it teaches us to perform in front of audiences.

GL: That can be quite tough actually, standing up and performing in front of people for the first time. Yeah, good one. Why do some students quit class music, that some kids quit at the end of Year 8?

#6: Because it sometimes get boring, like, always doing assignments.

GL: So the same sort...doing the same sort of stuff all the time. Any other reasons why some kids might want to drop out?

#4: Because some people reckon they're too good, that they're not learning enough.

GL: Oh, ok, so sort of like the opposite – it's not that it's too hard, it's too easy, is that what you're saying?

#4: Yeah.

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#5:   It can be hard to get...bring your equipment to school every, like...all the normal lessons first.

GL: Yeah, especially if you play drums or something like that, that could be fun. Ok, how many periods a week do you do music?

[students answer 'two – Mondays and Wednesdays']

Ok. Did you have to give up any other option choices to do music?

?#:   We could choose one of the arts, like we could do performing arts, drawing, visual arts or...home ed.

GL: So there's not a lot of choices that you had?

[students answer no]

Ok. Some schools, kids have to choose...music would be like four periods and it cuts out half their options. So that's not a real issue for you guys? You didn't lose a lot of options?

[students answer no]

Ok, good. Is it really important for students to sort of feel like they can do the things the teacher asks them to do in class music – you know, feel confident and competent about doing things? Is that important or not?

#6:   Yes, because if they don't feel confident they're not really going to learn anything.

GL: Yeah. Anyone else?

#5:   Yeah, it...

GL: Anyone else? Suppose we had a student who didn't think they were good at music. Would that affect how they feel about the subject, do you think? If they didn't think they were very good at doing it?

#2:   Yes, because they probably wouldn't try.

GL: Because they just don't think they can do it anyway. So then let's say the opposite. Someone thinks they're really good at music. Will that mean they might try harder?

#3:   No because they think they know everything already.

GL: So, really then feeling confident and competent isn't that important then? It's more about whether you like it or is it whether you feel you're really good at it?

[one student says 'the first one']

So more about whether you just like the sort of things you're doing rather than...

Do most students think they'll get better at doing music in the future?

#6:   Yes, because if we're doing assignments we have to practice our songs. So we'll all obviously get better at them.

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GL: Ok. Is that the case for everyone?

[students answer yes]

The sort of activities you're doing in class music. Do you think they're the right activities for you to get better at music? Do you think you're doing the right sort of activities to help you get better?

#5: Yes, in a way, because what...the stuff we do boasts our confidence and stuff, but it would be better if the teacher could teach us something, like something else, and then we do that.

GL: So what do you mean by that – do you keep doing lots of the same stuff over and over, do you?

#5: Basically we perform the song and we do research with something to do with it – like maybe the band that does the song. But we just keep doing that. It would be good if the teacher could show us something new.

GL: Does anyone else feel like that?

[students answer yes]

What sort of...what other things would you might like to do, do you think?

#5: Like a song as a class.

GL: Oh, ok, so like a whole school-class band sort of thing?

#5: Yeah.

GL: Anyone else?

?#: Learn more of another instrument, say, like just one.

GL: Do you stay on the one instrument all the time?

?#: Yeah, we start on the piano at the start of the year but we've only

GL: Is that something you'd like to do a bit more of?

?#: Yeah.

GL: How about you guys? Would you like to do more piano?

?#: Probably, yeah.

GL: Ok. Do most students think they can actually play their instruments quite well? What do you think? Ok, let's think about your own situation. Do you guys think you can play your instruments well in class music – you've got to play songs? Let's go around the group. What do you reckon?

#6: I think I'm actually not that bad at playing instruments.

GL: Ok, what do you play?

#6: I play the electric guitar.

#5: I think I'm not too bad. I play electric guitar.

#4: I'm ok, I play the acoustic guitar.

#3: I started off as a beginner and didn't know anything so ▮▮▮▮▮

GL: **Ok, and what's your instrument?**

#3: Piano.

GL: **Oh, that's right.**

#2: I think I'm alright, I play the classical guitar.

#1: I'm ok.

GL: **And what do you play?**

#1: Piano.

GL: **Do you just literally play your instruments all the time? Do you do other things like sing or get on the computers at all?**

#6: We sometimes go on the computers to get at research and that.

GL: **But that's all – you don't...**

#6: To research our assignments.

GL: **Do you make any music on the computers?**

[students answer no]

So you don't use any of those programs?

[students answer no]

Do most students find the playing pretty easy then? When you're putting songs together, do you find that easy or is that quite hard to do?

#5: In my case it's pretty easy because I have a tutor out of school, and I basically just play what I want to learn or what I'm learning from the tutor at that time.

GL: **That's good. Number three, because you're a beginner, do you find it easier or harder to learn the songs?**

#3: I'm just ok, I just sort of teach myself a bit and get help from the teacher every now and then and stuff.

GL: **Ok, so it's not too bad. Do you do much group work – is there much group work in class? You know, working in groups of three and four?**

#3: If you we do ▮▮▮▮▮ anything together for a performance, then yeah, otherwise no. It's our choice, like we can choose if we want to do a group or we want to do it on our own.

GL: Oh, ok, and what do most people choose?

[most students say 'on their own']

Oh, ok. Have any of you guys worked in a group this year?

[one students says yes]

And how did you find that – was it easy to work with other people?

?#: It was too hard to do it, just because I like learning by myself more than doing it with another person.

GL: And what was the problem when you worked with another person?

?#: She like played a little bit, like, slower than me, and yeah.

GL: Ok, so it was getting on with the other person or was it you just played differently?

?#: Kind of played differently.

GL: Ok. What about anyone else – did anyone else work in a group so far?

#5: I haven't but I would have liked to but it's a bit hard because you have to learn the song for two people to play it together, and you only get to practice at school, you can't practice at home, like with that person.

GL: Oh, ok.

#?: Some people would learn the chords and tabs, that different type and stuff like that, like different types of music.

GL: Oh, different types of reading?

#?: Yeah.

GL: So ok, that becomes tricky? So how do you write your songs – do you write them in tab or do you just learn them…you write them all by ear, do you?

?#: By ear, basically.

GL: Suppose you were working in a group, do you reckon it's important you can get on with others in the group, get along with others?

[students answer yes]

See, number one mentioned she had a bit of trouble working with someone in the past. So it is important to get on with others?

[students answer yes]

Do you reckon if you did a bit more group work, that you might get better at getting on with other people in the future – it might sort of make it easier, the more you did, or not?

[students answer yes]

Ok. My last question on that one: is that something you might like to do more of – more group work?

[students answer 'yes' and 'sort of']

Why sort of?

?#:   Because like I would like to do some things on my own and not have someone else doing it with me.

GL: Ok, cool. A couple more questions. Do students usually think they're going to get better at all school students or only some subjects?

#4:   Not all of them.

GL: Yeah, that's fair enough. Let's go around the group. Number six, do you think you're going to get better at all your subjects?

#6:   Not really.

GL: Which ones do you think you're going to get better at?

#6:   Music, stuff like that.

GL: Why music, why do you think you'll get better at music?

#6:   Because I can sort of practice that at home and at school.

GL: Is it something you like?

#6:   Yeah.

GL: Number five, do you reckon most kids are going to get better at all the subjects or only certain subjects?

#5:   Yeah, I think so. But things...like the computer I don't think students will get that much better because we don't...we just learn like how to use Microsoft Word and stuff. I think most kids already know that.

GL: Oh, ok, so it's a bit easy?

#5:   Yeah.

GL: How about number three?

#3:   Yeah, I think it depends on what subjects you actually enjoy and want to get better at.

GL: So that could be a really important point, couldn't it, so getting better sometimes depends on how much you enjoy the subject. Ok. What about you, number two?

#2:   Yeah, I agree with number three.

GL: Ok. Number one?

#1:   I don't know.

GL: Might some students think they'll get better at class music but not other subjects? Like if there are some people that who are really good in class music and not so good in other subjects. Can you think of anyone or is that possible? Where you said before, you reckon you're going to get a lot better at class music – what about with your other subjects?

#6: No, not really, because I can't practice how to do experiments in science at home.

GL: If someone really liked class music; do you reckon they could get better at class music and still not get better in their other subjects or do most people think they're going to get better gradually regardless of all subjects?

[one student says 'gradually']

All subjects? Oh, ok. Last couple of questions. Music in Year 8, is it easier or harder than primary school? Did you guys do it at primary school?

[a student says 'no' and another 'I did']

You did it? So, number one, was it easier or harder?

#1: It was easier last year.

GL: And why was that?

#1: Because we were in Year 7.

GL: Yeah, but why was the subject easier though?

#1: We were just learning how like…the notes, not like songs.

GL: So you were learning to read music, were you?

#1: Yeah.

GL: Learning to read and write music?

#1: Mm-hm.

GL: Ok. Number two?

#2: It was easier in primary school because we didn't have to do assignments, we just learned stuff.

GL: So what sort of stuff did you learn?

#2: The notes, harmony songs…

GL: Did you go to the same school, you guys?

#2: Yeah.

GL: So you were learning to read music as well?

#2: Yeah.

GL: Number three, how about you?

#3: I'd say it depends because at my old school we all learnt the same instrument. So if you didn't enjoy it, then probably you wouldn't try and get better at it.

GL: **What instrument was that?**

#3: A kind of recorder.

GL: **Oh, right, ok.**

#3: Some other people didn't really enjoy learning it so they didn't bother to actually try and learn it.

GL: **Was it pretty easy doing the recorder?**

#3: Yeah.

GL: **So it's a lot harder at high school?**

#3: Yeah, but in a better way.

GL: **Oh, ok, that's good. Number four?**

#4: I didn't do class music last year.

GL: **There wasn't any in Year 7?**

#4: Oh, there was but I just didn't do it.

GL: **You had a choice?**

#4: I think it was at the start of the year or something like that, yeah.

#5: We didn't have class music at my primary school.

#6: The only class music we had was the guitar and we had to pay for it and all that.

GL: **Ok. So was it easier or harder?**

#6: It wasn't really that hard but it wasn't really that easy either.

GL: **Is there anything else, just the last question, anything we might have missed in terms of things that you would really like to do in class music? Is there anything else you can think of that you would like to do?**

#5: I would like the teachers to teach us more stuff.

GL: **More variety?**

#5: Yeah, and we could do songs like as a class, like together.

GL: **Anyone else – anything else you'd really like to do, that maybe you're not getting a chance to do now? Computers?**

[no answer]

Just a reminder, anything that you are doing that you don't like, really don't like? We sort of touched on this at the start. Is there anything that you really don't like doing?

#5:   The assignments. I think lots of us just want to play our instrument and not be doing the assignments.

GL: So you'd rather keep playing and not writing?

#5:   Yeah, basically.

GL: Does everyone else...anyone else agree with that, or disagree?

[all students agree]

#2:   I think we don't like it but we sort of might need it a bit.

GL: The written stuff?

#2:   Yeah.

GL: So you'd like to keep more of what you're doing.

#2:   Yeah.

GL: Great. Well, that finishes it. Thank you very much.

--- END OF INTERVIEW ---

SCHOOL 3 – INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Interview Transcription

GL: Just a general question: what are some of the activities that students find really interesting and enjoyable in class music?

#1: I like playing the piano in class.

#4: We like to do the instruments in ours.

GL: Great. Is that a general thing – everyone likes doing the practical stuff?

[students agree]

Anything else that you enjoy? No? That's cool. What are some of the aspects of Year 8 music that students generally don't find interesting and enjoyable?

#4: Mostly writing and mostly like writing their own, like, writing down the notes and that.

GL: So sort of theory stuff?

#4: Yeah.

GL: Is anyone else...how do you feel, does that...?

#2: Yeah, I find...I don't really mind it but I've done music for about seven years now, I've done it for ages, so all the theory is really boring.

GL: Is it too easy?

#2: Yeah.

GL: Ok. Cool. What could be done to make class music more interesting and enjoyable for all students, especially the ones who don't like it? What do you think could be done?

#1: I think that maybe they should ask those students, like 'what don't you like like' and 'what would you prefer to do in that time'.

GL: So giving students the opportunity to put some input in.

#1: Yeah.

GL: That's a good point. Yeah?

#4: More hands-on things.

GL: More practical stuff? Yep. You guys – anything? Think of the people in your class who you know don't really enjoy it that much. What are the things they don't seem to enjoy?

#2: Sometimes like if we, like the teacher sometimes goes a bit ape...and gets really angry at us if we don't do what we want to do – or like don't do what we're supposed to do. So if we're just...like discuss things and stuff, she like tells us off or something. That annoys lots of people.

GL: **So getting on with the teacher is really important?**

[students murmur agreement]

Ok. That's good. I'm going to go into more specific questions and some of them might be a bit strange, but we'll just see how we go. Would most students find class music activities challenging – are they hard, do they challenge you or are they too easy?

#1: I don't...I find them...they're pretty easy sometimes except when we've got to play the piano with both hands, that gets tricky.

GL: **So it's a bit hard, yeah.**

#2: It depends on what we're doing. So if it was theory, then some people might have like a difficulty with reading in base clef and they do treble clef; they read in treble clef, they might have a bit of a problem or something, so yeah, it depends.

GL: **Number three anything? Nothing at this stage?**

#3: No.

GL: **Ok. Number four?**

#4: Um...

GL: **Do most kids find class music easy or hard?**

#4: Well, we find it in the middle. It depends on what we are doing.

GL: **Oh, ok. So again it depends, like number one said, it depends whether you're doing theory or prac or whatever.**

#4: Yeah, and it is hard because some of us read in different clefs and that, and we have to go back and check it again. We have to go and listen and do it all over again.

GL: **Cool. Would most students find class music relevant to their lives?**

#1: I don't really think it's relevant in real life because, how...if we're not like...I'm just...I'm doing music just to learn how to play the tuba. I don't want to learn how to play, like...do...like write my own music so I don't really like learning all these complicated names for things like three notes of first and fourth and fifth and stuff.

GL: **Yeah, no, that's a good point. How about you guys – do you find it's relevant?**

#2: If we have like a job and we kind of fail at it, then I guess music could be a rebound if we like learn a bit more and go to uni. So if we...I don't know...have a job like as a business or something and you fall like...and you lose out on the job, then you could probably become, I don't know, a musician maybe.

GL: **That's a really good point actually. Anyone...yeah?**

#4: Because in my family, music is a big part of it so it depends – they go like do part-time jobs and then they do part-time music so it's all good together, so I wanted to do it for the family but if I was not doing it for the family, probably not. I would like to…know how to play the instruments but not like know all about it.

GL: **All the theory stuff?**

#4: Yeah.

GL: **Now just a bit of a side question on that one – what sort of music do you normally listen to at home.**

#4: All sorts.

GL: **So like, do you listen to any classical at home or is it mainly rock?**

#4: Yeah, I do.

GL: **So you do. Yeah, number three?**

#3: Whatever's on the radio.

GL: **Radio, yeah.**

#2: I listen to just, like, any type of music and then Mum normally usually listens to classical and she plays the piano all the time, so I listen to that.

GL: **That's be great. Yeah, number one?**

#1: Well, I like rock music a bit more, like things like Metallica and Kiss, they're good.

GL: **Cool. What sort of music do you mainly do in class? Do you do any rock or is it mainly contemporary – ah, mainly classical?**

#4: It's mainly classical.

GL: **Agree with that?**

#1: Yeah, I do.

GL: **Would you like to do more contemporary stuff?**

[all students say yes]

Why do you think?

#?: Because it's fun.

GL: **Because it's more fun. Any other reasons?**

#4: It's more interesting knowing other types of music, and the kids might get into it more.

#2: It would be a lot more enjoyable for us because what we're doing now is really just slow music and some people like, you know, going a bit faster with the tempo and that.

GL: **So they like the good rhythms and speeds and beats and stuff?**

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#2:   Yeah.

GL: That's a very good point. Yeah?

#4:   I think if she sometimes put in like...songs that are now going, we might learn stuff from it and it might get the kids more interested in the types and they might pay more attention to the other music, too.

GL: Good. Would most students think it's important to understand how music works?

#1:   Yeah, it would be good to like...if you hear like a song on the radio and you like that and you want to know how it works so you can try it out a bit.

GL: Yeah. So that means or implies then that maybe a little bit of theory is important?

[some students agree]

      So would that be the case – yeah?

#2:   Well, we need theory so we can read the music and understand it so we play it right if it's jazz and like...you know, indicate it's jazz but if we don't know what it means then we might just play it straight and it would be really boring.

GL: Ok.

#4:   Yeah, I think that's good but some people, they don't understand the theory better, they listen with their ears and then their senses come to the beat, they pick it up just naturally so it's harder for other people to like work it out like that.

GL: That's a fantastic point, isn't it, because most rock bands actually learn by experimenting and trying it out, and not by doing the theory. Yeah, good point. Ok. Would most students find class music activities useful? Are the sort of things that you would take away with you and maybe try out at home?

#1:   Not really because like the sort of stuff we do in class is, it's not something I would like to do in my own time.

#2:   Right now we're doing Beethoven and so...I don't know, I wouldn't really use that at home like, maybe it's kind of interesting to know, like he was deaf or something, but it's not something I would, you know, practice at home or anything.

GL: Yeah, good point.

#1:   Have you seen that movie, Beethoven's Copyist or something – about that lady that's this copyist or something. I find that really interesting how he's got that the big metal thing around his head so he feels the vibrations of the music, and he writes it like that. That...I found that really interesting how he did that sort of stuff.

GL: Cool. Are you ok? *[students laugh]* We're about half way through. How might some class music activities be useful – is it just for getting a job as a musician or is there anything else you reckon music might be good for?

#4:   It is useful because we are all in the band and we do have to like work out everything and it helps us, and we can tell family about it and then, like, I told my niece about it and she really wants to do music now. So I teach her sometimes and then we all help each other.

Transcribed by Orr Solutions

GL: **Fantastic. That's great.**

#?: Yeah, it's useful because if we need to play like stuff, and we don't know what things mean, we really need to have the theory knowledge so we know if there's like a crutched or something, some people might not know what it is, so it's good to know.

GL: **Ok. Why would some students quit class music? Why do you reckon some quit? Let's start at number three.**

#3: Because they don't like the teacher.

GL: **Ok.**

#4: Teacher and sometimes they find it hard so they have to get interested.

GL: **Ok. Yeah?**

#1: I agree with the teacher part. Some people, they might try it out for a bit and then they don't...they decide they...that maybe the music sort of thing is not for them, and they try other things like drama and art and get into that more.

GL: **Sure. Do students here have to give up anything to do class music – like in some schools, it's like a double option so you lose some option time. Is that...?**

#1: Yeah, we do lose one space in our timetable for music, every Monday and Tuesday. And I would like to be doing other things in that space like metalwork or woodwork but I have to do music.

GL: **Yeah?**

#4: We have to...it is a big deal we have to sacrifice in order to do our things, because we do have our dra...like we have lessons for our instruments during one part of the period and then we have music which we have to...we did for the whole year, so we gave up like metalwork and that so we didn't get to that, and we have band so we sacrifice our afternoon time with our friends. So yeah.

#2: My friends and I, we wanted to do dance and I know other people wanted to do like lote and language and that, and um...music is in the same area as lots of things that people are interested in. So people decide that they would rather do the other things and they quit, and yeah, we lose out on a lot of our time with practice and stuff, and some people find like homework difficult because we have to practice like 30 minutes a day, and then we don't have time to do other things that we need to.

GL: **Cool. That's good. Let's just keep rattling on. Is it important for students to feel that they can understand and do the tasks in class music?**

#3: Yeah.

GL: **In what sense? Anyone else – yeah, number four?**

#4: Yes, we do, they do, because when, like, say our teacher is away, we have relief, and not many relief teachers know a lot about music in this school, so we have to know what we're doing otherwise we'll get in trouble for not doing it or it doesn't make any sense and we like to help other kids so they understand it too.

#2: We lose out on our music grades if we don't understand so we need to work out and find out what things mean so we can keep our grades up.

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GL: Cool. Do most students think they're going to get better at understanding how music is put together and works, the more you do? What do you reckon?

#1: Yeah, probably, because the more you know is better as well.

#?: Yeah, I guess, because like so that if you went for a job or something, and it makes sense to know something about it. And one day someone will come up to you and ask you some random question about music, and then if you didn't know about it, you'd just look really weird, so if you know about it, yeah.

GL: What about the specific tasks that you do in class music – are they helping you understand more about music?

#1: Most of the things in class amuse me.

GL: Yeah. Anyone else?

#4: Yeah, no.

GL: Yes no?

#4: Yeah, because we're learning about other musicians – it's not like we're learning about really music, we're learning about everyone else that has composed music and not particularly the one sort of musician.

GL: Yeah, that's actually a really, really good point. I might just move on for now because we're just going to get really... Do you get to make much...do much practical stuff in class music – you know, play with the computers, sing, play instruments much – do you get to do that much?

#2: Last term we used to bring our instruments in every Tuesday and we'd do like music but now we just do class music and it's really boring, like we get work sheets, and every now and then we get to play on the piano, but that's pretty much it.

#1: We don't...the computers in, that we can use, there's not enough for everybody in the class so if we do use them, some people have to go, like have to wait for their turn, so we don't really get that much practical stuff done.

#4: Yeah, I say it's the same as number one, because the computers, we used them last term, but it was only to write our own music, and we had to wait – not many people got to finish theirs so we had to go on the keyboard, play it ourselves, write it down, go on the computer and put it up. So we didn't have enough time and it is getting a little bit boring just doing paper, like work on pieces of paper.

GL: Fair enough. Do most students find it easy when you do the practical stuff – like when you do get on the computers and get on the keyboards? Do most students find that easy or is it hard?

#4: Medium.

#3: A bit easier.

#1: I do think it's pretty easy except sometimes when we're making our own compositions on the computer, you press the wrong button and mess it up completely and you'd have to start from scratch, which I don't really like.

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GL: Do most students think they're going to get better at playing in the future? Like if you're playing keyboards, do most students think they're going to get better?

#2: If they think like they continue but some people aren't really interested anymore because what we do in the class is really boring.

GL: Ok, yeah.

#4: I really like music, the sound of music, but after a while like getting to know everything, it is starting to boring, but the instruments, in the practical bits, they're really, really cool but the rest is not really.

GL: That's a really good point, thanks for that. Do you do much group work, you know, work in groups at all?

#3: Rarely ever.

GL: Rarely ever? That's fair enough. Just if you were working in groups, how important do you think it would be to get on with others in the group?

#2: It would be fairly important because I know some people that are...we don't really talk at all and we kind of have the...we don't have a really good friendship at all so it's better to work with people that you get along with so you can get on with the work.

#?: It is really good to get along with...really important to get along with the group, and it is fun once you get along with them because you know that you can work as a team and you'll get it done. But in our class, working as a group won't really work, I don't think.

GL: Because the class doesn't get on that well or there's some strange people or...?

#1: There are some very annoying people.

GL: Ok. Fair enough. We're just done to the last couple of questions and we're nearly done, and I thank you guys, you've really been very helpful. Do students think they're going to get better at all school subjects or only in some subjects? What do you reckon – do most kids reckon they're going to get better in all their subjects or only in some?

#1: You can you get better at your subjects if you try hard at them.

GL: So the amount of effort means you get better? That's a good point.

#2: If you like, you can, you can get better but it would depend because there is some things that you're good at and some things that you might not be as good at. So you might be really good at maths but then you might not be so good at SND or something – so you could excel more in maths.

GL: What about if you tried hard in SND – do you still think you'd get better?

#2: Yeah, you'd get better but probably not as good as you would get in maths.

GL: Good point.

#4: I think the same as number two but it is like, it is hard when you've got other subjects that you really, really try hard at and you let go of them because you think you know that you're so good at them, so you like slow it down with them a little bit so you can try

harder on your other subjects, and then suddenly you get really good at your other subjects that you were failing at, and you slow down more at the other subjects.

GL: Hey, can I swing that question around the other way then – might some students think they might get better at class music but not other subjects? You get some people that reckon who are really good at class music but not so good at others – yeah?

#1: Well if they're really good at class music they might like spend all their time playing music and doing things like that and not bother with the other work – like not bother trying for it, just think 'oh, I'm going to get a job in music' but they won't have anything to fall back on, like any degrees or anything.

GL: Good point.

#4: Yeah, I agree with number one again. But it depends because some people put their heart and soul into music but they really want to get better at their other subjects but doing – because we have like band during some school times, we put so much effort into music when we want to push so much effort into other subjects, but it gets hard. So we pile up with homework and we still don't get the right marks that we knew that we could get.

GL: Have you got...just one last question on that – are there anyone in your Year 8 class that are really, really, really into music? Or is it all, everyone is sort of pretty much the same?

#2: Well, some people are really good at it and they are like a lot better than other people, but some people think they're really good and they try really hard as well, so yeah. There are some people that are better and yeah, other people that are kind of not as good as them.

GL: Ok, cool. Last two questions and then we're done. Is Year 8 music harder or easier that primary school, and is it different? So there is two parts to that one – is it easier or harder, and how is it different. Let's start with number four.

#4: It depends because in primary school I didn't do that much music because there was an all-aboriginal school so we were more into culture and cultural dances and that. So...but I was in the band there and I went to ab-music and did music for a little while with the old guys and yeah, I got really good at that so they pushed me into trying to get the scholarship and I did, so I tried really hard for them.

GL: Fantastic, well done. Yeah, number two?

#2: In our primary school, I didn't really have theory and I did mainly just private lessons with people and yeah, because music wasn't that popular in the primary school, and I lived in the country so it was a bit isolated so you couldn't really get anyone to come and teach music.

GL: Yeah, just quickly – number three, did you have music at primary school?

#3: Yeah, but we didn't do that much of it.

GL: Was it easier or harder?

#3: Easier.

GL: A lot easier?

#3:   Yes.

GL: **Ok, cool. Number one?**

#1:   Well, in my primary school I didn't actually play the instrument but in class music it was really easy because we didn't actually...we didn't like read compositions or play music on the pianos at all. We just talked about the notes and how high they were and stuff, that's really what we did.

GL: **Was it fun or was it a bit boring?**

#1:   It was a bit boring but we got to watch a lot of video clips.

GL: **Ok. Easy. Last question: is there anything that you want to add that we might have missed about why some students like class music and why some quit?**

#4:   I've got one for why some people, most people, are quitting. It's because of the teacher. She has like, it's not her fault, but it's not other people's fault, too, and she does have her hissy fits every once and a while, and it does scare everyone, and she does walk out. But we do get back on track and we try our hardest but yeah...

GL: **That's a good point.**

#1:   I agree about the teacher because in one of her hissy fits she threw a texta and she hit me.

GL: **Ooh, really. What would you...and obviously you...what would you like in a teacher then, what would you like the teacher to be like?**

#1:   Happy, outgoing and doesn't get angry and encourages us a lot more.

GL: **That's important – the encouragement bit is important for everyone?**

[students agree]

        That's great, yeah, keep going – sorry for interrupting you.

#1:   And somebody not so mean.

#4:   I agree a lot with the encouragement but I also think like they have to be nice and kind and they have to be calm about it, because other people have different ways of learning, and they have to work with it so they have to like help other people, say, other people don't know how to read music a lot but they know how to like hear it and then play it. They need to encourage them to keep going because that's the best way of learning it.

GL: **That's a fantastic response, really well done.**

#2:   Some people aren't as musically talented as other people and they need to build it up, and the teacher needs to be more patient with us because we're not all perfect and some people have only just started doing their music this year.

GL: **Number three just put up her hand. Keep going, is there anything you want to add in that?**

#3:   Oh, and also people like...I know heaps of people that do music and we pretty much get along really good together and we would rather just learn our instruments a bit more

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because that's what we thought it was about – we never knew that we had to do all this theory and learning about other musicians and that. We just thought it was just learning the instrument and maybe every now and then do a bit of theory.

GL: No, that's good. Last comment and then we'll wind it up.

#1: Theory confuses me. Theory confuses me a lot.

GL: Yeah, ok. Anyone want to add any last things – we're pretty right? That was really good, thank you very, very much.

--- END OF INTERVIEW ---

SCHOOL 4 – INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

GL: Ok, this is interview number four. Let's just start off with a couple of general questions then. Can you guys describe some of the activities that students find interesting and enjoyable in class music? What are some of the things that students enjoy doing?

#2: Games.

GL: What kind of games?

#2: Oh, I don't know, like clapping games and rhythm games.

GL: Oh, so like doing...sort of physical 'doing' games?

#2: Yeah.

#3: Playing instruments. Maybe like having competitions and joining as a band.

GL: Cool. So performing and composing – there's two sort of things there?

#3: Yeah.

#1: Composing and playing music.

GL: Excellent.

#5: Some of the projects are quite fun to do as well.

GL: Specific ones – any ones that sort of leap out?

#5: The rock music one we just did was quite fun. The rock music one was quite fun to do.

GL: Excellent.

#6: I think people enjoy playing in duets or trios, with themselves during class, and possibly doing covers or original stuff.

GL: Ok, excellent.

#7: I found it fun to do/play music together as like the whole class, because that's what we did in class.

GL: Great. So we'd all pretty much agree we like sort of doing the composing, the performing, group ensemble sort of stuff? Ok, excellent, thanks for that. Now what are some of the aspects of class music that Year 8 students generally don't find interesting and enjoyable? Ok, start over there.

#8: Rhythmic composition, I think it is.

GL: Dictation?

#8: Yes.

GL: You've got to write down the rhythm.

#6: I don't think many people have enjoyed too much of the self composing stuff where they've been set an assignment 'write this much and bring it in the following week'. They enjoy only writing in class when there's someone to help them who is of higher level in music.

GL: Ok, that's a good point. Yeah?

#7: Dictation. I don't like...and rhythmic dictation.

GL: Sorry, just to progress on that – why is that? Is it because it's tricky or...?

#7: Rhythmic dictation is hard to do because you've got to know all the different types of rhythm, as in 'ta-ta-chi-chi-ta', that's a simple one.

GL: Ok, so there's a lot to actually learn.

#7: And melodic dictation, not sure if I'm saying that right but still...is hard because you're doing the rhythm which is hard, sort of hard, and then you're doing the pitch.

GL: There's a lot to cover.

#4: I don't think we really enjoy doing a lot of the theory where you just copy down from the board. We enjoy more hands-on.

GL: That's a good point. Great.

#4?: Some of...we shouldn't do it because we have to do a little bit, but we did too much of like writing down notes or something like that.

GL: Ok. Well, we'll just keep moving for the moment because we've got a lot of people here. What could be done to make class music more interesting and enjoyable for all students – especially the ones that don't like it that much?

#4: More hands-on and practical activities.

#2: Like actually playing music.

GL: As in the class performance and stuff?

#2: Yeah.

GL: Anyone want to come in on that?

#6: More, yeah, hands-on, composing on like computers and actually physical instrument playing rather than having like six lessons where you just learn off the board and then one lesson maybe where you rush it at the end where you get to play something.

#3: Your own music as well, like songs, on the CD player, and like then having to say the different instruments in there and that, that's a good one.

GL: Oh, ok, oh, that's good. Now, which sort of activities do students find most challenging in class music? We've already mentioned over here, some of the

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dictation ones are pretty challenging. What other activities do you find fairly challenging? Let's start here.

#2: Like, the stuff that you wouldn't do because of your instrument, like, I play the saxophone and sometimes we do the bass clef and I don't know anything about that. So that's hard.

#3: When the teacher plays the piano and you've got to say if its like a perfect chord or...

GL: Oh, ok, intervals?

#3: Like intervals, yeah.

#1: Like assignments and stuff. Some of them are really difficult because you've got to write a lot out.

GL: Write music or...?

#1: Yeah, write music and...

GL: Ok, cool, so that comes back to the theme over here.

#6: Really, really difficult transposition from finding keys with too many sharps to back to basic keys with absolutely no sharps and flats, and then transporting that into bass clef and our electro-lines and everything.

GL: So is challenge a good thing, or is it a bit of a scary thing at times?

#6: Depending on the thing that we're doing at the time, it can be a good thing in a lot of ways because you're learning something that you didn't know before, but it can also be a bad thing because yeah, there are times when you just have absolutely no idea what you're doing and you're just copying down what someone's written on the board, and you forget about it the next day.

GL: Ok, good point. What sort of activities do students find that you do in class music that might be relevant to what you do outside with music?

#6: Learning about certain patterns of chord structures and how they fit into certain songs that we've written at certain times.

GL: Are you a guitarist?

#6: Yes.

GL: What a surprise *[laughs]*. Anyone else? Any other activities that you do in class music that are sort of relevant to what you do with your music outside?

#2: We've recently been learning about rock and that's more what we like and we can relate to that.

GL: So repertoire, the sort of music that you've been doing – is that a common theme for you guys? You prefer looking at popular music?

#7: Another thing that we do that relates to sort of what we do outside of school is performances. We sometimes do, maybe once a term, a performance and well, that's basically what we do our lessons for, to practice, so we should perform, show the other people in the class what we are doing.

GL: That's a good response. I know someone said before, you're not a great fan of theory, but is it important for students to understand how music works, by doing some of the theory stuff?

#4: It's important to learn theory but it's just the way we go about learning it.

GL: Ah, good point.

#4: Where if it's just copying down things then we're not likely to absorb the information, whereas if they incorporate it into games or something that gets our attention, then we're more likely to remember.

GL: Excellent point.

#6: Theory is important because when you get to a higher level of music, it does come in handy to know when you play and someone asks you to solo over something, you need to know how to play it. But again, sometimes some of the theory that they're trying to teach us is like shoving it down our throats, you know, one big gulp and then you all burst out because you don't really understand every bit, for some people.

GL: Ah, so it's too much in one go. Yeah, good point.

#3: Theory is important but we should use it in a way, as example in first term, how we went outside and we sat on the grass and we got taught there for a little while. It was nice, like...

GL: So just a change of...

#3: Yeah, a change of the environment, because if we were in the classroom with the board and the texta and writing it all down.

GL: Ok, so slightly different focus. Which sort of activities in class music do most students find useful? Now, we sort of mentioned one over here, you're a guitarist and learning about the chords was useful. Is there anything else that you might find useful – again, stuff that you might use outside?

#7: Rhythmic and melodic dictation are annoying but if you plan to be a musician or something, it is sort of good, and if you like hear a song and you think, 'oh my God, I want to play that,' you know, it's melodic dictation – there you go.

#5: I think learning the theory helps a lot of students, like if they want to pick up another instrument and they know how to read the notes and stuff already, then that just helps them kind of get the instrument a lot faster.

GL: Good point.

#4: I think the composition is quite useful because that's a direction that a lot of people want to head in, their own music, and that way it's easier for them because they know the basic components of how to write a song.

GL: Oh, good, so song writing is something that some people might want to do down the track. A couple of other quick responses?

#1: Like when you perform you get to know how it feels, like, you know, if you...how you can perform...how to perform in front of people.

GL: Yeah, good point.

#3: The piano is a very common instrument and if we like just learn the basic scale, at least in a lifetime at this school, everybody would at least play piano. It would be nice to just know the notes and just...you know.

GL: It might be one of those things that maybe not now, but in ten years time you might go, 'oh yeah, I might sort of pick that up again'?

#3: Yeah.

GL: Ok, great. The sort of things that you do that you're saying are useful, is class music a sort of a useful subject – do you think it's something that you might sort of use later in life, some of the skills you learn in class music?

#6: A lot of the stuff that I've learnt so far this year has been useful because I've gone home, mucked around with it, came up with something about it, but there is some stuff that we've been doing recently, you know, late last term/early this term, which has sort of been just turning up and learning gibberish and I don't know if that's because of the students or the teacher or what, but it does sort of...you get there and you think, you know, are we actually learning anything or are we just sitting here and mucking around?

GL: Good point.

#7: Like what number six said. Learning class music is useful because of various things you might want to do with your career after school, but sometimes people have had five years of experience of learning an instrument before high school and they're just learning 'ta-ta-ti-ta-ta' and they already know it.

GL: So it's too easy, so there's too much of a mixture maybe.

#7: And a term of rhythm, you know, isn't fun if, you know, you've learnt the piano for two years.

#2: It's kind of the same thing – that at the start of the year I found it really boring because I knew most of the stuff but now it's starting to help me a bit more because I'm getting a bit more advanced on my instrument.

GL: Is it just about helping people get jobs as musicians or is there any other sort of benefits to doing class music – just a couple on this one?

#6: One of the benefits that I have found is that when you learn about intervals and chord structures, all that, and then you go home and listen to the radio and you suddenly think, 'oh, now I know what they're doing' – you've always wanted to hear something on there and now you're actually able to because you've learnt how to do it in class.

GL: Cool. Anyone else want to come in on that? Ok, good. Let's move on to the next one. How important is it for students to feel that they can understand and do all the tasks? You know, how important is it to feel that you can actually do it?

#7: Well, it's pretty important because we're here to learn and if you don't understand something, well how are you going to learn more because that may just be the basic foundation of what you need to do, and then it gets more advanced and then you're like...'oh my goodness, I can't do this, help'.

GL: Do you think students get put off if they can't do it?

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#6: Definitely, because you hear a lot of the time when we work on stuff that some students might not understand, they generally turn around and because they don't understand it, they just decide to start talking with their friends, they just give up about it because they may not have much experience with their instrument or with music theory.

#8: If you don't know something you could keep on falling behind, because if it's really important you might use it for like learning further things that you need to know about music.

GL: **Yeah, that's a good point.**

#3: I reckon that like other subjects, they should split it into two different courses. Like maybe one which is like the theory side and one which is the musical activity side, like...

GL: **Like a practical and a theory base – two separate subjects?**

#3: So like...what it is, is like people who want to take it seriously as a musician, take either both or one of them, and people who just want to learn their instrument, normally you know, like with friends and you know, do activities, do it the other side.

GL: **I'm just going to change the batteries – just bear with me for two seconds.** *[brief interruption]* **That's better. Ok, now a couple more slightly different questions – we're nearly there actually, we're doing well. Do most students think they'll get better at understanding how music is put together, with time? You know, the more you do class music, do you think you're going to get better or do some people feel like they're never going to get any better?**

#7: Well, if you...it's like practice makes perfect. If you do it loads and loads of times, well, obviously you're going to get better, you're going to get more confident.

#5: I think that because while in the class music, we're being pushed and we are advancing, so I think it's helping us.

#6: I think most of the students believe that if they try hard enough, they'll progress significantly and get to a higher level, but some of them are just there because their parents have told them, you know, 'now you're going to learn a musical instrument' and they just sort of sit there and go, 'well, there's no point in doing this'.

#3: I can think...like everybody has learnt something and especially like, you can tell when people have learnt and they feel like they've learnt things as well, like personally I think that since the start of the year, I have like further knowledge of the theory side of music, even if I don't like it.

GL: **So that's important – to feel you are going to get better at understanding how music works. Is that important for most students? Like, if you thought 'ah gee, I'm never going to get any better', would that sort of affect your attitude?**

#4: It would because the more positive frame of mind you're in, the more willing you are to absorb the knowledge and to learn, whereas if you've got a negative attitude towards it, you're not going to want to learn anything. So that's...your frame of mind towards how much you will learn.

GL: **That's a really good answer, yeah, excellent, thank you for that. Now slightly differently, do most students think that they're going to get better at making the music? You know, we talked about sometimes playing the instruments and the**

singing and the practical side – do most students think they're going to get better at actually doing music?

#3: It's kind of hard because like...most of the beats are something are you do, are already made and then because you've heard lots of songs, you tend to (instead of making your own), you just make like, something from which you know, even though you try not to, you just make it like a song which you're already heard of, and it's really hard to unless you are like really Einstein, you know.

#4: I think that the more people learn and the more concepts they get together, the more they start to understand because everything sort of fits together, and once they've got the basics they can learn more.

GL: **So I guess I'm splitting off theory from practical here, you know. So I'm sort of now talking about the actual playing of the instruments. Do most students find it easy to do the practical activities in the class, like when you're asked to play something, do most people find those activities fairly easy or are they hard?**

#7: I find it pretty easy but then I'm ████ student so I all I like to do is go 'lah'

#6: I...personally I know a lot of people who find the playing side and the music side very easy, and you know, get there, it's still something that they're learning but they still do it. But again, with the people who have a completely different frame of mind, they sort of sit there and you know, go like, well I really don't want to be doing this, so why put in any effort into playing, to practicing to playing, and to actually getting up and playing to the people.

GL: **Is that the same for the theory stuff and the playing stuff?**

#6: To the people who don't have that good frame of mind towards music, then yes, I see.

GL: **Are there people...sorry, just to follow up on that one, and then I'll come round to you guys. Are there some people then who say maybe hate the theory but really like the practical – who try at the practical and don't try at the theory, do you see any of that?**

#6: Yeah, I've known people at other schools and from my primary school, who had that sort of mind – you know, they want to learn to be able to play and, you know, they don't really want to go learning about theory, but in my class at Sacred Heart, I really find you either want to do it or you don't want to do it.

GL: **Cool. Let's come in on few others.**

#3: I think like...say you had a class which teaches you an instrument and just play a song, a few people can, i.e. number six, but like...some people, some people they struggle to play a song, and it's not just because they like practical, it's because also theory. Because if you know theory, then you can remember what you're playing, like otherwise you just can't...you're just like...I can play it if I have the notes but if I don't have them, I don't know what to do.

GL: **Good point.**

#5: It depends on the student's confidence levels and also how advanced they are in their instrument, because if they've only just started then they're not going to be as confident as someone who's been doing it for a few years.

GL: Good point. That's a really good point. Ok, let's move on a slightly different area. Is there much group work done in class music?

#7: During our class at this, like now, present, well we've got a group, like a whole class group activity going, where we're performing a song, so that's really good.

#1: Like we do a lot of activities together, you know, like clapping and...

GL: Ok, well, we do quite a bit of group, but can I just sort of follow up the question. How important is it if you're working in a group, to get on with others in the group?

#8: It's important to get along with other people in your group because if you don't, you don't want to be there and you won't try as hard and because they want you to like enjoy it.

#2: I think it would be much more better because, no offence to my music class, but some of them, well most of them, aren't really good friends and the other music class has my good friends. So I'd rather be in that class so I could have more fun.

GL: Ok, fair cop, fair cop.

#6: I find in our class and in other classes, friends do work and if they're good musicians they work a lot better but it is a skill to learn in music that sometimes you won't always be with people you want, and if you learn to play with people who share the same passion for music but are not necessarily on the same level as you, then that won't necessarily work but if they share the same passion and same standard then I find we get along pretty well.

GL: Excellent.

#3: I've forgotten now...

GL: Ok. Did you want to add something?

#7: What's the question?

GL: It's about how important it is to get on with others in the group?

#7: It's kind of important because we're a small class, like number seven's class has about...yes I know, I was referring to myself, has about 8, yes 8, people, so it's kind of good to be friends, well not friends-friends but like you can talk to each other, because then it's harder to work with and then can't make it fun because if you're friends you can mostly like do jokes and stuff, and then everyone laughs and has a good time.

GL: Ok, we're getting the same theme here. Yeah, it is important to get on with others in a group. Can I just sort of keep moving and maybe you'll come in on the next one. Is getting on with others, when you're doing group work, do you think that's something you'll all get better at in the future, given time, you know, the more group work you do, do you think you'll get better at getting on with others and more productive and that, or not – is that something that probably won't change? Let's start over here.

#3: It depends how you start off. Like you could start off with somebody you really hate and it could just get worse, because you could keep disagreeing, like you might want to go 'do-do-do' and they want like a 'do-do-dah'. *[everybody laughs]*

GL: That'll be fun to transcribe. I know what you mean. It's a good point actually. Now, did you want to come in on that?

?#: Ah, not really.

GL: Ok, no worries.

#6: Yes, in music, definitely I think if you try hard enough to get along with other people who you might not be the greatest friends with, you will get better with that over time. But in other subjects, then not necessarily because you just leave that sort of behind you as you go on with life, but music stays there forever.

GL: Good point. Ok, we're just down to our last couple of questions now. You guys have been really good. Do students usually think they're going to get better at all school subjects or only some school subjects? As you move on into Year 9 and Year 10, do you think most students think they're going to get better at all subjects or only some subjects?

#8: To get better you have to like enjoy the subject and you have to put the effort into it but if you don't then you won't get better at it.

GL: Good point.

#6: I find that the 'nerd people' who try harder to progress really hard over that, whereas some of the 'cool people' will just sort of sit back and go hey, this is what I have to do, if I fail, well, big deal.

GL: Do you guys…anyone want to come in here or…ok, no.

#3: I think at some stage, yeah, you'll of course learn something, if it's number 2.25, you'll still learn something in the subject and that means you've progressed. You can't not progress unless you're like seriously, you know, like…

GL: Don't say it, I know what you mean. So you're saying that maybe some people will progress further in some subjects and not as far in others?

#3: Yeah.

GL: So you will progress but it depends on the subject.

#3: Because you don't actually go back. It's really honestly like, you can't go back.

GL: That's a good point. So I'll just sort of follow up that theme a little bit. Might some students think they'll get better at class music but not so much better at other school subjects? Do you have some people that really think…that are really, really good at class music, maybe not so good at other subjects, or does it tend to be, you know, most people are good at all of their subjects? Is class music a little different in a sense or not? Let's start over here.

#4: It actually depends because if the people are good at the other subjects, then that usually means that they've got a willingness to learn and that means that they will probably carry that into the class music. So people who are good at other subjects would probably be just as good at music.

GL: Good point.

#5: Again, how advanced they are with the music, because the people who aren't as advanced will probably learn more because the class music is probably covering stuff that the more advanced people already know, so...yeah, it depends on how advanced they are.

GL: Good point.

#6: I know very few people who want to do music and music only and don't care about the other subjects. So yeah, but then again, they suffer with other subjects because they've never really tried as hard with the other ones, and again, with music they think 'oh, I'm doing music, I'm going to progress' but they still don't put in the hours to do it.

GL: Yeah, good point.

#3: Back up with number six, I think it's true there are a few people in our, like a shortage in those people, who are actually good at just music. They're not...they're not, like no offence to some people like here, they're not really, they're not really into other things, they're just into music and it's not bad, it's definitely not bad you know, but they should average it out, I think.

GL: So you do find some people who are really into their music and not so much into other subjects, and other people that are good across the board? Yeah. Ok. Last two questions. Let's move on, we've just go two more questions for you. Is music in Year 8 easier or harder than at primary school? Do you reckon it's been harder this year or is it easier this year? Let's start around here.

#1: Well, we weren't really learning that much at primary school. Yeah, I think it's getting a bit hard but at the start of this year it was quite easy because we weren't really learning that much.

#2: Well, in primary school we didn't really have a good music program, we just learned at lunchtime with the teacher and we had different instruments. So it was a number of people and now it's better, like...

GL: More mucking around was it, in primary school?

#2: Yeah. And now that we do class music, we get to learn more and...

#3: Back then it was compulsory so you had people who wanted to do it, you had people who were just like 'I hate music, I don't want to play an instrument' it's like, 'why am I here' – it's like music is a different language to them. Then you're like trying to go ahead and the teacher's like 'no, don't go ahead, let other people catch up' and then you've got work at their pace.

GL: Yeah, good point.

#4: It was a lot easier in primary school because, well, you weren't really learning anything much, the 'ta-ta' and the 'ti-ti-ta' and, you know, we only really started proper theory in Year 7 and then even then, basically nobody got it except for people who are doing music this year, so yeah, and it's a lot harder this year than it was in primary school.

#5: It's kind of completely different because before this year in music, we were kind of just singing songs and doing basic theory with like 'ti-ti-ta' and stuff, and this year we're like learning all the names of the notes and stuff, and yeah, people are going at different rates but with primary school, you were, yeah, again with number three, you were kind of staying at the people that weren't getting any further, you were kind of going at their pace.

GL: That's a good point. So we're getting a recurring them coming here that it's definitely harder. A quick run around?

#6: Music in Year 8 is definitely harder than, not necessarily harder but we're learning more and more information packed than the ones in primary school, because primary school again was filled with people who didn't really want to be there and we spent lessons for seven years, really it was one time a week where those guys had a free period to just run around and do what they liked and the teacher just sort of stood up the front and said, 'well, if they don't want to learn, then I won't bother to teach'.

GL: Ooh, that's tough.

#7: Basically what number six, five and three said. Music wasn't really music. It was just learning about 'ta-ta-ti-ta-ta'. Probably the most musical we got in our school was singing the *Virgin Mary had a Baby Boy* at our Christmas concert, and that was embarrassing because we had to dance as well, which isn't musical at all. So yeah.

#8: I pretty much agree with everyone because like it's a lot harder but it is a lot better because in primary school we didn't learn much in theory but I personally didn't learn much in my instrument either. Like, we only learnt, like one bar songs, so it's a lot more full-on and like number six has said, most people don't want to do it and they like can't, but others can and they're like holding you back.

[bell rings]

GL: Just one last quick question. Is there anything that we might have missed today as to…say, for example, why do or why might some students quit music at the end of Year 8 – just quick comments because the bell's gone. Just a couple of real quick ones.

#2: Well, it kind of sucks doing music this year because, yeah, your music takes up a lot of your electives so you miss out on Food and other things.

#3: People like the teacher mostly, because we have a new teacher this term, and she gets angry with everybody on some stuff which we find it is a bit too small.

GL: So the teacher is really important in whether kids go on?

#3: Yeah.

#6: Two quick things: first, the teacher – so far this term has been teaching us a lot of music information, like what they used to wear and really stuff that's irrelevant to that and more relevant to fashion, and also because we've got the mixture of people – people who want to do it, people who don't want to do it, that sort of disrupts the teacher from getting on and getting to the more theoretical stuff.

#7: I reckon it depends mostly on how passionate the person is about music, because you have the people that want to do music but don't put in as much effort as the people who really want to do music and put in loads of effort.

#8: Ah yeah, it does take a lot of electives, so we can't enjoy other subjects, and because we also have to do a band which some people really, really don't want to do it and they just mess around and the whole band like can't play because some people have just started this year and they really like suck, yeah, so it sounds really terrible, and I just don't like band.

GL: Ok, thank you very, very much – that's where we'll conclude at that point.

--- END OF INTERVIEW ---

SCHOOL 5 – INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview Transcription

GL: Let's start off with the icebreaker questions. Ok, describe some of the activities students find interesting and enjoyable in class music.

#1: Things that I find interesting are the group activities where we like play instruments and stuff.

GL: Cool. Playing. Does anyone else agree with that?

#8: Number 8.

GL: Why would you agree?

#8: Because it's fun.

GL: Good. Anything else that you find, apart from playing in groups, anything else that you find sort of fun and interesting in class music?

#2: Trying out different chords, different minors and majors.

GL: Ok, so what, composing or just experimenting – which one?

#2: Experimenting.

GL: Anything else that you guys really enjoy doing? [no answer] Ok. Maybe we'll come back to that one. Ok, the next one: what are some of the aspects of class music that Year 8 students generally don't find interesting and enjoyable, and why? Ok, let's go...

#6: Like learning the theory and stuff is a bit boring sometimes.

GL: Why is that? Is it how the theory is done, is it...?

#6: I don't know.

GL: Do you do it sort of just written down all the time or do you ever get to do the theory on the keyboards?

#6: Sometimes we're on the keyboards but usually it's like...we get a sheet and have to read it, right it down and stuff.

#1: I really dislike sheets/doing the sheets.

GL: Yeah, why is that?

#1: I don't know, I just don't...I just hate writing down the music itself that we already know.

GL: Ok, cool. Anyone else want to come in on that? What do you guys think about the theory stuff? Anybody like it?

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[students laugh]

> Ok. Is there anything else that you dislike apart from just doing the theory?

#2: The tests.

GL: Tests? Are the usually written tests?

#2: No, where you have to hear which note it is.

GL: **Oh, so like aural dictation and stuff like that. Yeah.**

#7: It's just like, some people they don't really know, they've never done it before and we just like go straight into it, it's sort of hard to do it.

#6: Also like to start with, some have to expect to know some stuff we didn't know...like sometimes people need to know how to play the keyboards and stuff and some people didn't know.

GL: **Is that a general issue then, that there's a big difference in standards? So some...there's some really bright kids and there's some real struggling people?**

[All] Yeah, definitely.

GL: **Ok, that's an interesting one. Ok, next question then: what could we do to make class music more interesting and enjoyable for all students, especially the ones that don't like it?**

#1: I reckon have one at ▓▓▓ and partners who play music.

GL: **Ok, so more practical stuff?**

#1: Yeah.

GL: **Anyone else?**

#8: No tests.

[other students laugh and agree]

GL: **No tests, yeah. Anything else? What about around this side – what would you, if you were given the choice, what would you really like to do? What's your favourite activities in class music?**

#4: Probably more practical stuff and less sheet music.

GL: **Ok. Anyone else, anything else to add at this stage?**

[no answer]

> Ok, let's keep going. Do most students find the activities that you do in class music challenging or are they really easy? And which ones do you find challenging?

#1: I don't reckon much of it is challenging.

GL: **Just generally pretty easy?**

#1:   Yeah, pretty much.

GL: **What about some of the other people here? Do people here find the activities challenging or are they generally fairly easy?**

#7:   I think they're practically...cos like, cost most of the stuff is to do with, like the piano, and I play the piano and stuff, so it's easy to play. There are people in our class who don't know how to play and have never done it before, so they know nothing about it.

GL: **Ok. So do you find that the activities are balanced, like there is some challenging activities for the more advanced students, and some for the weaker students, or is everyone doing pretty much the same stuff.**

#7:   Yeah, they are doing the same stuff.

GL: **Everyone does the same stuff. Ok. Anyone else? Do you generally find it challenging or do you find it fairly easy then?**

#6:   Most of us are at like...there are some kids haven't necessarily or don't necessarily play an instrument. So that for them, it's harder for them like they came into doing music not knowing the...they don't necessarily know how to do this.

GL: **That's a good point. Ok, next one: Would most students find class music relevant to their lives? Like the sort of stuff that would be done in class music – is it similar to the sort of stuff that you would do or listen to outside of school?**

#1:   Unless I think you're going to be a musician, I don't think it has any relevance whatsoever.

GL: **Good strong point. Anyone else agree or disagree?**

[no answer]

        Let's go around the group. How about #2 – do you think it's sort of relevant, the sort of stuff you're doing in class? Is that the sort of stuff you would listen to outside?

#2:   I don't really listen to classical music outside of school.

GL: **Yeah, that's a fair point.**

#2:   But I do have an older sister who does study music pretty easily, and it's kind of like ▒▒▒▒ so to mean it kind of does have a bit of relevance to our life.

GL: **Ok, how about...?**

#3:   ▒▒▒▒▒▒▒▒

#4:   It has pretty much no relevance to my life. I don't listen to classical music out of school.

#5:   Not relevant at all.

#6:   Some of it might be relevant ▒▒▒▒ musician but ▒▒▒▒

#7:   Yeah, like...if you don't...if I don't become a music teacher or whatever, like I don't think I'll probably use it.

#8: Not at all.

GL: Is it...you do lots of classical music – is that the main music that you study?

[All] Yeah.

GL: Ok. Do you ever do any popular music at all?

[All] No, not really.

GL: Ok, interesting. Would most students think that it's important to understand how music works. So, I guess the point here is, you know, you've said to me that the theory can be pretty boring, right? But theory is a little bit like learning grammar in that it helps you understand how music works. So do you think it's important for students to understand how music works in that sense? What do you think?

#6: If you learn an instrument or something, sometimes it helps you play it, depending on what you learn in class, it would help.

GL: Ok, great, so particularly for learning an instrument, it's good, yeah.

#1: I think it does have some, like effect or something, because whenever you go for a job, if you learn an interview, you have commitment, and the job people, you will get like...brownie points.

GL: Ok, good, so there is some sort of slight spill over there. Anyone else? Is it just for learning instruments that it's good for? Does anybody here have the urge to go and write their own music or compose their own music?

Not really.

GL: Ok, let's move on. Which activities would students find really useful? What sort of activities that you do, do you find useful, the sort of things you might sort of do outside of school? Is there anything that you do in class music and you sort of think, 'yeah, yeah, yeah, I might do a little of that outside' – it might be singing, might be something to do with an instrument.

#1: I think like whenever we're like practicing, like performing a piece with my friend, and we muck around a little bit. I reckon that's pretty fun because outside of school I play an instrument with my friend – he plays drum and we muck around a bit so...that's kind of musical.

GL: Ok, cool. Anyone else? Is anything you do in class music sort of useful to what you do outside, maybe in your own time?

[no answer]

I take that as a no. Ok, how might class music be useful – is it just for becoming a musician? I mean, the sort of stuff that you do, might it be useful for students to learn how to relax, for example?

#7: I guess like when we do group things, it's good for teamwork and stuff, yeah.

GL: Yeah. Anything else?

#1: I think it's, in a way, it sort of builds character.

GL: Good, good point. Do you want to explain that a little bit more?

#1:   I think with all the roles and the teamwork and stuff, you get a little bit of like...

GL: Discipline?

#1:   Yeah.

#8:   Confidence.

GL: Confidence? Ok, cool. So some of the activities that you do might be useful for just developing discipline and confidence and stuff. Anyone else want to come in on that? Yeah?

#2:   With music theory you might end up learning about music history...

GL: About which?

#2:   About history.

GL: Oh, about history?

#2:   Yeah.

GL: Ok. Good. Why do some students quit class music?

#7:   I guess they might find it boring or they don't want to do their instrument anymore.

GL: Which aspects would be most boring, do you think?

#7:   Like the theory.

GL: Anything else? What about the other guys?

#1:   I think people might leave because the sheet music at times gets a little frustrating, because like we know it all, we like revisit it a lot – like do it over and over again.

GL: So a lot of repetition. Anyone else – how about you guys? You're very quiet down there. Why do you think some students might quit at the end of the year?

#8:   They might not like their teacher.

[students laugh]

GL: Now we won't mention names, but is that a pretty important point to you guys?

[All]   Yeah.

GL: Talk to me a little bit about that. How important is it to like your teacher?

#7:   The teacher might be like really strict on how you...I don't know, do something and like...you just feel like you don't want to do it anymore because you don't want someone like standing over you here and telling you like every mistake you've done.

#4:   And if the teacher is really strict and she makes like, if you want to make your class and music and stuff fun, and if your teacher is really strict, they make it really hard and very boring and you just get so annoyed, and you just don't want to do it anymore.

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GL: Ok, good point.

#6: Like…it's meant to be an elective, when we choose music and it can be fun but sometimes it becomes boring and stuff so therefore it's not much fun, whereas the electives need to be more, I guess, choice is fun.

GL: So what would you like teachers to do then? So what I'm sort of getting as a theme here is that teachers can be pretty strict. So what would you like to do, like your teachers to do?

#1: If we do something right, we get chocolates.

[students laugh]

GL: Fair enough. Anyone else – what would you like your music teachers to do – what how you would you like them to be with you more?

#7: They should like put more…maybe more encouragement and stuff like, so if you do something good, they will reward you unless when you do something bad, then it's like…aargh.

GL: So focus more on the positives and less on the negatives?

#7: Yeah.

GL: Great!

#2: We could start studying different types of music and not just classical.

GL: Good. What kind of stuff would you like to study, given the chance to? What's your favourite?

#2: I don't have a favourite, I just can't stand learning classical experience for another three years…

GL: Let's go around the group. What's your favourite music?

#1: Metal.

GL: Yeah. Not sure?

#2: I don't know.

GL: Let's say eclectic.

#2: Eclectic…[laughs]

GL: Which means a 'wide' range.

#2: Ok.

GL: Number three?

#3: Old. Any.

GL: Any music?

#4:   I don't really like ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

#5:   Any music.

#6:   Definitely ▓▓▓▓▓

#7:   Like ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

#8:   R&B and rap.

GL: R&B and rap, ok, so we're getting an interesting little cross-section. Hey, that's really great. Do students have to sort of give up anything to do class music as an elective? Like in some schools, electives are two periods a week but music might be four. Do you have to do extra periods to do class music or is about the same four in the electives?

#1:   I'm not sure about this but with music, it takes up two electives, like cos it goes for the whole year, and so it takes two electives, so that might be the reason why people are...

GL: Ok, so it does actually take up more of your elective time?

#1:   Yeah.

#4:   And also you're not allowed to do your instrument unless you do class music. So you have to do class music if you want to learn an instrument.

GL: Ok, good. And over here?

#5:   If you play an instrument, you've got to go in a band or something, and that's after school or before school so...

GL: A lot of extra commitment.

#6:   I'm in a basketball scholarship so we have, we already don't have an extra elective and like...everyone else I think has three periods of stuff, so I have two and then music takes one of those ▓▓▓▓▓▓ so therefore I really only have got one extra one.

GL: So it does actually...you have to give up electives, spare electives, to do class music? Ok, that's interesting. How important is it for students to feel that they understand and can do the tasks, being good at the tasks in class music – how important is that, to feel like, 'yeah, I can actually do this stuff'?

#7:   I guess if you don't know how to do it, like you wouldn't feel like going, because then everyone else can and you'll feel really dumb and stuff, like, you know, you haven't got it or you realise you can't so yeah ▓▓▓▓▓▓

GL: Pretty important to feel like you know what you're doing. Yeah. Anyone else?

#2:   I think there's no point in studying music if you don't understand what you're doing at all so...

GL: Good. Anyone else? I'll go around the group – maybe that's an incentive. No? How important is it for you to feel like you know what you're doing? How important is it to feel like you know what you're doing? I'll come back to you.

#1:   I think it's pretty important because I think you'd feel pretty stupid if you don't understand, because everyone will guess you're uncertain and they're not understanding, you'd be pretty embarrassed.

GL: **Yeah, ok, let's move on then. Do most students think they will get better at understanding how music is put together and how it works – do you think you will get better, you've got better over the year and you'll continue to get better if you keep doing it?**

#7:   Because if you don't know any at the start, you'll never like...unless they do something special, I don't know, like a catch-up or something, because if you're doing stuff you don't know, you won't learn anything. Well, you will, but...not much.

GL: **Yeah, that's cool. Yeah?**

#6:   I think you'll probably improve if you continue doing it, then like you already knew something to start with and...

#?:   If you've got a good teacher and they know what they're talking about, you will improve if you don't know at the start.

GL: **The sort of tasks that you're doing in class music, are they pretty good at helping you understand about music and do you think as a result you will get better, with the current sort of tasks that you're doing now?**

#7:   Some of the stuff like we do in class music, doesn't really have that much to do with other instruments maybe, like, it's always really based around the piano or keyboard, and people like do different instruments. You know, like chords and stuff but like...well you would play them on other instruments but not as much, you know, like you would only play them as much on the piano and stuff. Some know how to play other stuff you know.

GL: **Let's move back on to that one, that's a really interesting one. Do students get to play instruments and make the music in class music, or is it mainly sit down and writing?**

#1:   Every once and a while we get to like, if we have a concert or something coming up or if we have a special festival or something like...if they have like something like eco-friendly week or whatever that is, and we have like...like last thing we had, we had this whole song thing about saving the trees, you know, like ▓▓▓▓ music and stuff, so that was pretty cool.

GL: **Ok, so I come back to the question. Do you get much opportunity to play instruments or is it mainly sit down and writing in clas music?**

#7:   It's mainly like...like if you do...mainly writing down the theory and stuff but if you do like make up something, it's on the keyboards and stuff, you don't do like...you don't do really weird instruments or something, you don't do your instrument, they only have like keyboards and stuff, so you can only do keyboard or piano.

#4:   Basically when we have to make up our own music, we write it down and then like a couple of days later then we get to try it on the keyboard. We don't just like, we don't always get to go and sit at the keyboard and make it up.

GL: **That's a really, really good point. That's a really good point because how do you know what to write if you haven't heard it? We need to hear it first, muck around, and then go 'I like that' and write it. Is that a fair comment?**

[All] Yeah.

GL: Do most students find it easy to play instruments. Ok, you go on the keyboards quite a bit. Do most students find that easy or not?

#7:   If they haven't done it before, they probably won't know the notes unless they have the ▒▒▒▒

GL: What's your impression within the group, when you look at the people in your class, when you go on to keyboards, do most of them seem to cope or do they struggle?

#1:   I struggle because I don't play piano and stuff, like I play the bass guitar so I'm in a totally different range than pianos and stuff, because they...I use the bass cleft and they use like a different kind of cleft.

GL: A treble cleft, yeah.

#6:   I think like...it wouldn't be too bad if they taught us how to use the pianos and stuff, but they don't, they just sort of expect you to know how to and then say you're pretty right with that one...and I've learnt the notes on a keyboard but I still can't play it, like the others. I'm trying to figure out which one is which [laughs] because I don't play on the piano so it's been a lot harder.

GL: Now that's another really interesting point. So would it be actually quite good to actually have like a little mini-lesson first, get something happening and then say you'll go and...would that be...yeah? Ok.

       Do most students think they're going to get better on keyboards in the future or are they still sort of floundering a bit?

#7:   Well, what we do on the keyboard...we do end up going on the keyboard, we don't actually do that much, like we only make up the song and then we like...if you can't play it, you get someone else to play it. So we don't actually do that much on keyboards so you're probably ▒▒▒▒ don't do that much.

GL: Ok, good point. Yep?

#1:   I think if we do enough of it, we might learn a bit.

GL: Ok. Is there much group work undertaken in class music, and if so, what sort of activities do you do and how important is it to get on with others in the group? So let's unpackage that – do you do much group work?

#6:   We've done a fair bit, we've done maybe one or two assignments per term with like groups or partners or something. And I don't know whether it's important or not, it's sort of usually...that part of our marks that we sort of go good at.

GL: Ok, the next part of that question then was what sort of activities do you do in groups? The sort of the things you do.

#7:   Once like...I don't know, I'm sure if it was this term or last term...we had to do a radio station and stuff and everyone had to contribute, like we got into groups, and so that was pretty fun because you like ▒▒▒▒ and you've never done it before. So that was pretty fun.

GL: Ok. The last part of that question was how important is it to get on with others in the group? Ok, so let's unpackage that. Do you get to choose your groups or do you get put in groups – if you get put in groups, how important is it to get on with people in your group? Starting here.

#8: We usually choose our groups so its like...we get to choose our friends instead of other people who you might not know.

GL: Ok, so it's generally not too much of a problem getting on with people? What is the consensus around here, what were you going to say?

#6: Yeah, it's usually pretty good because we are allowed to choose our own groups so we can work with people, choose people that we know we can work with or we're friends with or whatever.

GL: Is that important – to be able to pick your own groups?

#1: Yeah, I reckon definitely because if you don't really know who the person is, you're not going to be really open with your ideas, you're kind of like held back a little bit because you don't really know the person.

GL: Good point, excellent point.

#2: But then how would you make new friends if you didn't talk to new people?

GL: That's another good point. So there's a nice sort of counter-balance. Well done. Is getting on with others...do you think you'll get better at that in the future or do you all get on pretty well now?

#7: When you get older you have to work more with people so you probably would get better because you know, you're in a job or whatever, you're always have to work with people.

GL: Yeah, good. We're nearly there, we're nearly there. We're just down to the last couple of questions. These are pretty strange questions aren't they? But trust me, your answers are very good.

Ok, do students usually think they're going to get better at all school subjects or generally just some? Do you guys think you're going to get better at all the subjects you do in time?

#7: I guess [illegible] but if you do like more of it, I guess you will improve, like over time but for some people, like if they don't know it, they just drop it so, you know, they won't learn more.

GL: What about around here – do you think you'll get better at all your subjects in the future – particularly with the core ones?

#4: I think if subjects are too hard and if you find them really hard, you just get bored of them and you stop trying.

GL: Good point.

#2: Everyone is different so everyone will be good at certain things, so I don't think everyone will be always good at every subject they have.

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GL: Ok, so let's swing that back the other way. Might some students think they will get better at class music but not other subjects?

#7: Definitely, because I don't know, maybe they'll find it easier to...because all your subjects that you're good at and you're not good at.

#1: I think they might...people will think we might get better at music because we have like, you do it all year so we have a lot more time with it.

GL: Are there people in the class that you can see that are really good at class music and not so good with other subjects, or not? (They're pointing at number two.) Ok, that's alright, it's not an intrusive question. Hey, look, I've just got three more questions to go and we're nearly done. This is good.

Ok, last couple of questions. Is Year 8 music harder or easier than primary school, and how is it different? So let's start around here. No? Ok.

#7: Usually you just repeat the same thing because they won't know what you did in primary school so they're just all over again.

GL: Is it same or is it different, the way you do it?

#7: Well, I guess some of it is the same and some of it is different, I suppose.

#6: Even in my primary school we had music class and like, if you learned an instrument you also had that separate. Our music class usually wasn't much because most kids weren't bothered so the teacher would try and teach us stuff, no-one would listen or...so we didn't really do much...or he'd just put that karaoke thing on and we'd just listen to music.

GL: So it was easier?

#6: It was easier because we didn't really do much.

GL: What about around here – is it easier or harder?

#?: In primary school we used to

GL: Sure. How about you guys? Did some of you have music in primary music or did some of you not have it?

#7: I think, cos I only came into my primary school last term, I think they did have one but they didn't enter everyone, because I had one....when I came from New Zealand they had it but I don't think they had it in my last primary school.

#8: Our primary school, we didn't have all these sheets and stuff. We just did like mostly singing and group work. So I reckon primary school is easier.

GL: A lot easier? Was it more enjoyable?

#8: Yeah because we usually mucked around.

GL: Oh, ok. Yeah?

#4: In my primary school, we had like had a big class of music that all the Year 7's would do music and...we didn't do that much, we just played instruments and worked in

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groups. But then if you wanted to learn an instrument, it would be like 20 minutes of maths or something that you miss out, just to learn your instrument.

GL: Yeah, it was tough. Last question: Is there final things that we might want to add that we might have missed out, about why some students like class music and why some quit? Now that we've had quite a chat...

#1: I think the fact that it does go for a year might annoy people because they might want to like have a variation of what they do, like they want to do something instead of just music all year round.

GL: Yeah, sure. Yeah?

#6: I don't overly enjoy class music generally but the people are really nice [laughs]...

GL: You've got to say that, don't you – they're all here!

#6: What I do like about it is the fact that if we do class music, then we can learn an instrument and the study after school stuff, and band and stuff ▨▨▨▨ because we had a school production a while ago and that was really fun, and that was all music and stuff. So like if you didn't do the music, we might not have been able to do that.

GL: So you might not have had the opportunities?

#6: Yeah.

GL: The things that seem to be coming through to me are you saying a lot of the time, you would like to do a lot more practical stuff – is that right?

[students murmur agreement]

And less of the sit down theory stuff – is that right?

[students agree]

And what about the choice of music – also you were saying you'd prefer to have some more popular stuff, contemporary stuff?

[students murmur agreement]

And why...just to follow-up on that one...why contemporary, why popular stuff?

#1: Because we don't really listen to any classical music, we listen to more modern music.

#2: Because we can relate to the popular music more than to the classical music.

GL: Really good point.

#7: And the classical like music is so old, like, you feel really old and stuff.

[students laugh]

GL: Anything else to add before we finish? You guys have been absolutely fantastic. Thank you very, very much.

--- END OF INTERVIEW ---

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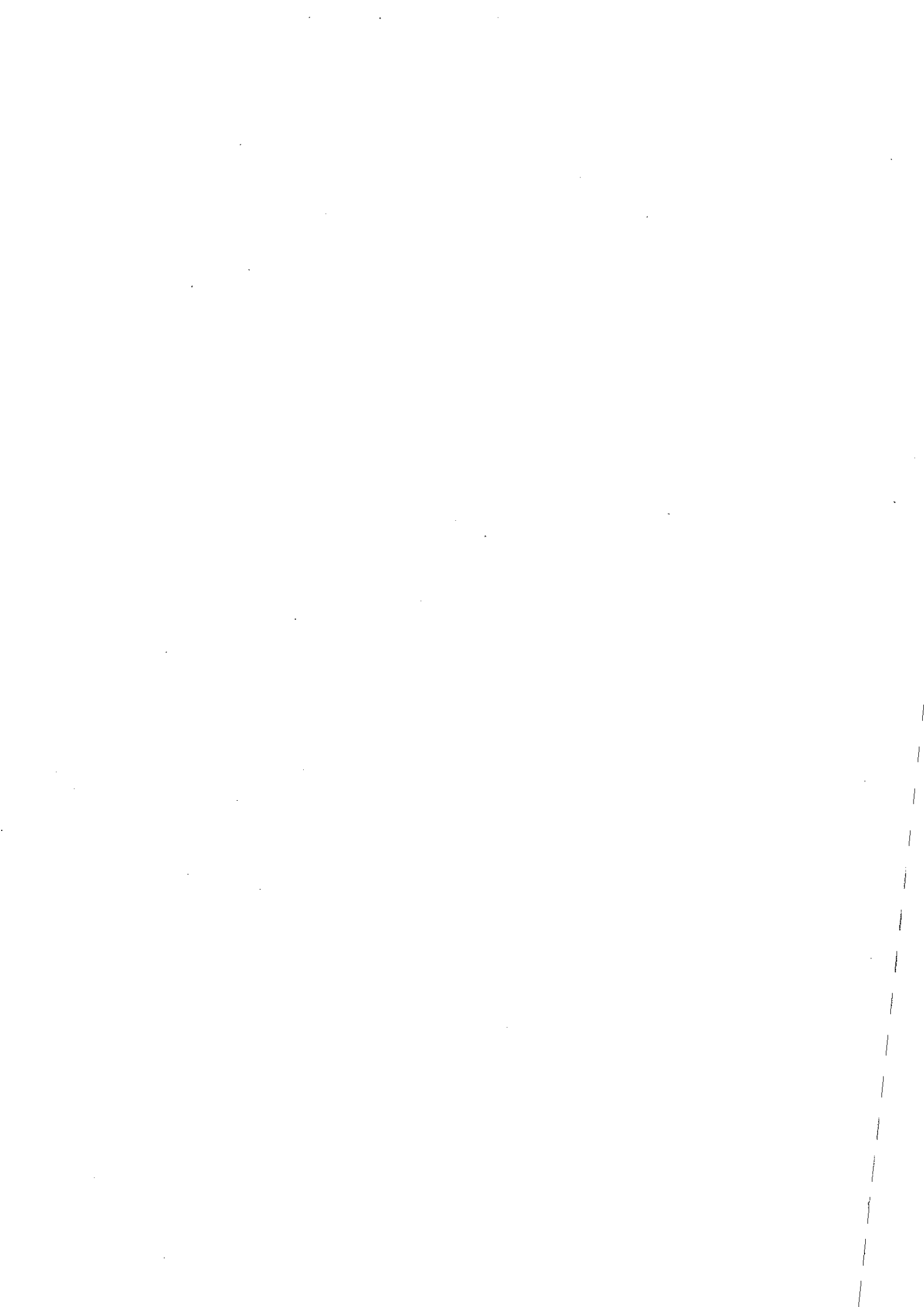
SCHOOL 6 – INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

GL: Let's just start with some just general questions. What are some of the activities that you do in class music that you find interesting and enjoyable? Is there anything you do in class...?

#2: We made board games about, like a composer and you had to ask questions about them and stuff.

GL: And did you get to play the games afterwards?

#2: No, we haven't yet.

GL: Not yet, you're still doing them?

#2: Yeah, we're doing it next lesson.

GL: Ok, cool. Anything else?

#5: We compose our own pieces on xylophones.

GL: Oh, cool. So you enjoyed composing? Ok. Is that generic – did everyone like composing?

[students agree]

Anybody not keen on it?

#4: I don't like it when it's more than 24 bars, it's not fun then.

GL: What, just hard work?

#4: Yeah.

#6: I'm not very good at composing things but I find it fun, though.

GL: Oh good, excellent. Ok, well what are some of the aspects of class music that Year 8 students generally don't find interesting and enjoyable, and why might that be?

#5: Theory because it's boring and we just keep doing it over and over again.

GL: Do you do a lot of theory?

#5: It seems like it.

GL: Anyone else feel the same way?

[other students agree]

#4: More specifically, the whole learning about the majors and the minors because then you have the melodic and then the whole other ones, and then it just gets confusing. You

have raise the seventh and then not raise the seventh, and then change it all the way back down so it's all natural.

GL: So it's confusing as much as anything?

#4: Yeah, very confusing.

#7: I think that we shouldn't really do theory in class because I like did theory like, when I did my normal lessons which were outside of school, it was like you have theory exams and all that. So I think you shouldn't have to do like things that you do exams for in class.

GL: That's a good point.

#5: Sometimes we don't...even though we're not doing it in our books, we still do it on the board so it's like more theory. And we don't spend long enough on things so they don't really stick in.

GL: You mean don't spend long enough on the theory or the practical stuff?

#5: No, on the theory, like when we're learning different things – like how to change to relative minors and things.

GL: Oh, ok. Anything else that anyone is not that keen on in class music?

#6: I'm not very keen on like...finding key signatures and that. I just think it just gets like really confusing.

GL: So again, it's a bit more theory isn't it.

#6: Yeah.

GL: Anyone over here? Is it mainly the theory stuff that you're not so keen on?

[students agree]

Ok, good. Well, what could we do to make class music more interesting and enjoyable for all students – even those that aren't that keen. What could we do as teachers?

#5: Do more of the things like board games, because that makes it fun, other than theory all the time.

GL: Ok, good. So more board games, more sort of stuff like that. What else?

#2: Like practical things instead of just writing in the theory books and stuff.

GL: Ok, composing or just playing or a bit of both?

#2: Yeah, both.

GL: Yeah?

#1: Learn while like playing games instead of just talking through on the board, like doing more worksheets and games.

GL: Ok, so maybe we could do a bit of theory but if we did it in more of a fun way rather than just boring on the board – is that sort of thing?

#?: We were once, we were learning about the different types of music like...no, no, the three types that we're doing the Harry Potter thing for...

[students discuss together]

#?: We had us...like singing and things. It was like better than just sitting down listening.

GL: So you were singing. Ok, let's go into some more specific questions then. Would most students find class music, the activities, challenging. Are they challenging/hard to do or are they generally pretty easy?

#7: I think that some things are pretty easy like when we do research tasks and all them things, because it's already like there for you, you just have to kind of find it. But with theory and stuff, you kind of have to work to find out – which is like a lot harder.

GL: Cool. Anyone else have a thought on that? Do you find the stuff generally challenging or do you find it fairly easy to do?

#4: I don't play an instrument so it's harder to understand it because I don't put it into practice like at all. So someone who plays like the cello, they know more about certain key signatures and they're easier to identify for them.

GL: Oh, ok, yeah, so we don't always put into practice. That's a good point.

#2: It's like...with the music and stuff, the theory and that, like...if the book's ok, because you like learn stuff, like it's from easy and then at the end of the book it's harder. So like with the tests and stuff, they do it really hard and...I haven't learnt music before, I'm just learning with the book, and it's like harder, and I haven't gotten up to that, so we didn't know what it was.

GL: So maybe tests and things need to be a little bit more graded from easy to hard?

#2: Yeah.

GL: Ok, that's a good point.

#1: I find it fairly easy because I did theory out of school before so I learnt most of the things that she's teaching.

GL: Oh, ok. So the people who haven't played instruments are saying that it's actually quite hard, and the people who have done theory before are saying it's actually pretty easy then.

#1: Yeah.

GL: Ok, then that's a tricky one, isn't it. What about, do most students find class music relevant? The sort of things that you're doing in class, are they the sort of musical things that you would do outside of school? Let's start over here.

#7: I think like at the beginning of the year we did a research task and we had to research like the different, the different, like, types of music – like romantic period and all that. I think that was a bit irrelevant because you don't really need to know that kind of to play music.

GL: Ok, yep, fair enough. Someone else?

#5: I thought that the research task was pretty good because we...it was something to do, like hands on, and it helps a bit for exams and everything. But with the relative minors and everything, I don't think we're ever going to use that – it's not something you'd look at music and try and change it.

GL: Sure. Anyone else comment on that – the things you do, do you think they're relevant all the time or are they a bit sort of 'I can't see the point of them'?

#2: I think most of them are relevant, like most of the theory stuff is like we learn about it and then we do it sometime later in the year or whatever. But like lots of the research and stuff, it's like we're never going to use it, like for playing an instrument or whatever. It's just like tomorrow.

GL: Ok, that's fair enough. Would most students think it's important to understand how music works? I mean, we're talking about theory here – what do you think – is it important that we understand how music works, how it's put together?

#4: I think it is because it helps you, I don't like...like be more in touch when you're playing your instrument. You think more about it so you know more about what you're playing and you really think about what notes you're playing and does it do this, or what does it do.

GL: Ok. Yeah?

#2: I don't think like...well like with the notes and stuff, like how long they last for and stuff. You think about that but you don't think about the majors and minors or like the fourths and thirds and stuff, when you're playing an instrument or whatever.

GL: Does anyone else want to come in on this? Do you think it's important to understand how music works, so that we know the theory because we understand how it works, or is that not really so important – it's better just to do it?

#5: I don't think we really need to unless we're playing or composing later in life. So I don't really think it's necessary.

GL: So there needs to be a point for doing the theory?

#6: I think it's good that we do theory because it helps us with...because I sing, it helps me with singing because I know how long I have to hold a note for and just, yeah, what key I sing in and stuff like that.

#4: It helps me understand it better, because obviously I'm not that musical, so when they talk about like a specific piece and when we're analysing it, I'm not as in tune with everyone else and what they're doing. So if I know more about the majors and the minors, I can relate to it more.

GL: Cool. It seems to me that there's sort of a common theme coming through there, is that we think that theory is important but we don't necessarily like it. Is that sort of right?

[students agree]

Anyone disagree? So is it just the way theory is presented that's more than an issue – not the fact that you're doing theory, but more the way it's presented – is that...possibly, does that make sense?

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Ok, because I think the point over here was quite a good one – you're using the theory to actually put it into practice. Ok, great. Would most students find class music activities useful? Are they useful – which ones, you mean, like in your daily life, would there be anything you do in class music that you would think would be really useful in your daily life?

#2:   Only if you're playing an instrument, like the theory side would help you like read the music and know how to play it, and like what they're for and stuff.

GL: Do any of you use it outside the classroom?

#5:   Not really but if you want to be a board game designer, you know how to do that know.

GL: Ok, so there's good applied knowledge there. Ok, well, how useful could class music be in terms of say, later in your life? Is it only useful for people that want to be musicians or could there be anything else – helping you relax or getting a job or something like that? Do any of you think that music might be useful? Let's start around here.

#7:   I think that music only really helps you if when you're older, you want to be like a musician or something, because if you want to get a job as like a lawyer or something, and then you know heaps about music but not much about anything else, you're not really going to…it's not really going to help you much to get that job.

GL: Do others think similarly, or does anyone think differently? Number three, do you want to jump in at some stage?

#3:   Yeah, I agree.

GL: Bravo, well done. Courage! Yeah? So you really just see music as being something that is good for people that want to be musicians, not necessarily something in life?

[students agree]

Ok, no worries. Why do some students quit class music? Let's start over here and we'll come around the table.

#2:   Because it's like really hard and like…if you're not doing well and stuff, and if you don't want to be a musician later in life, you decide you want to do something else, then you'd quit.

GL: Absolutely, yeah.

#4:   I find it gets tedious because I don't go around analysing everything that I listen to, and I don't get it on a piece of paper and everything, so I don't…

GL: Yeah, that's fair enough, yeah.

#5:   I think it's not so great because it's pretty hard and you have to think a lot more than you would in everything else.

GL: Really?

#5:   Also you don't get something to take home, like in food tech, you have food to take home, and I've just bought home a clock from d-tech, but with music you don't really get anything to take home except the theory book.

GL: **What if you were, say, composing a piece of music and it was recorded and you got to take home a CD of the piece that you've written – would that be good?**

#5:   Yeah, that would be better because you have something to show for all your work.

GL: **What about you guys – why do you think people sort of often quit music?**

#6:   Oh, I agree with her.

#7:   I think people quit because...heaps of people stop playing instruments after a while because maybe they're finding it hard to like work, like cope with everything, so then they just stop music because...

GL: **Because they don't see much point in it?**

#7:   Yeah.

GL: **Ok, now that's fair enough. Do you have to give up anything to do class music – like does music take up more of your options than some of your other options, or is it the same? In some schools, you know, mostly options will run as a double period, but in some schools music will run as like a four period option. Do you have that issue here?**

#5:   We only get the choice of three things we can choose, so it takes up one of them, having to do it.

GL: **What about next year – is that the same next year in Year 9 or do you get more choices? It's only three choices next year, is it?**

[students answer yes]

        Ok, cool. Anyone else – what do you think?

#4:   I was going to do French as well this year because I also do Italian and Japanese but then my sister talked me out of it and she said, no you should do something easier, so I picked music, and then the theory is harder. So I'm more...and I'm doing French next year, I'm not doing music.

GL: **So really...there's not a lot in terms of...it doesn't intrude too much upon your other subjects – it's more just the fact that the subject is hard and not necessarily relevant that people quit – is that sort of right or...anyone want to come in that?**

#2:   But like with subject choice and stuff, if you want to do something else, if you're on a scholarship you have to do music, so you've only got two other electives to pick.

GL: **So it does narrow it down a bit?**

#2:   Yeah.

GL: **Ok. Let's keep moving – sorry, I'm just conscious of not taking up buckets of time. The next one then is how important is it for students to think that they understand and can do all the things in class music? So I'm not talking now about the sorts of activities, but how important is it to think that you can actually do them? Does that**

make sense? Being competent, feeling like you can actually do it, being competent, like being able to do the theory. How important is it that you think you can actually understand what the theory is?

#5: I think it's pretty important because otherwise you feel you're getting left behind and everyone is moving ahead of you.

GL: I mean, basically do you think it's important to actually feel like you can do it – or I mean, what if you feel 'aw, I'm really struggling, I don't understand this' – does that get you down or is it really important that you think 'oh yeah, I really know what I'm doing' – does that make a difference, feeling competent? Not sure on that one?

#2: Not really because like...you either know...you can or you can't do it, but if you know you can't do it, you just like do more or whatever or do it out of class.

GL: Ok. But was that a hard question?

[students answer yes]

I'm just sort of saying this time, I'm sort of thinking, like, you know, some people seem to be really good at music and others not so good. Is it important to feel like you're really good at the subject – does that sort of change your attitude to it, if you think you're really good at the subject, does that change it?

#4: I think motivation and encouragement make you feel like you are better at the subject so you're more likely to excel in it. Like if the...because some teachers, they focus on the better students and they ask them the questions and they'll pick them to answer, so the other students don't really get a chance.

GL: Is that the case in music?

#4: Not all the time really. Sometimes.

#6: I think it's important that you feel confident because if you don't, like if you feel like you're kind of lagging behind and then you feel like you have to do so much more homework to catch up, and if you have any questions, like while you're at time, you can't ask like your parents because my parents aren't very musical, so you get kind of stressed, you need to, yeah...

GL: Yeah, that's fair enough.

#2: I don't know if it's as much as like whether you think you're good at it or not, I reckon it's like if you enjoy it, because if you like it, you want to do it.

GL: Good point. That's a really good point. Ok, I'm just going to move into a slightly different area that's sort of talking about whether you think you're going to get any better at it – you know, if you keep doing it, do you think you're going to get any better or not. So do most students think they're going to get better at understanding how music is put together and how music works – do you think you will get better with practice?

#5: I think if it keeps being explained differently every time, then eventually you'll catch on to it. If you say exactly the same thing every time, you stop really listening and then you don't understand it.

GL: That's a really good point. Anyone else? Do you think you'll get better in time?

#4: I think if it's applied more it sort of sticks better more. I don't know, my brain works in weird ways and if the same thing happens again and again, it just sort of sticks there. Like I know a lot of Italian vocab but not as much Japanese because not all the Japanese is applied there. And in music, not all the same things are applied to the theme at the time. Like we'll learn about majors and minors but then we'll go do a polyphonic song and then it doesn't really click together.

GL: Ok, that's a good point. Anyone else want to come in on that for the last time? Do you think you will get better in this – do you think you will get better in time if you kept going with music?

#2: I reckon you will get better but only if they keep explaining it to you. Like what Julia said, because like if they keep explaining it and you don't get it, and like they do it the same way each time, you still won't understand it.

GL: Ok, good point. Let's keep moving on. Do students...do you get to make music in class music – do you get to play and sing much?

#7: Well, like every term we have a concert prac where we get to like play music, a piece from the instrument we play, and we did compositions and we also did the other thing that they were talking about – from the Harry Potter thing – we were just like doing rhythmic rhythm and stuff.

GL: Yes?

#?: Oh no, I was just going to say the concert prac.

GL: So was that...did you get to do much singing or practical stuff regularly or is it just like once a semester/once a term?

#5: I don't think we do it enough. We do it about...because we do...we only do one concert prac a term and we've only done the composed once in the whole year.

GL: Fair enough. Anyone around here?

#1: I think it is enough because every single term you would want to play a different song or sing a different song and usually you like learn a long, like maybe once a term, like a new one every term. So you wouldn't really want to do the same song over and over again.

GL: What if you were doing different ones?

#1: Yeah, but you might not have learnt that many in the short time.

GL: That's one view.

#2: We don't do much in class, like we only do it once a term for concert prac or whatever. But you can do it at assemblies and stuff if you really want to.

GL: I'm just sort of focusing on class music. What about the idea if you did a little bit of performance or singing or something in every class – would you like to do that? Is that something...or a bit of composing or singing or performing, not necessarily a concert practice but like a class ensemble or something?

#?: I guess you'd get more used to performing in front of people. You wouldn't be as nervous when you had to do it by yourself in front of the class.

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#4: No, because I'm sort of told, so when we stand I generally get the back and then everyone in front of you could hear what you're singing. And if you sing really softly, the teacher will know because they don't get any sound from the back and it sort of makes you feel a bit small.

GL: **Ok. Coming back to the question – the idea about performing every lesson, or singing or doing something or composing in every lesson rather than just theory.**

#?: I reckon, because one lesson we stood around the piano and we all sung to learn about the textures and things, and I thought that really helped me understand things. And it made it fun too.

GL: **Good. I just want to keep moving just for a sec, because I'm conscious of the time. If you did more practical stuff, more singing and playing, do you reckon you'd get better at it?**

#?: I reckon we would because we're actually doing something rather than sitting down and just copying off the board.

GL: **Yep. Anyone else want to come in on that? Do you reckon you'd get better at actually doing music if you did more of it?**

#4: Because when you apply it more, it sort of sticks there and you'll get it. Like if you do a little bit of theory and then you put it into practice, I think we're more likely to understand it because we can see where it's applied and we could recognise it more.

GL: **That's a really good point, isn't it. So if you took the theory and then did something with it, then suddenly it all makes sense. That's a really, really good point. Thanks for that. Ok, we'll keep moving on. Do you do much group work in class music? Do you split up into groups at all?**

#2: Yeah, like for projects and stuff, we normally go in groups, like for the board game thing we went in groups of four and stuff.

GL: **Ok, cool. How important is it getting on with others in groups – is that a big issue in music classes – getting on with other people?**

#4: Extremely because if you don't trust that person enough, they might…and you get really conscious of it and you get worried about it, because you're not sure if they will complete this, so you over-compensate it and it's like you sort of stand over them and you watch what they're doing for every second.

GL: **Ooh, ok, so getting on with others is important. Yeah, scary.**

#5: I was going to say that everyone in our class seems to get on with each other pretty well anyway.

GL: **Oh, ok, right.**

#5: And that it's a pretty friendly class.

GL: **Ok. So is that something that will improve in the future – do you think you'll get on even better in the future, as you get to know each other better, do you think you might get on better and work better in groups?**

#?:   I think we'll work better in groups when we're older because we'll know each other more and we'll know what each other's strengths and weaknesses are. So you could like give each other a job each and like you'd know who would do the best of each job, sort of.

GL: **Absolutely. Good point. Anyone else want to comment on that? Do you reckon it would be better working in the future with...it would become easier as you get to know each other better and better?**

[some students agree, but not all]

    Ok, let's move on. Do you reckon how students feel about themselves, in relation to the whole of their subjects, does that affect how they feel about themselves in relation to music? Like, I mean, if you think you're really good at school, does that mean you think you're really good at music, or if you're struggling at school, does that mean you're automatically going to struggle at music?

#7:   Well, I don't really think it means...like the only other subjects that you really do use in music is probably maths. It's not like you use English or SND or anything so it doesn't necessarily mean that you're going to struggle in music as well.

GL: **Ok, so you can think of music as a bit separate to your other subjects. Is that...do most people think that – you think of music separately to the rest of your school subjects, or do you sort of think them all the, all a big bunch of subjects that you do at school?**

#4:   I sort of think of some of them as joined. Like maths is sort of linked to music, and Italian is too. So I don't know...because I'm not as good at music as I am at Italian and maths, so it forms a sort of weird connection.

GL: **How about you guys – number one or number three – is that...do you sort of think you're good at your school subjects and then that sort of converts into music, or do you sort of think of music as a completely separate subject?**

#1:   I think it's quite separate. It's only got like a little connection with maths because you have to add all the beats together and stuff.

GL: **Let me just rephrase one more question then. Most of us would probably think we're going to get better at school subjects, aren't we – does that mean we're going to get better at music as well? Or do you think you might get better at your other subjects and not get any better at music?**

#2:   Like at theory or actually playing?

GL: **Well, theory, yeah. What do you think?**

#2:   I reckon that you'll like, if you don't understand it and they keep explaining it the same, you won't get it. But if you just keep trying to learn and stuff, you'll end up getting it.

GL: **Ok, cool.**

#4:   I also think it depends on the amount of focus you put into it. Like if you think more about maths than you do about music, obviously you're going to try harder at maths. So then your music might fall behind a bit if you don't focus on it enough.

GL: Ok, cool. Anyone else around here? So you think you're going to get better at your other subjects – do you also think you're going to get better at music or is music going to pretty much stay the same.

#?: Going to get better at it.

GL: You think you'll get better?

#?: Yeah.

GL: Right. Last three questions – woo-hoo! We're nearly there, and then there's a couple of more Freddo's to go. Is music this year easier or harder than last year?

#3: This year it's a lot harder because at my old school we didn't do music hardly any. We had music once a week and that was singing songs and that was about it. And then this year it's a lot harder because we're doing theory and learning about key signatures and everything and we never learnt that at our old school.

GL: Can I ask you a follow-up question – did you enjoy doing all the singing?

#3: No.

GL: That's an honest answer. Over here – easier or harder?

#?: I reckon it's harder…I went to Penhros last year as well but last year we played like…because we kind of…for about a term we did a composition on bins – like we just drummed, sort of thing, so basically for lots of lessons we were banging on drums. But this year we are like learning more about like theory and composers and things.

GL: It's a bit more structured?

#?: Yeah.

#4: I think I've got a bit to add to Emily's – it's because last year we all had to do every subject so everyone, even the people who didn't want to, they had to do music. So I don't think they really structured it in a way that actually teach us that much because they thought most of…because most of the people don't end up going on with it. Only like a handful of people do so I think this year it's more structured and last year it was a bit more basic.

GL: Ok, cool. Anyone else follow up on that one? Let me just move on to the last question then. Is there anyone else that you guys would like to add that we might have missed in our discussion as to why some students like class music, and why some students quit? Why do you think some students would like to go on with class music, and why do think some students quit? Let's have a quick whip around one last time.

#7: Well, some students, like people, some people will quit any subject if they don't like the teacher or they feel like they don't really understand the subject, or it's boring or something.

GL: Ok, cool. So the teacher is important?

#7: Yeah.

#?: I think if you want to like…say if you play an instrument, you'd want to do music because you'd learn more about like things to do with your instrument and if you want

to do it in university or something. And people who want to be a doctor wouldn't really find it relevant so they might do other subjects.

GL: **That's an interesting one. Yeah. So why do you think...any ideas as to why you think some students might continue on with it, why do you think some students might quit?**

#5: I think the reason some people quit is because if they're on a music scholarship, you're forced to do it. So I think they kind of like the choice of being able to do it.

#4: Because I find it more relevant. Some students might continue on because they find it more relevant to what they do. Like even though I don't play an instrument, I find bits about music in books and things, and because I like those books, I want to know more about the music and why these characters like it and everything.

GL: **Good. Good point. Number three, did you want to come in on there?**

#3: I think people continue if they actually want to be in a job that has something to do with music, and that's one of the reasons they continue it.

GL: **So thinking about what you're going to do later in life is important in your subject choice, not about doing subjects maybe for enjoyment but subjects that you think are going to be important or useful to you?**

#3: Maybe in the Year 8 and 9 you might do it for enjoyment but then when you get into the higher years, you might start thinking about subjects that will help you with what you want to be.

GL: **Cool. Do you guys want to come in?**

#2: I think it depends on whether or not you enjoy as well as like whether you want to do it later in life, like if you want to go to uni or work as a musician or whatever.

GL: **That theme has come up a number of times – enjoying, isn't it, you mention that quite a bit.**

#2: Yeah, if you don't like the teachers or like your classmates or whatever, or the subject, you won't keep doing it if it's not fun.

GL: **Did you want to add something as well?**

#1: It depends on your interest in music because some people might like have a bigger interest in drama so music might take up the subject that you want to do, and also if you have friends in the class, because I find that when you have friends in the class, you enjoy no matter what you're doing because you can sort of like talk to them and stuff.

GL: **Well, that's an interesting one, yeah. Anything else – any last comments on why some people might enjoy and why some people might not? We've actually spoken about it quit a bit, it's been good. Any last comments? Pretty much covered it? Ok, brilliant! That's it!**

--- END OF INTERVIEW ---

Transcribed by Orr Solutions

SCHOOL 7 – INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

GL: Gentlemen, what I'll do is ask a couple of sort of really general questions first of all and we'll just go around the table, and then I'll ask you some specific questions, if that's ok, and then at the very end then you can tell me if there is anything we've sort of missed. Ok, first of all let's start off with 'what are some of the aspects of class music that most students find enjoyable?' Ok, what are some of the things you enjoy and can you give me a reason. What do you enjoy?

#1: Having fun on the computers.

GL: Why do you find that enjoyable?

#1: Because you learn more.

GL: You learn more?

#1: Yeah.

GL: Ok, cool. Number two?

#2: Well I like going on the computers because you like just press a button and it sounds like an instrument.

GL: Do you get to use the computers a lot?

#2: About a third of the lesson.

GL: Ok, and what do you do the rest of the time?

#2: We do theory.

GL: Ok, cool, and do you do that as written theory?

#2: Yes.

GL: Ok. Number three?

#3: I enjoy a lot of things, occasionally the computer as number one and two said. Just playing with my friends.

GL: In the music class, you get to do some group work, do you?

#3: Yeah, like...well, like last term we did a bit of singing and sometimes dancing, but I don't enjoy that. Yeah, it's real fun, interactive – I am a kinesthetic learner so I enjoy it.

GL: So you enjoy the sort of interactive side?

#3: Yep.

GL: Ok, cool. Next one?

#4:   I probably like the computers because you get to probably learn more, like number one said and yeah, but we don't go on them very often.

GL: **Ok. So it's a bit of a treat?**

#4:   Mm.

GL: **Ok, yeah. Number five?**

#5:   I like the garage band program because you can experiment and combine them and see how it works and then you can like compare and listen to your peers' music.

GL: **Ok, cool. Yep, next one?**

#6:   I enjoy the, yeah, the computer kind of learning because I think it's just proven that kids learn a lot more when they're actually doing things and just mucking around with the instruments, and it's just...and like you're writing with your friends so you can kind of talk while you're doing it and stuff like that.

GL: **Ok. Do you find that using the computer is just a little more structured – is that what it is that you like about it?**

#6:   Yeah, it's pretty good because just like...it's so fun experimenting with the music because like you can choose any instrument you want really.

GL: **And when you do the computers, you get the chance to sort of create your own music or are you sort of given specific tasks?**

#4:   You're mostly given specific tasks and the...another good thing about it is that you can record it and it's always going to be there whereas if you played with the actual real instruments, then you might get it the same again.

GL: **Great, so one of the things is it's important to be able to hear back what you've been doing – that's a good thing?**

#4:   Yeah.

GL: **What about, what are some of the aspects of class music that students generally don't like? Let's start at this end – is there anything in particular that you think, not just yourself but other students don't like?**

#6:   Some of the...when we...people mucking around, we had to a whole lesson of theory, which is all written work, when the teacher gets kind of really mad.

#5:   Yeah, I don't like theory that much either.

#4:   I don't like the theory and the written work because when you do it, you don't get to speak or do anything exciting. It's mostly just writing down something that somebody/the teacher tells you to do.

GL: **Cool. Anyone got anything different to that – is it the same for you guys as well? Number one?**

#1:   Yeah, I don't really like it because no-one really brings their speakers, their headphones, so people just get the ones out of the box and then when people are late they don't get one – they don't like...they get the bad pair and you can't like listen to them or anything.

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GL: So something that sort of mucks up working on the computer.

#2: Like the teachers are really enthusiastic and stuff and that's like really good, because it like sucks having a bad teacher because it's really boring.

GL: Ok, that's a good one, that's a bit different.

#3: As number two said, the teachers are very enthusiastic but when the teacher is enthusiastic they're not enthusiastic about what we like to do – they like enjoy writing more than computer. We're a lot more passionate about using the computer but they enjoy doing more written work.

GL: That's an interesting point. So then what do you guys reckon could be done to make class music more interesting and enjoyable for the majority of students? Yeah?

#6: I reckon they should actually get some instruments in the work, like school instruments.

GL: Like ah...you mean like clarinets and trombones – not like the xylophones or particular instruments? Rock guitars, bass, drums?

#6: Yeah, like guitars. Like an instrument for each...sort of like two cheap guitars, two half drum sets, bass guitars.

#5: I think maybe a bit more time and/or time on the computers.

GL: More time in the class generally, you mean you don't get enough time in class music or you want more time on the computer?

#5: Yeah because sometimes when you're doing a piece of work and then like the time is over, you're just about to finish something and you have to like wait a couple of days before you can continue.

GL: Oh, ok, yeah, that's a good point. Anything to add? What would you like to see more of?

#7: Probably more on the computer and maybe like more physical, like playing actual instruments, like maybe even get a xylophone or drum kit and just have a go one lesson.

GL: Cool. That seems to be a theme that's coming out quite a bit is that you guys really like it when you actually do the music, not just do the theory side. You really want to do it. Is that pretty much the case?

[students answer yes]

Anyone disagree or...?

#6: Most people when they grow up, like they know a lot about the music but they really can't play, and it's kind of like when you do music you kind of really want to learn how to play and not just like what it consists of.

GL: That's fantastic, that's a really good point. You guys want to come in on that, anything to say?

#3: Well, I would really like not just instruments, sort of like surround sound so you can hear it every angle. So it's not just like it is coming from one location – it's like one whole room – where you can enjoy yourself and have fun with music.

#1: I reckon that it would be pretty good to get real instruments and record them so you know what you're playing and then if you've done something wrong, then you can record...like do it again because it sounds on the copy because you can record them and listen to them again, but if you play them real, like on a real instrument, you can't just like go straight back to it and see what you've done wrong.

GL: So really, does it sort of make you feel proud when you can hear what you've done on the computer when you play it back – you sort of think 'oh wow, I did that'?

[students agree]

Next question: what sort of activities do you find the most challenging in class music? Yeah?

#6: I think scales but once you really get the hang of it, they're pretty easy, but all the naming notes, that's pretty, that's just me but that was a little bit difficult but it's not that hard.

GL: I'll just jump over this side, we've sort of ignored you guys a little bit. Would most students find class music activities challenging?

#1: Writing the music, yeah, the notes, because sometimes you get a little lost.

#2: Well, some people just can't really read music that well, I can't read it that well but it's not...

GL: So that's quite a challenge to a lot of kids, is it, just coping with the reading side of it? Do the computers help with that?

[students answer yes]

Ok, cool. Would most students find class music as sort of relevant to their lives?

#3: Very relevant to my life because I enjoy it so much, it's like...I reckon...it's not so much as important than English or Maths but I reckon it's more important to me because I enjoy it a lot more than other subjects.

GL: Great. Anyone else come in on that – how important is class music to some of you guys?

#6: Well, I'm pretty sure it is because it depends what you really want to do with your life, like...say someone wanted to go and play pro music, well, then they've done it all and they know how to do it.

#4: I agree with number six. If somebody wanted a career to do with music, then they had the course in during school rather than having to go off to college and learn for another couple of years, trying to find out how you do it.

GL: What about, is it just about – is it important only for getting a job or is it important for someone of you to just be good at music anyway?

#1: Yeah, it's sort of just to...for both because you want to have fun and you want to learn it so you know what to do when you come back to it in your life.

#6: I think it's just really good to have and like, just as something to do otherwise sometimes it just gets so boring around the house, you just want to do something.

GL: Anyone else want to come in on this?

#2: Yes, it's really good to have it because some days you've got like all your core subjects and then you just have music at the end and that just like changes the day, makes it fun again.

GL: Good point. Yeah?

#5: I think music would be important in everyday life because after a day you could just go away and like have the break by playing music.

GL: So help you to relax/chill out. Ok, great. I know you guys have said that theory is a bit of a drag but is it important to do the theory to help you understand how music works?

#6: I think it really is important because if you don't really know how to read the music or write down the music, you're really not going to...if someone says, 'oh, can you play that?' and put a piece of music sheet of paper in front of you. If you just know how to play songs that have been taught to you, you're not really going to know what to do.

#4: I think that when you're learning theory you should maybe just do a couple of weeks on it, at the start maybe, and learn some of the notes, otherwise like we're doing, we just keep going and going, like every week and we just repeat the same thing. There are only a few scales that we need to learn but we keep on going over them and having tests again and again on the same thing.

GL: So there's not enough challenge in that, at this stage?

#4: Yeah.

GL: Anyone else want to come in on that one? How important is it to actually understand how music works?

#6: I think it is still very important

GL: Yeah. Because you've all sort of said that you don't like doing the theory but in a sense you're also saying but it is sort of important. Anyone got anything to say on that or...? We're sort of saying that we don't like the theory.

#1: Just going on the theory...I think we should be doing it because in class we don't learn about semi-tones and all the types of notes, but in theory book it shows us what all the notes are so, yeah, in normal class we don't know about all the notes, we just learn it in theory.

#4: I think that we should do more theory out of books rather than the teachers telling us what the scales are and showing us the notes, because the books show it better, and they move on, like progress, rather than the teachers telling us this and then forgetting they've taught us and saying it again the next week.

GL: And so that would give you more time to devote to the computers and practical stuff?

#4: Yeah.

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#6: I'm going to have to disagree with that because I think that a lot of, I think that a lot of us here would rather learn it off the teacher and the board rather than kind of writing stuff in a book – that's like an hour of study, it's not much fun.

#2: Yeah, I agree with number six.

#5: I think theory is important to learn because when you do class music where you have to actually record something, at least you can kind of know how to maneuver around the keyboard to actually make something sound good.

GL: Good. Ok, let's move on to something slightly different. I'm going to ask you sort of a slightly different question here. Would most students find the activities you do in class music useful?

#3: Well, there is a reason why we've picked music as an elective. It's because we want to do it maybe to help our careers in the future or for some reason. It's useful for us in our perspective but it maybe wouldn't be useful to someone who picks like business as their elective, because they might not use it in the future, so it might not be relevant to them.

GL: Which particular activities do you find the most useful – what sort of things do you do in class music that are most useful?

#1: Probably when he writes it on the board and stuff because...like when he writes all the scales and the notes, because...it just helps people and it's fun.

GL: Anyone else want to come in on that? I'm sort of thinking now, you're saying, some of you are saying that it's useful, some of the things you do in class music. Which particular types of activities – is it more useful when you go on the computer, is it more useful when do practical stuff like singing or is it more useful doing the theory?

#6: I think it can really help you with your computer skills a lot and like your playing skills because you're...like when you're just sitting there you can go, oh that's easy, CD and that sort of thing. Like with the computers you just know what to do.

GL: That's an interesting point that the music computers help you get better at computers generally. Anyone else want to come in on that?

#5: I think theory's important because it's something that you can remember for most of your life and when you play an instrument you can find it rather useful.

GL: Ok. Are there any other activities that are particularly useful?

#6: I'd have to also probably say theory is useful but it's not that fun.

GL: Good point.

#6: So they should maybe make it more enjoyable.

GL: Great. How could they do that – any ideas? How could you make theory more enjoyable?

#6: I don't know.

GL: It's ok. Maybe we'll come back to that one. Ok, why do some kids quit class music? Let's start with number three.

#3: Maybe because they don't...I reckon maybe because they don't enjoy it or they find it boring, because maybe it doesn't suit their style of how they learn or what they want to do. But there's a reason why we all like to do it – because we enjoy music and the way it's made and everything.

#2: Yeah. I reckon it's because they just don't want to put the hard work in to get some fun stuff out and they're lazy.

GL: Ok, so you reckon music is actually quite hard work – can be hard work?

[a few students answer at the same time – 'it can be hard work' and 'some of it']

So just come back to the main question then – why do you think some kids quit – why do some kids drop out?

#6: Because I play guitar, right, well...a lot of people that I know had quit guitar because when you learn how to play an instrument, the basics are always the hardest bit. But once you get over that, it really becomes fun and like you really start enjoying it. But most people I know can't get past that, that mental area.

GL: Ok, that's true.

#5: Perhaps they don't like it because they find doing the scales theory a bit boring and they don't actually want to like learn, like base clef, treble clef, all the different notes and names and other technical stuff.

GL: If you were to roughly divide the amount of, sort of the activities that you do in class music, how much roughly the time do you reckon you'd spend on computers, how much doing sort of other practical stuff, and how much time would you do on theory, do you reckon – just a rough breakdown?

#1: We don't do much theory, we haven't done any theory this term but...oh, we might have done a few but...we don't do that many because we're normally on the computers, so yeah.

GL: That's ok, we'll come back to you. Number four, were you go to...? Roughly how much time do you reckon you'd spend on computers, then on practical stuff and then on theory stuff?

#4: I'd say probably about half the lesson on the computers but probably at the end, and maybe do 15 minutes of theory and maybe before doing some computer work, do some practical stuff.

GL: So that's what you currently do now?

#4: No.

GL: Oh, that's what you'd like to do?

#4: Yeah.

GL: Oh, ok, great. What about what you currently do now?

#6: We're kind of doing this stuff where we're learning the concepts of chords and what they're made up of, and how to make them. So I'd probably spend a quarter of the time

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on that, a quarter on actual theory and the other half using computers, learning them by yourselves, like teaching ourselves.

GL: Great. Ok, a couple more questions – just to go onto something a little bit different. How many periods a week do you do of music?

#6: Two.

GL: And do you lose option choices if you do it?

#6: No.

GL: So it doesn't affect your other choices?

[students answer no]

Do you just do this for a semester?

[students answer yes]

At this stage, who is thinking of maybe doing it next year?

[all students answer yes]

All of you? Ok. Next question. Is it important for students to feel they understand and can actually do the tasks that you give them – is that important to feel like you can actually do it?

#3: Sort of and sort of not. It would be more effective if you do know what you're doing but even if you don't know what you're doing, it can still be fun and enjoyable because you've still got music to listen. You want to go anywhere, of course you're going to have to be good at it but you can always improve anytime in doing music.

GL: Cool. Anyone else want to come in on that – how important is it to feel like you really understand what you're doing? I mean, do some kids get sort of downhearted because they don't really understand? How important is it to understand what you're doing?

#6: I think it is really important to know what you're doing because when I play, I get really frustrated when I'm trying to play a song that I don't know, and I'm really trying to get my head around but it just doesn't happen.

GL: Does it make you want to quit?

#6: Yeah, it does.

#5: I think actually being able to achieve the tasks is really important because it's like a certain amount of frustration of not being able to nail it and you like have to keep on pressing record and like deleting what you've done if you really want to get it perfect.

GL: Is that why a computer is good? Because you get a chance to go back and fix it?

[students answer yes]

#1: I always make mistakes so I just take it back and do it again.

GL: Cool. Ok, we've only got a couple more questions to go. We're nearly there guys. We're nearly done. Do most students think they'll get better at understanding how music is put together in the future? Do you think you're going to get better?

[students answer yes]

Anyone not sure?

[one student answers 'depends if you do it, I will']

Ok, so we all think we're going to get better.

#6: I think if...I think...it really depends...if you want to get better you always have to listen in class work. Some people are just doing music because they get to play on the computers a whole period and if you really want to get better, but they just...you've really got concentrate.

GL: Ok. Now the sort of stuff that you're doing in class music, is that the sort of stuff that's going to help you get better or is some of it not sort of relevant?

#?: Some of it isn't.

GL: Which sort of stuff?

#?: Probably the stuff that he does on the board, the teacher does on the board.

GL: But in general, do you think the sort of things you do in class music are going to help you understand music more?

[some students answer yes]

Anyone feel anything like yes or no or not sure...you're just itching to say something, aren't you, number four?

#4: Yeah, I think that some of it isn't relevant, probably about 40% of it isn't relevant because like some of the stuff that we do, like originally we've been learning like who gets number one and four and stuff on scales, no...main...chords, and I don't think that will help you much during music. We just keep on changing them and it doesn't seem to help you very much.

GL: Ok, next one. Do you guys get to do music much in class music – do you get to sort of play the instruments and sing and do any of that?

[students mostly answer no]

#6: We haven't done that all year. We don't...we haven't played an actual instrument the whole year. We've only been playing kind of instruments on the electric keyboards.

GL: Is that something that students like doing – playing the instruments?

#3: I've always wanted to play the instruments in music but it's not actually music, it's music technology, so it's all about the technology of music, it's not so much playing it. That's what sort of music, like music lessons are for, that's so we can actually play an instrument for a whole 30 minutes non-stop.

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GL: Ok. Do most students find these activities easy, you know, when you play instruments, is that something you find easy or is it something that is quite hard to do?

#1: If you're reading notes, it sort of is. For a keyboard I find it difficult to read notes but...

#2: Yeah, I've been playing for like 4 years so it was like really hard when I started but it's pretty easy now, and the work we do in class kind of supports it.

GL: Oh, ok. That's good. Ok, let's move on then. Do you do much group work in class music or you generally work on your own?

#6: No, we don't really go in groups, we kind of just do our own thing.

GL: Have you done group work in the past?

#3: Yeah, we've done group work in the past, like sort of formed a mini-band type thing to play some music, or like a full class project type thing. They've been good.

GL: Were there any problems with people getting on with each other in the group?

#?: Not so far.

GL: Is that something that's not really a big issue for guys, if you were thinking now, if you had to work in a group in class music, do you think maybe you'd all get on or do you think there could be clashes?

#1: I think we'd all get on because everyone are friends practically.

#6: I think we'd be pretty good because we're all good blokes.

GL: How do your feelings about school affect how you feel about class music? Like, if you think you're pretty good at school, does that sort of automatically think you're going to feel pretty good in class music or...?

#6: No, I don't think having any academic knowledge – it can help a little bit but academic knowledge doesn't really help you in music.

GL: Anyone else, anyone else sort of feel like...I mean, if you feel good about school, does that sort of help how you feel about class music or are they completely different?

#3: Well, sometimes like...I'm just saying this, I don't know if it's true but sometimes if someone is under pressure, maybe they could struggle in music because they've got so much on their back, like a lot of workload.

GL: So it can be an issue sometimes?

#3: Yeah.

GL: Anybody else?

#1: Yeah, someone walks into class upset or something, they won't really get along in the class or if they have tonnes and tonnes of homework, then they won't really get along.

GL: Has that been something you've noticed – have you noticed people coming in and not wanting to participate because they've got buckets of homework?

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#1: Not really.

#5: I haven't noticed because I think I had the same issue once where I had a lot of homework and I didn't get back home quite late. I found music alright because it was helpful. Music got me away from homework, it took me mind of it.

GL: **Excellent. Ok, we're just down to the last couple of questions. Is music in Year 8 easier or harder than Year 7? Quite different, isn't it?**

#3: Personally, I think it's harder because this year we've only been using the computer but last year it was more physical than using the computer, so I reckon it is actually harder than – I mean easier – than last year.

GL: **Ok. Anyone else think it's easier?**

#1: I think it's easier because last year we had to sing and sometimes it got a little bit embarrassing because most of us had to sing and stuff so...

GL: **Anyone else reckon it's easier?**

#4: I reckon it's a lot easier because last year sometimes we had to like bring in our own kind of things to make noises – like make your own instruments, sort of thing, and that was kind of harder than now we just have the computers and it's got a wider range of like music things and instruments.

#6: No, I think it is a bit easier because last year, I've been doing it for 3 years now, like last year it really got hard because of all my other sports and all the other commitments I've made but this year it's a bit easier because music is just so much better.

GL: **Anyone think it's harder – does anyone find it harder?**

[all students say no]

Straight forward. Ok, down to about the last two questions. We've covered quite a bit of territory. What about the repertoire – what sort of music do you actually do on the computers, is it sort of more rock music or is it more classical or what sort of stuff do you do?

#1: It's...mainly we do rock and...yeah.

#2: Yeah, last term we did rap and I think that was the theme, but this term we're doing rock and blues.

GL: **Is that something that is important to you guys, do you enjoy the fact that you're doing more popular music or would you rather be doing classical stuff, or does it not make any difference?**

#2: I don't actually like sort of the genre we're doing at the moment, I'm more into the drum and bass or death metal type music.

GL: **Anyone else? What do you think about the sort of music that you're doing on the computers?**

#6: I think it's actually really good that we're learning modern music because most of the teachers, like they're really, really old and they teach like 70 year old music, and it's all like classical.

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#5:   I don't think it actually makes a difference that much because I don't mind doing rock genre or blues or whatever because it's something new for me, and classical I don't mind either because I'm familiar with it and I don't mind it.

GL: **What about you, number four, do you sort of like to do the rock stuff or does it not worry you, is it not an issue?**

#4:   It's really not an issue, it's...I'm happy doing any kind of music.

GL: **Cool. This last questions, is there anything we've sort of missed when we're talking about what you like and what you don't like. You've told me quite a bit about the computers and so on. Is there anything else that we might have missed when we think about what we like and what we don't like?**

#3:   I may have heard this earlier in the recording, but I reckon we should have some proper like instruments in the music technology class – like maybe a stage with proper lighting and stuff.

GL: **Putting a band together?**

#3:   Yeah.

GL: **Excellent. Anyone else got any comments like that? Anything else that you think that could make music better or are there things that make it bad?**

#4:   Probably the teacher has a lot to do with it. Like, if you get a really mean, uncool teacher that doesn't let you on the computers very much, then you're not going to like it and people would probably quit. But we have a really funny teacher who always makes jokes and stuff so...

#2:   I think we could do different genres like EMO and death metal and stuff.

GL: **So a little bit more variety of the music that you cover?**

#2:   Yeah.

GL: **Ok. Anything else from anybody about what you might like or dislike, or how we could make music better, class music better? Anything else that comes to mind – this is our last round, ok.**

#6:   Yeah, just more instruments in the room would be better.

#5:   On the computers or garage band – I think we need more instruments that we can actually use.

GL: **Ok. Gentlemen, thank you very much. That's fantastic, you've given me some really good responses. Good on you blokes.**

--- END OF INTERVIEW ---

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