Through the looking glass: A researcher’s perspectives on a collaborative music composition project

Tessandra Wendzich and Bernard W. Andrews
University of Ottawa, Canada

Abstract
Making Music: Composing with Young Musicians was a multi-year, multi-site research project partnered with the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and the Canadian Music Centre to commission composers to collaborate with teachers and students to write educational music. On-site observations undertaken by the co-author and examined through a pragmatic lens employing Brief Focused Inquiry focused on the contributions of students, teachers and composers to the collaborative music compositions. Students contributed their creativity and knowledge of musical elements and concepts, and they provided feedback to the teachers and composers. Teachers contributed technical, instrumental feedback to the composers and their understanding of musical elements and concepts. Furthermore, they led band rehearsals and played musical instruments with the students. Composers contributed their musical creativity and feedback while undertaking a teacher-like role. The composers, teachers and students also used technology during this creative endeavor. The findings will be of potential interest to post-secondary music educators, composers, music teachers, and music publishers.

Keywords
Collaborative atmosphere, educational music, music composition, music creativity

Introduction
Educational music

Educational music is repertoire written for young musicians designed to promote musical development (Andrews, 2013). Because of the mass-production of educational music by large
multi-national publishing companies, much of this repertoire is often viewed by composers and professional musicians as being of less quality than music composed for professionals (Camphouse, 2004, 2007; Gershman, 2007; Hatrik, 2002; Ross, 1995). Furthermore, members of the music profession (composers and educators) believe most of this music is unsuitable for local contexts and question its educational value (Camphouse, 2004, 2007; Colgrass, 2004). Much of this criticism may derive from the very little professional composers know about educational music (Andrews & Carruthers, 2004; Carruthers, 2000; Colgrass, 2004; Green, 2006).

What is known, however, is that when composers write educational music, they can refer to some materials and notational strategies (Hickey, 2001; Rine, 2005; Webster, 2011). Computer programs also help composers write repertoire as Timothy Broege states, “I set the piece up on the computer using Finale music software, which I find enormously helpful for score preparation and extraction of parts. The playback capabilities of music software are also useful in the proofreading process” (cited in Camphouse, 2002, p. 48). Scoring programs, such as Sibelius and Finale, are also helpful when students write and play compositions since they receive immediate feedback. For instance, when a student plays a piece of music they have written and an incorrect note is played, the incorrect note becomes red (Rowe et al., 2017; Yoho, 2013).

According to Fulton (2019), O’Neill (2012, 2014), as well as Wendzich and Andrews (2019a), it is also important for music instructors and/or composers to ascertain what students enjoy. They need to listen to the young musicians prior to composing for them, either in the music studio for private instruction and in ensembles within school-based music programs or within the community (Camphouse, 2007; Duncan & Andrews, 2015; Forrest, 1996; Hazo as cited in Camphouse, 2007; Wendzich & Andrews, 2017). Listening to melodies, one’s own musical output, or others musically improvising on their instruments can spawn creative musical ideas (Colgrass, 2004; Hazo as cited in Camphouse, 2007) and help composers become aware of students’ technical, instrumental limitations (Barnes, 2002; Duncan & Andrews, 2015; Wendzich & Andrews, 2019a, 2021). In order to understand how composers write repertoire for young musicians, researchers engaged in a project entitled, Making Music: Composing with Young Musicians. The following question was addressed: “How can co-creation of new music by professional composers and young musicians promote musical development of composers, students and teachers?” This question, among its many facets, is articulated below.

A collaborative atmosphere

The Making Music study sought to learn about the experiences of students working with composers to write new music. This study reinforced the idea that instructors can see themselves as equals to students (Vangelova, 2013; Wendzich & Andrews, 2017), and it expanded the literature, expressing the extent to which teachers can play musical instruments with young musicians. Existing literature on student-composer collaborations has found that when writing educational music, it is most beneficial to collaborate with young musicians (Andrews, 2013). When collaborating, composers are in a teacher-like role, facilitating, directing, instructing, and reviewing concepts (Hendrick, 2017; Lee, 2012), which is all reflected in the Making Music Project. Collaboration helps composers, students, and teachers learn from one another as they can engage in “respectful disagreement” and exchange musical ideas (Denner et al., 2005; O’Neill, 2012). Teacher input and facilitation (leading rehearsals) during music sessions also help composers write effectively for young musicians (O’Neill, 2014; Parker et al., 2018; Wendzich & Andrews, 2017, 2019b). This is reinforced in the Making Music Project. Through collaboration, not only will a composer learn how to write educational repertoire, but students will gain an understanding of the compositional process: creative thinking, decision-making, visualization, listening and
writing skills (Carlisle, 2011; Upitis et al., 1999; Wendzich & Andrews, 2017, 2020, 2021). Their listening skills develop not only when hearing their peers play, but when listening to instrumental recordings. Other musical skills students develop are exploration through improvisation, performance, and sharing musical ideas (Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2014; Freed-Garrod, 1999; Hargreaves et al., 2004).

To help students explore musical ideas, teachers can employ music activities that are relevant or related to real-world experiences (O’Neill, 2014). Moreover, through narrative prompts – such as photographs, visual art, a short story, or movie scenes – music instructors can encourage the young musicians to begin a composition (Riley, 2013; Stauffer, 2013). According to Andrews (2016), when artists, students, and teachers collaborate in artistic projects, students learn constructive criticism and refine their work accordingly, and they clarify artistic concepts and learn ways to express their ideas. Consequently, students develop independent learning techniques while deepening their understanding of artistic concepts and elements (Green, 2001, 2008).

**Research process**

Making Music: Composing with young musicians is a study focused on eighteen composers collaborating with teachers and their students to create new music suitable for educational purposes. The research in this article was executed employing Brief Focused Inquiry (BFI). BFI is designed for researchers who are undertaking “small-scale studies with limited amounts of data” (Andrews & Nemoy, 2017, p. 75). It involves research on a field-based problem using a Research Action Probe (RAP).¹ In this case, the RAP employed was the overall question of the Making Music Project: “How can co-creation of new music by professional composers and young musicians promote musical development of composers, students and teachers?” On-site observations were undertaken by the co-author over a period of three years (the 2012–2013 school year; the 2013–2014 school year; and the 2014–2015 school year) within eleven of the eighteen participating schools. Each observation session was open-ended as the co-author observed classroom instruction for one 50-minute period in each case. The observations were written in point-form comprising of what the co-author saw and heard. In some instances, the observational notes included quotations from composers, teachers, and students. The findings from BFI studies often establish the basis for large-scale ones. They also tend to generate more questions and potentially suggest new methodologies for future studies.

**Participants in the Making Music Project**

Eighteen composers (members of the Canadian Music Centre) from across Ontario were invited to participate in the Making Music Project. They were selected by nominations from peers (snowball technique) based on their professional reputation. There were fifteen men and three women. All of them received Western-European music training and degrees in their studies. Moreover, all had experience composing educational music from previous educational music projects; that is, New Music for Young Musicians (Andrews, 2007) and New Sounds of Learning (Andrews, 2013). Many of them also had experience studying, writing, or teaching in various musical genres. Even though all the participants were composers, several were also conductors, educators, and music arrangers.

Eighteen associate teachers employed by the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) also participated in this study. There were fourteen women and four men teaching music classes that ranged from middle (grades 6, 7, and 8) to comprehensive high schools (grades 9-12). The music teachers were invited to participate by the Arts Instructional Coach, who was also the
Contact Person for the partnership with the OCDSB. The teachers all had similar backgrounds in music and education. Furthermore, they all required teacher certification to teach in the schools. A composer was assigned to each teacher to collaborate on the creation of a new composition for young musicians.

From the eighteen teachers and composers who participated in the project, eleven composers and their corresponding teachers were observed by the co-author of this article. Four of them were observed in year 1 of the study, while notes were taken on three of them in year 2, and four of them in year 3. Each composer discussed with their corresponding teacher how they would proceed with the project. Consequently, every composer upwards of five music classes (each class lasting approximately 50 minutes) in which they built a rapport with the students and encouraged them to write melodies that would eventually help comprise the main class composition. It was a musical journey that began with composers learning students’ instrumental abilities, their likes, and dislikes, and ended with the composer crafting a composition with input from both the teacher and students.

**Analysis of observations**

The observational data was analyzed through a process of qualitative coding. The first cycle coding was inductive as descriptive and N Vivo codes highlighted what was pertinent to the research question. Descriptive codes summarized the primary topic of the notes while N Vivo coding regarded a word or phrase that was directly taken from what the participant said and was placed in quotation marks (Saldana, 2015). Once first cycle coding was complete, a second cycle of coding (or pattern coding) was conducted (Miles et al., 2014), where first cycle codes were re-assessed and potentially reconfigured to discern patterns and common themes (Miles et al., 2014). The following themes emerged from the data: Collaboration, Musical Ideas, Feedback, Musical Elements and Ideas, Leading the Band, Ideas and Writing, Teaching and Leading, as well as Technology.

**Findings**

**Collaboration**

All of the eleven composers observed were aware of the collaborative nature of this project. This intimidated some of them, but excited others, as one composer expressed, “[f]or me, collaboration is unknown.” Although this was the case, all the composers were privy to the students’ ages and grades prior to visiting the school. Moreover, in many cases, the teacher conversed with the composer before their first official classroom visit. Some teachers even discussed students’ instrumental ranges. Most of the artists’ enthusiasm shone as they introduced themselves to the students, built rapport, and delved into the creative compositional process, as one composer stated, “I love collaboration . . . It has been a wonderful experience.” While another claimed, “When collaboration works, it is a great experience.” In all cases, the composers introduced themselves, briefly discussed the creative project with the students, and listened to the students play on the first visit. All the composers became aware that they were collaborating with a “mixed ability group” – a class of students with a variety of instrumental abilities and ranges.

**Student contributions: The creative compositional process**

*Musical ideas.* Students’ creativity was in evidence as they suggested moods, contrasting musical sections, and melodies that eventually comprised the main musical composition; the on-site observer noted, “[the students] started with a concept – spooky, sneaky, suspenseful, mysterious
established commonalities as the basis for the music.” They then “suggested a contrasting section – peaceful, calm.” At one point during the compositional process a student said, “[l]et’s go wild!” Many of the young musicians were enthusiastic, selecting fun and meaningful musical ideas, which spawned creative compositions.

When students were asked to create their own melodies, they were instructed to use the notes of their favorite melody within their selected song as inspiration, as one teacher claimed, “Use the notes as inspiration for your own writing by improvising.” Many of their melodies or melodic fragments were played by student volunteers, even though in one instance students were reluctant to self-volunteer. In contrast, one composer was so relieved and excited when one student volunteered that he exclaimed, “[w]e have a winner!” Although some students were shy, most of them contributed melodic fragments which helped comprise the main composition. Furthermore, they “listened to each other’s melodic fragments,” tried to “hear the [musical] part, not only read it,” and provided feedback as observed by the on-site researcher.

The young musicians also contributed to the compositional process by expressing their own thematic ideas. In one instance, students desired to create a scary piece for Halloween – “A Halloween Adventure.” After deciding upon a theme, creating melodies, and hearing what the composer wrote based on their melodies, the young musicians “provided suggestions on time signatures, dynamics, and tempo,” as noted by the observer. They also recommended “a crescendo on a flute trill,” and “turning 3-note groups into triplets . . . to create a flowing movement in the piece.” Moreover, students and composers engaged in “sample exchanges” whereby they swapped musical ideas. In order to integrate unusual sounds within a composition, one class created a wind noise by saying “shshhh” while creating a “clicking sound” with their fingers on the saxes without playing notes.

Feedback. Not only did students contribute their creative and musical ideas, they also provided input and feedback. In once instance, the composer provided a list of words – some of which included, “Enjoyment,” “Memories,” and “Learning.” With this list, students were asked to describe what music is in relation to each of these words. The on-site researcher observed many students engaged in this activity, providing the composer with their responses. This activity helped the students conceptualize the music. The young musicians also provided feedback on their instrumental challenges. The co-author observed students being initially confused by modular parts. Further, the students had difficulty reading from one page to the next. Due to these challenges, “one student wanted to scream and run away.”

Teacher contributions: The creative compositional process

Feedback. In order to address the challenges students faced, all teachers provided technical, instrumental feedback. In one particular instance, a teacher was concerned about the clarity of the melodic line. The melodic line was unclear as students were “intimidated by syncopation.” Consequently, the teacher asked the composer, “Can I . . . remove the double tonguing in the lower parts?” The composer responded, “Yes, also focus on intonation in the brass.” The teacher agreed with the composer as some of the young musicians were challenged by achieving the correct intonation. Teachers also discussed with the composer the importance of band balance and ways of addressing it. Since many students experienced difficulty maintaining the tempo of a piece, a teacher stopped the music so students could adjust their parts. The students made “changes idiomatic to [their] instrument – rests for breathing, adjusting rhythms, etc.” Many times at the end of class, teachers discussed with the composer the importance of student-input concerning instrumental challenges, musical elements and concepts, as well as creativity. As another teacher noted, “No one ever asks them for their opinion . . . It’s like pulling a rabbit out of hat!”
Musical elements and ideas. Teachers also provided input concerning musical elements and concepts. In one instance, a “teacher noted lyricism in the melody.” In another instance, the teacher reviewed the “cold” sounds students created on their instruments to assess whether these reflected the mood and theme of the piece. Some of these sounds included “a ship fog-horn played on the bassoon, a wind sound by blowing air through a saxophone, and the sound of a diesel engine through the use of an electric bass,” the on-site observer recorded. The creation of unusual sounds extended to students using unusual instruments, as one teacher suggested, “[p]lay a brake drum with a wrench.”

Leading the band. Not only did the teachers discuss musical elements and concepts, but in many instances, the teachers conducted the piece and “rehearsed some of the difficult parts.” Moreover, all the teachers warmed-up the class for composer-class visits and in many instances rehearsed while waiting for the composer to arrive on his/her visitation day/session. Further, to encourage the students and lead the ensemble, most teachers played musical instruments with the students. In one instance the music instructor played the clarinet. In another instance, the music instructor “joined in and played the trombone part.”

Composer contributions: The creative compositional process

Ideas and writing. In the early stages of the composing, one of the composers claimed, “Orchestration is a time-consuming process.” It takes time because composing is multi-layered; a composer must have musical ideas, and then transcribe them, rewrite them, etc. This particular composer commenced the compositional process working from a condensed score at the piano, then orchestrating it for the band.

Once the students provided melodic and thematic suggestions, the composers created a skeleton of the new composition. Moreover, they used student-input to “create the first section of the music.” In one instance, a discussion ensued between the composer and students on how the piece was to be written, “Start with the D part as a canon . . . [part] A to provide rhythmic support . . . Overall a canon with counterpoint,” stated the composer.

Musical ideas. Upon hearing the “cold” sounds students played on their instruments, one of the composers suggested adding a bass drum to strengthen the “diesel sound” that was created on the electric bass. He also suggested that “all brass instrument players blow air through tubing to create a windstorm.” Another composer stated, “[w]hy don’t we combine the bass and temple block parts? . . . Let’s try it as an experiment.” Experimentation and improvisation were encouraged when one of the composers, for example, asked the percussion to play “scary sounds” on their instruments.

Teaching and leading. At one point, a composer introduced his “Composer’s Toolbox,” a tool to guide students in composing music. When explaining the many facets comprising the Toolbox, the composer noted, “[w]ith a melody, you have to do something” to create a piece of music. Composers were in the role of a teacher, as they taught students about composing. Similar to a schoolteacher, the composer learned about students’ interests as well as their abilities; for example, according to the on-site observer, “a composer wrote four modular parts based on the students’ interests.” Furthermore, the composers led many of the ensembles.

The on-site observer also witnessed another composer “initiate a PowerPoint presentation, reviewing what was accomplished on previous visits.” Moreover, the composers taught students about “chromaticism and distant harmonies.” After students listened to a musical composition, the
composer asked, “Does the piece make sense?” According to the on-site observer, a discussion also ensued with students on “the use of 5/4 time” in a piece of music, while another composer provided insight into their workload and life, “I am a living composer, not a dead one,” he claimed. Similar to a teacher, the on-site researcher observed composers “distributing parts,” and in one instance, the composer was able to name students. In another instance, a composer attempted to encourage students and heighten their musical enthusiasm, saying, “This is meant to be fun!”

Within a teacher-like role, the composers asked students questions relating to their own musical knowledge and experience: “Does anyone know what the dot over a note stands for?” Composers also asked students whether melody or harmony comes first when beginning the compositional process. One of the composers even made inquiries as to whether the students desired a faster tempo in one of the sections. The students’ reactions were mixed as some claimed, “Let’s go wild!” While others said, “We can’t do that!” Although their reactions were contrary, the composer responded, “In music, you are allowed to crash and burn. Let’s try it faster!” The same composer also asked students whether they enjoyed playing the piece and whether they could provide more input. In one instance, the young musicians claimed that some sections helped them “develop fingering.”

While students played their instrumental parts, the composers conducted the band. They provided instrumental and technical suggestions. In one instance, a composer said, “Softer at bar 35 so the solo can be heard . . . Tympani stronger at bar 8.” In order to address ensemble limitations, the composer “modified parts” while trying to retain what the students sent him through e-mail. Another composer suggested reversing the time signatures in one of the sections. Consequently, the students agreed that the composition was easier to play. In another instance, the composer explained how adjusting the range can address instrumental challenges. Although most composers considered this collaborative project fun, a few commented on the challenges it presented, “In this project, working with a whole class is quite a challenge . . . This has been hard for me; writing for young musicians is not easy.”

**Technology**

In order to help composers, teachers, and students write an educational piece of music, they all used technology. According to the on-site observer, the teachers and composers “played computer-generated recordings” as this “assisted learning.” Moreover, the observer witnessed students listening to a “computer recording of the music to date.” Consequently, the composer discussed with the students “the use of 5/4 time in the piece” and the impact on the listener when this time signature was altered. One of the composers also discussed with the students his use of a computer when composing, “I use an instrument (the cello) and a computer to compose [for bands],” he claimed. This particular composer also asked students to “use Noteflight to write parts.” When creating their own melodic fragments, the on-site researcher observed “students providing a bridge melody on the computer.”

**Discussion**

The most successful learning environments, such as the Making Music Project, kinaesthetically and actively engage students in learning (Meiners et al., 2004; Smithrim & Upitis, 2005). It is important that such settings allow sufficient time and space for students to explore ideas and experiment on their instruments (Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2014; Freed-Garrod, 1999; Hargreaves et al., 2004; Hsieh, 2012; Wilkinson, 2000). When experimenting on musical instruments and critiquing their own work as well as the work of others, many students develop listening skills (Colgrass,
Within this collaborative project, students developed such musical skills as listening, peer-critiquing, instrumental fingering, instrumental experimentation, improvisation, and brainstorming. Moreover, this study reinforced the idea that when students, teachers, and composers communicate, the quality of composers’ music for young musicians is enhanced (Wendzich & Andrews, 2019b). Suffice it to say, a collaborative atmosphere is essential for the success of an arts-related project (Andrews, 2016). This success was replicated in the Making Music Project as the on-site researcher said, “[when] the composer combined the bass and temple block parts [of the composition], it was a very successful rendition of the two fragments. The students responded by clapping.”

During the compositional process in the Making Music Project, the composers, teachers, and students engaged in frequent discussions. The majority of the conversations between the composers and teachers concerned the students’ needs. It was important for students to enjoy themselves and have fun during the compositional process (Wendzich & Andrews, 2019a). When a musical passage was too challenging, the composer and teacher discussed ways of simplifying the piece to accommodate everyone. Simplifying pieces after recognizing the instrumental diversity within an ensemble is consistent with the findings of Camphouse (2004, 2007) and Wendzich and Andrews (2019b). Further, students recommended ways of addressing their instrumental difficulties. A discussion pertaining to student encouragement also ensued as students are often reluctant to volunteer in class and provide input on their own (refer to Zhu, 2008).

Composers, teachers and students were continuously exchanging creative musical ideas and providing input and feedback. There were many brainstorming sessions and discussions about themes, tempo, rhythm and dynamics which is congruent with research on the Making Music Project (Wendzich & Andrews, 2017, 2019b, 2021). Most of the composer-student interactions were instructional and pedagogical in nature. The composer began the compositional process by discussing with students their own experiences composing – the process, the challenges associated with writing, how to circumvent those challenges, and what comprises a composition. In so doing, the composer played recordings and discussed music as psychology, as well as musical concepts and elements (Menard, 2013; Wendzich & Andrews, 2017). The composer became an instructor, facilitating and directing the creative compositional process by asking the students questions and prompting them, and reviewing with students what they had accomplished on the previous composer-student visit. Music teachers often employ repetition and review in their teaching (Lee, 2012). In general, constant review is a pedagogical technique applied in instruction (Hendrick, 2017). Teachers also acted as facilitators and instructors as they rehearsed and warmed-up the ensembles (Wendzich & Andrews, 2017).

In the role of a music teacher, the composers applied a pedagogical technique known as student-centered learning (Cohen & Robinson, 2018) or an inductive approach (Smart et al., 2012; Vangelova, 2013). This pedagogical approach enabled students to create their own melodies, time signatures, etc. The composers implemented activities in which students explored, inquired, reflected and expressed musical ideas (Menard, 2013; O’Neill, 2014; Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012). When exploring various sounds on their instruments, students engaged in experimentation and improvisation (Thornton, 2013). Student-centered activities also allowed the young musicians to provide continuous feedback and reflect upon their own musical knowledge and skills, especially when the composers asked them questions about developing contrasting sections, and questions concerning the use of notes and dynamics within a musical passage. Moreover, a student-centered approach enabled the music teachers to discern what is challenging or relevant to the learners (Duncan & Andrews, 2015; O’Neill, 2014). It also helped all involved learn from one another and gain insight into new concepts and/or behaviors when listening to each other’s ideas (Denner et al., 2005; O’Neill, 2012). Listening to each other and
hearing, rather than solely reading music, enabled students to develop their listening skills as replicated in Wendzich and Andrews (2017, 2021). Other studies indicate how this approach allows students to not only listen to others, but improve their work through critiquing (Andrews, 2016; Upitis et al., 1999).

The composers’ adoption of an inductive approach to teaching enabled the young musicians to learn more about the compositional process, take risks, and have a voice in their learning (Vangelova, 2013; Wendzich & Andrews, 2020). It allowed the composers and teachers to be “facilitators” rather than a “controlling force.” According to Vangelova (2013), “It’s about breaking down boundaries and seeing yourself as an equal.” This notion of equality is what the teachers and composers fostered as they placed themselves in the role of a student, practicing and rehearsing along side the young musicians.

Many times musical ideas in the Making Music Project were developed by the composers through the use of music software programs. According to Hickey (2001), Rine (2005), and Webster (2011), compositions can be promoted in educational settings when young musicians are given electronic tools and notational strategies. Moreover, appropriate materials and compositional parameters, for example, the Music Complexity Chart (MC²) can guide their compositional writing (Andrews, 2011).

**Concluding comments**

The purpose of the study, Making Music: Composing with Young Musicians, was to obtain an in-depth understanding of how composers can collaborate with students and music teachers to create educational music. Findings from the on-site notes indicated that students contributed their musical creativity and knowledge of musical elements and concepts. Teachers also contributed compositional feedback by suggesting certain musical concepts and elements. Moreover, they provided instrumental feedback, led band rehearsals, and played musical instruments with the students. Composers contributed their musical creativity and feedback while functioning in a teacher-like role. Everyone involved in this collaborative project also employed technology, only one of many pedagogical strategies employed in this study. Overall, the composers and teachers created a student-centered, inductive, atmosphere wherein students took ownership of their work and felt responsible for what they were producing. Future research could focus on detailing pedagogical strategies and tools that would promote collaborative music composition. The following questions could be asked: What pedagogical strategies foster collaborative music making?; What pedagogical roles do composers and teachers undertake throughout the collaborative process?; and How do students view their role(s) throughout the collaborative compositional process?

**Author’s note**

This manuscript has not been published previously in part or in whole, and it is not under consideration by any other source.

**Funding**

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This research is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Grant No. 890-2012-0143 and the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa.

**ORCID iD**

Bernard W. Andrews [https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0079-8345](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0079-8345)
Notes

1. RAP (Research Action Probe) is a key question or statement within a study. It is similar to a guiding research question or purpose statement. For example, a RAP could be the following: “The purpose of the study was to assess preservice music teacher perspectives on the qualities, functions, and leadership roles of an effective music educator . . .” (Andrews & Nemoy, 2017, p. 77). In order for a purpose statement such as this to reflect BFI, the study’s method must be a form of action-research in arts education. Furthermore, it must probe issues or problems as a preliminary step in developing larger-scale studies.

2. One composer wrote a piece with parts of increasing difficulty. All the parts appeared on each page and the students selected those parts that they could play.

3. Noteflight is a music software program.

4. Successful learning environments are ones that optimize the ability of students to learn. They can help students develop skills in creativity, critical thinking and reasoning, assessment, communication, etc. (Bates, 2019).

References

Andrews, B. W. (2007). Composing new music for young musicians: Emerging questions. The Recorder, 50(1), 16–21.

Andrews, B. W. (2011). The Music Complexity Chart (MC²): Identifying the characteristics of levels of difficulty in educational music. In M. Kennedy & B. Bolden (Eds.), Widening the boundaries of music education (pp. 109–135). University of Victoria Press.

Andrews, B. (2013). Composing educational music for strings in a Canadian context: Composer perspectives. Canadian Music Educator, 55(5), 10–17.

Andrews, B. W. (2016). Working together: A case study of a national arts education partnership. Peter Lang.

Andrews, B. W., & Carruthers, G. (2004). Needle in a haystack: Canadian music in post secondary curricula. In P. Shand (Ed.), Music education entering the 21st century (pp. 75–83). Nedlands, Western Australia: International Society for Music Education.

Andrews, B. W., & Giesbrecht, M. (2014). Composing educational music for strings in real time. International Journal of Contemporary Composition, 10(1), 24–38.

Andrews, B. W., & Nemoy, L. (2017). Brief focused inquiry (BFI): Conceptualizing a strategy for small-scale research studies. In J. Bugos (Ed.), Contemporary research in music education across the lifespan (pp. 75–84). Routledge.

Barnes, J. (2002). Chapter 1: James Barnes. In M. Camphouse (Ed.), Composers on composing for band (Vol. 1, pp. 1–42). GIA Publications.

Bates, A. W. (2019). Teaching in a digital age: Guidelines for designing, teaching and learning (2nd ed.). SFU Document Solutions.

Camphouse, M. (Ed.). (2002). Composers on composing for band (Vol. 1). GIA Publications.

Camphouse, M. (Ed.). (2004). Composers on composing for band (Vol. 2). GIA Publications.

Camphouse, M. (Ed.). (2007). Composers on composing for band (Vol. 3). GIA Publications.

Carlisle, K. (2011). Arts education partnerships: Informing policy through the development of culture and creativity within a collaborative project approach. Arts Education Policy Review, 112(3), 144–148.

Carruthers, G. A. (2000). A status report on music education in Canada. In S. T. Maloney (Ed.), Musicanada 2000: A celebration of Canadian composers (pp. 86–95). Canadian Music Centre.

Cohen, J., & Robinson, C. (2018). Enhancing teaching excellence through team-based learning. Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 55(2), 133–142.

Colgrass, M. (2004). Composers and children: A future creative force? Music Educators Journal, 91(1), 19–23.

Denner, J., Meyer, B., & Bean, S. (2005). Young women’s leadership alliance: Youth adult partnerships in an all-female after-school program. Journal of Community Psychology, 33(1), 87–100.

Duncan, A., & Andrews, B. (2015). Composers’ personal learning composing Canadian music for strings. Canadian Music Educator, 54(6), 26–29.

Forrest, D. L. (1996). The educational theory of Dmitri Kabalevsky in relation to his piano music for children [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Melbourne.
Toshalis, E., & Nakkula, M. J. (2012). Motivation, engagement, and student voice: The students at the center series. Jobs for the Future.

Upitis, R., Smithrim, K., & Soren, B. (1999). When teachers become musicians and artists: Teacher transformation and professional development. Music Education Research, 1(1), 23–25.

Vangelova, L. (2013, November 13). Subverting the system: Student and teacher as equals. KQED. https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/32436/subverting-the-system-student-and-teacher-asequals

Webster, P. R. (2011). Towards pedagogies of revision: Guiding a student’s music composition. In O. Odena (Ed.), Musical creativity: Insights from music education research (pp. 93–112). Ashgate.

Wendzich, T., & Andrews, B. W. (2017). Music to my peers: The knowledge and skills developed when students and teachers co-create music with composers. International Journal of Arts and Humanities, 3(6), 16–24.

Wendzich, T., & Andrews, B. W. (2019a). Gone with the wind: What do composers learn writing educational music for young musicians in the Canadian context? Canadian MusicEducator, 60(1), 15–22.

Wendzich, T., & Andrews, B. W. (2019b). Composing together: The development of musical ideas with students and teachers. Visions of Research in Music Education, 34, 1–26. http://www-usr.rider.edu/~vrme/v34n1/index.htm

Wendzich, T., & Andrews, B. W. (2020). Shifting the paradigm: What is learned through student/teacher/composer collaborative composition. International Journal of Education and the Arts, 22(4), 1–28. http://www.ijea.org/

Wendzich, T., & Andrews, B. W. (2021, in press). Collaborative composition: Composers’ perspectives on teachers’ and students’ input. In C. Randles (Ed.), Routledge handbook of creativities in music education. Routledge.

Wilkinson, J. (2000). Literacy, education and arts partnership: A community-system programme integrating the arts across the curriculum. Research in Drama Education, 5(2), 175–197.

Yoho, S. (2013, March 21). Finale vs. sibelius: Creating SmartMusic accompaniments. Finale. https://www.finalemusic.com/blog/finale-vs-sibelius-creating-smartmusic-accompaniments/

Zhu, H. (2008). Speaking anxiety in the classroom: Getting students to talk. Modern English Teacher, 17(2), 33–37.