

# Navigating Music and Sound Education



# Navigating Music and Sound Education

Edited by

Julie Ballantyne and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet

**CAMBRIDGE**  
**SCHOLARS**  

---

**P U B L I S H I N G**

Navigating Music and Sound Education,  
Edited by Julie Ballantyne and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet

Meaningful music making for life Series, Book 2,  
Series Editors Steve C Dillon & Elizabeth Mackinlay

This book first published 2010

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2010 by Julie Ballantyne and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and contributors

We are privileged to have the artwork of Vincent Serico on the cover of this book to represent the series philosophy of engaging with the struggle between colonial European values and the standpoint presented by Indigenous peoples. These tensions with lifestyle changes alert us to the need to consider culture and place when we navigate our approaches to learning. For Indigenous cultures art and music is knowledge that spans time and place. Vincent Serico's work confronts these issues:

<http://www.fireworksgallery.com.au/Artists/Vincent%20Serico/VincentSerico.htm>

We are extremely grateful to the Australasian CRC for Interaction Design  
for their support and kind permission.

© Australasian CRC for Interaction Design Pty Ltd.

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-1843-7, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-1843-8

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	vii
Contributors.....	ix
A Letter to Pre-Service Music Teachers.....	xvii
Julie Ballantyne and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet	
Chapter One.....	1
Navigating Context-Based Learning in Pre-Service Teacher Education Julie Ballantyne and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet	
Chapter Two .....	16
Teaching for Musical Understanding: A Constructivist Approach Deborah Blair and Jackie Wiggins	
Chapter Three .....	31
Integrating Music with Other Subjects: Challenges and Possibilities Smaragda Chrysostomou and Natassa Economidou Stavrou	
Chapter Four.....	51
Creative Learning in Music and Educational Renewal Pamela Burnard	
Chapter Five .....	77
Navigating the Gender Landscape in Music Education Scott D. Harrison	
Chapter Six.....	96
Informal Learning in the Music Classroom: A Seven-Stage Program Lucy Green	
Chapter Seven.....	115
Musical Education as a Social Act: Learning From and Within Musical Communities Stephanie E. Pitts	

Chapter Eight.....	129
Weaving New Patterns of Music in Indigenous Education Anja Tait, Edel Musco, Megan Atfield, Leonie Murrungun, Catherine Orton and Tony Gray	
Chapter Nine.....	161
A Tale of Three Cities: Dreams and Realities of Cultural Diversity in Music Education Huib Schippers and Melissa Cain	
Chapter Ten .....	175
Navigating Technological Contexts and Experience Design in Music Education Steve Dillon and Kathy Hirche	
Chapter Eleven .....	193
The Morphing Music Educator Peter de Vries	
A Concluding Letter .....	208
Julie Ballantyne and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet	

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Each chapter of this book was blind refereed by a panel of international experts in the field. Thank you to the reviewers, who gave of their time and wisdom in commenting on the draft chapters. Our thanks also go to Jessica O'Bryan and Tammy Jones for sub-editing the book.





## CONTRIBUTORS

**Megan Atfield** is a multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, and community musician who has been resident in the Northern Territory for fourteen years. Megan has a strong interest in and continues to study the music of other cultures. Megan's teaching practice with the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training encompasses general classroom teaching and music education across the stages of schooling, from Preschool to Year 12. Megan taught for over four years in a remote school community in Central Arnhem Land, including three years in a bilingual classroom.

**Julie Ballantyne** (co-editor of this volume), is the Director of Learning and Teaching in the School of Music at the University of Queensland. She sits on various editorial boards, including the *International Journal of Music Education* and has published in areas such as music teacher education, social justice in teacher education, the psychological and social impact of music participation at music festivals, and teacher identity. She has presented at various international conferences both in Australia and overseas, and has led an Australian Learning and Teaching Council Grant (known as *Music Teachers Oz*) that used online, collaborative case-based learning in music education courses across Australia.

**Brydie-Leigh Bartleet** (co-editor of this volume), is a Lecturer in Research and Music Literature at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University. For the past two years, she has worked on the ARC funded project, *Sound Links: Exploring the dynamics of musical communities in Australia and their potential for informing collaboration with music in schools*. She has also worked as a sessional Lecturer at the University of Queensland, and as a freelance conductor has worked with ensembles from Australia, Thailand, Singapore and Taiwan. She has published widely on issues relating to community music, women conductors, peer-learning in conducting and feminist pedagogy, and recently launched co-edited books on music research in Australasia and music autoethnography. She is also on the editorial board for the *International Journal of Community Music*.

**Deborah Blair** is Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Music Education of the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance at Oakland University. Deborah's research interests include the application of constructivist learning theory and its implications for music learning and teaching in educational contexts including preservice and inservice music teacher education, general and choral music settings, and music learning for students with special needs. Her work appears in journals such as the *International Journal of Education and the Arts*, *British Journal of Music Education*, *Research Studies in Music Education*, *Visions of Research in Music Education*, and the *Music Educators Journal*.

**Pamela Burnard** works at the University of Cambridge, UK where she manages Higher Degree courses in Arts, Culture and Education and in Educational Research. She is Co-Editor of the *British Journal of Music Education*, Associate Editor of *Psychology of Music* and serves on numerous editorial boards. She is section editor of the 'Creativity Section' in the *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education* (Springer, 2007), and the 'Musical Creativity as Practice' section of the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Music Education* (OUP, 2010). She is convenor of British Education Research Association Creativity SIG.

**Melissa Cain** is an Australian who has worked as a primary music teacher and Music Co-ordinator at Singapore American School since 1991. She has written educational resources for the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and has a strong interest in South East Asian and Pacific musics. Melissa is currently completing her PhD thesis through Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University which focuses on the challenges associated with teaching diverse musics to primary aged students.

**Smaragda Chrysostomou** is Assistant Professor of Music Pedagogy and Didactics, Faculty for Musical Studies, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece. She has publications related to her work in Greek and international journals and edited books. She is on the Advisory Board of the *International Journal of Education & the Arts* and the *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education*. She is on the International Editorial Board of *IJME-Practice* and on the Editorial Boards of Greek journals *Mousikopaidagogika* and *Music in Primary Education*. She has recently published her book titled "Music in Education: the Dilemma of Interdisciplinarity" (in Greek).

**Peter deVries** is currently Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. He has taught at the early childhood, primary, and tertiary levels. Peter is a composer of music for children and has conducted research spanning early childhood and primary school music education. His research has been published in a variety of peer reviewed journals including *Music Education Research*, *International Journal of Music Education*, *Australian Journal of Early Childhood*, *Early Child Development and Care*, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *Cultural Studies/Critical Methodologies*, *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, and *Curriculum Perspectives*.

**Steve Dillon** is a Senior Lecturer of Music and Sound and Music Education in the Faculty of Creative Industries, Queensland University of Technology. Steve's research focuses upon meaningful engagement with music making in schools and communities. He is founding director of the Save to DISC (Documenting Innovation in Sound Communities) Research Network (<http://savetodisc.net>) which examines and documents the qualities and relationships between music, meaning, cognitive and social benefit, health and well-being. Steve is Project Leader for the Australasian Cooperative Research Centre for Interaction Design (ACID) Network Jamming Research, creating new instruments and ways of learning for media performance.

**Tony Gray** is a band manager ([www.yilila.com](http://www.yilila.com)), producer, songwriter, sound engineer, educator and musician. His specialist skills include double bass performance across genres, composition and arrangement, production, audio and video engineering, editing and production, band and tour management. Tony is committed to developing arts businesses in remote Indigenous communities which promote the preservation of traditional culture, build Indigenous-controlled enterprises, develop/manage artists' careers, build infrastructure and create employment for traditional Indigenous people within their communities. Tony coordinates remote area workshops in recording, song writing and video for youth and adults (Arnhem Land and Eastern Indonesia). He works with linguists and local musicians to teach traditional languages through music and produce relevant educational resources for school communities.

**Lucy Green** is Professor of Music Education at the Institute of Education, University of London. Her research is in the sociology of music education and music pedagogy, specialising in meaning, ideology, gender, popular music and informal learning. She is the author of numerous articles and

four books on music education, most recently *Music, Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy* (2008). She has given keynote lectures and seminars in many countries within Asia, the Americas and Europe, and serves on the Editorial Boards of a number of journals including *Music Education Research*, *Radical Musicology*, *Popular Music*, and *Research Studies in Music Education*.

**Kathy Hirche** is an Australasian Cooperative Research Centre for Interaction Design (ACID) postgraduate scholarship student examining educational frameworks and resource production for generative Arts applications. She is currently undertaking a Master of Arts Research at the University of Queensland. She is an experienced professional musician and music educator. Her current research examines the development of curriculum and experience design for generative music making.

**Leonie Murrungun** is a songwriter, senior literacy worker and Indigenous language teacher at Numbulwar Community Education Centre, South East Arnhem Land. Leonie has undertaken education studies at Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, and theological studies at Nungalinga College, Darwin. She is an active musician and composer of songs and chants for young children in her mother's language, Nunggubuyu. Leonie is committed to working with young children so they will have strong language and culture for their future. Leonie has presented at regional and national education, arts and research conferences and symposia. In 2009 her work was recognised with an award by the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL).

**Edel Musco** is a visual artist, practitioner-researcher with ArtStories, and Executive Teacher (Well-being and Behaviour Management) with the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training. Edel is an experienced teacher, who has been resident in the Northern Territory for fifteen years. She spent six years in Arnhem Land teaching students across the stages of schooling, followed by intensive literacy and numeracy education for remote students in urban settings. Edel has authored articles for practitioner publications, and an independent evaluation report of school based research for Charles Darwin University. Edel has presented at local and national health, education, arts and research conferences and symposia. She is committed to promoting and facilitating practitioner research in schools.

**Scott Harrison** is a Senior Lecturer in Music and Music Education at Griffith University. A graduate of Queensland Conservatorium and the University of Queensland, Scott has experience in teaching singing and music in primary, secondary and tertiary environments. Performance interests include opera and music theatre as both singer and musical director. His teaching and research focuses on teacher education, music and well-being and gender. He has published extensively in the field of males' involvement in music: he is author of *Masculinities and Music* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008) and editor of the *Male Voices: Stories of Boys Learning Through Making Music* (Australian Council for Educational Research, 2009).

**Catherine Orton** is an early learning educator. She has worked across contexts in early childhood, as a teacher, consultant and director: sessional preschool, long day care, special education (inclusion), and pre and post trauma education for children recovering in medical settings (RCH, Melbourne). Catherine currently works in remote Indigenous school communities. She is a passionate educator and perceives the early learning environment as a complex organism which has the potential to build or shatter a child's interest and capacity to engage with new learning. Positive first impressions of formal schooling are crucial for the young learner. Catherine has travelled widely but considers the "learning road" one for life.

**Stephanie Pitts** is a Senior Lecturer in Music at the University of Sheffield with research interests in music education and musical participation. She is the author of *A Century of Change in Music Education* (Ashgate, 2000), *Valuing Musical Participation* (Ashgate, 2005) and, with Eric Clarke and Nicola Dibben, *Music and Mind in Everyday Life* (Oxford, 2010). Her current research projects include investigations of jazz audiences, new audiences for classical music, and the influences of music education on lifelong participation in music.

**Huib Schippers** has a long, diverse and profound history of engagement with music, education and training in various cultures. Trained as a professional sitar player, he proceeded with (partially overlapping) careers in performance, teaching, research, journalism, the record trade, arts policy, and project management. He founded the Amsterdam World Music School (1990-1996), worked in and with several conservatoires (1998-2003), and was the driving force behind the World Music & Dance Centre in Rotterdam (2001-2006). Currently, he is Director of Queensland

Conservatorium and Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre at Griffith University in Brisbane, from where he leads a three million euro project *Sustainable Futures for Music Cultures: Towards an Ecology of Musical Diversity*.

**Natassa Economidou Stavrou** is Assistant Professor in Music Education in the Department of Arts at European University Cyprus. Her research interests include music curriculum design, implementation and evaluation, teacher education and the use of an interdisciplinary approach in pre-primary school music settings. Her work has been published in national and international conference proceedings, journals and books. She is the Cypriot national coordinator of the European Association for Music in Schools (EAS), a founding member and the secretary of the Board of the Cyprus Music Institute (CMI) and a member of the Editorial Committee of the *International Journal for Music Education: Research*.

**Anja Tait** is a Registered Music Therapist, music educator, and researcher. From 1999-2009 Anja was employed by the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training as an advisory teacher in music and related arts. In 2004 she was recognised and awarded by the Australian Government's Minister for Education, for her contribution to literacy and numeracy in the community, using an arts-based approach; and in 2005 was a keynote speaker for the 11<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Music Therapy, presenting case studies of Indigenous community engagement with the arts, for education, health and well-being. Anja is now employed by the Northern Territory Library as Library Programs Advisor, for Public Libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres. She is the Director of *ArtStories*, a model of intergenerational interaction, learning and involvement with the arts, and provides consultancy music therapy services in maternal and child health, early childhood intervention, and palliative and bereavement care.

**Jackie Wiggins** is Professor of Music Education and Chair of the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance at Oakland University. Jackie advocates a constructivist approach to music learning and teaching that engages learners with a broad diversity of musics through interactive performance, listening, and creative problem solving experiences with a goal of empowering learners with musical understanding and competence, fostering musical independence and the ability to use music as a means of personal expression. She serves on the Editorial Boards of several journals, including the *CRME Bulletin*, *Research Studies in Music*

*Education*, the *International Journal of Education and the Arts* and the *Asia-Pacific Journal for Arts Education*. She is affiliated with the Center for Applied Research in Musical Understanding, which published the second edition of her book *Teaching for Musical Understanding* in 2009.





# A LETTER TO PRE-SERVICE MUSIC TEACHERS

Dear colleagues in music education,

It is with great pleasure that we present you with this book. It has been written to assist you in preparing for your years as teachers of music. We believe that as music teachers of the future, it is important to begin thinking about your values and beliefs about music education in order to pre-empt the ways you might respond to the changing realities of your classroom. It is those teachers who are prepared, flexible and adaptable who will best be able to capture the imagination and creativity of their students and school communities. It is those teachers who reflect on the success, or otherwise, of their teaching, and are continually striving to improve, who will be leaders in the future.

To assist you in navigating your way through this book, our introductory chapter opens with a discussion about case-study based learning in teacher education. We offer three varied teaching contexts and situations for you, as pre-service teachers, to explore, “unpack” and reflect upon. Our discussions of these case-studies provide some strategies which are designed to assist you in preparing for similar situations in your future teaching lives. You may find the questions that we pose useful in guiding you through ways to approach the different viewpoints and diverse contexts found within the following chapters of the book.

Constructivist pedagogy in the music classroom is addressed in the chapter by Deborah Blair and Jackie Wiggins. They argue that learning is first and foremost an individual process whereby the individual student constructs their own understandings of an experience. The case studies explored in their chapter highlight the myriad of ways that constructivist learning can occur, particularly when assisted by a social environment that is warm and supportive. Another pedagogical approach, of increasing import for music specialists and generalist teachers around the world, is arts integration. This issue is explored in Smaragda Chrysostomou and Natassa Economidou Stavrou’s chapter. Their three case studies, which cover early childhood and secondary school contexts, provide illuminating examples of different approaches to integration, in practice. Their chapter

provides a comprehensive discussion about issues pre-service teachers need to keep in mind when approaching integration. Within the realm of constructivist learning, Pamela Burnard's chapter explores progression in musical creativity, and the concept of "creative learning." Drawing on insights from teacher stances in four different contexts, she outlines a number of important implications for classroom creativity in music which can lead to educational renewal.

Another important consideration for teachers is the role that gender can play in shaping the musical identity of their students. Scott Harrison's chapter explores this area in relation to music education, and highlights three positive examples from individual, school, and community contexts where gender issues are at play. He explores the role of gender in developing the core of students' identity—musical and otherwise—and provokes deeper thinking into ways that gender issues infiltrate music education more broadly.

When teachers give credence to the developing identities and preferences of their students, informal music making becomes increasingly relevant. Lucy Green's chapter discusses informal music making in the classroom, and gives practical examples of steps to take in implementing such strategies. Green's chapter highlights how such informal music making—used in combination with other approaches—can enrich the experience of school students, particularly in terms of student motivation, the role of the teacher, the development of students' musical skills, and the development of the student as a whole. Following the theme of more informal approaches to music-making, Stephanie Pitts' chapter explores the learning and teaching dynamics of contexts beyond the traditional classroom. Her chapter explains that when music education is viewed through the lens of community music, school classrooms, ensembles, and cohorts can be seen as musical communities, ripe for investigation, development and support. By exploring contexts in which musical communities can thrive, she also considers the extent to which these qualities are transferable to more formalised settings.

Anja Tait, Edel Musco, Megan Atfield, Leonie Murrungun, Catherine Orton and Tony Gray discuss teaching in diverse contexts and cultural traditions. Focusing on examples from Indigenous Australian locations, their chapter looks at the ways in which music education in such Indigenous settings can intersect with literacy learning, numeracy, language revitalisation, transfer of Indigenous cultural knowledge, social cohesion, and student well-being. Their chapter is full of examples of this, and provides inspiration for future teachers, who may find themselves in such cultural settings. Consideration of teaching music in a culturally

appropriate way is central to Huib Schippers and Melissa Cain's chapter on cultural diversity in music education. Their three examples from across the world demonstrate how music teachers can address issues relating to the inclusion of culturally diverse music, suitable transmission processes and performance practices, and how teachers can negotiate the selection of pedagogical approaches appropriate to the cultural contexts in which they find themselves. Following the conversation about teaching in a manner appropriate to context, Steve Dillon and Kathy Hirche explore how technology can assist this process. In particular, their chapter explores the notion of collaborative virtual music making, by focusing on the implications of a particular innovation (jam2jam) for student learning. Their chapter provokes discussion on how technology can be effectively used in classrooms, and how it can change and shape our future pedagogies.

The final viewpoint is offered in Peter deVries' chapter, where he explores the importance of reflection in teaching, and how reflective practice shifts and changes in different contexts. His chapter sheds light on the ways that contexts can challenge our conceptions of what good music education is all about, and can force us to step back, considering creative and new ways of teaching/facilitating music. This concluding chapter highlights that while we might not be able to predict the contexts and challenges we face as future music teachers, we should be prepared to be flexible, adaptable, and most importantly, reflective.

We hope that this book provides you with an insight into many different viewpoints in music education. Each of the authors in this book has clearly articulated their personal approaches to music education, and how these look in real teaching contexts. By reading each chapter, you should be able to understand the theory that underlies the authors' approaches, and relate this to music education "in practice." The chapters show the diversity of practices found in music education today, and by comparing and contrasting them an interesting picture of learning and teaching in music education emerges.

How, for example, does Lucy Green's approach to popular music relate to Peter de Vries' chapter on the developing music teacher? How might Huib Schippers and Melissa Cain's chapter on cultural diversity in music education relate to Anja Tait, Edel Musco, Megan Atfield, Leonie Murrungun, Catherine Orton and Tony Gray's chapter on music education in Indigenous communities? How do the classroom-based examples provided in Deborah Blair and Jackie Wiggins' chapter relate to the classroom-based examples provided by Smaragda Chrysostomou and Natassa Economidou Stavrou? If there are similarities, what does this say about the nature of music education? And in the case of significant

differences, what does this suggest? Which approaches inspire or appeal to you, and why?

After reading this book, and addressing these and other questions, it is important to try and place yourself amongst these writers, particularly as you prepare to respond to the multiple possible contexts of music education that you may face in the future. Try to put yourself “in the shoes” of the students in the examples, and ask yourself how each approach would have suited you. Also imagine yourself as the teacher in the examples—and then how alternative contexts might change your response.

By exploring these authors’ views of music education, alongside examples or case studies that exemplify their positions, we hope you will be able to establish your *own* approaches towards music education.

Wishing you all the best in your future endeavours,

*Julie Ballantyne and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet*

# CHAPTER ONE

## NAVIGATING CONTEXT-BASED LEARNING IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

JULIE BALLANTYNE  
AND BRYDIE-LEIGH BARTLEET

Research into early-career teachers' experiences in their first few years of teaching has revealed that sometimes a disparity exists between their expectations and the realities of teaching life (Ballantyne 2007a). One of the best ways to better prepare pre-service teachers for the multiple teaching experiences they might face is to provide them with opportunities to actively engage with as many different "real-life" contexts as possible. In many cases, these contexts might extend beyond the classroom walls to include music-making in local community centres, sporting facilities, festivals and community events (see Bartleet 2008). By thinking about, planning for, and practising their responses to these situations *before* they face them in "real-life," pre-service teachers can be better equipped to deal with the realities of their teaching experiences.

In a structured, supportive environment such as the teacher education classroom, pre-service teachers can explore extensive learning and teaching situations across multiple contexts. Students can also workshop how the theories, perspectives and approaches they have learnt through their teacher education can be applied to their imagined practice in these situations.

### **Why think about contexts together with "problems"?**

University educators have been challenged and encouraged to incorporate "authentic" activities and realistic contexts into teacher education (Bennett, Harper, and Hedberg 2002). In fact, the need to provide learning opportunities which allow the transference of theory-based knowledge to real situations has been argued in the literature for

many years. Case-based learning in particular has gained popular support in assisting pre-service teachers to be better prepared for their future careers (Ertmer and Russell 1995).

Early-career music teachers have also spoken about the need for pre-service teacher education courses to thoroughly prepare them for the realities of the classroom (Ballantyne 2007a). Ballantyne's (2007a) findings show that early-career teachers perceive a need for teacher education courses to provide opportunities for the continual development of knowledge throughout the early stages of their careers. In light of this, we believe attention should be given to the realities of the classroom in order to prevent praxis shock and the associated high incidence of "burnout" among new music teachers. Suggestions for improving teacher education include "problem-based learning opportunities and interaction with a variety of music teachers in many different contexts" (Ballantyne 2007b, 187). Such techniques support students not only in generating knowledge but also in developing self-directed learning skills, increasing the opportunities for education to become a lively discovery of reality (Henderson 1992).

In previous work in this area, Ballantyne (2007a; 2007b) found that early-career teachers consistently described their "ideal" teacher education preparation as being framed within a context where *music teaching* might take place. Whilst teachers emphasised the importance of *pedagogical content knowledge and skills* and *professional knowledge and skills* in pre-service courses, they also commented on the importance of the practicum being integrated throughout the structure of the course. This could be combined with university-guided reflection in order to enable pre-service teachers to more readily contextualise the educational theory learnt. Active guided critical reflection on multiple learning contexts before, during and after practicum experiences (which are located throughout the courses) could also serve to better prepare teachers for the multiple contexts that they may face in the future.

This chapter has been designed to demonstrate how teaching situations can differ, and how responses to challenges in music teaching can vary depending on the context, and the predisposition of the teacher. The purpose of presenting these case studies, therefore, is to assist pre-service teachers in pre-empting their own responses to similar situations that they are likely to encounter when they leave the "safety" of their universities.

Students reading this chapter should be aware that the following case studies are just three possible examples of learning spaces in music education, within and outside the classroom walls. The examples in this chapter do not come close to encapsulating the plethora of possibilities

that pre-service teachers might face in their working lives; however, the very experience of trying to engage with these “real-life” problems should assist students in dealing more effectively with different, unimagined situations when they begin teaching.

It is hoped that the pre-service teachers who read these case studies will consider how they might respond if they were faced with similar situations, and how they might draw connections between general education “theory” and the dynamics of each context. These three case studies are *inspired* by real situations that Bartleet encountered in her fieldwork for *Sound Links*, an Australia-wide study into the dynamics of community music and the models it represents for music learning and teaching in formal and informal settings (Bartleet et al. 2009).<sup>1</sup> We have presented these case studies in a descriptive and somewhat evocative way, and the discussions which follow them are conversational in style. We hope that by presenting the case studies in this way, we will bring the situations to life and spark further conversations between our readers and their colleagues in the classroom.

## Case study one

Imagine for a moment that you are a classroom music teacher in a small primary school (250 students) in the Dandenong Ranges in Victoria, about an hour’s drive from Melbourne’s CBD. You have been working at this school for the past eight years, and are employed on a full-time basis. You have your own music classroom, which is central in the school, but in its own building. The music program is fairly well resourced, with a piano, access to tuned and un-tuned instruments, and a very supportive principal, which means that you are generally not restricted in how you manage your program. There are a number of schools in the local Shire of the Yarra Ranges; eighty-four to be exact.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Sound Links* is a project of Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre (QCRC), Griffith University, in partnership with the Music Council of Australia (MCA), the Australian Music Association (AMA) and the Australian Society for Music Education (ASME). The project was realised with a two-year research grant (2007-2008) under the Linkage scheme of the Australian Research Council. The research team for the project included Professor Huib Schippers (QCRC), Associate Professor Peter Dunbar-Hall (Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney), Dr Richard Letts (MCA), and Dr Brydie-Leigh Bartleet (QCRC). The final report from this project was launched in May 2009 and can be downloaded from <http://www.griffith.edu.au/music/queensland-conservatorium-research-centre/resources/sound-links-final-report>

The area contains some of the most environmentally important areas in Victoria, which attracts both residents and tourists (see Figure 1). The local shire has a diverse economy of around 10,000 businesses, employing some 35,289 people. Manufacturing continues to represent the single most valuable sector of the economy, with construction, property and business services, retail trade, agriculture and forestry (including wine-making) other key sectors. Your school is surrounded by spectacular forestland and natural beauty; however, it is dangerously prone to bushfires.



Figure 1: Dandenong Ranges, Victoria, Australia

You have a vibrant weekly program of music activities that keep you busy. In close proximity to the school is the Dandenong Ranges Music Council, an arts organisation that has been funding, facilitating and teaching community music in this region for over thirty years. They run weekly programs and flagship projects that focus on important local issues, such as the environment, local artists and community education projects.

The life of your school is moving along peacefully until a series of deadly bushfires roars up the north-face of Mount Dandenong. Many of your students are seriously affected and countless homes are lost. Reports



confirm that a handful of local people have been killed. It emerges that these fires were no accident; they were started by two “firebugs.” Community outrage grows, and anger starts to set in. Your students are deeply affected by this tragedy and they don’t quite seem themselves in music classes—they are more subdued than usual. You try to talk to them about it, but words just don’t seem to be enough.

\*

**Pause for a moment.** What is the main problem faced by you, the teacher, in this case study? What are the issues associated with this case study from your perspective (as the music teacher), and from the perspectives of the students? What do you need to find out in order to address the issues at hand? What issues are specific to the music teacher’s classroom/teaching environment? How is this problem relevant to you (as a pre-service teacher)? What are the broader issues that need to be considered when engaging with the wider community as a music teacher? What would you do—what “solution” can you suggest? Is your “solution” specific to this context? Make sure you try and link your “solutions” to educational literature when justifying your approach.

Below we have described a solution to this problem inspired by a “real-life” example from the Dandenong Ranges. As you read it, think of how this teacher’s response relates to your solution and how many other potential solutions there may be.

\*

In this “real-life” situation, the music teacher, Margaret, realised she couldn’t adequately deal with the situation on her own, so looked to the community surrounding her school for help. She discovered that the local Music Council was planning a community-based project to help heal the anger that was building. They were sending a songwriter and music therapist out to local schools, fire brigades, and community ensembles to write a series of songs about the community’s feelings towards this tragic event. The songwriter had previous experience working with communities who had faced traumas, and was well equipped to assist people in dealing with grief (in conjunction with the music therapist). The moment Margaret heard about this she went to her principal to ask if their school could become involved. Despite her busy teaching schedule, she knew this was an opportunity both she and her students couldn’t miss. Thankfully her principal was encouraging and agreed to lend his support. As Margaret

watched the songwriter and music therapist working with her students, listening to their fire stories and incorporating their words into his song-structures, she was humbled and more than a little surprised to hear the depth of emotion reflected in their lyrics. It certainly built on the skills that she, as a music teacher, brought to the classroom. She witnessed how powerful the process could be in giving her students a collective voice to express the trauma and fear they had experienced. Margaret was so inspired by the workshops and the links to the community which resulted, that she decided to incorporate community members into her music classroom at every opportunity.

When Margaret asked one of her students, Jonathon, to reflect on this experience and the power of music to tell local fire stories, he said:

I think it's really good, because kids especially, don't really want to sit and hear people ramble on about the fires. It's more interesting, especially for children, to actually hear it in a different way; like telling through singing. So when you actually sing about something like fire, it reaches people in a different way.

However, this project didn't just end with the song-writing workshops. The local Music Council brought together all the schools, students, and music teachers involved in the project, along with the local fire brigade, local police, parks and wildlife rangers, and hundreds of community musicians for a large-scale concert to unite the community in solidarity. This project became a way of not only healing the community, but also educating the community about fire prevention and preparation.

If we look towards educational literature on community engagement, we discover that the concept of learning is integral to community music-making and the notion of community is important to music learning and teaching. As Jorgensen (1995) explains:

One of the most pervasive models underlying music education is that of community. Whether it be the Hindustani sitarist instructing his disciple in traditional manner, the Western classical pianist conducting her masterclass, the Australian Aboriginal songman teaching his young kinsman a love song, or the Balkan mother singing her daughter a lament, all participate in a community in which music making and taking plays a central role. (71)

Likewise, Wood and Judikis (2002) suggest:

One cannot belong to a true community without learning in the community and from the community. . . . every community educates—in making its

decisions, in developing or agreeing upon values, in determining cultural norms, in negotiating differences among members and with other communities, and even in the everyday unstructured interactions and communications among community members. (112)

Margaret’s willingness to engage with her local community, thus not only assisted her students to come to terms with a tragic event that had horribly affected their community; it also provided her students with a powerful community learning experience that left a deep and lasting impression on them. Margaret cleverly drew on the expertise of a community musician, the “songwriter” in this particular case study, to assist in bringing two traditionally quite separate communities together—that of the classroom and the broader community. In this particular example, the learning occurring in the classroom was enriched by the incorporation of the community musician into the traditional classroom. The collaboration between the teacher and songwriter benefitted the students, both socially and musically. In reporting their exploration of similar issues within service-learning programs for pre-service teachers, Burton and Reynolds (2009) suggest that nurturing these kinds of community partnerships also “helps community stakeholders see music, music educators, and music students as valuable resources—and valuable future employees—for their communities” (30).

These are just a few insights into Margaret’s situation. We are sure you could think of many more. Take a moment to reflect on the ways in which this discussion has been enriched by such philosophical and practical approaches to classroom music education. When you are ready, it’s time to travel to another case study, this time in the Top End of Australia.

## **Case study two**

Imagine for a moment that you have just been posted to a community education centre (CEC) in the remote town of Borroloola in the Northern Territory. The CEC is a school which caters for students from ages five to eighteen years (approximately). Borroloola has a population of nearly 1,000 people, with 80–90% being Indigenous, and representing four different linguistic groups—Yanyuwa, Garrwa, Marra and Gudanji. The town consists of a main road with a few shops, take-away outlets, a school, a church, an arts centre, and administrative buildings (see Figure 2). There is also a residential area known as The Subdivision, the Yanyuwa, Garrwa, Marra and Gudanji camps, and twenty-six outstations. It is a vibrant and friendly community; however, unemployment is extremely high, local health statistics are troubling, the provision of

housing is inadequate, and cycles of substance abuse are deeply affecting young people in the area.



Figure 2: Borroloola, Northern Territory, Australia

Your CEC is located in the middle of town, with a primary and secondary campus, and almost all the students are Indigenous. School attendance at both campuses is low, so you have been employed by the principal to try and re-engage the students in learning, using music. You have never worked in an Indigenous context before, but are enthused about the challenges ahead. The principal is mindful that the local elders in the community are concerned about the disappearance of traditional culture and language and tells you this is something she wants the school to address. They are beginning to do this through traditional culture lessons where the students are taken out into the bush to learn about stories, songs, weaving and bush tucker food. These classes seem popular with the students, and you notice the bright coloured displays they have made in these classes proudly hanging on the walls. These culture lessons are led by the Assistant Teachers, who are Indigenous, with the classroom teachers taking on the role of assistants.

Currently there is no music program at the CEC and you are the only classroom music teacher in the town. When you walk into your teaching room, which doubles as the school library, you find some containers of dusty percussion instruments, but very few resources. However, your principal is committed to supporting your program, so offers to buy any equipment you require. She has imposed no restrictions on what repertoire you teach or the methods you use, your mandate is simply to re-engage the students in learning through music using whatever means possible.

\*

**Pause for a moment.** What is the main challenge faced by you, the teacher, in this case study? What are the issues associated with this case study from your perspective (as the music teacher), and from the perspectives of the students? What do you need to find out in order to address the issues associated with working in this Indigenous context? What issues are specific to the music teacher’s classroom/teaching environment? How is this situation relevant to you (as a pre-service teacher)? What are the broader issues that need to be considered when engaging with complex issues such as race and culture, as a music teacher? What would you do—what “solution” can you suggest when thinking about the development of this curriculum? Is your “solution” specific to this context? Make sure you try and link your “solutions” to educational literature when justifying your approach.

Below we have described a solution to this problem inspired by the “real-life” example from Borroloola. As you read it, think of how this teacher’s response relates to your solution and how many other potential solutions there may be.

\*

In this “real-life” situation, Jeff, the non-Indigenous music teacher, realised he needed to “step back” for a moment and be sensitive to the cultural context in which he’d found himself. From a musical perspective, he knew that he needed to be strategic about what repertoire he’d use to engage the young people in this community. He sought to find out what music they were listening to and discovered that rock, country, hip hop and R ‘n’ B were all popular. He wanted to capture the students’ imagination by providing a pathway for them to make this music themselves within a short space of time, and so he went to his principal and ordered a few guitars, basses and amps in order to set-up a “rock

group.” In very little time he had the students playing percussion and learning the basic chords of their favourite songs. They were immediately engaged and amazed at how easy it was to make this style of music.

In time, Jeff discovered that there were a few Indigenous rock bands in town. He soon realised that the young children idealised these groups and knew many of their songs by heart. When he asked the students about them, they shouted, “Yeah, the Sandridge Band, they’re really good. They played down at the sports field last year some time. They have this song ‘Think about your culture,’ it’s like reggae and stuff.” From a cultural perspective, Jeff saw the potential role that this popular group could play in connecting his music classes with the students’ culture classes, so decided to go and meet the band. By this stage, Jeff was somewhat self-conscious about his glaringly “white skin” and all too aware that he was no expert when it came to working in an Indigenous context, so he was keen to get some advice from these local Indigenous men. Shortly, their relationship began to grow around a shared passion for music-making, and Jeff invited them into his classroom. The collaborative relationship that developed enabled deep learning to occur, both musically and culturally. Rather than shying away from the potentially tricky issues relating to this cross-cultural collaboration, they worked closely together on incorporating traditional language into the songs that they wrote during music classes.

Valuing Indigenous ways of learning and knowing is crucial, particularly within Indigenous contexts. As May (1999) explains:

Education has now come to be seen as a key arena in which indigenous peoples can reclaim and revalue their languages and cultures and, in so doing, improve the educational success of indigenous students. A key concern here has been to regain a measure of direct control of the educational process; something largely denied indigenous peoples by colonisation. (1)

By acknowledging the importance of Indigenous ways of learning, the literature also calls music teachers to think about “relationship” as the key to negotiating music education in such cross-cultural contexts. As Mackinlay (2008) describes:

I am often asked by music educators about teaching resources that are available to use in their classrooms so that they can include Indigenous Australian music in their curriculum. My answer begins and ends with “relationship.” My own experience has shown me that one of the most powerfully transformative teaching and learning resources about Indigenous Australian performance practice that we all have at our fingertips is not something we will find in a book on the library shelf, in an