Experienced general music teachers' instructional decision making

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Abstract
The purpose of this descriptive study was to explore experienced general music teachers' decision-making processes. Participants included seven experienced, American general music teachers who contributed their views during two phases of data collection: (1) responses to three classroom scenarios; and (2) in-depth, semi-structured, follow-up interviews. Analysis using a constructivist approach revealed that participants reported making distinct decisions during the planning, instruction, and reflection stages of teaching. During planning, their focus was on developing clear goals and objectives, encouraging a life-long love of music, and fostering responsible citizenship. During instruction, they made decisions guided by specific formal and informal methodologies to build on previously taught concepts and to support classroom management. After instruction, participants' responses highlighted the importance of being flexible, their own professional development, and student assessment. While other studies have examined general music teachers' instructional processes in methodology-specific practices, this study offers insights from experienced general music teachers regarding their decision-making processes when responding to classroom scenarios. Implications for future research include improving in-service teachers' self-awareness, advancing professional development for experienced teachers, and enhancing the effectiveness of music teacher education programs.

Keywords
classroom scenarios, experienced teachers, general music, instructional decision making, music education, teacher education

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The instructional decisions teachers make on a daily basis directly impact the lives of their students. As reflective practitioners, teachers scrutinize the learning environment, establish goals for their students, plan how to achieve these goals, evaluate the results, and thoughtfully reflect on their own professional beliefs (Bernstein-Colton & Spark-Langer, 1993). These decisions rely on multifaceted cognitive processes that are influenced by teachers' experiences, values, content knowledge, pedagogy, and their individual students (Shavelson, 1973). As Anderson (2003) emphasized, thoughtful consideration of information is needed for teachers to make informed decisions.

The literature examining non-music teachers' decision making focuses on the many and varied pedagogical decisions teachers initiate before, during, and after the process of teaching (Shavelson & Stern, 1981). Decisions made prior to teaching encompass choices regarding curriculum and planning activities for a variety of outcomes, including enhancing student understanding and engagement. During classroom instruction, teachers focus on students' conceptual understanding and behaviors (Parmigiani, 2012) and provide any adjustments needed to improve student learning. Although some scholars advocate for the notion of reflection-in-action (Schon, 1986), others report that teachers reflect on the lesson and create follow-up activities after instruction is completed (Kohler, Henning, & Usma-Wilches, 2008).

Bernstein-Colton and Spark-Langer (1993) proposed a framework consisting of three stages for the mental process of decision making, which highlights the importance of a professional knowledge base that includes understanding the influences of content, students, pedagogy, and values. Specifically, they defined the three stages of teaching as the following: planning, pre-instructional decisions; instruction, actual teaching time with students; and reflection, deliberation during and after instruction. Westerman (1991) found that experienced teachers focused their decisions on understanding the student's perspective and on fully analyzing all parts of the educational process. As Parmigiani, (2012) reported, these practices strengthened as teachers gained classroom experience.

In music, researchers have agreed that effective decision making and reflective thinking skills are important tools for teachers (Conway, 1999a). The majority of studies involving general music teaching, however, focus on the importance of general music (Atterbury, 1992), on methods or approaches to teaching general music and corresponding student learning outcomes (Hedden & Woods, 1992), identifying and refining the general music curriculum (Rufola & Rutkowski, 1992), and investigating general music teacher identities (Bernard, 2005). Additionally, many investigations into music teachers' instructional decision making have centered on beginning music teachers (Conway, 2001), pre-service music teachers (Haston & Leon-Guerrero, 2008; Powell, 2014), secondary instrumental directors (Millican, 2008), and early childhood teachers (Miranda, 2014). These studies have shown a trend to emphasize general content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge as teachers select teaching strategies, determine evaluation protocols, gauge student impact, and maintain developmentally appropriate instructional practices. To understand instructional decision making more fully, the co-authors of the current study chose to investigate general music teachers' decision-making processes in relation to the three phases of teaching: planning, instruction, and reflection.

Purpose

In this qualitative study, the co-authors explored how seven experienced general music teachers described their decision-making processes when prompted by given classroom scenarios. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to explore the underlying reasoning behind instructional decision-making processes used by experienced general music teachers. Accordingly, the co-authors asked: how do experienced general music teachers describe their decision-making processes?

Method

The co-authors recruited a purposive sample of experienced, American, public school, general music teachers based on their qualifications and experience (Patton, 2002). Criteria for selecting participants were teaching experience and advanced professional credentials. Participants were all female and encompassed a 25-year range of teaching experience. Each participant held a Masters of Music degree, a Masters of Arts in Teaching degree, or a National Board Certification in Early/Middle Childhood Music. All participants taught in a suburban setting in the southeastern United States. These criteria allowed for a descriptive multiple-case study, examining within and between cases of general music teachers with similar training as they reflect on the real-life context in which they make decisions (Yin, 2003). As Baxter and Jack (2008) explained, results gathered from this type of qualitative study are robust and reliable. The co-authors secured the appropriate Institutional Review Board approval, and all participants completed consent forms prior to beginning this study. For a display of corresponding demographic data and pseudonyms, see Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic background of participants.

Pseudonym	Years of teaching experience	Graduate degree	Certification and/or training
Abby	18	MA in Music Education	Orff Levels I, II, and III
Betty	5	MA in Teaching	None
Caroline	21	MM in Music Education	Orff Levels I and II
Dorothy	9	MA in Teaching	Orff Levels I and II, and National Board Certification in Early/Middle Childhood Music
Emily	15	None	Orff Level I, and National Board Certification in Early/Middle Childhood Music
Fran	22	MM in Music Education	Orff Level I and Kodály Levels I, II, and III
Gretchen	34	MM in Music Education	Orff Levels I, II, and III

In phase 1 of this study, each participant wrote open-ended responses to three classroom scenarios, adapted by the co-authors as mini case studies from *Music in Childhood* (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2014, pp. 109–110, 236–237, 312–313), to represent different instructional situations and to present specific instructional challenges. The co-authors chose to use scenarios because this methodical approach is an effective way for participants to describe their behaviors across similar situations (Alexander & Maiden, 2005), is particularly useful for illustrating knowledge in applied settings (Tandogan & Orhan, 2007), and allows for a systematic comparison and contrast of participant responses. Although scenarios and case studies are relatively new in music education research (Lind, 2001), their use stimulates critical and reflective thinking (Conway, 1999b). In order to preserve the open-ended nature of this qualitative inquiry, the scenarios included opportunities for respondents to react to many aspects of instruction, classroom management, curriculum, and the learning environment (Rossman & Rallis, 2011). After reading the scenarios, each teacher explained how they would finish the particular lesson and provided reasons for their answers. See Appendix A for the scenarios.

In phase 2 of this study, the co-authors conducted interviews using written responses from the scenarios as reference points to guide and extend the investigation. Interview questions were developed based on participants' scenario responses. Each semi-structured interview lasted between an

hour and an hour and a half. Participants were asked to elaborate on decisions they presented in the scenarios, why they were making them, and what results they believed the students would demonstrate. Later, recorded and transcribed, these interviews added detail to the scenario responses. See Appendix B for the follow-up interview questions.

The data analysis process allowed the co-authors to focus on participant stories and their lived experiences. Using tenets of constructivist approaches, the co-authors independently analyzed written responses and transcribed interview data using open coding, which enabled them to examine responses for instructional decisions. They then investigated relationships of the resulting 19 in-vivo codes in an analytic framework to determine the resulting themes and analyze their meanings (Charmaz, 2006; Kreuger & Casey, 2015). When no substantive changes occurred during the coding process, data saturation had been reached (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Upon further analysis of the codes, multiple themes emerged to incorporate details about participants' decision-making processes. For triangulation, the co-authors performed member checks to provide internal validity for the findings (Creswell, 2008). All participants concurred with the thematic analysis, occasionally adding supportive clarification. In addition, the co-authors conducted peer reviews with published experts in the fields of qualitative analysis and general music education. Their input provided an opportunity to reflect on the data collected and strategies for presenting the findings. After constant comparisons and open-ended analysis, the co-authors used memoing to further develop themes that represent goals of musical instruction and citizenship. Finally, to aid in organizing and understanding the data, the co-authors reviewed the data multiple times and used theories and readings that illuminated participant responses (Maxwell, 2013).

Findings

Nine emergent themes clustered around the three stages of teaching proposed by Bernstein-Colton and Spark-Langer (1993): planning, instructing, and reflecting. Planning constituted pre-instructional decisions, while instruction pertained to actual contact time with students, and reflection encompassed reflection-in-action during instruction and post-instructional decisions. Within each of these areas, three emergent themes illustrated ways in which the teacher participants described making instructional decisions. During planning, participants indicated that they focused on: (1) having clear goals and objectives; (2) helping students develop a life-long love of music; and (3) displaying responsible citizenship. During the instructional stage, participants reported that they made decisions: (4) guided by specific formal and informal methodologies; (5) building on previously taught concepts; and (6) addressing classroom management. In the reflection stage, participants indicated that their decisions focused on: (7) the importance of being flexible; (8) their own professional development; and (9) gauging student growth through assessment. Participants reported that decisions made within each stage influenced and guided decisions in the other stages, providing for a cycle of continuous feedback. Common themes in participants' reflections regarding instructional decision making and underlying processes are presented below.

Themes Related to Planning

Regarding planning, participants responded with both specific procedures as well as long-term ideas. They described setting goals and objectives for one lesson, along with overarching aspirations for encouraging a life-long love of music. In addition, they explained that their planning encompassed the non-musical notion of responsible citizenship. These broad aims provided an educational context for the shorter-term goals and objectives.

Clear goals and objectives. In discussing their planning, participants focused on the importance of having clear proximal and distal goals, as well as objectives in their lesson plans. For example, Caroline described writing lesson plans by stating:

> When you have objectives you need to know if they [the students] are learning the objectives, so if you're planning correctly you're going to look and see if they are the objectives for your grade level. Make sure that your planning meets those objectives.

Fran noted that in addition to musical skills, there are other school-wide goals that music teachers need to meet. She said, "I think we are also responsible for integrating and correlating with everything else going on within the school. I don't think we're isolated …we have to be school-wise." She spoke about her role in the School Improvement Plan and the importance of fitting into the entire school. She also tied overarching school-wide documents to teacher assessment in order to emphasize the importance of music teachers understanding their role in the school as a whole. Similarly, Dorothy expressed her desire to help students understand music's connection to the world around them:

> I want them [my students] to see that we can use music as a vehicle to learn about math or science or global awareness … It is not just about music … that is definitely a top priority, but it's not just about music. It's how can I show kids that … you learned about rhyming words in your classroom but you can listen for rhyming words in a song.

Life-long love of music. Many participants commented on wanting students to develop a life-long love of music, to feel joy, and to express their inner creativity through music. Abby commented, "I would define true success now when I see that spark happen, or I see extensions happen when the kids create … that's when I feel like, ok, today's class is successful." Participants also expressed a great responsibility to help students learn musical concepts, with the goal of students independently demonstrating knowledge. Participants highlighted the importance of music in students' lives and giving them their first impressions of music. Dorothy elaborated:

> I just want kids to be life-long learners. Whether it's a lifelong learner about music, I mean obviously I want that. I just want them to understand that you can learn a lot through music and it doesn't have to be specifically about music, but you can learn about other areas through music. I always think that I want to plant that seed and then maybe in middle school, maybe somebody will pour some water on that seed and it will really start to sprout … so just to plant that seed, whether it be for general music or whether it be for just learning in general. I want students who may not be top level learning to know that the way we learn in music class can help them learn … I want them to feel comfortable in this environment and feel like they too have a chance to succeed.

Fran's comments summarized this theme. She stated:

> Our job is to not only to teach all the scales but I think part of our job is to make them lifelong musicians. Be it singing lullabies to their kids, or going to a concert, it's important to make them feel comfortable in understanding that if they go on to play music they'll have a background.

Responsible citizenship. Participants expressed that they wanted students to treat each other with respect and to understand that actions have consequences. For example, Abby commented, "I want music to help make them be better citizens in the world. You know, more sensitive people, more aware, [and to] have a tenderness. I think that the arts definitely do that for kids, for people, for

everybody." Similarly, Betty said, "A lot of what we do in music helps students collaborate with others, problem solving … you have to get along with others and accept different viewpoints." Fran put the issue of responsibility and citizenship in context by saying:

> In the public schools, I'm responsible for teaching music concepts and all that but I've got to make sure that we learn how to treat other people and to deal with the world in a social context also. You know, I'm constantly saying, "Do unto others," and, "How do you want people to treat you?" I think that's just as much a part of my job as teaching music, because if they can't come in here in an orderly manner and take turns and treat each other the right way, we're not going to do music. I have a class like that, and I teach very little music.

Similarly, Dorothy underlined connections between classroom behavior and social awareness: "I say 'Wait … Maybe it's time to give someone else a turn here. Someone else that hasn't had a turn,' and I think there's a lot of social interactions in the music room, especially if you're doing movement activities and those kinds of things." This theme highlights the importance of non-musical skills as they transcend music and apply to general education.

Themes Related to Instruction

With respect to instruction, participants discussed the importance of methods and theories along with pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986). On this topic, participants provided more procedural specifics in their responses. Analysis of data pertaining to instruction revealed themes related to using specific methodologies, building on concepts in sequential instruction, and managing the classroom for optimal learning.

Using specific methodologies. Participants commented on their approaches to teaching specific musical skills and concepts. The nature of these comments was consistent with the professional development the majority of participants had in Orff-Schulwerk. For example, Emily discussed motivating students by sequencing instruction, building on things students already know, and organizing lessons to facilitate learning and support self-efficacy. Similarly, Caroline advocated planning a variety of activities, especially on the primary level. She explained, "You have to make sure you get the variety of activities and this helps you meet the needs of the kids … You need to include movement, reading, writing, and singing and the more you do that within everyday the more you can be successful with every child."

Many participants based their instruction on a variety of established approaches such as Orff-Schulwerk, Kodály, and Dalcroze. For example, Abby used solfège to improve pitch matching and believed that this concept was integral to developing the musical skill of singing in parts. She reported that, "Students would be asked to sing solfège patterns after me using the Kodály [Curwen] hand signs, so that I may check for understanding."

Possibly as a result of their experience with the Orff approach, many participants cited body percussion, improvisation, and movement prominently as instructional features. Regarding body percussion, Dorothy commented:

> I find that teaching rhythm patterns as body percussion first provides an opportunity for students to internalize the rhythms. Using words or phrases that relate to the song and the rhythm works wonders. It gives the kids something verbal that they can connect to if they're not kinesthetic with the movement.

Improvisation figured prominently in some responses, as Gretchen said:

I would play a steady beat followed by a four-beat pattern, and then students can echo me, improvising their own four-beat pattern. Then students can create their own eight-beat patterns on their instruments. Students may decide to have different groups of instruments to create their own patterns.

Notably, all participants highlighted the importance of incorporating movement into their lessons. For example, Caroline said:

We would almost always learn things through movement. It seemed that their singing was always there, when we're talking about rhythm, we would use manipulatives sometimes, because, you know, with little kids that might be the popsicle sticks for ta's and ti-ti's, with older kids it might be that they cut out the rhythm and then move them around to make up rhythms of their own because that actual tactile part helps them create.

Building on concepts. Many participants described expanding on concepts and continually assessing students' knowledge during instruction. Gretchen illustrated how she structured her lessons:

If I noticed the kind of difficulty students were having; I would make my patterns easier and speak on rhythm syllables while clapping (ta; ta; ti-ti; ta or beat; beat; beat and beat—whatever system the students know). Then, I would ask the students to speak while echo clapping instead of playing their instruments (adding speech usually really helps my students perform with accuracy), review steady beat and rests using the Heart Chart, and then have students help me create a pattern using the beat and rests. We practice speaking, moving to, and performing the patterns with body percussion before ever moving to instruments. The last step is to add in the instruments and I might have all students play similar instruments so I can monitor technique more closely to make sure that is not the reason for the difficulty in echoing rhythm patterns with accuracy.

Dorothy had an innovative use of technology to help students develop their understanding of harmony. She said:

They can begin to see harmony with a simple song. Take "Row, Row Your Boat," and then we divide it into a round and they can begin to hear that harmony … sometimes when they're focused on their part, they're not going to hear that harmony but if we use Audacity [a computer software program for audio recording and editing] or a video camera or something like that and play it back, and I say, "Listen to how the two parts fit together and how we have different notes that are creating that harmony." I chose to do it that way because I think it is easier for the kids to understand the concept.

Managing the classroom. All participants mentioned the importance of classroom management. Many commented on having transitions from one activity to the next. For example, Betty stated:

I try to have music playing when the students enter and a task for them to do at the onset, so that no time is lost in the transition into music from the hallway. I also have routines/procedures for the start of class and usually move a pretty quick pace to maximize instructional time and keep students engaged.

Clear expectations and student choice also had an impact on classroom management. As Dorothy commented:

I allow my students in first through fifth grade to choose where they would like to sit each week during music class and that is their assigned seat each week. I tell them that I am giving them a privilege to choose where they want to sit. They can choose to sit next to a friend, but they need to make a good choice. If they are going to talk or play with this friend, they will be off task and may cause others to be off task. If this

happens, I (as the teacher) have the right to move them away from their chosen seat so everyone has the opportunity to be successful and learn during music class.

Caroline commented that using a consistent daily routine was one effective tool for classroom management. She said:

I always start the class with a song, with the primary kids the same song every time. They've got to sing every day. They've got to see some sort of written music in every lesson, so it depends on what the objective for that day is. I want them to have some sort of experience in reading and writing every day. The listening for listening's sake would often have another theme tied to it.

Dorothy's comments illustrated the intersection of instruction and classroom management:

I always emphasize that we always need to be aware of where we are, where things around us are and where people are … [I tell the students] we're in a little bubble and that we don't want to be in someone else's bubble space. Again, you're teaching kids politeness [and] responsibility.

Themes Related to Reflection

With respect to reflection, participants analyzed and made judgments about the classroom scenarios. Because reflective thinking is "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge" (Dewey, 1910, p. 6), participants demonstrated how they learned by thinking reflectively about learning situations. Based on participants' assessment of what they know, what they need to know, and how to bridge that gap, three emergent themes addressed the importance of flexibility, professional development, and student assessment.

Flexibility in the classroom. Abby specifically mentioned the importance of flexibility when reflecting on making decisions in the classroom. She commented:

Different teachers have different personality types, and the different personality types lend themselves to be really open ended and flexible and not attached, like … my personality is more open ended and always wanting to be open to options rather than making decisions and having it "black and white."

Professional development. Participants also discussed the importance of assessment in their own professional development and their desire to improve their teaching. For example, Dorothy commented that participating in an Orff level course was a turning point in her career. Before that course, she said, "I was at a standstill. I didn't know what I could do to make myself a better teacher … What did I need to do? I don't want my kids to learn this way."

Reflection as assessment was prominent throughout the data, specifically in the context of feedback to students. Gretchen highlighted this idea in her comments:

I want to assess which students are singing independently and which students are depending on others to match pitch. My feedback would be more specific than, "pretty good," when assessing student singing. Throughout singing solfège patterns, melodic patterns, and the song, I would remind students to use correct posture and vowel production. Students would be provided opportunities to be the teacher by singing solo patterns and having the class echo after them. The class would end with the teacher listening to students sing.

Student assessment. Participants also mentioned the importance of quick assessment to develop a fast appraisal of student progress and growth during instruction. These assessment techniques

included having students indicate understanding through "thumbs up" or "thumbs down," engaging the students in discussions, or having them respond to a question on an index card. For example, Emily said, "I always collect the index cards and sometimes read one of the answers or ask for volunteers to read the answers. So, even though it wasn't a formal assessment of some type, I could get an idea of where they were." Some participants mentioned reflecting on their decisions during instruction. As Dorothy noted, "If something's not working, you have to be reflective right there on the spot and say this is not working, and I need to figure out quickly another way to make this work." Her observation is consistent with teachers as reflective practitioners, using reflection-in-action (Schon, 1986).

Discussion and conclusion

To investigate general music teachers' instructional decisions, the co-authors asked: how do experienced general music teachers describe their decision-making processes in response to provided classroom scenarios? For teachers in this study, nine emergent themes clustered around the three stages of teaching: planning, instruction, and reflection (Bernstein-Colton & Spark-Langer, 1993). Through these themes, these teachers highlighted the importance of making decisions to promote students developing a life-long love of music and becoming responsible citizens. Participants' responses were also guided by specific formal and informal methodologies, understanding students' prior knowledge, and managing the learning environment. Finally, participants' answers culminated in understanding the need for flexibility, professional development, and student assessment. The concept of promoting citizenship through music, and developing a tolerance and a respect for others is notable as one of the emergent themes. In contrast to previous studies of pre-service teachers and instrumental directors (Haston & Leon-Guerro, 2008; Millican, 2009), experienced general music teachers highlighted responsible citizenship as an important learning outcome in addition to the musical content in their curriculum.

The general music teacher participants in this study valued content knowledge. Participants reported that during instruction they relied on their professional development in specific pedagogical content knowledge of Orff and Kodály methodologies to integrate barred (Orff) instruments, hand-signs, and body percussion to help students understand musical concepts. Participants also commented on the importance of sequential instruction and making effective classroom management decisions during instruction. This is consistent with Conway (2001) and Millican (2008) who examined decision making in pre-service teachers and secondary instrumental music teachers.

Many participants emphasized using a variety of instructional strategies in a sequential manner to help students understand musical concepts. Participants also cited visual aids, singing, playing instruments, and reading and writing. These results are consistent with others in the literature, such as the three-legged curriculum model consisting of objectives, strategies, and evaluation (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2014). Probing experienced general music teachers' responses to classroom scenarios offers insights into instructional strategies situated in a specific musical context. Their responses also echo results in the general education literature demonstrating how teachers make decisions based on disciplinary content and pedagogies (Bernstein-Colton & Spark-Langer, 1993). Westerman (1991) found that experienced teachers focused decisions on understanding student perspectives and on fully analyzing all parts of educational processes. Consistent with Parmigiani (2012), teachers in this investigation viewed decision making as reflective and cyclic.

Illustrating the importance of reflection in instructional decision making, many participants commented on how they thought about assessment, student success, and their own personal growth. Some of the participants also commented on the need for finding immediate and practical solutions using reflection. Such results of reflection-in-action were consistent with those

stated by Schon (1986), while post-instruction reflections were consistent with other studies (e.g., Kohler et al., 2008).

This research provides a window into how general music teachers describe their own decision-making processes during the stages of planning, instruction, and reflection, as prompted by the scenarios provided to them. One limitation of this study was that all the participants were female, yet that sample reflects the demographic of their peers. The sample also reflects only the beliefs of American teachers, and only those who pursued degrees or professional development beyond the bachelor degree. Most participants had completed training in Orff-Schulwerk, a popular teaching approach among American general music teachers. If participants' teaching approaches were more balanced, this study may have yielded different results. Another limitation was that the scope of this inquiry did not address obstacles teachers may encounter when making instructional decisions (e.g., limited resources and school climate). These topics require further study to determine what influence they might have on teacher motivation, decision-making processes, and corresponding practices.

Findings from this study illustrate how these teachers describe their decision-making processes in general music education as prompted by classroom scenarios provided to them. Insights from teacher responses may assist educators in understanding and contextualizing their responsibility to guide student learning during the stages of planning, instruction, and reflection. Through increased familiarity with the ways experienced general music teachers conceptualize decision-making processes, music teacher-educators can assist pre-service teachers in anticipating challenging situations, increasing self-awareness, and developing more effective decision-making strategies. Utilizing teaching scenarios to prompt reflection is another implication of this study. Employing scenarios may prove to be a valuable strategy that results in teachers thinking deeply and insightfully about their classroom decisions. By developing a better understanding of teachers' instructional decision-making processes, teacher educators may enhance professional development and pre-service teacher programs.

Funding

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Appendix A

The co-authors adapted the following scenarios as mini case studies from *Music in Childhood* (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2014, pp. 109–110, 236–237, 312–313), to represent different instructional situations and to present specific instructional challenges.

Classroom scenarios

Scenario 1. It is September, and Ms. Patterson has begun the school year with a plan for her fourth-grade children at Thompson Elementary School: to learn to sing in parts. Her students arrive, settling in at the outer rim of a large braided carpet with many colors—three girls here, a couple of girls there, and the eleven boys packed in shoulder to shoulder within about one-third of the rim. Ms. Patterson stands by the piano, just outside the circle, plays a few chords to bring the children to attention, and announces the plan: "Because you have all had four years of experience in our music program, and your voices have developed such strength, we will be learning to sing harmony this year—in parts." She shares the sequence of the day's lesson with them: "We'll begin with some vocal warm-ups, and then we'll be ready to learn our first real part song, 'Old Texas.'" One of the boys mumbles, "Oldy Moldy," while another boy holds his nose and says, "Stinky!" causing a few other students to snicker. With a flourish of several more chords to set the key, she redirects the class's attention and instructs them to sing a major scale on a neutral syllable and then on solfège syllables, accompanying them chordally on each pitch they sing. Most of the girls are with her and a few of the boys, while others are chanting and half-shouting the syllables (but in a very rhythmic manner). She proceeds to pitch-matching exercises, playing a brief melodic phrase at the piano to which they respond in imitation on a neutral syllable. "Pretty good," she says, in part to balance her remarks to a group of both in-tune singers and others who seem uncertain, uninterested, or unable to match pitch. Among the weaker singers, she notices some students standing with poor posture and mouthing the words. Ms. Patterson has thirty (30) more minutes left in this class period. If you were she, how would you finish the class? Be sure to include the reasons for your answer in your response.

Scenario 2. A combined class, Mrs. Barr's second- and third-grade group has arrived to Miss Hailey's room for their late-morning class. They settle themselves into their places just behind the instruments that have been laid out in sections on the carpeted floor. There are three xylophones and three metallophones (soprano, alto, and bass). Four groups of instruments are arranged in each corner of the room: six glockenspiels in one corner; two conga drums, a goblet drum, and three hand drums in another corner; two woodblocks, two claves, a slit log drum, and a guiro in the third corner; and one gong, two cowbells, two triangles, and a pair of finger cymbals in the last corner. The children know the routine, but Miss Hailey reminds them, "Do what I do. Listen to me, watch my cue, then you do it." She picks up a pair of claves and plays a four-beat pattern, then extends her arms and nods her head to the children, and they immediately try to imitate her. Their imitation is less than precise, but generally recognizable. That pattern is followed by another, and another, and another. She increases the length of the patterns to eight beats, and more and more of the class are unable to produce a completely accurate imitation. The children on the three xylophones are playing on the keys of the C pentatonic scale (the Fs and Bs have been removed) with less rhythmic precision than the children on claves, woodblocks, or slit drum, but Miss Hailey continues to maintain a steady pace. Mrs. Barr has thirty (30) more minutes left in this class period. If you were she, how would you finish the class? Be sure to include the reasons for your answer in your response.

Scenario 3. One of Mr. Robinson's late-afternoon classes of third-grade children is lively. On one Tuesday afternoon in February, he is convinced that they are one of his more kinesthetically inclined classes and that they will do well to spend much of their music time with movement activities. His classroom, a 1970s-style portable building of aluminum exterior siding set at the far end of the parking lot, is conducive to movement. There are no desks or chairs, no clutter of books or instruments on the floor, and the tile floor stretches over a space as large as a standard school cafeteria. The children have taken their places in a standing circle. Although most are either laughing, or talking loudly, or twirling, or even stamping in place, Mr. Robinson moves quickly to the middle of the circle with a colorful Ghanaian-style djembe drum hung from his shoulder. Without a word of instruction, he slaps his hand on the head of the drum, and the deep-sounding "thud" signals the children to turn to the right, tune their ears to the beat, and walk. For nearly two minutes, most of the children walk when the drum sounds and freeze when the drum rests. They try to match the tempo of the drumbeat. Despite losing some control, the children adjust their movements from moderately fast to medium, to slow, and to a gradually increasing speed that changes to become so slow as to finally stop. Most of the children follow his directions well, but Billy failed to stop and accidentally bumped into the class bully, Mack. Mack screamed, "Get away from me you jerk!" and pushed Billy, who fell backward, bumping his head into Stephanie's face. By the time Mr. Robinson approached Billy and Mack, Stephanie's sobs had reached earsplitting level. Mr. Robinson has thirty (30) more minutes left in this class period. If you were he, how would you finish the class? Be sure to include the reasons for your answer in your response.

Appendix B

Follow-Up Interview Questions

Part I. We found these three ideas in your original survey responses:

1. Helping students learn
2. Specific instructional strategies
3. Promote student understanding
   1a. How do you view helping students learn?
   1b. How is helping students learn consistent with your approach to teaching?
   1c. Can you explain more about this?
   2a. How do you view specific instructional strategies?
   2b. How are specific instructional strategies consistent with your approach to teaching?
   2c. Can you explain more about this?
   3a. How do you view promoting student understanding?
   3b. How is promoting student understanding consistent with your approach to teaching?
   3c. Can you explain more about this?

Part II. [Review their individual responses.]
Can you explain more about these ideas?
Is there anything else you would like to add to this response?

Part III. Are there other important goals you have as a teacher in general music? If so, please explain or describe them.