

## Team Final Report on Teacher and Student Learning

Please completed the form and have to your Team Leader **by May 30th**

Teacher/School: Paula McKenney-Myers

SUNY Oswego faculty member: Dan Wood/Josh Russell

Teacher Participant Names: Tom Wiegand, Cathy Kelly, Jim Hartman, Laurel Artz, Carolyn Dehm, TJ Bandla (OHS theater), Steve Braun (OHS theater)

Course Name & Academic Year: General Music 2013-14

### Please answer the following questions:

#### **Please update us on any changes you made to your team action plan:**

This was a year of seeing what I could accomplish at each grade level. I found that I was able to use the computer technology with grades 4-6 in a project format. Grades k-2 were able to use the iPads on a rotation basis for about 5 minutes at a time. At that level, select students were also able to change sounds using XPand in Protools. Only 1 workstation was set up at a time at that level. Grade 3 was able to use the computer technology on a rotational basis for about 15 minutes. Music programs on the iPad included Treble Cat, Launch Pad, Garage Band, Music Trainer, Music Sparkle, Rhythm Trainer. ProTools was used on the computers.

**Analysis of Data on Teacher Learning:** We examined our reflections on the 6 shifts, and CCLS and found the following: (Support each claim with examples/evidence)

Shift 2- knowledge in the disciplines- I addressed this ELA shift. During a unit on cultural music and jazz music, we used an online data base called World Book Kids to learn about the music of different countries. We also used Pebble Go and Brain Pop to learn about musical concepts. As the on screen text is read aloud, every word is highlighted. I questioned the students about what they read and heard.

Shift 3- Staircase of Complexity- I addressed this ELA shift. All grade levels read from age appropriate music textbooks as part of their musical study. Students also read from music in traditional and nontraditional notation.

Shift 4- Text Based Answers- I addressed this ELA shift. Any time we dealt with musical text, especially when we used the online data bases, I would ask questions about the text that we learned. Students would have to read the section to find the answers to my questions.

Shift 6- Academic Vocabulary- Students were always learning new vocabulary words in music class. I have words posted on every wall of the room. Every grade level learns about tempo, rhythm, dynamics, etc. All the basic musical elements. We revisit these terms throughout the course of their musical studies all the way up to graduation.

I did not address any of the shifts in Math.

**More information available in my teacher journal.**

**Analysis of Data on Student Learning:** We examined usability at different grade levels and found the following: (Give examples/evidence for each claim).

The students were very receptive to the use of technology (computers, keyboards, iPads). Meeting with students once every 4 days made things a bit difficult when working on projects. The students remembered where they were upon returning but it made the projects last for a very long time. They seemed to enjoy the projects. The 5<sup>th</sup> graders made songs on a cd as a Christmas gift so they were motivated to finish by the deadline. The 6<sup>th</sup> graders did the sound story project. They weren't in a hurry to finish and they seemed very content with their work on the project. The 4<sup>th</sup> graders didn't work on a project. They just played with the software for a few classes and that was good for their level.

More information available in my data analysis, see below.

Paula McKenney-Myers (Frederick Leighton Elementary School)

Dan Wood (SUNY Oswego)

Recording Our Future program 2013-14

Since this is a new project at this grade level and the students had no experience with this equipment before, I made the assumption that the students knew nothing. I am including 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders in the data. The 5<sup>th</sup> graders completed a composition project using ProTools. The 6<sup>th</sup> graders completed the sound story project (story set to music with sound effects).

### **Initial Survey:**

- 1- Have you used recording equipment before?
- 2- Have you used an electronic keyboard before?
- 3- Do you play a musical instrument?
- 4- Have you used any apps on an iPad or phone that are related to music?

#### Question 1:

Out of 40 6<sup>th</sup> graders, less than 10 have used recording equipment. Two students have family members who use recording equipment and have been present during a recording session. Out of 50 5<sup>th</sup> graders, less than 5 have used recording equipment. One student (related to a 6<sup>th</sup> grader) has family members who use recording equipment and have been present during a recording session. FLS is the 2<sup>nd</sup> poorest school in the district. Many families just can't afford this equipment for home use.

#### Question 2:

All of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders have used an electronic keyboard before, either in class or outside of school. Electronic keyboards are pretty inexpensive now. Many kids start out with toy keyboards and branch out into more complicated models. All students in grades k-6 knew what to do with the keyboard when placed in front of one.

Question 3:

Out of 40 6<sup>th</sup> graders, 23 play an instrument now. Another 5 used to play an instrument but quit. Out of 50 5<sup>th</sup> graders, half of them play an instrument now. Another 10 used to play an instrument but quit. In this school, I've found the younger kids more enthusiastic towards organized musical study. The older kids, while more capable, get involved in many activities outside of school. They often feel that they don't have the time or the desire to practice.

Question 4:

Out of 40 6<sup>th</sup> graders, about 35 have used music apps. Most use music players such as iTunes. Less than 10 have used recording or music manipulation apps. Out of 50 5<sup>th</sup> graders, about 30 have used music apps. Most use music players such as iTunes. Less than 10 have used recording or music manipulation apps. A very small number of students in both grades have the interest in creating their own music. They all like listening to music but very few were curious about how the music was created. Once the possibility was introduced to them, more students were interested.

### **Teacher Questions:**

- 1- Were the students too young to work with this technology (computers, ProTools, ipads)?
- 2- Would the students be able to work independently in small groups once they knew the technology?
- 3- Would the students be able to complete extended projects while coming to music once per week?
- 4- What technology would be appropriate for each age level?

Question 1:

The students at both grades were introduced to the keyboards first. Students would work in teams of 2 to learn a keyboard song. Both grade levels handled the independent work well. They were able to use the equipment and stay focused on the task. 4<sup>th</sup> graders were also given a keyboard project but their time on task was limited. In grades k-3, keyboard time is given as a reward during the last 5-10 minutes of class starting in February. Keyboard time isn't given during every class, just once or twice per month. The primary grades time on task is definitely limited but they enjoy using the keyboards and can handle short amounts of unstructured time with the equipment. iPads were tried with K-3. The classes are smaller so students were filtered through iPad workstations for 5 minutes each trying different apps. I feel that more preparation and app research needs to be done with these grade levels. Grade 4 iPad use was not attempted due to the large class sizes. A 6<sup>th</sup> grader used an iPad for a Garage Band project. He seemed to enjoy it and was able to spend a long time on task. This is the same student whose parent does recording and owns a copy of garage band on a Mac. The students can successfully use the workstation if ProTools is open with XPand (a virtual instrument program), with minimal explanation. Grades 1-6 interact very well with ProTools and XPand. I was impressed at how well the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders did with their recording projects. The 6<sup>th</sup> graders grasped the concept of sound editing with audio suite (a set of programs within ProTools) very well. They followed directions better than the middle school students did. All students could work with the technology but the level of involvement needed to be adjusted for each grade level.

Question 2:

The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders were the most independent with the technology. They were able to complete their group work with minimal intervention from me. I had one 6<sup>th</sup> grader who showed aptitude and was assigned to do the final mixes on the projects with the assistance of Josh Russell. He was able to eventually work independently on that task. There were two other 6<sup>th</sup> graders who expressed an interest in working on their own song in a dubstep style. Once again, with the assistance of Josh Russell, they were able to learn some advanced techniques in

sound manipulation and complete a composition in their free time on Friday afternoons. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders needed more assistance in staying on task. Some groups were able to work independently for 20-30 minutes. Others, required redirection after 10 minutes. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders have not been tested for independence for longer than 10 minutes.

Question 3:

I found that the students were able to remember their projects in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders entered class eager to get started on their projects. They remembered their workstation location and how to open their files. The 4<sup>th</sup> graders had a hard time remembering their workstation location and what song they were working on for their keyboard project. The 4<sup>th</sup> graders did not complete a computer project. After a month, the students would comment that they've been working on a project for "a long time" but they've only had 4 classes with the project. I will continue to test project for future use. Projects need to be kept small and manageable at this age level.

Question 4:

K-3 Keyboard use, iPad use, ProTools with Xpand. No projects. Either focus on one piece of technology in a class or have rotating centers.

4-6 Keyboard use, iPad use, ProTools. Projects are OK. ProTools with virtual instruments and the use of audio suite for sound editing.

### **Student Self Evaluation (6<sup>th</sup> grade):**

- 1- Were you able to finish your project?
- 2- If you answered no, why didn't you finish?
- 3- What was the toughest part about this project?
- 4- What was your favorite part of this project?
- 5- Do you think others would like to do this project?

Question 1:

Most were able to finish their project. Only 3 were incomplete.

Question 2:

The incompletes were due to computer problems, lack of student focus, and too much testing of sound sources in sound effects. We lost the connection that makes the software run (hardware device) in 2 workstations causing the system to reboot. This would happen once or twice per class. We haven't located the source of the problem. There were some students who were so creative that they couldn't settle on one sound source for a given sound effect. They kept testing to improve what they had. There were a couple of groups that needed redirection. One partner would be focused and the other would be socializing with a neighbor for example. The focus problems were very few.

Question 3:

No one said that the software was difficult to use. Most said that creating the sound effects or background music was the tough part. There were 3 workstations with intermittent computer problems but those students did not feel that the problems made it difficult for them. Since we started out with a template, the students had very little to learn to get them started. This gave them the confidence to explore on their own and learn more.

Question 4:

Most really liked being able to use a microphone. They would have been happy to spend a class talking into the microphone and listening to the sounds of their voices. Once audio suite was introduced to them, they were very excited to play with the special effects. In the future, more preparation in audio suite and microphone use would go a long way with the students. They might remember what each effect does and possibly save time in the future. Students also enjoyed the sound editing when creating sound effects.

Question 5:

Most thought others would like this project. Some made suggestions like being able to use short stories instead of the poem. Perhaps if I could find some content that the kids would be able to connect to, they might be more successful.

### **Student Evaluation (5<sup>th</sup> grade):**

- 1- Did you like using ProTools?
- 2- What was your favorite part of the project?
- 3- Do you think other students would enjoy doing this project?

Question 1:

Most students liked using ProTools. They liked the freedom of being able to create their own project and enjoyed all the sounds available to them. When I give students a keyboard song to play, usually a quarter of the students will ask if they can write their own. Since we started with a template, the students were able to start recording right away. The click track helped them stay in a steady tempo without getting distracted. I was impressed with how well they used the midi editor (advanced students). They liked being able to change missed notes and move notes to the beat to get everything perfect.

Question 2:

Just about all students enjoyed creating the freestyle section of their composition. They started out with 3 notes that they had to use for the main part of their composition. They used basic rhythms, wrote everything out on staff paper, and then played it into the computer. The freestyle part was a section of improvisation- no limits. Most felt that this was their true expression, a part that was really their own. Even though they wrote the first part of the composition, the note and rhythmic limitations were a bit confining for most.

Question 3:

The students worked on this project for about 2.5 months (10 classes) so they felt like they had had enough of it by the time they finished. I did question them during the project and they all felt very positive about it. They did say at one time or another that they thought others would like this project.

### **Summary:**

My experience this year has been a positive one. I feel that the elementary students are more focused and more open to the directions I give them. They are eager to try new things and to be challenged. I was impressed at how well kids as young as 5 can handle technology in music. The mix of technology with a traditional general music class provides a broader experience for them than just having the technology alone (like in the middle school). It's important for the kids to see growth and change from year to year. If they feel like they are getting new things in class then they receive the experience more positively.

## Plans for next year:

- 1- Offer exploration centers using ProTools, Ableton, iPad apps, and internet sources like Brainpop, Culturegrams, and PeppleGo
- 2- Increase the number of music apps used for the iPads
- 3- Structure the exploration for audio suite (sound editing)
- 4- Create new smaller projects
- 5- Create age appropriate documentation or instructional tutorials for ProTools

Teacher journal

Project Smart

Paula McKenney-Myers

FLS elementary- Oswego

9/2013 5<sup>th</sup> grade, started bag project. 5<sup>th</sup> grade, students compose a song using the notes g, a, b. Students learn to read notation and rhythms in music. They record it on the computer. Each student gets a cd and a bag to decorate and give as a gift.

10/2013 recording using protocols. Projects going well. Using a PT template really helps. Students are able to get started right away on their recordings.

10/28/13 Using iPads with grades k-3. As class watches a video or has free play on keyboards, 4 students come up at a time to play iPad games. K- Music Sparkles, 1- Music Cubes, 3- Rhythm Trainer

10/28/13 used iPad to record a class performance of "whacky Halloween" on the boomwackers

11/22/13 Mr. Wiegand's class is better at group projects than whole group instruction. Find a way to split the group and instruct half while half works on something.

PBIS day 2013 Had 2 groups of 6-10 students. Offered keyboard playing, ProTools recording, and iPad apps (Garage Band and Launch Pad). Most played keyboards and were happy. A few wanted to try the computer and iPads.

December 2013 Finish BAG project (composition). The project went well but the students took a very long time on it. CD distribution went smoothly. The bags were decorated in one class. 2 out of the 3 classrooms brought a written element to put into the bag. I did not hear any feedback on the project from parents. Also, a student post evaluation form would be good to add. I obtained verbal feedback from them.

January 2014 Allowing free keyboarding time for grades 1-5. Working well. Showing grades 3-5 how to hook up headphones to keyboards. Raising awareness of how to do it, what to look for in splitters and adaptors. Grades 1-2 the keyboards are on and ready for them. When I turn off lights, students must line up at the door- a good signal for the end of class. Starting classes with the artsfest sign song, moving to some kind of listening activity, ending up with keyboard playing. K are following the same format except that they are using percussion instruments or freeze dancing at the end. I call this the book break. We have been getting bogged down by book activities. Both myself and the kids were not enjoying music as much. I think a freestyle class every once in a while is good for all.

PBIS day 2014 (2/7/14) Had 2 groups of 16 students. I started everyone on keyboards. As they got bored with that, I switched them to Protools to play with Xpand and Vacuum sounds and possibly record. There were a few that wanted

an additional activity so I brought out iPads for Launch pad and Garage band. This worked well. Josh Russell came over to help out for both sessions (9:00-9:50, 9:55-10:45). Very positive.

January 2014- started sound story project with 6<sup>th</sup> graders. They really liked the concept and are excited about the project. Each group started with a template. Using templates allows me to eliminate part of the introductory material I teach when starting Protools. It allows the students to get into the project quicker and feel like they can use the program. More students would have felt positive about Protools at the middle school if I made it easier for them to use it. There are some groups who are taking an extra long time to get their stories recorded so I had to sit with them to help. The groups of 2 and 3 worked well for the kids. They did not have the creativity when dealing with sound effects. Many didn't know where to begin when creating something from scratch. They were much better than the middle school students at testing their sound levels before recording. They were better overall at following directions. Next year, I plan to show an instructional sound effects video. Maybe I can find one about the creation of a popular animated movie soundtrack.

April 2014- Projects were finished this month. Introduced audio suite and allowed the students several days to fine tune their sound effects. Not all students used audio suite on every sound effect as directed. Students completed a progress check where we listened to all projects and completed a written evaluation of each one. Responses were collated and distributed to each group. This really helped to focus each group on the completion of the project. Final presentations in most cases were different than the progress check presentation.

May 2014- 4<sup>th</sup> graders started to use Protools. Since the classes are so large, groups need to be split in 2. The larger 4<sup>th</sup> grade class (Bowman) needed to have partners assigned and workstations assigned. Fear's class was split into chorus and non chorus groups and the students were able to pair themselves up. A generic file was used for each workstation. The file has 2 instrument tracks for melody and a few drum tracks to choose from. The drum tracks are hidden so students can concentrate on the use of virtual instruments with xpan. I could not have done this without the help of Josh Russell. He provides support for the computer group while I teach the non computer group.

June 2014- PBIS day on 6/24, last day of school for kids. I plan to offer recording sound effects with protools. I may even demonstrate Ableton software. I will also bring out the iPads to play.