Developing Classroom Music Programs for intellectually homogeneous groupings of students of differential musical ability in selective secondary school settings. Implications for Teaching Practice in Music Education

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Homogeneous groupings of students of high intellectual potential, such as those found in selective high schools in NSW, present unique challenges for music educators in the design and delivery of classroom-based music programs. Although students attending selective high schools may be intellectually capable of working in a manner differentiated from students of average intellectual ability, the musical skill and knowledge base of members of the class will vary considerably. The dilemma for a classroom music teacher in a selective high school setting is to provide adequate intellectual stimulation for students while at the same time providing opportunities and learning experiences which will assist in the development of the specific musical skills and understandings of each student.

Van Tassel-Baska's (1988) model of curriculum modification was used to assist in the design and implementation of a classroom-based music program which involved an examination of music used in films and animation. The content was modified and adapted according to the guidelines provided by the NSW Board of Studies in current junior secondary music syllabus. A variety of grouping practices were introduced as a means of enabling students of differential musical ability to work with "like-minded" individuals and a "smorgasbord" of assessment options was provided for students. Self and peer assessment strategies were selected according to the intellectual and musical needs and abilities of individuals. Learning environment adjustments were also introduced in order that individuals and small groups of students could work simultaneously on a variety of tasks.

The findings of the pilot program contain significant implications for the design and implementation of outcomes-based classroom music programs in primary and secondary schools. The model constructed could be adapted to a variety of classroom music settings.
Introduction

In addressing the 1992 Conference of Secondary Music Educators of the Metropolitan South West Region (NSWDSE) Jessica Milner Davis reinforced the notion that classroom music educators have always had to deal with individual differences. The nature of the discipline and the scope of current music curricula has enabled music educators to explore teaching strategies and program differentiation that caters for the needs and interests of a broad range of musical abilities including the particular requirements of gifted and talented students.

In NSW the state education authority has recently renewed its commitment to specialist education for intellectually more able students and students exhibiting talent in fields such as sport or the performing arts. It has expanded the number and location of specialist high schools dedicated to providing special programs for gifted and talented students. In particular it has expanded the number of schools that cater for the education of students of high intellectual potential. Students compete for placement in academically selective high schools before the end of their final year of primary education. Tests in literacy, numeracy and general knowledge are administered. In addition the students' performance across a range of areas during the primary school years is considered. Nomination by teachers or other experts in specialist fields is also employed as a means of selection.

This paper reports on a pilot program that has been incorporated into the year eight core music course of a selective state high school in regional NSW. A unit of work differentiated by content, process, product and learning environment was introduced to two different year eight music classes each semester. At the end of the first semester the students and the regular class music teacher helped identify strengths and weaknesses of the unit. Modifications were then made before the unit was incorporated into the second semester program. While the content of the semester two unit of work was very similar to that of the semester one unit significant adjustments were made to the teaching process, the product requirements and the learning environment. In addition a musical profile of the second semester groups revealed a high level of previous involvement with musical activities than either of the first semester groups. This factor too mandated particular modifications.

Learning characteristics of students of high intellectual potential and their curricular needs.
The Marland Report (1971) acknowledged that gifted and talented children "require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program" (p.ix) Gifted students "possess certain characteristics that affect their ability to think, to learn, to produce information...the basic core curriculum is not adequate for them and must, therefore, be modified or differentiated" (Borland, 1989 p173). Passow (1982) too refers to the developmental and learning needs of gifted and talented students in substantiating why differentiated curriculum goals are necessary. Feldhusen and Wyman (1980) contribute by outlining the central learning needs of gifted students. A range of cognitive and affective characteristics are included for consideration by practitioners. They also reinforce the notion that gifted students work at different rates, deal with different levels of abstraction and engage in different ways of processing information than students from regular classroom settings. These significant differences in learning style alone suggest that a curriculum which is different from that being provided for all students is an essential component of the educational experiences of gifted students.

Van Tassel-Baska (1988) too states that gifted learners have different learning needs compared with typical learners. She outlines specific learning characteristics of gifted students and links these to their learning needs, with consideration of the specific curricular implications (1989). She discusses particularly the gifted child's ability to deal with abstractions. A curriculum therefore which contains provisions for the presentation of symbol systems at higher levels of abstraction would be appropriate for students of high intellectual potential. The introduction of new symbol systems at earlier stages of development than would occur for the mainstream class group might be considered. Examples of such inclusions might be computer based activities, involvement with foreign languages or music.

Gifted students exhibit increased powers of concentration. As a consequence they are able to spend longer periods of time involved with a task. This allows in-depth work in areas of particular interest and challenge. Instructional programs for intellectually more able students would need to be flexibly scheduled in order that blocks of uninterrupted time could be made available for work on specific projects.

Gifted students also display the ability to make connections and establish relationships between disparate data. Instructional strategies need therefore to include exposure to multiple perspectives and domains of inquiry. A curriculum constructed on
an interdisciplinary approach would for example provide opportunities for the development of integrated perspectives. Van Tassel-Baska (1989) suggests that the use of multiple text materials and resources should be adopted in any program designed for gifted students.

The ability to memorise well and learn rapidly is frequently demonstrated by gifted students. Instructional strategies which enable students to move rapidly through basic skills and concepts are favoured. Van Tassel-Baska (1992) suggests that new areas of learning should be economically organised. Curricula therefore need to include a revision of the structuring of learning frames. Fewer reinforcing activities would actually be required for gifted students. In addition strategies for moving through these quickly are preferred.

Gifted students exhibit multiple interests which involve a wide information base. Opportunities to choose areas of interest and for students to explore a chosen area in greater depth should be considered by classroom practitioners. The establishment of learning centres and areas within the school where gifted students can spend long blocks of time should also be considered. Learning experiences for gifted students will be enhanced by the provision of self-directed learning packets and individual learning contracts.

"One of our major obligations as educators of the gifted is to expose students to new ideas, new experiences, and new realms of meaning" (Borland 1989 p 184). Recognition of different learning rates, styles, interests, and abilities should be embodied in curricular considerations for the gifted.

What are differentiated curricula?

Gifted learners are best served by a confluent approach that allows for accelerated and advanced learning and enriched and extended experiences (Van Tassel-Baska 1988). Borland (1989) describes a differentiated curricula as "a course of study that is in some manner different from the one to which students in the mainstream are exposed...anything that makes the curriculum different is sufficient to create a differentiated curriculum (p172). Van Tassel-Baska (1989) puts forward the view that this is a "mistaken belief" (p13). What is "new" can often be mistaken for what is uniquely different. Passow (1982) amplifies this concept by suggesting that curriculum differentiation is a "process of individualising curricula to better match individual and group learning needs, abilities, and styles" (p6).
The panel advising the education commissioner Marland (1971) identified three characteristics which a differentiated program should include:

- A differentiated curriculum that promotes higher cognitive processes;

- Instructional strategies that accommodate both curriculum content and the learning styles of gifted and talented children; and

- Special grouping arrangements appropriate to particular children, i.e., special classes, honour classes, seminars, resources rooms, and the like. (p.x)

Borland (1989) acknowledges that while differentiating the curriculum may be "relatively easy and confirmable; demonstrating that a curriculum is both differentiated and defensible is another thing altogether" (Borland, 1989 p 173). In this context Borland suggests that curricula for the gifted need not only be different from the norm but also educationally suited to the specific needs of the clients. Van Tassel-Baska (1992) maintains that gifted students require teachers to adopt differential treatments in "curriculum and instructional patterns of delivery" (p20). Maker (1982) supports this notion by suggesting that educational experiences for gifted and talented students should be qualitatively different from those offered to all children.

Clarke (1980) identifies several affective and cognitive characteristics of gifted children which indicate a need to include an arts component in the educational experiences for these students. These include characteristics such as a high-level sensitivity, a keenness of perception as well as a heightened capacity for understanding interrelationships and grasping meanings. These differential characteristics "reflect a need for exposure to aesthetic experiences that allow for further development of these traits" (Van Tassel-Baska, 1989 p182). "The overall goal of teaching the arts to gifted learners is to help these students scrutinise the knowledge, experience, and values they derive from all of their studies and to translate them into unique and satisfying portrayals and explanations of their existence" (Seeley, 1988 p300). Eisner (1984) considers that the arts tap into the emotional centre of human beings. A study of the arts therefore can be considered to be real enrichment for it offers "new awarenesses about the world that has a deep relevance to the individual" (Van Tassel-Baska, 1989 p 181).

Seeley (1988) suggests, however, that the level of instruction offered in the arts in public schools is "too broad based to challenge the very young talented artist" (p303). Seeley concedes that schools are frequently unable to offer the range and depth
of curricula required to cater for the needs of talented individuals. Instead families are faced with the need to support the development of artistic talent by their own means through agencies operating outside the regular school environment. This is seen particularly in the case of involvement with musical activities.

While Van Tassel-Baska (1988) suggests that curriculum modification for the gifted and talented student should consist of modifications to a core, extension of a core and integration within other curriculum areas in reality the existence of a suitable core may present a hurdle which the resources of the school and community may not be able to overcome. In a selective high school setting all students have been admitted on the basis of outstanding performance in one or more of the areas of numeracy, literacy and general knowledge. The core curriculum employed in the arts area may then be modified not just to cater specifically for the superior level of artistic attainment of the individuals (although this will be necessary for some students) but to account for the generally superior intellectual ability of the clients which makes a study of the arts not only possible but necessary.

Procedure - Content, Process/Product and Concept Dimensions

In consultation with the classroom music teacher at the selective high school, an examination of the features of music used in film and animation formed the basis of a unit of work. The unit was differentiated to cater for the specific needs of a year eight population which was intellectually more able than students attending a regular comprehensive high school. Within the group though a range of musical abilities was exhibited. Some students had had opportunities to gain musical knowledge and skills through the provision of individualised tuition in the area of music performance.

"The dimensions within which we design a curriculum for the gifted are based on the characteristics of these learners" (Van Tassel-Baska, 1988 p55). The content dimension refers to the breadth and depth of the curriculum experience. Through the appropriate selection of content teachers are able to take advantage of the special learning characteristics of their intellectually more able students. Van Tassel-Baska suggests that the choice of a narrow content topic focus enables students to engage in a more detailed and intensive study of selected areas within the curriculum. The unit of work designed for the music students of the selective high school was based upon the use of
musical stereotypes employed in music for film and animation. The content focus shifts from facts, definitions and descriptions to a conceptual focus which encourages students to generalise from their observations and experiences. The examination of musical stereotypes is considered to be conceptually complex and varied and is considered therefore to be meaningful for these more able students.

An analysis of the special characteristics of gifted learners suggests that critical and creative thinking, problem finding and problem solving and evaluation are process skills which should be addressed in the design of curriculum for intellectually more able students. The unit of musical work contains opportunities for students to deal with knowledge in a different manner from regular learners. Students were able to gain practice in managing, monitoring and applying knowledge rather than the focus of activities being in the acquisition of the knowledge itself (Kanevsky 1993). The activities designed for music students of the selective high school involved students in higher level thinking skills, tasks which were open-ended, freedom to choose from a range of options, opportunities for group interaction, were paced appropriately and contained variety in order to maintain interest.

Changes to the content and process of differentiated programs for the gifted must also be accompanied by modifications to the "nature of the outcome of learning, its communication and evaluation" (Kanevsky 1993). Music students of the selective high school were encouraged to work with problems that were deemed as "real" or relevant to the field of enquiry. In addition they were required to present their findings to the remainder of the class. Students were given the opportunity to select tasks appropriate to their musical abilities and interests. In addition they were able to nominate whether to work individually or in small groups. Evaluation of the outcomes was based upon criteria which were predetermined and understood by all members of the class.

In order to successfully facilitate modifications to the content, process and product requirements of a differentiated unit of work for intellectually more able music students, adjustments to the learning environment were also made. These changes effected both the physical and psychological aspects of the learning environment (Kanevsky 1993). A range of student-centered teaching strategies were employed. In addition students were encouraged to work individually and in small groups on the completion of tasks. A variety of resources and materials were provided and students were encouraged to locate relevant information from sources beyond the classroom.
The physical environment was organised for high mobility. Small 'studios' adjoining the main classroom were made available. These spaces afforded privacy away from the main classroom which enabled musical experimentation and composition activities to take place. A large open corridor space became a favoured performance rehearsal venue. Furniture within the main classroom was rearranged to create group conversation areas for musicology and aural skills tasks.

Grouping Practices

A meta-analysis of literature related to grouping practices conducted by Kulik (1992) found that homogeneous grouping coupled with curricular adjustment provides larger and positive benefits for intellectually more able students. These findings support the need not only for a differentiated curriculum for the musically more able students but a program based upon accelerating content. In particular "highly talented youngsters also profit greatly from an enriched curriculum designed to broaden and deepen their learning. Schools should try to maintain programs of enrichment" (Kulik, 1992 p x). Stanley (1977) endorses these findings by suggesting that elements of enrichment and acceleration should be employed concurrently in program and curriculum designed for gifted and talented students.

The investigations of Rogers (1992) reveal that full time ability grouping for core curriculum makes no discernible difference in the academic achievement of average and low ability students "but that in the case of gifted students significant academic gains have been produced "(p xi). Vaughan (1990) too, contributes to the ability grouping debate by suggesting that a homogeneous grouping of students of high intellectual potential "produces substantial academic gains in general achievement, critical thinking, and creativity for the gifted and talented learner" (p 185).

Grouping practices were considered as one means of adjusting the learning environment of non-elective year eight music classes. Activities were especially designed to encourage students of like musical ability to work together on the successful completion of tasks. In addition alternative activities were provided for musically less experienced students. Differences in the levels of musical skills, understanding and literacy were used as the benchmark for task differentiation. Teacher directed tasks tended to be used at the commencement of the unit of study as a means of introducing facts, definitions and descriptions. Individual and small group tasks contained a conceptual focus so that students
could be encouraged to generalise from their observations and experiences.

Assessment Options

A range of modes and means of assessing student outcomes were employed. Product modifications were made using the literature in this area as a guide. Students were presented with a range of tasks which could be completed as a means of assessing student outcomes. Throughout the unit students were required to complete one task in each of the music activity areas of performance, composition, aural skills and musicological investigation. Alternative tasks were provided which catered for differences in the levels of musical ability. The same mark value was attached to each task. Students were able to nominate assessable tasks from a range of options provided. Before commencing work on the unit they were required to nominate which tasks would be completed and with whom they would be working towards the completion of those tasks.

Students were able to organise regular class time to complete tasks at their own rate. They were able to spend any amount of their own time in the completion of the tasks and were encouraged to continue investigating and working on solutions to the problems in their own time. Assessment proposal contracts were devised, sighted and signed by the teacher and the students before commencement on the unit of work. Students were also asked to nominate proposed dates for the completion of each task. Within the time available tasks could be attempted in any order and according to the schedule determined by the students themselves.

A sample lesson from the first semester program is presented for examination and analysis. Van Tassel-Baska's (1988) content, process, and product dimensions have been used as the basis for analysis. Kanevsky's (1993) concerns relating to learning environment adjustments have also been considered.

Sample Lesson I (Semester I) Sound Effects (Stereotypes)
Inspector Gadget

Objective

* to identify and classify sounds taken from sound track of animated film sequence (sound effects, vocal sounds, instrumental motives)

* to explore the use of specific musical devices in the creation of mood
Sequence of Activities

1. Aural skills

* Listen to the opening excerpt of Ghosts from Inspector Gadget cassette
  - identify sound sources
  - describe how they are used
  - classify the role played by each sound source as melodic, accompaniment or sound effects

2. Musicology

* Discuss the type of mood conveyed by the opening excerpt of Ghosts
  - consider compositional devices and techniques under elemental subheadings; duration, pitch, dynamics and expressive techniques, tone colour, structure

3. Musicology

* Construct a board summary of findings

4. Aural skills

* Listen to the opening sequence of any Inspector Gadget video
  - identify sound effects and musical ideas heard
  - compile a list from class responses
  - discuss contrast and variety of musical motives
  - consider the relationship between musical motives and sound effects

5. Musicology

* Watch the opening sequence of any Inspector Gadget video
- consider the relationship between musical motives, sound effects and screen action
- examine the speed of screen movement and the relationship to tempo
- consider the speed of changes to shots and the relationship to tempo
- examine the mood/action, colours used on the screen and the relationship to tonality
- discuss the use of dynamics and expressive techniques to enhance mood
- consider the effectiveness of sound sources in enhancing mood
- discuss the relationship between visual images and recurring and contrasting musical motives
- consider the relationship between screen action and the use of silence
- consider the relationship between screen action and changes of arrangements of layers of sound

6. Musicology

* Comment on the effectiveness of the opening sequence

- refer to the relationship between musical motives, sound effects and screen action.

Any study of music used for film or animation must consider the use of musical stereotypes to enhance mood. The use of Ghosts, from the animation Inspector Gadget, provides an illustration of the type of musical devices and techniques which are used to convey a feeling of suspense. Through an examination of the musical elements of pitch, duration and tone colour students have some guidelines for the examination of other musical examples taken from film or animation. This content, taken from key concepts within the topic, is intended to facilitate the transfer of learning, memory and understanding of abstract concepts and generalisations.

Material is presented to the whole class. Enquiry is generally
directed by the teacher with opportunities for discussion and exchange of ideas provided. Steps 4 & 5 involve the use of open-ended questions. Students are encouraged to expand their thought processes rather than simply come up with the right answers. Inductive reasoning is deliberately encouraged in order that patterns of information shall be revealed. This lesson has already been specifically designed for a population of students of high intellectual potential. There is considerably more content, for example, than that which would be taught to students from a regular comprehensive classroom. In addition the pacing and variety of presentation have been adjusted for such students. While student evaluation of products and outcomes is implied it is not an assessable requirement.

Students were encouraged to move away from their desks to a grouping around the video. Some chose to sit on the floor while others pulled chairs around in informal groupings. An accepting environment was encouraged by the teacher in which the musically less experienced students would feel free to articulate their views without fear of being judged by the musically more able members of the class.

Results - Modifications to the first semester unit.

Evaluative comments from the first semester groups and the regular class teacher were used as starting points for modifications to the content, process, product and learning environment dimensions of the unit. A profile of the second semester class groups was constructed. It contained information about students' previous musical experiences and levels of skill and knowledge attainment in the area of music. In addition students were asked to identify one aspect of their year seven compulsory music course which they had found worthwhile and one aspect which they had not found worthwhile. In so doing student preferences for content, process, product and learning environment dimensions were identified. Students were also asked to nominate the types of skills and knowledge which they expected to gain by the end of the year eight music course.

The evidence collected indicated that the second semester groups had had a higher incidence of involvement with formal musical tuition than either of the first semester groups. In particular higher levels of music literacy and performance skills were documented. Activities and tasks were modified and adjusted to reinforce the same musical concepts and generalisations. The second semester unit was differentiated by the amount of guided assistance provided for students by the teachers. A concentration of higher order thinking skills was still maintained. So too was
the evaluation of outcomes by the preparation of "real products for real audiences" (Kanevsky 1993). Peer assessment became a more formalised part of the program. Investigation at the individual and/or group level was also facilitated. Teacher directed lessons, where information was conveyed, were kept to a minimum and confined to the beginning of the unit in order that a framework of facts and definitions could be established. In so doing the focus of the unit and the nature of the investigations could be articulated.

A program of activities and activity options was structured in order that students would be able to move at their own pace, through a variety of tasks designed for their specific level of musical development. In general there appeared to be a need to further differentiate the musical content of the activities in order to provide greater scope for the musically more and less experienced students. Contract agreements enabled students to choose from a range of tasks and set their own pace of working. Teachers acted as facilitators rather than directors of learning experiences. Tasks were designed to enable students of differing musical ability to nominate content within activity areas that were best suited to their musical needs and abilities (Kanevsky 1993). In this way more individualised attention could be provided for students who considered themselves musically "less able".

Opportunities were created for investigation at the individual and group level rather than a predominance of whole class activities being directed by the teacher. In this way students were able to move at their own pace through a variety of tasks designed to provide for their specific level of musical development. They were also able to pursue tasks to a level more appropriately suited to their interests and needs.

A modified version of the Maker (1982) chart, (Kanevsky 1993), was also employed to confirm the type of program modifications necessary for the second semester groups. The chart, originally intended to provide an analysis of an individual student's needs, was used in relation to modifications for the whole class. A generalised view of the cognitive and affective characteristics of the whole class was therefore plotted. The following modifications were confirmed and included with consideration for the already differentiated nature of the program:

- **Content**: abstraction, complexity, variety and methods of enquiry
- **Process**: debriefing/reasoning and variety
- **Product**: transformation
Learning environment: student-centeredness, independence, openness and high mobility.

The same sample lesson is presented in its modified form for examination. Once again the content, process, and product and learning environment dimensions have been used as the basis for analysis. (Van Tassel-Baska 1988, Kanevsky 1993)

Sample Lesson I  (Semester II) Sound Effects  
(Stereotypes)Inspector Gadget

Objective

* to identify and classify sounds taken from sound track of animated film sequence (sound effects, vocal sounds, instrumental motives)

* to explore the use of specific musical devices in the creation of mood

* consider the relationship between musical motives, sound effects and screen action

* comment on the effectiveness of the opening episode

Sequence of Activities

1. Aural skills

* Listen to the opening excerpt of Ghosts from Inspector Gadget cassette

  - identify sound sources

  - describe how they have been used

  - classify the role played by each sound source as melodic, accompaniment or sound effects

2. Musicology

* Discuss the type of mood conveyed by the opening excerpt of Ghosts (cassette provided)

  - consider compositional devices and techniques under elemental
subheadings; duration, pitch, dynamics and expressive techniques, tone colour, structure

- construct a summary and provide a written report of the findings 10 marks

Duration: rhythm, time signatures, tempo, changes of tempo - gradual or sudden

Pitch: tonality - major or minor, shape of melody - lyrical, fanfare, march, range - distance between the highest and lowest sounds employed, extremely high or low

Structure: verse, chorus, song telling a story, introduction, coda, many layers heard simultaneously, a few layers, some layers accompanying, some with the melody.

Tone colour: instrumental group - large, small, orchestral, rock, one family of instruments featured, soloists, duets, vocal forces - choir, soloists, female, male, vocal styles from non-western backgrounds, folk, pop.

Dynamics and Expressive Techniques: loud, soft, gradually or suddenly moving from one to the other, with passion, life, energy, short and detached, smooth and flowing

3. Aural skills

* Listen to the opening sequence of any Inspector Gadget video (cassette provided)

- identify sound effects and musical ideas heard

- compile a list of your observations

- discuss contrast and variety of musical motives

- consider the relationship between musical motives and sound effects

4. Musicology
* Watch the opening sequence of any Inspector Gadget video (video provided)

- consider the relationship between musical motives, sound effects and screen action

- examine the speed of screen movement and the relationship to tempo

- consider the speed of changes to shots and the relationship to tempo

- examine the mood/action, colours used on the screen and the relationship to tonality

- discuss the use of dynamics and expressive techniques to enhance mood

- consider the effectiveness of sound sources in enhancing mood

- discuss the relationship between visual images and recurring and contrasting musical motives

- consider the relationship between screen action and the use of silence

- consider the relationship between screen action and changes of arrangements of layers of sound

5. Musicology

* Comment on the effectiveness of the opening sequence

- refer to the relationship between musical motives, sound effects and screen action.

- provide a written report summarising your findings to sections 3,4, and 5 10 marks

The use of Ghosts, from the animation Inspector Gadget, was retained to provide students with an illustration of the type of musical devices and techniques which are used to convey a feeling of suspense. Through an examination of the musical elements of pitch, duration and tone colour students have some guidelines for the examination of other musical examples taken from film or animation. This content, taken from key concepts within the
topic, is intended to facilitate the transfer of learning, memory
and understanding of abstract concepts and generalisations.

Material is dealt with by individuals or small groups. Students
work independently of the teacher and each other if so desired.
Steps 3 & 4 involve the use of open-ended questions. Students are
encouraged once again to expand their thought processes rather
than simply come up with the right answers. Inductive reasoning
is deliberately encouraged in order that patterns of information
shall be revealed. There is still considerably more content than
that which would be taught to students in a regular comprehensive
classroom. Students determine the rate at which they work and
evaluation is by means of two steps specified for mark
allocation.

Students are involved with the presentation of original work
based upon their own observations. While some similarities did
occur between the findings of different groups students were
involved with drawing their own conclusions rather than
summarising information provided by others. All assessable work
was presented in regular timetabled lessons. Where indicated
performances, reports and seminar type work was presented for the
remainder of the class, a real audience (Kanevsky 1993). Teacher
and peer evaluation of products was required. Peer assessment
was employed as a means of evaluating students outcomes. Members
of the class were introduced to an impression marking scale which
is currently employed in the assessment of Higher School
Certificate music examinations. The criteria for assessment were
clearly documented beforehand so that peers understood the
requirements of the task and used this as the basis for their
judgements of whether or not the outcomes had been successfully
achieved. Some students requested adjustments to the assessment
tasks. In so doing they were able to modify the assessment tasks
to suit their specific areas of interest and ability.

Students were able to move about the room freely gathering
resources and materials required to complete the tasks. Resource
packages containing audio and video tape materials were prepared
and made available. Students took on greater degree of
responsibility for organising group members and ensuring the
availability of resources and materials required to complete the
tasks. An accepting environment was again encouraged by the
teachers in which the musically less experienced students felt
free to articulate their views without fear of being judged by
the musically more experienced students.

Conclusion - Implications for Teaching Practice in Music
Education.
Learning in music takes place in a spiral rather than a linear configuration. Students may enter the spiral at any point and expand their musical knowledge and skill basis by travelling along an ascending path. Concepts and ideas may be revisited in an ever widening spiral. Gaps in the musical knowledge or skill basis do not necessarily impede the development of more advanced understandings.

The design of newly developed secondary school music curricula in NSW are founded upon the principles of outcomes based education. Syllabus outcomes are described as the "intended results of teaching and learning expressed as a set of broad, comprehensive, assessable and observable indicators..." (p 5). "Syllabus outcomes are more usefully thought of as implying differential levels of performance and that students will experience varying degrees of achievement" (p 5). Van Tassel-Baska (1988) describes this type of curriculum design as technological. Curricula structured in such a way rely heavily on stated behavioural or performance objectives with measurable outcomes that can be tested in order to determine educational progress or achievement. In the creative and performing arts the implications of this curricular orientation need to be carefully considered. By its very nature the creative process generates a range of unintended outcomes, that is outcomes which cannot be readily measured and tested. Strict adherence to the philosophy of outcomes based education, which has it's roots in competency based education, is therefore neither appropriate or desirable in the field of the creative arts. Aesthetic development cannot be viewed in the same way as competency concerns.

The unit of work differentiated in this project focused on the development of cognitive process. It employed materials and activities aimed specifically at the development of higher level thinking skills. Van Tassel-Baska (1988) considers that a curriculum designed to encourage cognitive development has the potential to become substantially "content-independent". The development of cognitive skills becomes the "centrepiece of all learning activities" (p 4). Newly developed music curricula for junior secondary students in NSW also articulate an emphasis on process (doing) rather than content (knowing) of music. If the use of process is considered in a broader context, to involve ways of thinking in music and ways of processing musical information, then the type of modifications to the design and delivery of music programs described in this paper may be readily adapted for students attending regular comprehensive schools. A broader view of process orientation may be a means of effectively catering for the range of musical and cognitive abilities.
exhibited by students completing classroom based music programs. The newly designed 7-10 Music syllabus in NSW clearly states that "the process by which this [students involved in music making] is achieved are just as important as the final product" (p2). Van Tassel-Baska (1988) suggests that processes can become the "substance" of the curriculum itself, "treating these process skills as content dimensions in their own right" (p 4). Lessons offered for examination in this paper employ all of these processes as they apply to musical contexts. Students are engaged in the processes such as critical thinking, creative thinking and problem solving.

The unit described in this paper also contains elements of a curricular orientation in which knowledge is considered as personal relevance (Van Tassel-Baska 1988). A student-centred approach to the design and delivery of music programs supports the notion that student interest and ability should be used to determine the content of the curriculum structure. Given the diversity of musical skills, and the extent of the previous musical experiences exhibited by students in school classes, elements of a curriculum structured on this basis should also be included in the design and delivery of school based music programs. "The goal of such curriculum is to be personally engaging and to offer consummatory experiences that will provide growth at each student's level of understanding" (Van Tassel-Baska, 1988 p4). A curriculum which is personally relevant would provide a great deal of flexibility for the musically more experienced student while at the same time caters for the musical and cognitive needs of students of mixed cognitive and musical ability. Curriculum models suggested by Renzulli (1977) and Feldhusen and Kolloff (1978) for students of high intellectual potential also favour this type of orientation. Adoption of elements of this curriculum structure would also enable the learning environment to be significantly altered. The teacher would act as a facilitator assessing "interest, ability and maturity" (Van Tassel-Baska, 1988 p4). Students would be able to work with contract agreements.

As classroom music educators in NSW implement new outcomes based curricula careful consideration should be given to the needs of the individual child. The processes of thinking about and working with musical materials within diverse contexts should act as a guide for the selection of appropriate content, processes, products and learning environments. Adoption of this type of curricular orientation will assist in the development of positive outcomes for both regular learners and students of high intellectual potential.

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