

**CULTURALLY RELEVANT 4TH GRADE GENERAL MUSIC CURRICULUM FOR
PUERTO RICAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

by

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We, the undersigned, certify that this project entitled CULTURALLY RELEVANT 4TH GRADE GENERAL MUSIC CURRICULUM FOR PUERTO RICAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS by KARA MAYER, Candidate for the Degree of Master of Science in Education, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, is acceptable in form and content and demonstrates a satisfactory knowledge of the field covered by this project.



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ABSTRACT

The number of English Language Learners (ELLs) in the United States continues to grow at a rapid rate. In New York State, the home language of ELLs is mainly Spanish. In Buffalo, New York, at an urban public school serving grades kindergarten through 8, the native Spanish-speaking ELL students are largely from Puerto Rico or Puerto Rican culture. As the population of ELLs continues to rise across the country, public school teachers in New York can expect to see an increase of ELL students in their classrooms. Research has shown that many pre-service teachers are ill prepared to accept and accommodate ELLs in their classrooms. This includes, but is not limited to, music teachers. Music is a required subject for students in grades kindergarten through 8 in New York State. In order for ELL students to receive an equal, quality music education, research has proven that a culturally relevant approach to teaching is necessary. A required part of providing a quality, culturally relevant education to ELLs is to incorporate their funds of knowledge into the curriculum. My culturally relevant music curriculum project was designed to provide music teachers with knowledge about best teaching practices for teaching ELLs. Another intended outcome of my music curriculum is for music teachers to learn how to incorporate culture into their curriculum so that all students, not only ELLs, receive a meaningful education.

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Introduction

English Language Learners (ELLs) “are the fastest growing segment of the student population” (National Council of Teachers of English, 2008, p. 2). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2015b), in the 2002-2003 school year, 8.7%, or about 4.1 million students, were ELLs. This number grew in the 2011-2012 school year to 9.1%, or approximately 4.4 million students, and again the next school year 2012-2013 to 9.2%, or roughly 4.4 million students (NCES, 2015b). In the 2013-2014 school year, the percentage of ELLs was 10.1, or approximately 4.9 million students (NCES, 2015c). The number of ELLs in United States public schools is likely to continue to increase in the coming school years.

In New York State, the home language of ELLs is mainly Spanish. In the 2015-2016 school year, Spanish was spoken by 64.9% of all ELLs (NYSED, 2017a). According to the United States Census Bureau, nearly 3.5 million people (17.6% of the population) in New York State were Hispanic or Latino, including representation from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba (US Census Bureau, 2010). In 2015, for people of Hispanic or Latino descent, 14.5% were native born, 31.8% were foreign born, and 41.2% were foreign born and are not US citizens (US Census Bureau, 2015b).

English Language Learners are a diverse and multifaceted group of students, with various gifts, backgrounds, languages, educational needs, and goals. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (2008) explained that some ELL students speak no English, while others may have been exposed to or use many languages. A teacher of ELLs cannot easily prepare a curriculum for her students until she knows who her students are and where they come from. No two ELL students are alike, so there is no

single response suitable to meet their educational goals and needs (NCTE, 2008). As the population of ELLs continues to grow, many music educators are ill prepared to include ELLs in their classes. Music education is required in New York State public schools for grades Pre-K through 8. Students in 9th-12th grade also must have the option to complete additional credits in music available to them if they wish to receive a Regents diploma (NYSED, 2011). In high school, when music is no longer required, researchers have found that ELLs are severely underrepresented in music programs, compared with their native English-speaking peers (Elpus & Abril, 2011; Lorah, Sanders, & Morrison, 2014).

Creating a music classroom environment that is inclusive of ELLs is essential for many reasons. The population of ELLs in the United States is rapidly increasing, and because music education in grades Pre-K through 8 is required for all public school students in New York State, music teachers can expect to see this increase in their own classrooms. Music education is a vital component for a well-rounded public school education. Creating a comprehensive music curriculum with ELL students in mind allows music educators the chance to promote cultural awareness and acceptance, life skills that will follow all students throughout their lives. The curriculum project described in the following chapters is directed toward students of Puerto Rican descent. During this unit of study, students are asked to choose their own music and create a performance with their classmates. The students will then be asked to respond to the music and to make social and cultural connections to the music.

The Music and Language Development Connection

Music and language have been found to develop in humans in very close proximity in the brain (Chen-Hafteck, 1997; Hallam, 2010; Lorah, Sanders, & Morrison,

2014; Paquette & Rieg, 2008; Trollinger, 2010). Research has found many connections between the development of language and the development of music in babies and young children (Chen-Hafteck; Trollinger). As Chen-Hafteck pointed out, “music and language are the two ways that humans communicate and express themselves through sound,” and, “early vocalization shares both musical and linguistic characteristics” (p. 85). The author went so far as to say that “the roots of music and language development are indistinguishable, and that early perception of sound seems to involve common processes across music and language” (Chen-Hafteck, p. 87). Trollinger also noted that “the study of language in relationship to music perception shows strong relationships between musical perception and processing with language” (p. 20). An interesting finding that Trollinger discussed is that

most imaging research about the brain... shows a great amount of activity in Broca’s area when processing musical melody, processing rhythm, and performing on an instrument. These findings have led many brain researchers to conclude that instrumental musical training, musical perception and processing, and language are strongly connected. (p. 20)

Broca’s area is one of the two language areas in human brains, and is “generally associated with processing grammar” (Trollinger, p. 20).

Language and music are both used as forms of communication, and they share many communicative traits. Pitch, rhythm, tempo, volume, prominence, stress, tone, and pauses are all elements of sound found in both media (Chen-Hafteck, 1997).

Understanding the close connection and development of both music and language will inform educators of the importance of developing both skills together. Chen-Hafteck

claimed not only that language and music should be inseparable, but that “the interaction between the two in children’s thinking may enhance the development of each other as well as creativity in both musical and linguistic expression” (p. 95). Research shows that a music classroom in which ELLs are given the input necessary to succeed in both areas, music and language, will be most beneficial.

Benefits of Music on Other Areas

Not only do language and music develop in similar ways and areas of the brain, but research has also found that “ability in one will facilitate ability in the other” (Chen-Hafteck, 1997, p. 94). Trollinger (2010) stated that the “development of these stronger connections” between music and language in the brain “will help the brain work more efficiently and effectively and may enhance overall learning and provide some cognitive advantages in linguistic and musical processing” (p. 20). Hallam (2010) echoed these ideas with the statement that “active engagement with music may influence other development” (p. 269). Her article discussed many correlations between musical aptitude and phonemic awareness, the ability to manipulate speech sounds, encoding of linguistic speech patterns, and improvement in the brain’s ability to process spoken word. Paquette and Rieg (2008) added that “music supports students’ literacy development”, and it “can also improve listening and oral language skill development” (p. 228).

Besides music’s ability to enhance language capability, music also has many positive effects on students’ social and emotional wellbeing. Research has found common themes between music learning and higher feelings of confidence, self-esteem, and motivation (Abril, 2003; Hallam, 2010; Lorah, Sanders, & Morrison, 2014; Paquette & Rieg, 2008). Elpus and Abril (2011) discovered that “music students are more engaged in

school and more likely to participate in prosocial activities that lead to positive developmental and educational outcomes” (p. 131). Music participation has also been found to increase student success academically, socially, and emotionally (Paquette & Rieg).

Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic status plays an important role in music participation in public schools (Elpus & Abril, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Kinney, 2008; Kinney, 2010; Lorah, Sanders, & Morrison, 2014). A student's socioeconomic status (SES) is one of the strongest predictors of whether they will participate in instrumental music courses (Elpus & Abril; Kinney, 2010). In order to participate in an instrumental ensemble, one needs to have an instrument to play. Often, instruments are rented out by independent music stores, or by the schools themselves. For students who live in low SES households, the need to purchase or rent an instrument is a huge hindrance (Fitzpatrick). In 2015, 25.9% of the Hispanic or Latino population in New York State was below the poverty level (US Census Bureau, 2015a). Since ELLs in New York are mainly from this ethnic population, one can see that their SES is a major factor in determining whether they can participate in instrumental music programs. Test scores, GPA, and academic achievement are also found to be linked directly to SES (Kinney, 2008; Lorah, Sanders, & Morrison), however this curriculum project has a more singular focus on the correlation between socioeconomic status and school music participation.

Reason and Purpose

As a music education undergraduate student, I went through four years of music education training, and during that time I did not receive any methods or instruction in

teaching English Language Learners. Abril (2003) pointed out that this is common for most preservice music teachers, and this lack of training can lead to “ineffective music pedagogy” for ELLs (p. 40). As a former music educator, I hold music education and music educators in high esteem. I firmly believe that all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, or socioeconomic status should have equal access to all that public schools have to offer. Currently, I am employed as an English as a New Language (ENL) teacher in an urban school district in the state of New York. In my particular school building, which serves grades K-8, 79% of all students are of Hispanic or Latino descent, 50% of all students are labeled as ELLs, and 88% of all students are economically disadvantaged (New York State Education Department, n.d.). The Hispanic or Latino students in this school are mostly Puerto Rican. It is because of my educational background in both music and in ENL, and because of my current teaching position in this particular building, that I have decided to create a culturally relevant music curriculum to serve the cultural needs of Puerto Rican students. By developing and using a culturally relevant music curriculum, music teachers will be better prepared to incorporate ELLs into their classrooms, and all students, not just ELLs, will have the opportunity to not only learn about and appreciate music, but to learn about and appreciate different cultures and customs in the world. This culturally relevant music curriculum can be shared with current and future music educators who have ELLs in their classroom, or who wish to recruit ELLs into their classroom. In the following chapter, I will review the relevant literature that supports my curriculum project. Topics will include the state of ENL instruction in New York State, culturally relevant pedagogy,

Puerto Rican culture, and finally the incorporation of Puerto Rican ELLs into mainstream music classrooms.

Literature Review

In the previous chapter, I introduced the problem of the rapidly growing population of ELLs in the United States and their many hindrances to obtaining an equal and relevant learning experience in a public school music classroom. Those hindrances include low socioeconomic status as well as a lack of music teacher preparation in their college coursework to teach students whose home language is one other than English. This chapter will review the relevant literature related to teaching music to ELLs.

English as a New Language

English as a New Language (ENL) and Bilingual Education in public schools are still relatively new educational programs that have been put into place to serve ELLs in the United States. In 1968, for the first time ever, federal funding was provided to support programs specifically for ELLs with the Title VII Bilingual Education Act (Mahoney, 2017). Following the passing of this act were many court cases in which ELLs and their families fought against their school districts for providing insufficient educational programs to meet their needs. The most important of these cases, which proved to be an important turning point for ENL and Bilingual Education, was the Supreme Court case of *Lau v. Nichols* in 1974 (Baker, 2011; Mahoney). The question this case brought forward was whether an ELL was truly receiving equal educational opportunities by being instructed in a language they did not know. The eventual verdict by the Supreme Court was to outlaw English-only teaching. The Office of Civil Rights, following the Supreme Court ruling, issued guidelines for school districts known as the Lau Remedies. These

“remedies included classes in English as a Second Language, English tutoring and some form of bilingual education” (Baker, p. 188). Another outcome of this case was the 1974 amendments to the Bilingual Education Act of 1968. The amendments “required schools receiving grants to include teaching in a students’ home language *and culture* [emphasis added] so as to allow the child to progress effectively through the educational system” (Baker, p. 188). These important turning points in the history of ENL and bilingual education have led the United States to our most recent laws and regulations regarding the education of ELLs.

According to the New York State Education Department (2018), “ELLs must be provided with equal access to all school programs and services offered to non-ELL students, including access to programs required for graduation” (CR Part 154 section, para. 1). In order to ensure that ELLs do in fact receive equal access to programs and services in public schools, there have been many laws and regulations put into place by both the state and federal education departments. One of the most important and helpful documents for a teacher of ELLs to be aware of and refer to is the Commissioner’s Regulations Part 154 (CR Part 154). At this time, Subpart 154-2 is the current amendment of the regulations that teachers should be aware of. Subpart 154-3 is another amendment to the regulations, used specifically for procedures for ELLs who also have disabilities; however, this section will focus mainly on subpart 154-2.

The purpose of Subpart 154-2

is to establish standards for school districts having students with limited English proficiency... to assure that such students are provided opportunities to achieve the same education goals and standards that have

been established by the Board of Regents for all students. (NYSED, 2015, p.1)

Information contained within the regulations include definitions of important terms; responsibilities of the school district, such as identification of ELLs and program requirements, to name a few; the different language levels of ELLs and how many units of study each different language level is expected to receive in ENL; exit criteria for ELLs; and reporting requirements for school districts (NYSED, 2015). Understanding the regulations surrounding ELLs, as well as what types of services an ELL receives throughout their school day, will ensure that all teachers have the necessary information available to them in order to teach those ELL students to the best of their ability.

Although it is ultimately the responsibility of the ENL or bilingual teacher to provide English teaching for ELLs, it is important that other teachers in the school are equipped with knowledge about laws and regulations surrounding ELLs, as well as best teaching practices for ELLs, in order to truly welcome ELLs into the school environment and culture, and to be able to provide “equal access to all school programs and services” (NYSED, 2018).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

There has been plenty of research performed related to incorporating a child’s culture into their schoolwork and life (Abril, 2003; Abril, 2009; Elpus & Abril, 2011; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2009). Culturally relevant pedagogy is a necessity in order to break down barriers that prevent many ELLs from access to a quality music education (Abril, 2003; Abril, 2009; Elpus & Abril; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Paquette & Rieg, 2008). Ladson-Billings stated that “over the past ten years, there has

been increased interest in looking at ways to improve the academic performance of students who are culturally, ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse” (p. 17). Creating a multicultural classroom that includes and appreciates the different cultures represented in the class will help “facilitate the acculturation process for the English learners while giving other children the opportunity to learn about a new culture” (Abril, 2003, p. 42). A culturally relevant classroom “can lead to improvements in children’s attitudes towards unfamiliar musics and cultural groups”, and will improve education for all students (Abril, 2009, p. 78).

Ladson-Billings (2009) indicated that, “the notion of ‘cultural relevance’ moves beyond language to include other aspects of student and school culture” (p. 19). González et al. (2005) felt that “instruction must be linked to students’ lives, and the details of effective pedagogy should be linked to local histories and community contexts” (p. ix). The authors described this premise as funds of knowledge, claiming that “people are competent, they have knowledge, and their life experience has given them that knowledge” (González et al., p. ix). When creating a culturally relevant music curriculum, a teacher should first study the culture of their students. Abril (2009) stated that “culturally responsive teachers go beyond their classrooms to build a knowledge base about their students’ cultures” (p.87). Ladson-Billings shared a similar sentiment, claiming that “students come to school with knowledge and that that knowledge must be explored and utilized in order for students to become achievers” (p. 56). One of the teachers in Ladson-Billings’ (2009) book “talks to students about their interests and the things at which they are experts” (p. 57). A student’s culture would certainly be one thing that they are an expert of. In this case, a music teacher can and should use an ELL student

as a primary source of information when studying the students' culture. When teachers draw on their students' prior knowledge, "student experience is legitimized as valid, and classroom practice can build on the familiar knowledge bases that students can manipulate to enhance learning" in other areas (González et al., p. 43).

After a teacher has done some independent study of their students' culture, it is important for the teacher to remember that culture extends beyond holidays, food, or costumes. González et al. (2005) stated that "this special event approach to culture ignores and devalues the everyday experiences of many minoritized... students in our country" (p. 131). Abril (2009) shared one idea of "selecting music for the curriculum that serves as valid and respectful representations of specific cultural groups", but acknowledged that simply incorporating a culture's music into the curriculum "may not do enough to bring educational practices closer to students' lives" (p. 78). An initial step in gaining an understanding of what students already know can be to ask students about the types of music they like to listen to at home, with their families and friends. Abril (2003) claimed that "integrating students' cultures into instruction is an effective way of motivating ELL children to learn" (p. 41), and will help students to "make a connection between school music and home music" (p. 42).

Much of the current public school music curriculum is not culturally relevant to the wide array of students that public schools serve. In her 2011 study, Fitzpatrick discovered that "teachers held a moderately positive belief in incorporating culturally relevant musics such as popular music and the music of their students' culture within their programs" (p. 240). By creating a multicultural music curriculum to serve the different cultures of the students in the school, students of differing ethnic backgrounds

may be more likely to participate in instrumental music courses if the courses become more meaningful and relevant to their lives and cultures (Elpus & Abril, 2011). A culturally relevant music curriculum will not only make students more likely to participate in music courses, but it can also provide students “with a more realistic understanding of music and one more relevant to their lives” (Abril, 2009, p. 78). When teachers take their students’ cultures into account when planning and executing the curriculum, learning of the subject is more effective and relevant, children will be more motivated to learn, and education can be improved for all students (Abril, 2003; Abril, 2009).

Puerto Rican Culture

As with any person and their culture, it is important to keep in mind that no person will completely fit into all of the generalizations and categories having to do with their culture. This section is meant to serve as a high-level overview of Puerto Rican culture, not as a one-size-fits-all definition.

Puerto Rican culture has influences from the Taíno Indians, who were the inhabitants of the island when Christopher Columbus landed there in the late 1400s; from the Spanish, who first colonized the island; and from many African countries as slaves were introduced to the island in the early 1500s. As the Spaniards continued to arrive on the island without bringing any women with them, they sought to populate the island by taking the Taíno Indian women as wives. This combination, plus the arrival of the African slaves, “has resulted in a contemporary Puerto Rico without racial problems” (Rivera, 2018, History section, para. “1521”). In 1898, the United States acquired Puerto

Rico from Spain after the Spanish-American war, resulting in yet another cultural shift to the people on the island.

Puerto Rican individuals place an enormous value on their extended family (Bird & Canino, 1982; Contreras, 2004; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). Members of the extended family tend to live very close to one another, if not under the same roof. It is expected that family members will help one another with raising the children. The emphasis on familism, or “feelings of obligation, solidarity, and reciprocity within the family” (Contreras, p. 343), leads children to learn about *respeto*, “the most valued trait in the culture” (Culture of Puerto Rico, 2018, Socialization section, para. “Child Rearing and Education”). *Respeto*:

refers to the belief that every person has an intrinsic dignity that must never be transgressed. One must learn to respect others by learning to respect oneself. All other valued qualities, such as obedience, industriousness, and self-assurance, follow when a child internalizes *respeto*. (Culture of Puerto Rico, 2018, Socialization section, para. “Child Rearing and Education”)

Respeto also includes “demonstrating respect and responsibility toward elders” (Guilamo-Ramos et al., p. 19). Families tend to place a higher value on service to the greater good of the family, rather than individual achievement. As far as parenting goes, Puerto Rican parents are generally thought to be strict. However, Guilamo-Ramos et al. reviewed different studies which showed differences in Puerto Rican parenting styles. Some studies characterizing parents “as authoritarian and control oriented in their interactions with their adolescents and as more insistent on discipline and obedience” (p. 19), while others found that “maintaining warm and supportive relationships

characterized by high levels of parent-adolescent interaction and sharing” was more common (p. 17). Puerto Rican mothers tend to monitor their children closely, and have high expectations of their children in terms of loyalty, respect, and obedience. In the study by Guilamo-Ramos et al., the mothers who were interviewed claimed that although they believe that “strictness is better than leniency”, they also “emphasized the importance of warm and supportive relationships” (p. 22).

There are certain gender roles that males and females have in Puerto Rican culture. Puerto Rican males will tend to exhibit *machismo*. According to Guilamo-Ramos et al. (2007), “*machismo* refers to a constellation of attitudes and behaviors that accompany the leadership or decision-making role that men individually and collectively assume in the home and community” (p. 19). Although the males assume the leadership role in the households, it is actually quite often the females who are the main source of care for the entire family. Often, men will work to earn money for their families, and women will stay home to raise the families, as well as to take care of daily household necessities. However, this is not always the case, especially as the world continues to move forward in time, and roles, attitudes, and needs begin to change. When it comes to decision-making, men tend to take the lead in the case of social activities or setting a budget, while women will take the lead in the household affairs such as child rearing and chores (Bird & Canino, 1982). The differences in gender roles for Puerto Ricans also has an effect on parenting style. The Puerto Rican mothers interviewed by Guilamo-Ramos et al.

explained that boys should be raised with more freedom than girls and how, in some Latino families, girls were strongly encouraged to participate in activities

inside the house, and boys were allowed more freedom to explore activities outside of home. (p. 23)

The majority of Puerto Rican people are Roman Catholic, and they celebrate Catholic holidays such as Christmas and Easter. The Christmas season in Puerto Rico lasts for a long time, “starting right after Thanksgiving day and officially lasting until Three Kings Day on January 6” (Rivera, 2018, Folklore section, para. “Christmas”).

Marriage is another religious event that is important to Puerto Ricans. While Catholic weddings have many similarities throughout different countries and cultures,

one unique characteristic of a Puerto Rican wedding is the bridal doll. A bridal doll, in a dress identical to the brides' gown, is usually placed on the head or center table with souvenirs attached to its dress. During the reception, the bride and groom will walk to each person and thank him or her for their presence at the nuptials. Each person is then pinned with a souvenir, some people in return pins dollars into the doll's dress. (Rivera, 2018, Folklore section, para. “Weddings”).

Quinceañeros are another celebration for Puerto Ricans in which 15-year-old girls transition from adolescence to womanhood. Often there is a religious celebration in the church, followed by a party. The girls wear extravagant gowns and dance with different males in attendance; however, the first dance is always reserved for her father (Rivera, 2018).

This is a very small representation of Puerto Rican culture. Having a relative understanding of cultural norms will allow a teacher to begin to link instruction to students' lives, histories and community contexts. However, because no single student will fit into a culture's mold completely, it is best to get to know your students as unique

individuals. When teachers take time to understand the unique capabilities and prior knowledge that a student has, and “by capitalizing on household and other community resources, we can organize classroom instruction that far exceeds in quality the rote-like instruction these children commonly encounter in schools” (González et al., 2005, p. 71).

Welcoming ELLs into your Classroom

When an ELL enters the elementary music classroom for the very first time, they will likely be nervous, timid, shy, and quiet. Abril (2003) stated that music teachers should “immediately involve the child in meaningful activities that will make him or her feel welcome in the class” (p. 40). The music classroom should be seen as a safe environment for the child. Miranda (2011) stated that there are “four periods of language use by ELL students: use of the home language, a nonverbal period, participation through use of short phrases, and use of productive language” (p. 17). Some children will start out trying to use their home language to communicate, while others will start in the silent period. It is important that a music teacher does not force the new ELL to speak. During this silent time, the child is observing the practices and routines in the classroom, and may attempt to communicate in nonverbal ways such as making sounds, pointing, or using facial expressions. To some teachers, it may seem as though the child is disconnected from the classroom, “but often they are ‘cognitively engaged’, trying to figure out the ‘code’ of the language” (Miranda, p. 18). Teachers should continue to create meaningful activities for their ELL students, and their expectations for the ELLs’ involvement in class should remain high. If a teacher gives less attention to an ELL or has lower expectations for them, this “can lead to minimal effort and low achievement”, as well as “fewer opportunities to learn” (Abril, p. 41). Having an ELL work with their

Native-English speaking peers in class is an excellent way to “provide ELL students with opportunities to learn content as well as language” (Abril, p. 41).

Not only should a music teacher create a safe and welcoming environment for their students, but they should also work to get to know their ELL students outside of class. This will help to build a stronger relationship between teacher and student, and will help lead the teacher to a better understanding of the students’ home life and culture. This is necessary in order to create a culturally relevant atmosphere.

When considering music classroom activities, Abril (2003) suggested using hand signals “in connection with a word or concept (to) improve ELL children’s ability to use and understand vocabulary” (p. 42). The author also suggested using songs with plenty of repetition, so that the ELL has numerous opportunities to succeed. Miranda (2011) recommended “the use of gestures, acting out ideas, facial expressions, and the use of visual aides”, as well as slowing down your speech, “repeating and rephrasing, watching for indications of understanding, and incorporating new vocabulary” (p. 21). Trawick-Smith’s (2010) research study on common types of classroom play for Puerto Rican students indicated that “one of the most common, spontaneous play activities identified in this study was music play” (p. 96). In this type of play, children mimic real life musicians in “elaborate, spontaneous performances” (Trawick-Smith, p. 96). Children sing, dance, act, and dress up like the performers they are impersonating. The researcher found that children’s songs were rarely used in this type of play, but that popular music was what the children most liked to imitate. A music teacher can incorporate this type of play into their classroom. In doing so, “positive cognitive and social outcomes in areas such as language and literacy skills, temporal-spatial reasoning, fine motor skill coordination,

motivation, and self-perception” (Lorah et al., 2014, p. 235) can be observed, and students can make a “connection between school music and home music” (Abril, 2003, p. 42).

Having ELLs and non-ELLs work together to create musical performances will lead to an enhancement of “students’ creativity and cultural awareness” (Paquette & Rieg, 2008, p. 228). Using strategies that are targeted for a specific group of students will often benefit all students in the classroom (Miranda, 2011). Hallam (2010) claimed that “success in music can enhance overall feelings of confidence and self-esteem” (p. 278). Creating a culturally relevant music curriculum can make a difference in the lives of ELL children.

Conclusions

Understanding the history of ENL in the United States, the regulations surrounding ELLs, and how to provide culturally relevant pedagogy will ensure that a music teacher of ELLs can successfully include those students in his or her music curriculum. Once a teacher investigates beyond the surface level of their students’ cultures, they can prepare a curriculum that focuses on students’ strengths and prior knowledge in order for them to gain new knowledge. The following chapter will review the methodology involved in creating the culturally relevant music curriculum aimed at ELL students of Puerto Rican descent.

Methodology

This curriculum project will seek to create a music classroom environment that is inclusive of English Language Learners (ELLs), “the fastest growing segment of the student population” in the United States (National Council of Teachers of English, 2008,

p. 2). This type of curriculum is essential for many reasons. The population of ELLs in the United States is rapidly increasing, and, since music education in grades Pre-K through 8 is required for all public school students in New York State, music teachers can expect to see the increase of students in their own classrooms. As was previously stated, music and language develop in very similar areas and ways in the human brain (Chen-Hafteck, 1997; Hallam, 2010; Lorah, Sanders, & Morrison, 2014; Paquette & Rieg, 2008; Trollinger, 2010). Not only is the development of both language and music alike, but it has also been found that “ability in one will facilitate ability in the other” (Chen-Hafteck, p. 94). A music curriculum that includes resources for learning both language and music will be most beneficial for ELLs.

Music education is a vital component for a well-rounded public school education. Not only will the music in this curriculum be culturally relevant, but information on the ways in which ELLs learn English and the expectations regarding ELLs as they arrive in the music classroom to assist music teachers will also be included. The New York State Education Department (2018) stated that “ELLs must be provided with equal access to all school programs and services offered to non-ELL students, including access to programs required for graduation” (CR Part 154 section, para. 1). Creating a comprehensive music curriculum with ELL students in mind will ensure that they receive an equal education in music, and will allow music educators the chance to promote cultural awareness and acceptance, life skills that will follow all students throughout their lives. The following chapter will discuss the methodology underpinning this curriculum project.

Conceptual Frameworks

My culturally inclusive music curriculum is grounded on the idea of case study

research. Case study research “provides a detailed account and analysis of the characteristics and dynamics present in one or more cases” (Johnson & Christensen, 2017, p. 434). A music teacher could implement this curriculum and observe the effects of the new curriculum on the students’ attitudes and participation levels, as well as the teacher’s perception of the curriculum and the ways in which it impacted the students. It could also be beneficial to perform a collective case study in order to observe the differences between a music classroom with a culturally relevant curriculum and one without it. This could lead to decisions on what type of curriculum to include in schools.

Culturally relevant pedagogy is a method of teaching in which teachers push students to “make a connection between their in-school lives and their out-of-school experiences” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. xi). As was mentioned previously, this type of teaching is necessary in order to provide all students with access to a quality education. When teachers draw on their students’ funds of knowledge, “student experience is legitimized as valid, and classroom practice can build on the familiar knowledge bases that students can manipulate to enhance learning” in other areas (González, Moll, & Amanti, p. 43). Miranda (2011) stated that, “the use of focused strategies within an inclusive classroom community will often benefit all students, even if the strategies were selected with one particular group in mind” (p. 21). The strategies and methods used in this culturally inclusive curriculum are beneficial for all students in the classroom, not just the English Language Learners.

Audience

I plan to create a curriculum for an elementary general music classroom, rather than an instrumental one. ELLs who arrive in elementary school will be required to

participate in some sort of music program, and, since ELLs are less likely than are their native English speaking peers to participate in instrumental music programs, they will likely end up in a general music classroom (Elpus & Abril, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Kinney, 2010; Lorah, Sanders, & Morrison, 2014). This makes the need for an ELL-friendly general music curriculum at the elementary level vital.

In New York State, the home language of ELLs is mainly Spanish. In the 2015-2016 school year, Spanish was spoken by 64.9% of all ELLs (NYSED, 2017a). According to the United States Census Bureau, nearly 3.5 million people (17.6% of the population) in New York State were Hispanic or Latino, including representation from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba (US Census Bureau, 2010). I am currently employed as an English as a New Language (ENL) teacher at an urban K-8 school located in New York State. Of the student population in this school, 79% of all students are of Hispanic or Latino descent, 50% of all students are labeled as ELLs, and 88% of all students are economically disadvantaged (New York State Education Department, n.d.). The most common ethnicity found in my school is Puerto Rican, so the music curriculum will focus on Puerto Rican culture. This curriculum will be for a 4th grade general music class that includes Puerto Rican, Spanish-speaking ELLs.

Procedure

When I was starting this process, I first decided that I wanted to combine my two specialty areas, music and ENL, into one project. I searched for literature that was relevant to music, language learning, and language learners, and eventually found literature that dealt with both music and language together. Some of the research had to do with connections between language and music in human brains (Chen-Hafteck, 1997;

Hallam, 2010; Lorah, Sanders, & Morrison, 2014; Paquette & Rieg, 2008; Trollinger, 2010). Other research related to the positive effects of music on other areas, such as enhancing overall learning as well as social and emotional wellbeing (Abril, 2003; Hallam; Lorah, Sanders, & Morrison; Paquette & Rieg). I also found pertinent information on ELLs that would directly relate to their school and music involvement, such as their socioeconomic status, which ultimately helped to guide me to the final curriculum project (Elpus & Abril, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Kinney, 2008; Kinney, 2010; Lorah, Sanders, & Morrison).

While I was researching, I also took time to speak with my music education colleagues and peers in order to better understand the current climate of music education in public schools in New York State. From those conversations, one beneficial item I found was that most music educators use the National Music Education Standards, rather than the standards provided by New York State (NYSED, 2017b). So I found the National Music Education Standards for PK-8 General Music and began to look through all of those standards to see which of them I may be able to meet with my curriculum. Some of the standards include verbiage such as personal interest, social and cultural context, and specific interests, which lends itself very well to a culturally relevant curriculum (National Association for Music Education, 2014). Upon being hired in my current school and district, I was able to determine my audience for this curriculum.

Once I understood the national standards for music education and my audience, I asked music educators about their current general music curriculum. One music teacher I spoke with teaches at another urban school in New York State as a K-8 general music teacher. She was kind enough to share her music curriculum with me, which is the way

that I came to create a specialized version for my audience. Her school uses the Quaver Music Curriculum (Quaver Music, 2018). Quaver's 4th grade curriculum includes a unit on rap music, in which students create their own rap and then perform it for their classmates. I took this idea and geared it toward Puerto Rican students, and created a curriculum where students are expected to create a performance of the music that they like to listen to at home. This idea is supported by notions of culturally relevant pedagogy and funds of knowledge, and will help students to "make a connection between school music and home music" (Abril, 2003, p. 42).

Besides the informal interviews conducted with colleagues and peers, I also used research in second language acquisition in order to assist with my decisions for the curriculum, as well as to offer solutions for differing English language proficiency levels that music teachers are likely to encounter. These teaching methods and strategies will be discussed in chapter 4.

Scope and Sequence

The curriculum will cover one unit and will last approximately 3 weeks. Students will start by being asked to share their favorite song with the class, and the teacher will play each song for the class to listen to. The teacher can also share popular songs that he or she knows if they have not been chosen by students, especially songs by artists from Puerto Rico. Students will immerse themselves in the music, listening for different instruments and rhythms, and will eventually be expected to create their own performance of the song of their choice. The students will also be asked to respond to the music and to make social and cultural connections to the music. These concepts align with the National Music Standards for PK-8 General Music.

The National Music Standards include four overarching standards: creating, performing, responding, and connecting. Each of these standards has different branches of standards below. Creating includes imagining; planning and making; evaluating and refining; and presenting. Performing includes selecting; analyzing; interpreting; rehearsing, evaluating, and refining; and presenting. Responding also calls for selecting; analyzing; interpreting; and evaluating. Last, the connecting branch asks students to synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make music; and relate musical ideas and works with varied context to deepen understanding. The following standards were used in at least one of the lesson plans that were created:

MU:Cr1.1.4b Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms, melodies, and simple accompaniment patterns) within related tonalities (such as major and minor) and meters.	Lesson 1
MU:Cr2.1.4a Demonstrate selected and organized musical ideas for an improvisation, arrangement, or composition to express intent, and explain connection to purpose and context.	Lessons 4 and 5
MU:Cr3.1.4a Evaluate, refine, and document revisions to personal music, applying teacher provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback to show improvement over time.	Lesson 4
MU:Cr3.2.4a Present the final version of personal created music to others, and explain connection to expressive intent.	Lesson 5
MU:Pr4.1.4a Demonstrate and explain how the selection of music to perform is influenced by personal interest, knowledge, context, and technical skill.	Lessons 1 and 3
MU:Pr4.2.4a Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, and form) in music selected for performance.	Lessons 2 and 3

MU:Pr4.2.4b When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation.	Lessons 2 and 3
MU:Pr4.2.4c Explain how context (such as social and cultural) informs a performance.	Lesson 4
MU:Pr4.3.4a Demonstrate and explain how intent is conveyed through interpretive decisions and expressive qualities (such as dynamics, tempo, and timbre).	Lesson 2
MU:Pr5.1.4a Apply teacher-provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback to evaluate accuracy and expressiveness of ensemble and personal performances.	Lesson 5
MU:Pr5.1.4b Rehearse to refine technical accuracy and expressive qualities, and address performance challenges.	Lesson 4
MU:Pr6.1.4a Perform music, alone or with others, with expression and technical accuracy, and appropriate interpretation.	Lesson 5
MU:Pr6.1.4b Demonstrate performance decorum and audience etiquette appropriate for the context, venue, and genre.	Lesson 5
MU:Re7.1.4a Demonstrate and explain how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, purposes, or contexts.	Lesson 3
MU:Re9.1.4a Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and explain appropriateness to the context.	Lesson 5
MU:Cn10.0.4a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.	

(National Association for Music Education, 2014)

The National Music Standards lend themselves well to a culturally relevant curriculum, as they require students to relate their interests, knowledge, and skills to their personal

choices in music selection and performance. Those requirements align well with the concept of funds of knowledge.

Validity

This curriculum was created specifically for Puerto Rican English Language Learners. Depending on the cultural identities in other elementary schools, this curriculum could easily be implemented in other schools where Puerto Rican culture is represented. If the school has a culture different from Puerto Rican represented, the music teacher could use this culturally responsive curriculum as a framework, and substitute the correct culture for his or her own students. The music teacher would need to do research to find the type of lessons that would be appropriate for their students, since a group musical performance may not be the best way to incorporate all ELLs into a music classroom. However, this review of literature has presented teachers with a baseline understanding of the challenges to be expected from newcomer ELLs in their classrooms, as well as ideas and recommendations for accommodating them.

Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the methods for creating and implementing a culturally responsive music curriculum for Puerto Rican English Language Learners. By enhancing the current general music curriculum that many schools use in order to account for ELL's English language capabilities as well as their home cultures, I hope to increase the accessibility of the music classroom to ELLs. I hope to better prepare music educators for teaching ELLs, as well as to create an environment where students of all cultures and languages can learn acceptance through music.

Results

In the previous chapters, I introduced the problem of the growing population of English Language Learners (ELLs) in the United States and the lack of teacher preparation to effectively teach ELLs, I discussed the history of English as a New Language (ENL) in public schools, and I described the concept of culturally relevant pedagogy. This section contains the lesson plans for the single unit within the curriculum. Included with the lessons are the national standards for music that are being met, necessary materials for each lesson, higher order thinking questions, cultural connections, and a wrap up section. The lesson plans also include sections where the teacher can modify instruction for different language levels, can use home language or translanguaging, and can show the incorporation of technology into the lesson. García (2011) explained translanguaging as differing types of “pedagogical practices that use bilingualism as resource, rather than ignore it or perceive it as a problem”, and stated that it “refers to the language practices of bilingual people” (p. 1). García also described the use of translanguaging by bilingual people and their families as the “flexible use of their linguistic resources to make meaning of their lives and their complex worlds” (p. 1). A brief follow-up is included after each lesson to discuss any extra remarks or special instructions for teachers. The lesson plan template is taken from SUNY Fredonia’s Master of Science in Education (M.S.Ed), TESOL K-12 program, which will assist teachers with including ELLs.

4th Grade General Music Lesson Plan
 Creating Your Own Performance

Key: **SW** = Students will; **TW** = Teacher will; **SWBAT** = Students will be able to do; **HOTS** = Higher Order Thinking Skills

Grade Level: 4	Language Level: All levels are represented in this classroom	Student Backgrounds: Home language is Spanish, Puerto Rican descent
<p>National Music Standards (PK-8 General Music):</p> <p>MU:Cr1.1.4b Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms, melodies, and simple accompaniment patterns) within related tonalities (such as major and minor) and meters.</p> <p>MU:Pr4.1.4a Demonstrate and explain how the selection of music to perform is influenced by personal interest, knowledge, context, and technical skill.</p>		
<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SWBAT identify different instruments they hear/see in the song Vivir Mi Vida. 2. SWBAT perform on instruments along with the song Vivir Mi Vida. 3. SWBAT discuss the music of Marc Anthony as well as their preference of music. 		
<p>Extra Resources/Supplementary Materials: Computer and projector, internet access, congas, guiro, keyboard, maracas, palitos, timbales, cowbells</p>		
<p>HOTS:</p> <p>What kind of music do you listen to at home? How do you like to listen to music (alone, with friends, singing/dancing along)?</p>	<p>Cultural Connections: How can lesson be linked to examples from home language & culture? Students will discuss other songs/artists they like to listen to at home. Certain instruments used in Marc Anthony’s song come from Puerto Rico. Salsa music is derived from Puerto Rico.</p>	

Instructional Procedures (TW/SW):	Modifying for Different Language Levels:	Use of L1 / Translanguaging(TL):	Use of Technology:	Assessment:
<p>1. TW have salsa music playing in the background while students enter the class. Once students are seated, ask the class if anyone knows what type of music is playing. Discuss salsa music, Puerto Rico makes a lot of salsa music.</p>	<p>Students can be partnered up if they do not have enough English yet.</p>	<p>Teacher can give directions in Spanish (if teacher does not know Spanish, they can at least find small phrases, such as “listen” or “watch”).</p>	<p>Music is coming from the computer and speakers in the classroom.</p>	
<p>2. TW ask students if they know any singers who are from Puerto Rico. TW have small list of artists prepared just in case.</p>		<p>Use L1/TL with partners as needed.</p>		
<p>3. TW discuss Marc Anthony. He is American born but his parents are from Puerto Rico. TW explain that she will play a song by Marc Anthony. (Students may sing/dance if they are familiar with the song, or if they choose to. Teacher should encourage it).</p>			<p>Bring up image of Marc Anthony on screen. Have Vivir Mi Vida queued, ready to play video for students.</p>	

<p>4. TW ask students to discuss music of Marc Anthony: why do you think he likes to perform salsa music? Then ask students about what music they like to listen to and why.</p>				<p>O #3: SW discuss the selections of music made by artists and by themselves based on personal interest, knowledge, context.</p>
<p>5. TW play the song again, this time asking students to listen and watch for the different instruments they hear/see in the song. TW play Vivir Mi Vida on screen for students.</p>	<p>Teacher can model first example: "I heard a trumpet!" Mime playing a trumpet, pull up an image on the computer of a trumpet.</p>		<p>Replay Vivir Mi Vida on screen for students.</p>	
<p>6. TW ask students to talk about different instruments they saw in the video. As students identify the instruments, TW either bring that instrument out (if it is available in the classroom) or they will search for it on the computer for students to see.</p>	<p>Students may point to, mime, or draw the different instruments they see or hear in the video.</p>		<p>Teacher will use internet to pull up instruments that are not available in the classroom.</p>	<p>O #1: SW identify different instruments they see/hear in the video.</p>
<p>7. TW pass out available instruments to students to have them play. SW experiment and create melodies and rhythms</p>			<p>Play the song again for students to play along with.</p>	<p>O #2: SW create simple accompaniment melodies to go</p>

<p>with their instruments. Then SW play along to Vivir Mi Vida. If there are not enough instruments for all students, they should take turns and pass instruments in order for everyone to get a turn.</p>				<p>along with Vivir Mi Vida.</p>
<p>Wrap – Up: Teacher will collect the instruments back (or have student helpers to collect and return). Teacher will explain that in the next class, we will learn about form, dynamics, and tempo. Eventually, students will be making their own performances of songs of their choice.</p>				

Lesson 1 Follow-Up

Before students arrive in their music class, the music teacher should do some research on Puerto Rican artists and music, as well as on musical instruments. Marc Anthony was not born in Puerto Rico, but his parents are from the island. He is an extremely popular salsa artist, and according to his website, he “holds the Guinness World Record for best-selling tropical salsa artist and the most number-one albums on the Billboard Tropical Albums year-end charts” and is considered “an ambassador of Latin Music and culture at a global level” (Biography section, para. 1). Other artists either from Puerto Rico or of Puerto Rican descent include, but are not limited to, Ricky Martin, Daddy Yankee, Jennifer Lopez, and Bruno Mars.

Teachers should remember that a new English Language Learner (ELL) may be in what is called the silent period, and that the student should not be forced to speak before he or she is ready. Having students dance and play on instruments will ensure that no student is forced to speak, but that they are participating in music making with the class. When all students work together, it gives everyone an opportunity to learn a new language. Pairing Spanish dominant speakers with English dominant speakers can help with this task. Pairing a Spanish dominant speaker with a newcomer can also be beneficial, and having designated translators in the class can be very helpful as well. However, it is important to note that one should not rely too heavily on using students as translators. Spanish should always be encouraged, and a music teacher should remember that “it could take months for (ELLs) to respond through speech, join in during group singing, or take their turn to sing their first solo” (Miranda, 2011, p. 20).

Abril (2009) stated that the main purpose of culturally relevant teaching “is to get teachers to connect with students’ cultures, and to help students connect with their cultural and social identities in ways that learning in any subject is made more effective and relevant” (p. 79). With this in mind, teachers should ask students about the music they like to listen to at home. This allows teachers to learn more about students’ home lives, and enables students to make connections between home and school music. Teachers can ask students to elaborate upon and discuss the music that their other family members listen to as well. Learning as much as you can about your students’ backgrounds allows you as a teacher to bring more of their culture and funds of knowledge into the classroom. For example, perhaps someone has a parent who plays salsa music. That parent could be invited to the music classroom to perform for the students. This sharing of home music and traditions will also help your students to learn more about one another, and can ultimately “lead to improvements in children’s’ attitudes towards unfamiliar musics and cultural groups” (Abril, p. 78).

4th Grade General Music Lesson Plan
Creating Your Own Performance

Key: **SW** = Students will; **TW** = Teacher will; **SWBAT** = Students will be able to do; **HOTS** = Higher Order Thinking Skills

Grade Level: 4	Language Level: All levels are represented in this classroom	Student Backgrounds: Home language is Spanish, Puerto Rican descent
National Music Standards (PK-8 General Music):		
<p>MU:Pr4.2.4a Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, and form) in music selected for performance.</p> <p>MU:Pr4.2.4b When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation.</p> <p>MU:Pr4.3.4a Demonstrate and explain how intent is conveyed through interpretive decisions and expressive qualities (such as dynamics, tempo, and timbre).</p>		
Objectives:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SWBAT identify the form of different songs (selected by teacher). 2. SWBAT understand and describe dynamics and tempo. 3. SWBAT discuss how intent is conveyed through interpretive decisions and expressive qualities (such as dynamics, tempo, and timbre). 		
Extra Resources/Supplementary Materials:		
<p>Computer and projector, internet access, percussive instruments A & B cards for all students, dynamics chart, forte and piano signs, tempo chart</p>		

<p>HOTS: How does understanding the structure and context of musical works inform performance?</p>		<p>Cultural Connections: How can lesson be linked to examples from home language & culture? When teaching form, dynamics, and tempo to students, teacher can use popular songs from students' cultures.</p>		
<p>Instructional Procedures (TW/SW):</p> <p>1. TW introduce form to students. It is the overall structure of a piece of music, shows how the music is divided into sections. Start with song El Coquí to introduce AB form. Listen for where the song sounds the same and different. Continue with other songs in AB form for students to practice identifying the different sections.</p>	<p>Modifying for Different Language Levels:</p> <p>Students can be partnered up if they do not have enough English yet.</p>	<p>Use of L1 / Translanguaging(TL):</p> <p>Use L1/TL with partners as needed.</p>	<p>Use of Technology:</p> <p>TW use computer to play the song El Coquí for students.</p>	<p>Assessment: (CO#s & LO#s)</p> <p>O #1: SW identify the different parts they hear in the song (AB). Students can do different movements to identify A section versus B section, or they can be given hand signals or cards with A and B on them to hold up.</p>
<p>2. TW introduce dynamics and tempo to students. Dynamics are how loud or soft the music is. Tempo is how slow or fast. TW use dynamics chart to show how different dynamics are notated (forte, piano, etc.). TW</p>	<p>Students can use movement to show differences in dynamics and tempo.</p>		<p>TW use computer to play different songs for students in order for them to identify dynamics and tempos.</p>	<p>O #2: SW be able to describe dynamics and tempo. Students can show differences in dynamics and</p>

<p>use the tempo chart to show how different tempos are notated (allegro, andante, etc.). TW play different songs for students to show loud/soft, fast/slow.</p> <p>Model whispering vs. talking vs. shouting</p>				<p>tempo by using movements. Students can be given signals to give or signs to hold up when a song is loud or soft (forte and piano signs).</p>
<p>3. TW pass out percussive instruments to students. SW take turns holding up a forte or a piano sign, the rest of the class needs to play their instruments at the dynamic that the leader gives.</p>				<p>O #2: SW correctly play loud or soft based on the leader's instructions.</p>
<p>4. TW review AB form using El Coquí. Then TW explain to students that they will work together to find the form of Vivir Mi Vida. TW explain that popular songs have sections called verse, chorus, etc. (compared to A, B, etc.).</p>	<p>Students may use the A & B signs to identify different sections they hear in the song.</p>		<p>TW use computer to play Vivir Mi Vida.</p> <p>TW use whiteboard (or dry-erase, chalkboard, etc.) to write out the form</p>	<p>O #1: SW identify the form of the song Vivir Mi Vida.</p>

			that the class decides on.	
<p>5. TW ask students to describe dynamics and tempo in Vivir Mi Vida. Why do you think the artist chose those dynamics/tempos? How does understanding the structure and context of musical works inform performance? How would you use this knowledge in your own performance?</p>	<p>Students can use forte and piano signs.</p>		<p>Song will be queued on the computer in case students need additional listenings.</p>	<p>O #3: SW discuss their thoughts on how the artist’s intent is conveyed through interpretive decisions and expressive qualities.</p>
<p>Wrap – Up: Teacher will review form, dynamics, and tempo with students. Teacher will remind students of the importance of these musical items when conveying intent in their own performances. This is important because students will be choosing their own songs to perform, and will need to be able to analyze their music in order to perform it well.</p>				

Lesson 2 Follow-Up

This lesson will take more than one day to complete, as students will need time and practice in order to learn the ways to identify form, dynamics, and tempo. Teachers should introduce form starting with a simple song with only two parts, such as *El Coquí*. This song is very popular in Puerto Rico, and is learned early on in a child's life. The coquí is a tiny frog that can only be found on the island of Puerto Rico. It is named for the unique sound that it makes at night. The form in the song *El Coquí* is AB. The version of this song performed by Jose Gonzalez and Banda Criolla is a good option to play for students because it is in both Spanish and English, and can be found on YouTube. Once students master hearing the differences within the song, then a teacher can add songs with increasingly difficult forms. The Star Wars Theme, for example, uses the form intro-A-B-A-B-A-ending. Since the form of *Vivir Mi Vida* is not a simple AB, a teacher should introduce more difficult forms to students before they attempt to find the form of the popular song. Once it comes time to identify the form in *Vivir Mi Vida*, a teacher should explain the terms verse, chorus, bridge.

For learning about dynamics and tempo, a teacher should start simply. The teacher can play the piano or other instrument for the students first loudly, then softly to begin explaining dynamics. The names of different dynamics should be taught to the students (using the dynamics chart, for example) so that students are learning the appropriate academic vocabulary (*forte*, *piano*) rather than colloquial terms (*loud*, *soft*). The same goes for teaching tempo. Students should understand that different speeds in music have specific names, such as *largo*, *adagio*, *moderato*, *vivace*. Ideally, the tempo chart should have a well-known song or tune attached to each tempo marking, and the

teacher should play each song for the students in order to help them understand what each tempo marking sounds like. The song In the Hall of the Mountain King, from Edvard Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite, is an excellent piece to use to show differences in both dynamics and tempo. The song starts extremely soft and at a relatively moderate tempo. As the piece continues, it gradually gets louder and faster. Using classical music for some of the examples is a good way to introduce an unfamiliar genre of music to students.

4th Grade General Music Lesson Plan
 Creating Your Own Performance

Key: **SW** = Students will; **TW** = Teacher will; **SWBAT** = Students will be able to do; **HOTS** = Higher Order Thinking Skills

Grade Level: 4	Language Level: All levels are represented in this classroom	Student Backgrounds: Home language is Spanish, Puerto Rican descent
<p>National Music Standards (PK-8 General Music):</p> <p>MU:Pr4.1.4a Demonstrate and explain how the selection of music to perform is influenced by personal interest, knowledge, context, and technical skill.</p> <p>MU:Pr4.2.4a Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, and form) in music selected for performance.</p> <p>MU:Pr4.2.4b When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation.</p> <p>MU:Re7.1.4a Demonstrate and explain how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, purposes, or contexts.</p> <p>MU:Cn10.0.4a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.</p>		
<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SWBAT find the form in their chosen song, and write it out using iconic and/or standard notation. 2. SWBAT explain why they chose a specific song based on personal interest, knowledge, context, or technical skill. 3. SWBAT find and present information on their selected artist. 		
<p>Extra Resources/Supplementary Materials:</p>		

Computers for students, internet access, paper & pencil				
HOTS: How does understanding the structure and context of musical works inform performance?		Cultural Connections: How can lesson be linked to examples from home language & culture? Students may choose any song they'd like to perform. This might be a song from Puerto Rico, or from a Puerto Rican artist, but it doesn't have to be. This song can be anything they like to listen to at home. Students will be connecting their home music to their school music, making it more meaningful.		
Instructional Procedures (TW/SW): 1. TW introduce the overall objectives for this lesson: students will be put into groups and choose a song they wish to perform. SW 1. choose song; 2. find the form; 3. research the artist(s); 4. explain why they chose this song/artist. Eventually they will perform the song with their group. Remind students of the Puerto Rican artists that were discussed on the first day, but let them know they have freedom to choose whatever song they like – but it must be approved by the teacher (no	Modifying for Different Language Levels: Students will be placed into groups based on language levels. The teacher should try to make all groups “equal”, with differing language levels present in all groups.	Use of L1 / Translanguaging(TL): Use L1/TL with partners as needed.	Use of Technology: SW use computers to research their songs and artists.	Assessment: (CO#s & LO#s)

<p>swearing or inappropriate content).</p>				
<p>2. TW display the groups on the board, as well as what information SW need to find. SW find their song and have it approved by the teacher. Once the song is approved, SW work in their groups to identify the form in their song.</p>			<p>SW use computers to research their songs.</p>	<p>O #1: SW identify the form of their song, using help from the teacher when/if necessary.</p>
<p>3. SW research their artist(s) to find their birthday, city/state/country of birth, ethnicity, type of music they perform, and any interesting facts about the artist(s). Students will also consider and be ready to present why they chose this song or artist(s) based on personal interest, knowledge, context, and technical skill.</p>			<p>SW use computers to research their artist(s).</p>	<p>O #3: SW obtain information through research on their chosen artist(s).</p>

<p>4. SW present their information to the class. Each student will be responsible for presenting information (unless this child is an ELL in the silent period (Abril, 2003; Miranda, 2011), then this student should not be forced to speak in English).</p>		<p>Students may present their information in Spanish.</p> <p>Students may have their information in Spanish, and work with a partner to present in English.</p>	<p>Students may use technology to create their presentation, show a picture, etc.</p>	<p>O #3: SW present information they obtained through research on their artist(s).</p> <p>O #2: SW explain why they chose a specific song based on personal interest, knowledge, context, or technical skill.</p>
<p>5. TW ask students how understanding the form of their chosen songs will help them to perform the songs.</p>				<p>HOTS: SW explain why understanding the form of their songs will assist them when it comes time to perform. (selecting who sings where, who will play instruments, etc.)</p>

Wrap – Up: Now that we know why understanding the form of our songs will help us to perform them, keep that in mind for our next lesson. Next time we get together, the groups will begin rehearsing for their performances. The first step is to figure out who will be assigned to each part of the performance.

Lesson 3 Follow-Up

Trawick-Smith's (2010) research study on common types of classroom play for Puerto Rican students indicated that "one of the most common, spontaneous play activities identified in this study was music play" (p. 96). In this type of play, children mimic real life musicians in "elaborate, spontaneous performances" (Trawick-Smith, p. 96). Children sing, dance, act, and dress up like the performers they are impersonating. The researcher found that children's songs were rarely used in this type of play, but that popular music was what the children most liked to imitate. The findings in this study were used to help frame the overall curriculum. Including the music of the students' home lives was also important to this curriculum, since "the more that participants can engage and identify with the topic matter, the more interest and motivation they will have" (González et al., 2005, p. 9).

As Abril (2003) and Miranda (2011) both mentioned in their research, ELLs in the early stages often go through what is known as a silent period. Abril stated that, "at the initial stages, ELL children should not be forced to participate in activities in which they are expected to speak English" (p. 40). Miranda echoed this idea, and explained different ways in which ELL students may be participating, including spectating, telegraphic speech, and formulaic speech. Miranda described spectating "as a behavior in which the child is focused on observing the language among English speakers" (p. 18). The author explained that "telegraphic speech involves the use of single words to respond to questions or identify an object, but not within a complete sentence", and that "formulaic speech is illustrated by the child's repetition of using phrases they have heard other children use in similar situations" (p. 19). Finally, Miranda stated that this

“transition to productive language use for ELL students can take at least a year”, so teachers should be aware and be patient with their ELL students (p. 20).

4th Grade General Music Lesson Plan
Creating Your Own Performance

Key: **SW** = Students will; **TW** = Teacher will; **SWBAT** = Students will be able to do; **HOTS** = Higher Order Thinking Skills

Grade Level: 4	Language Level: All levels are represented in this classroom	Student Backgrounds: Home language is Spanish, Puerto Rican descent
National Music Standards (PK-8 General Music):		
<p>MU:Cr2.1.4a Demonstrate selected and organized musical ideas for an improvisation, arrangement, or composition to express intent, and explain connection to purpose and context.</p> <p>MU:Cr3.1.4a Evaluate, refine, and document revisions to personal music, applying teacher provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback to show improvement over time.</p> <p>MU:Pr4.2.4c Explain how context (such as social and cultural) informs a performance.</p> <p>MU:Pr5.1.4b Rehearse to refine technical accuracy and expressive qualities, and address performance challenges.</p>		
Objectives:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SWBAT assign parts to each group member for the performance of their selected song. 2. SWBAT make connections between their song and artist(s) and the musical choices they make for their performance. 3. SWBAT rehearse their songs with their group members. 		
Extra Resources/Supplementary Materials:		
Computer and projector, internet access, congas, guiro, keyboard, maracas, palitos, timbales, cowbells, any other available instruments. Dynamics chart and tempo chart.		

<p>HOTS:</p> <p>How does understanding the culture of the artist(s) influence your musical performance?</p>		<p>Cultural Connections: How can lesson be linked to examples from home language & culture?</p> <p>Students choose to study and perform the music of their choice, likely the music they listen to at home. This allows the merging of home and school music, and students can bring in their funds of knowledge.</p>		
<p>Instructional Procedures (TW/SW):</p> <p>1. TW review dynamics and tempo with students. SW make sure to incorporate dynamics and tempo in their performances.</p>	<p>Modifying for Different Language Levels:</p> <p>Teacher can have students play examples of different dynamics and tempos on their instruments.</p>	<p>Use of L1 / Translanguaging(TL):</p> <p>Use L1/TL with partners as needed.</p>	<p>Use of Technology:</p>	<p>Assessment: (CO#s & LO#s)</p> <p>O #3: SW use incorporate appropriate dynamics and tempos during their rehearsals.</p>
<p>2. SW assign parts to their groups, keeping the form of the song in mind. SW collaborate to ensure everyone has an equal part in the performance.</p>	<p>Students in the silent period may be assigned to an instrument only, so they don't have to sing/speak in English. Or, if the song has Spanish, that student may sing/speak in Spanish.</p>		<p>SW use the computers and internet to listen and watch their song in order to rehearse.</p>	<p>O #1: SW assign parts to each group member so that all members have an equal opportunity to perform and participate.</p>

<p>3. TW walk around the room to provide feedback and assistance on group performances. TW use this opportunity to ask students to relate their musical performance choices to the information they learned about their artist(s) and song.</p>				<p>O #2: SW make connections between their song and artist(s) and the musical choices they make for their performance.</p>
<p>Wrap – Up: Once students have had ample opportunity to rehearse their songs, the next step will be to perform for their classmates. Teacher will explain to students that they will need to introduce their songs before performing. Students will recap information about their artist(s), then perform, then explain how they made connections between their song and artist(s) and the musical choices they made for their performance.</p>				

Lesson 4 Follow-Up

The rehearsals will likely take a few days before the students are ready for a performance. Teachers can provide feedback and suggestions to students for their performances. Students may need help with the connections between their song and artist(s) and their musical performance choices. The teacher may provide examples to guide students in the right direction. For example, in *Vivir Mi Vida*, Marc Anthony and his band are very joyful in their performance. Why do you think that is? What words or lyrics do you hear in the song? He sings about laughing, dancing. These are joyful activities, and so his musical performance is also joyful.

The teacher should also be rotating between groups in order to ensure that all students are participating, and that everyone has an equal share in the performance, as well as the performance choices. Remember that some of the ELL students may still be in the silent period, so they should be performing on an instrument instead. Abril (2003) stated the importance of involving ELL students in meaningful musical activities in order to demonstrate the teacher's expectations for involvement and participation in class. If a teacher does not maintain high expectations for their ELL students, this "can lead to minimal effort and low achievement", and will ultimately provide ELLs with "fewer opportunities to learn" (Abril, p. 41).

4th Grade General Music Lesson Plan
 Creating Your Own Performance

Key: **SW** = Students will; **TW** = Teacher will; **SWBAT** = Students will be able to do; **HOTS** = Higher Order Thinking Skills

Grade Level: 4	Language Level: All levels are represented in this classroom	Student Backgrounds: Home language is Spanish, Puerto Rican descent
National Music Standards (PK-8 General Music):		
<p>MU:Cr2.1.4a Demonstrate selected and organized musical ideas for an improvisation, arrangement, or composition to express intent, and explain connection to purpose and context.</p> <p>MU:Cr3.2.4a Present the final version of personal created music to others, and explain connection to expressive intent.</p> <p>MU:Pr5.1.4a Apply teacher-provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback to evaluate accuracy and expressiveness of ensemble and personal performances.</p> <p>MU:Pr6.1.4a Perform music, alone or with others, with expression and technical accuracy, and appropriate interpretation.</p> <p>MU:Pr6.1.4b Demonstrate performance decorum and audience etiquette appropriate for the context, venue, and genre.</p> <p>MU:Re9.1.4a Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and explain appropriateness to the context.</p>		
Objectives:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SWBAT introduce the information they researched about their artist(s). 2. SWBAT perform their chosen songs with expression and appropriate interpretation. 3. SWBAT demonstrate performance decorum and audience etiquette appropriate for the context, venue, and genre. 		

<p>4. SWBAT evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and explain appropriateness to the context.</p>				
<p>Extra Resources/Supplementary Materials: Computer and projector, internet access, congas, guiro, keyboard, maracas, palitos, timbales, cowbells, any other available instruments. Evaluation form for students to use.</p>				
<p>HOTS: How do context and the manner in which musical work is presented influence audience response?</p>		<p>Cultural Connections: How can lesson be linked to examples from home language & culture? Students will be linking their home lives/cultures to both the culture of school music, as well as to the culture of their selected artist(s). Students will be able to share some of their home cultures with their classmates.</p>		
<p>Instructional Procedures (TW/SW): 1. TW discuss objectives for the performances. Students are expected to be polite audience members. SW evaluate their peers’ performances using the provided evaluation form. TW review the assessment form with students.</p>	<p>Modifying for Different Language Levels: Assessment form may be provided in both English and Spanish.</p>	<p>Use of L1 / Translanguaging(TL): Use L1/TL with partners as needed.</p>	<p>Use of Technology:</p>	<p>Assessment: (CO#s & LO#s)</p>

<p>2. First group will be selected to present. Performing SW introduce their song and artist(s). SW provide information they learned through research to their classmates. Audience may ask questions.</p>		<p>Spanish-speakers may present in Spanish, and have classmates translate to English.</p>	<p>Computer may be used if students wish to show a picture of their artist(s), or if they wish to show information about their artist(s).</p>	<p>O #1: SW present information about their artist(s) to their classmates.</p>
<p>3. Performing SW perform their song for their classmates. Audience SW display appropriate etiquette and fill out their evaluations as they watch the performance.</p>			<p>Students may use computer if it is necessary for their performance.</p>	<p>O #2: SW perform their chosen song with expression and appropriate interpretation.</p> <p>O #3: SW demonstrate performance decorum and audience etiquette appropriate for the context, venue, and genre.</p>

<p>4. Audience SW provide feedback to their performing peers. Audience may ask performers any questions they have about the performance. SW give their evaluation forms to teacher, teacher will give them to the groups once they have been looked over.</p>				<p>O #4: SW evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and explain appropriateness to the context.</p>
<p>5. Continue steps 2-4 until all groups have performed their songs.</p>				
<p>Wrap – Up: The teacher can congratulate students on their performances and their skills as audience members. Students did a great job making connections to their home music and sharing that information with their classmates.</p>				

Conclusion

For all of the lessons in this unit, is it important to have students listening, pointing, miming, moving, choosing, categorizing, and repeating. These strategies are important tools for Entering and/or Emerging level ELLs to use in order to assist their language acquisition. These strategies can also be used in a teacher's formal or informal assessment to ensure that the student is learning the material being taught.

Having the students bring in their home music, as well as having them learn about their selected artists, allows the students to “make connections with (their) knowledge, cultures, ethnicities and identities” (Abril, 2009, p. 84). González, Moll, and Amanti (2005) supported this idea and claimed that, “by drawing on household knowledge, student experience is legitimized as valid, and classroom practice can build on the familiar knowledge bases that students can manipulate to enhance learning” (p. 43). The authors also claimed that “the more that participants can engage and identify with the topic matter, the more interest and motivation they will have” (González et al., p. 9).

Abril (2009) declared that

a sociocultural approach to teaching music considers the selection and use of culturally diverse musics and the ways they can be contextualized in the curriculum, but goes further by creating inquiry-based spaces where learners are invited to discuss, question and interrogate the music experience from different social and cultural positions. (p. 78)

The presented curriculum aims to meet these standards by including music from Puerto Rican culture and artists, as well as music that the students preferred to listen to and enjoy. The curriculum also attempts to get students to think more critically about culture, more specifically

about music in culture, and the ways in which artists and performers connect their cultures to their musical choices. Abril (2009) stated that, “some contend that this approach to teaching provides students with a more realistic understanding of music and one more relevant to their lives” (p. 78).

Lastly, Miranda (2011) explained that “finding effective ways to facilitate communication and support the learning experiences of ELLs is often a trial-and-error process, as each child brings varied experience levels into the environment of the music room” (p. 17). Keeping this in mind, this curriculum may not work for every group of students that a music teacher may teach. It is important not to get discouraged, but to continue to find ways to involve all students in your class in meaningful and appropriate ways. Abril (2003) asserted that “the arts provide children with a greater understanding of themselves and the world in which they live”, and that “participation in a nurturing, stimulating, and challenging music program can make a difference in the lives of these children” (p. 39). In the final chapter, I will discuss the significance and limitations of this curriculum, as well as potential for further work.

Discussion

The purpose of this curriculum project is to provide elementary general music teachers with information, ideas, and tools to use when teaching English Language Learners (ELLs). The curriculum was designed with a specific New York State urban school district in mind, in which I am currently employed as an English as a New Language (ENL) teacher. In my particular school building, which serves grades K-8, 79% of all students are of Hispanic or Latino descent, 50% of all students are labeled as ELLs, and 88% of all students are economically disadvantaged (New York State Education Department, n.d.). Of those Hispanic or Latino students mentioned above, the students in this school are mostly from a Puerto Rican background, which is why I

chose to use Puerto Rican culture at the center of the culturally relevant curriculum. The completed curriculum addresses the need for more culturally relevant teaching in public schools, as well as the need for more well informed music teachers of ELLs.

Significance

This curriculum aims to bring culturally relevant pedagogy into the spotlight of education. It is my hope that this curriculum will help ELLs to have a more meaningful learning experience in the music classroom. As I have discussed earlier, the population of ELLs in the United States continues to grow at a rapid pace. Wright (2015) stated that “English Language Learners (ELLs) are the fastest growing demographic in U.S. schools, and most teachers and administrators around the country can expect to find ELLs in their classroom” (p. v). As this population of students continues to grow in the United States, so does the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy in public school classrooms. González, Moll, and Amanti (2005) stressed the importance of this pedagogy by stating that “the more that participants (students) can engage and identify with the topic matter, the more interest and motivation they will have” (p. 9).

According to the United States Census Bureau, nearly 3.5 million people (17.6% of the population) in New York State were Hispanic or Latino, including representation from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba (US Census Bureau, 2010). In New York State, music education in grades Pre-K through 8 is required for all public school students, so music teachers can expect to see an increase in the number of ELL students in their classroom. Abril (2003) stated that “unfortunately, most music teachers receive minimal training (if any) working with language-minority children. This lack of knowledge often leads to uncertainty and confusion. This in turn can lead to ineffective music pedagogy for these children” (p. 40). This curriculum is intended to help maximize a music teacher’s effectiveness when teaching ELLs of Puerto Rican culture.

Limitations

One limitation of this curriculum is that it is aimed specifically at ELL students of Puerto Rican descent. A music teacher for any other culture would need to develop his or her lessons in different ways in order to meet the specific needs of their students. While some of the other Latin or Spanish-speaking cultures share some similarities with Puerto Rican culture, there is still a need for the teacher to do independent research on the culture(s) of his or her students in order to best teach those students.

Another limitation is that this curriculum calls for many different resources that may not be available in all schools. If the classroom does not have a computer, the teacher will not be able to present the songs or videos to the students. If the classroom does not have multiple computers, the students may need to go somewhere else in the school in order to do the research portion of their lesson. Or, the school may not have any computers available for student use, so the research portion might not be a plausible option for the students. The lessons also call for many different instruments that may not be available for the students either. In this case, a teacher would need to provide other instruments, or the teacher might need to create instruments for the students using materials that they have in the class. Ultimately, if all of the listed resources are not available for the students, this curriculum may not be able to be implemented in that particular school.

A final limitation of this curriculum is that it was made with specific students in mind. ELLs are a diverse and multifaceted group of students, with various gifts, backgrounds, languages, educational needs, and goals. They also bring a variety of funds of knowledge with them to school, and it is the teacher's job to learn about the prior knowledge that a student has in order to build on that knowledge. Asking his or her students questions about their home lives or

what they like to do in their free time is a relatively easy way for a teacher to get to know his or her students. In this particular curriculum, the teacher is asking his or her students what type of music they prefer to listen to. In doing this, the teacher has opened the door for more meaningful music education by bringing the students' music into the curriculum.

Reflection

I believe that this curriculum helps to meet the needs of music teachers who have not had much or any training for teaching ELLs. I believe this curriculum also helps to meet the cultural needs of Puerto Rican ELLs and shows music teachers the methods with which to draw on their students' funds of knowledge. I took into account the information that I learned from current music teachers, as well as my own experiences as an undergraduate in a music education program. The research I discovered led me to find valuable information on music learning, language learning, and language learners, and I was able to combine much of that information in order to create this curriculum.

Conclusion

I believe that an elementary general music teacher would find great value in this curriculum. I would like to bring awareness to culturally relevant pedagogy, as well as using students' funds of knowledge in order to better teach them. It is my hope that even if a music teacher does not teach Puerto Rican students, he or she would still gain new knowledge about ELLs and ways to teach that are relevant and meaningful to all students. I hope that this curriculum has provided some insight into the world of ELLs, and that teachers of ELLs can use this curriculum as a model in order to become more empathetic towards the students who come from different countries or cultures.

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