

Music is part of our lives at all levels: personal, social, and national. We are constantly aware of it through television, radio, recordings, live concerts, and background music.

Music is central to many activities. It is often used to bring people together and to give expression to cultural identity, human yearnings, and personal aspirations.

*Music Education Syllabus, 1989*

### **Music is central to human experience, expression and engagement**

Music, with its unique form, elements and symbolism, and its diverse compositions, performances, meanings and responses, is central to human expression and engagement. Creating, performing and responding to music are processes in which people of all times, places and cultures participate. Music's place in the school curriculum recognises the importance of giving students opportunities to learn about, explore, experience, enjoy and understand music in relation to themselves, others and society. Music is a powerful medium for aesthetic enrichment and creative expression. Its potential for personal and social satisfaction is enhanced when learners are helped to develop their musical skills, knowledge and understandings.

### **Music and the National Curriculum**

Music education represents part of a balanced curriculum for all New Zealand school students. A music education gives learners opportunities to develop their aesthetic appreciation, their capacities for original and imaginative expression, and their abilities to use and interpret musical elements for a variety of purposes with a range of materials. Music education can help students become aware of the distinctive functions of music in society and to know about the artistic heritage of their own and other cultures.

At the heart of music education are the actions of personal and social participation in making and responding to music for a variety of purposes and occasions.

The aim of music education is to involve people in the active, creative processes of making and listening to music, in ways that promote individual aesthetic growth and fulfilment.

*Music Education Syllabus 1989*

### **Skills, Knowledge and Understandings**

A music education involves skills of:

- listening (hearing, recognising, comparing, analysing, evaluating);
- singing, playing, moving and directing (exploring, experimenting, improvising, rehearsing and practising);
- reading and recording (sight reading, recording compositions and using notation skills where appropriate).

Creating, re-creating, responding and understanding are fundamental processes in music. They require invention, representation, interpretation, performance and evaluation.

Creating music involves exploring and experimenting, arranging and composing, and using sound in conventional or creative ways. The use of musical elements may be chosen to reflect historical, cultural, social or personal aesthetic understandings as well as showing confidence in technical proficiency.

Re-creating includes music making of all kinds, including singing, moving or playing an instrument. Technical skills of interpreting and representing elements of pitch, rhythm, melody, timbre and dynamics are important means to expression and quality of performance.

Responding involves interpretation of both the meanings and elements of music from visual and aural information in movement, words and sounds. Forming critical judgements about the technical and expressive qualities of musical performances requires knowledge of how music works along with an ability to understand the nature of emotional reactions.

Understanding musical form or structure is fundamental to musical literacy. Understanding involves an appreciation of the relationships of elements within a particular performance as well as the relationships of musical performances in time, place and setting.

### Framework for National Monitoring assessment

National monitoring task frameworks are developed by the project's curriculum advisory panels. These frameworks have two key purposes. They provide a valuable guideline structure for the development and selection of tasks, and they bring into focus those important dimensions of the learning domain that are arguably the basis for valid analyses of students' skills, knowledge and understandings.

The frameworks are organising tools which interrelate content with strategies, skills and processes. They are intended to be flexible and broad enough to encourage and enable the development of tasks that lead to meaningful descriptions of what students know and can do. They also provide help to ensure a balanced representation of important learning outcomes.

The music framework has a central organising theme supported by three interrelated aspects.

The theme "making and understanding music" is consistent with New Zealand's official music curriculum and sets the broad context for tasks.

The content aspect highlights the three basic aspects of music: creating, re-creating and appreciating music.

The processes aspect lists the areas of skill, knowledge and understanding that students could be expected to demonstrate while engaged with content. The skills, knowledge and understandings are highly interrelated both within the processes aspect and across the total framework.

The motivation and involvement aspect of the framework directs attention to the importance of having information about students' musical interests, attitudes, confidence and involvement, both within and beyond the school setting. Educational research and practice confirm the impact of student motivation and attitudes on achievement and learning outcomes.

#### MUSIC FRAMEWORK ORGANISING THEME: MAKING AND UNDERSTANDING MUSIC

CONTENT	PROCESSES	demonstrated in appropriate cultural contexts		MOTIVATION & INVOLVEMENT	
create music re-create music appreciate music	SKILLS listening moving singing playing directing	KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING composing improvising reading recording	melody and pitch rhythm timbre harmony texture	style form dynamics mood and style repertoire	musical interest enjoyment acceptance of a wide range of music involvement and participation inspirations aspirations confidence & willingness to try new ideas

### National Monitoring music assessment tasks

The choice of music tasks for national monitoring is guided by a number of educational and practical considerations. Uppermost in any decisions relating to the choice or administration of a task is the central consideration of validity and the effect that a whole range of decisions can have on this prime attribute. Tasks are chosen because they provide a good representation of important dimensions of a music education, but also because they meet a number of requirements to do with their administration and presentation. These requirements are discussed in Appendix 1 (p52).

Twenty-five music tasks were administered, using three different approaches. Seven were administered in one-to-one interview settings, where students used materials and visual information. Six tasks were presented in team situations involving small groups of students working together. Twelve tasks were attempted in a stations arrangement, where students worked independently on a series of paper-and-pencil tasks, each of which involved listening to recorded music.

Fifteen of the twenty-five tasks were the same or substantially the same for both year 4 and 8, whereas ten tasks were unique to either year 4 or year 8.

### Link tasks

Sixteen tasks are released in this report. The remaining nine tasks will be used again in the second cycle of assessments, in the year 2000. These link tasks will provide a basis for comparison of performance over time. Although first cycle results for link tasks are given in this report, more detailed descriptions are not given to help avoid biasing the results in 2000.

### National Monitoring music survey

In addition to the assessment tasks, one third of the total sample of students completed an interview questionnaire which investigated their interests, attitudes and involvement in musical activity.

### Marking methods

The individual and team responses produced by the students were assessed using specially designed marking procedures. Responses requiring high levels of professional judgement were marked by experienced teachers, who worked in pairs when marking team tasks. Tasks that required marker judgement and were common to year 4 and year 8 were intermingled during marking sessions, with the goal of ensuring that the same scoring standards and procedures were used for both. The criteria used in the marking had been developed in advance by Project staff, but were sometimes modified as a result of issues raised during the marking.

When the marking for each task commenced, all markers gathered to be introduced to the task and the marking criteria. They then collectively marked two or three performances, discussing discrepancies between the marks awarded. In this way, the meaning of the criteria and the standards to be applied were determined collectively by the 20 markers and the project staff member leading the session. Once good consistency had been achieved, the markers marked performances individually or in pairs, periodically being brought back together to collectively mark a few performances and discuss any discrepancies which were apparent. This process provided both assurance and reassurance that adequately consistent marking was being achieved.

### Task by task reporting

National monitoring assessment is reported task by task so that results can be understood in relation to what the students were asked to do.