

July 5, 2019

(Re)Conceptualizing the Curriculum

Discuss Book Review Choices. . .

Guided Tour of Curriculum Conceptualizations

Curriculum Studies Reader reading:

William Pinar, "The Reconceptualization of Curriculum Studies"

Articles:

Hanley & Montgomery, "Challenges to Music Education:
Curriculum Reconceptualized"

Barrett, "Planning for Understanding: A Reconceptualized View
of the Music Curriculum"

Questions...

1. Which two characteristics distinguish reconceptualists from other curriculum theorists?
 - a. emphasis on research
 - b. value-laden perspective
 - c. allegiance to behaviorism
 - d. focus on the needs of school personnel
 - e. politically emancipatory intent

2. Accepting the accepting the curriculum structure as it is and working to improve it would be an example of what type of approach?
 - a. Conceptual - Empiricist
 - b. Traditionalist
 - c. Reconceptualist

3. Which of the following best reflects Barrett's suggestions for rethinking the music curriculum?
 - a. incorporating an aesthetic philosophy of music into the curriculum
 - b. closely aligning the curriculum with the national standards
 - c. considering the students' musical experiences as the focus of the curriculum
 - d. adopting a more scientific approach to curriculum development

Book Reviews

Choices due...

Pinar



Identified 3 types of “curricularists” . . .

Traditionalists: focus on education as a field; service to teachers; came from schools; concerned with “improving” curricula; ASCD

Conceptual-Empiricists: focus on cognate/subject area; employment of social science research techniques; use of specific (Gary’s schools) to illustrate a general issue (stability & change); AERA

Reconceptualists: focus on political implications or emancipation; acknowledgment of “value-laden” perspective; **critical** in its approach and goals; no organizational affiliations

If I had to hazard a guess, I'd predict that we are in or nearing a "post professional association" era; a time in which music teachers and music teacher educators find membership in a particular association of limited value in meeting their needs, or interests. Many teachers are so stressed, or demoralized, or overworked that "professional development" opportunities are simply beyond their capacity to even consider, much less engage.

For some time, these associations have been failing to meet the actual needs of teachers, and offering little in return for ever increasing membership dues and conference attendance fees. Further, the gap between "theory" and "practice" seems to be widening, and the relevance of much of the professional and research literature to teachers' practice lessening.

Hanley & Montgomery



The authors distinguish between traditional (positivist) and postmodern (post-positivist) curriculum approaches, and ask the following questions. . .

- Should music education be teacher-centered, subject-centered or learner-centered?
- Should we:
 - focus on skill development or developing musical understanding?
 - emphasize musical learning or cross-curriculum connections?
 - improve student tastes or welcome the diverse kinds of music relevant to their lives?
- Whose interests should guide curricular decision making?
- What is really going on in schools?

Hanley & Montgomery

Traditional (Positivist) Curriculum

Improvement

Hierarchy

Action and results

Focus on how

Right and wrong answers

Prediction and control

Practice and theory isolated

Teacher as implementer of
someone else's ideas

Subject-centered

Test-driven

Reconceptualized (Postmodern) Curriculum

Quest for understanding

Collaboration

Inquiry

Focus on why

Multiple answers

Meaning

Practice and theory integrated

Teacher as decision maker
and researcher

Learner-centered

Performance-driven

Barrett

The author contrasts traditional and reconceptualized curriculum; for example:



Traditional	Reconceptualized
curriculum planning is: closed and predictive	open-ended and responsive
predetermined activities, sequenced prior to instruction	general frameworks that evolve during student learning

Figure 1. A Positivist Approach to Curriculum Planning

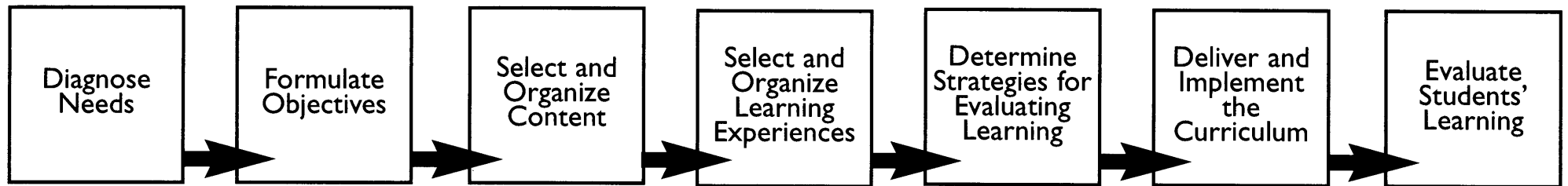
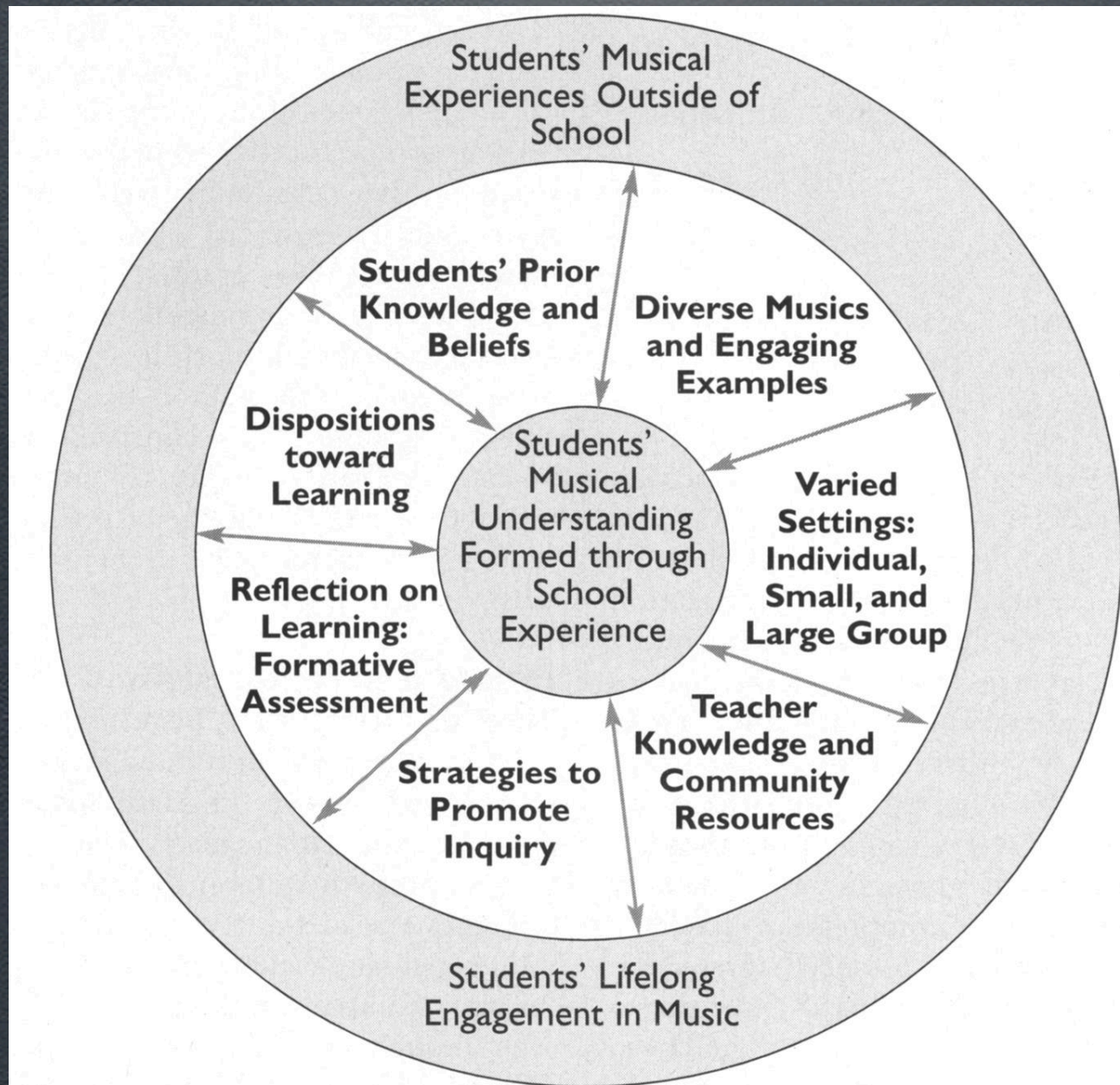


Figure 2. A Reconceptualized View of Curriculum



Essential Questions

From Barrett...

How can classroom experiences directly engage students' musical thinking?

How can the curriculum foster students' abilities and desires to relate to music as a lasting presence in their lives?

What is the essence of a musical experience with this sort of power?

From me...

How different would your program look if you followed these guidelines?

What would you do differently than you currently do, or not do?

From **where** would you expect "pushback" to come? Students? Parents? Administrators? Elsewhere?

The process of lesson planning is like playing tennis against a wall. You hit the ball against the wall, and can accurately predict the return path of the ball. You can practice your forehand, then your backhand, secure in the knowledge that the ball will come off the wall predictably and consistently, stroke after stroke.

Teaching, on the other hand, is like playing tennis against a wily opponent. You hit the ball across the net, expecting a nice, easy return that you can volley back to your opponent--but your opponent has other ideas, and slices the ball down the line, whistling past your outstretched racket for a winner. There's nothing predictable or consistent about playing tennis this way--and there's no do-overs, or practice volleys, either. (Teaching middle school, by the way, is even more challenging--it's like playing tennis against 30 opponents--each armed with a different piece of sporting equipment, and playing by different rules. You hit the ball across the net, one of your opponents grabs the ball out of the air, throws it to another opponent, and then both of them jump over the net to your side, steal the rest of the tennis balls, and throw bowling balls and hockey pucks at you until you surrender.)

From: *Reflection over prediction...*

Read for July 8

Read: from Aims,
Ch. 5

From Reader,
James Popham “Objectives”, Ch. 10

Elliott Eisner, “Educational Objectives—Help or Hindrance?”, Ch.
11

Articles,
Conway, “Curriculum Writing in Music”
Wells, “Designing Curricula Based on the Standards”

Online,
Reflection over prediction, or why we should write our lesson
plans after the lesson