**Inquiry in Music Education: Concepts and Methods for the Beginning Researcher (2nd ed.)**

**IME Worksheet 3.3 Purposes and Rationales**

Relates to **Constructing a Rationale for your Research Purpose**, p. 61

**Objectives**

1. Use published examples of research rationales developed by graduate students in music education to
   1. trace lines of reasoning in research rationales, and
   2. examine and compare different approaches to writing rationales;
2. Practice writing a rationale for a research study.

**Background**

In worksheet 3.2 you began to craft the purpose statement for your research. In this chapter you will begin a similar process as you craft the rationale for your research.

In Chapter 3 we suggest examining published research rationales to discern two things: the logical structure that is typical of rationales for different types of research and the ways writers use their own voices within that structure to argue for the importance of their study. It can also be informative to note the differences in rationales written for graduate projects (theses and dissertations) and those used in scholarly publications.

Below is a selection of published rationales for your convenience. Alternatively, you may wish to use rationales from sources that address topics close to your own, such as those used in your literature review.

**Instructions:** Choose two of the rationales below for comparison.

Jared R. Rawlings. (2016). Middle School Students’ Perceptions of Bullying. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, *209*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.5406/bulcouresmusedu.209.0007>

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore middle school band students’ perceptions of bullying behaviors inside and outside of the band classroom. Research questions included the following:

1. What is the frequency of bullying behaviors and peer victimization (physi- cal, verbal, and social aggression) as self-reported by middle school students enrolled in the band class while in the band classroom, during band-related activities, as well as within the school setting?
2. How do males and females differ in overall terms of reported perpetrating bullying behavior and victimization inside or outside the band classroom, during band class, or in band-related activities?
3. How do band students from different racial/ethnic groups differ in terms of reported bullying (victimization and aggression) behavior inside and outside of the band classroom?
4. How do band students who play musical instruments stereotypically associated with their gender differ from those who play musical instruments atypically associated with their gender in overall terms of perpetrating bullying behavior and experiencing victimization inside and outside of the band class- room? (p. 10)

Rationale

Students who are different from the established school ensemble culture, but who still volunteer to join the musical group, may be targets for antisocial-aggressive behaviors from their peers. This type of behavior has been documented in only a few studies involving school ensembles; however, additional evidence of hazing and harassment behaviors in collegiate music ensembles exists with late adolescent populations (Alvarez & Brown, 2011; Brinkley, 2014; Carter, 2013; Silveira & Hudson, 2015). With the prevalence of bullying in schools as publicized in modern mainstream media and research studies in music education as well as a growing wealth of empirical research in general education about aggression and bullying (Espelage, Green, & Polanin, 2012; Espelage & Swearer, 2004, 2010; Mishna, 2012), further studies are needed to understand bullying from inside the music classroom (Allsup & Shieh, 2012; Hubbs, 2010). (p. 10)

Baughman, M. (2017). An Examination of Methods Used to Teach Practice Strategies in the College Voice Studio. *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, *35*(2), 15–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123315593325>

The purpose of this study was to inform teachers and researchers about the methods used by voice instructors to address practice strategies in college-level studio instruction. Descriptive statistics were gathered about current voice teaching methods with the goal of understanding the practice strategies used and valued, the methods used to assess students’ musical achievement, and the role of the teacher in influencing student practice. (p. 16)

Rationale

Knowledge about the practice habits of vocalists may help voice teachers choose strategies more efficiently and effectively. Voice practice may differ from instrumental practice in terms of structure, time spent, or strategies used. It seems that an inves- tigation of the current teaching practices of college voice instructors would help fill this research gap. More specifically, understanding the practice strategies taught, the methods of assessment used, and the value placed on practice strategies may help inform researchers and teachers about vocal practice instruction. These findings have the potential to provide voice instructors with ideas for implementation in their studios and with information for determining how their own instruction of practice strategies compares with those of their peers. (p. 16)

Cronenberg, S. (2017). Making and Receiving: Possibilities for Middle School General Music. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, *210–211*, 81–99. <https://doi.org/10.5406/bulcouresmusedu.210-211.0081>

Purpose

In this study, I present the lived and told stories of two middle school music teachers and in sharing these narratives, highlight the influence of their lived experiences and philosophical principles on their daily implementation of middle school general music.

Rationale

I use Jorgensen’s dialectic of making and receiving as a framework to address a question Jorgensen (2003) herself asks: “What are the principles by which teachers and their students adjudicate the dialectics they face?” (p. 18). Both Rachel and Beth make choices for their music classrooms guided by specific principles developed throughout their lifetime of musical experiences and by their preparation for and work as music educators. In sharing their practices and experiences, I present two teachers who adjudicate the making and receiving dialectic in ways relatable to many music educators. I place them together in this study not to present two ends of a dichotomy, but rather to place their perspectives in dialogue with each other as well as with the perspectives of those reading. The intention of Jorgensen’s dialectic is to raise issues and generate dialogue, as is my purpose here. (p. 85)

Cayari, C. (2018). Connecting music education and virtual performance practices from YouTube. *Music Education Research*, *20*(3), 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2017.1383374>

The ubiquity of mediated and recorded music practices beckons educators to ask: How can synchronic performance ensemble participants expand their approaches beyond physical rehearsal rooms to mediated spaces? In what ways can the traditions of performance-based ensembles be connected to the practices of recording and digital artists? How might the practices that are part of synchronic ensembles offer support to mediated creation? This study explores the virtual ensemble, an emergent mediated performance practice that has become popular among classical and popular musicians by enmeshing modern technologies with aspects of synchronic, space-specific performance that exists at one point in time, and how the practice might answer these questions. (p. 361)

Calls this “purpose and issues” (I call it “rationale”):

By blending participatory media and social media musicianship with traditional music education values, ‘teachers are looking to make in-school musical experiences more like their students’ musical experiences outside school by drawing on the music technologies that are an integral part of youth culture’ (Ruthmann and Hebert 2012, 577). While the students in my classroom from the aforementioned study (Cayari 2015) had largely positive experiences with making music videos on their own, evidence of successful participatory culture practices and examples of effective projects remain mostly localised in a handful of classrooms led by educators who are willing to take the risk to try something that may seem novel in music education. A major issue is that music educators do not know how to translate relevant and successful participatory culture practices to for- mal instruction. Research may be able to aid in this translation and help music educators develop curricula that incorporate virtual music making practices. By exploring the way virtual music makers create and produce their art, this study asks: What skills acquired in music education translate to the creation of virtual ensembles? and how might musicians expand their formal education to become successful music creators and producers on social media websites? By understanding these questions, I hope to provide educators with a study that can aid in the development of instructional methods designed to foster the skills their students need to create virtual performances. (p. 362)

Meissner, H., & Timmers, R. (2019). Teaching young musicians expressive performance: An experimental study. *Music Education Research*, *21*(1), 20–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2018.1465031>

Purpose

This study is the first in a larger project that aims to develop and test instructional strategies for facilitating pupils' learning of expressive performance of Western classical music.

Rationale

Although several studies have investigated strategies for teaching tertiary students and adults performance expression (e.g. Lisboa et al. 2005; Persson 1994, 1996; Woody 2000, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2006a, 2006b), little is known about effective strategies for teaching primary and secondary school pupils expressive performance. It is important to develop a systematic pedagogy for facilitating pupils' learning of expressiveness (see Laukka 2004; Williamon 2014; Woody 2000) and the reported study has been designed to contribute towards this goal. (Para 1)

Meissner, H., Timmers, R., & Pitts, S. E. (2020). ‘Just notes’: Young musicians’ perspectives on learning expressive performance. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 1321103X19899171. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103X19899171>

Combined purpose and rationale

Although playing expressively is generally seen as an important aspect of instrumental performance, little is known about effective approaches for facilitating young musicians’ expressivity within one-to-one or small group instrumental lessons.

The aim of this study was to understand more about young musicians’ learning of expressive performance by exploring their perspectives on the instructional strategies that had been used for teaching and facilitating expressiveness in an earlier experimental study (see [Meissner & Timmers, 2019](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/1321103X19899171)). Investigating learners’ perspectives on instructional strategies helps to gain an understanding of the relative effectiveness of these methods. (Para 2-3)

Hash, P. M. (2021). Remote Learning in School Bands During the COVID-19 Shutdown. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, *68*(4), 381–397. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429420967008>

Combination of Rationale & Purpose

[Remote learning] provided during the COVID-19 shutdown was essentially emergency teaching rather than the implementation of curricula planned, organized, and designed for distanced environments. Knowing how teachers approached and experienced these unprecedented circumstances will help identify best practices, suggest avenues for future research, and inform professional development around RL. This line of research will help music educators prepare for future emergency school closures and perhaps foster ways of incorporating RL into the regular curriculum. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the practices, experiences, and perspectives of elementary and secondary school band directors in relation to RL during the COVID-19 shutdown of spring 2020. The following questions guided this research: (1) What technologies and materials did school band directors utilize in RL? (2) What learning activities and assessments did school band directors implement through RL? (3) What factors affected band students’ participation in RL? (4) What support and challenges did school band directors experience in relation to RL? (5) How did RL experiences vary among teachers in low-poverty versus high-poverty schools and at the elementary/middle school level versus high school level? and (6) What were the conditions and instructional practices of school band programs that experienced relatively high and consistent levels of student participation in RL? (p. 384)

White-Hope, S. R. (2016). *Up you mighty people, you can what you will! Elma Lewis And Her School of Fine Arts* [DMA, Boston University]. <https://open.bu.edu/handle/2144/19583>

Who was this woman who could see that American public school education needed supplementing if Africa-descended children were to see themselves as complete, contributing members to our society with a valiant past and an optimistic future? Who was this woman who, like Zoltan Kodály, insisted on only the best for children? Who was this woman who could rally elected officials and community members alike to transform a rat-infested dumping zone into the *Playhouse in the Park*? How was it that her festival, in the heart of Boston’s African American community, hosted internationally acclaimed and local performers night after night, year after year? How did one woman achieve these feats through her own grit? How did she combine support from the model arts institutions she created and her community? I felt I owed it to Boston’s African American children and their teachers – past and present – to document and describe her vision. In this context, it is intended that an in-depth study of Elma Lewis and her School of Fine Arts will introduce Miss Lewis’ philosophy to readers and highlight the role her School of Fine Arts played in Boston’s African American community. (pp. 4-5)

Palkki, J. (2020). “My voice speaks for itself”: The experiences of three transgender students in American secondary school choral programs. *International Journal of Music Education*, *38*(1), 126–146. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0255761419890946>

Purpose and rationale combined

In recent years, there has been rapid progress toward equal rights for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and allies/agender/asexual (LGBTQA)[1](javascript:popRef('fn1-0255761419890946')) community, most notably in North America and Europe.[2](javascript:popRef('fn2-0255761419890946')) Yet, even as laws and policies on marriage equality and anti-discrimination become more prevalent for gays and lesbians, people who identify as transgender (trans)[3](javascript:popRef('fn3-0255761419890946')) face discrimination ([Grant et al., 2010](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0255761419890946); [Harrison et al., 2012](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0255761419890946)), violence ([Stotzer, 2009](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0255761419890946)), and policing of their bathroom use ([Schilt & Westbrook, 2015](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0255761419890946)). In addition, trans youth are coming out at younger and younger ages ([Beemyn & Rankin, 2011](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0255761419890946); [Grossman & D’Augelli, 2006](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0255761419890946); [Grossman et al., 2006](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0255761419890946)). Therefore, more and more public school choral teachers will work with trans youth—and soon. Many trans students face bullying and harassment in school ([Greytak et al., 2009](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0255761419890946)). The burgeoning LGBTQA literature in music education has focused almost exclusively on lesbians and gays, with little or no mention of transgender viewpoints. In this study, I explore the musical lives and experiences of three trans students in high school choral programs.

Akutsu, T. (2020). Changes after Suzuki: A retrospective analysis and review of contemporary issues regarding the Suzuki Method in Japan. *International Journal of Music Education*, *38*(1), 18–35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0255761419859628>

Suzuki did not like the term “method” as he believed that teachers and children are unique individuals and Suzuki “didn’t always teach alike” (Preface). After Suzuki’s death in 1998, his pupils and the younger generation of Suzuki teachers faced the issues of continuing, renewing, and developing the method based on his philosophy ([Akutsu, 2016](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0255761419859628); [Kojima, 2016](https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.wpunj.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0255761419859628)). This study investigates the contemporary issues apparent in the textbooks and recordings of the Suzuki Method in Japan and examines the overall atmosphere of the lessons and Suzuki methodology past and present.