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ABSTRACT

An action research project was developed and implemented using student self monitoring of higher order thinking skills and task management to improve the music skills of a fifth grade beginning band (n=30) from a small middle school located in a rural midwest village. Evidence of the problem was documented with a performance test, a written test, anecdotal records, and teacher journal entries. Analysis of the probable cause data revealed that the students lacked higher order thinking skills, organizational skills, problem solving skills, and task management skills. Review of the curriculum contest and instructional strategies revealed an emphasis on information giving, a lack of planning for skill development and little emphasis placed on higher order thinking skills. A review of the suggested solution strategies, by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the selection of using student self monitoring of higher order thinking skills and task management skills to improve fifth grade beginning band students' music skills. Based on analysis of the data, the use of student self monitoring had little impact on improving the music skills of the fifth grade beginning band students. Few differences in the test scores, quizzes, and homework were noted between the treatment group and the non-treatment group. Appendixes include: scale exercise; pretest; categories for treatment or control groups; self-monitoring checklist for treatment group; alternate checklist for control group; and posttest. (Contains 10 figures, 6 tables, and 27 references.) (Author/BT)

IMPROVING STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN FIFTH GRADE BAND THROUGH THE USE OF STUDENT SELF-MONITORING

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for of using student self-monitoring of higher order thinking skills and task management to improve the music skills of fifth grade beginning band students. The targeted population consisted of 40 enrolled in 5th grade beginning band from a small middle school located in a small rural village in the Midwest. Evidence of the problem was documented with performance test, written test, anecdotal records, and teacher journal entries.

Analysis of the probable cause data revealed that the students lacked higher order thinking skills, organizational skills, problem solving skills, and task-management skills. Review of the curricula contest and instructional strategies revealed an emphasis on information giving, a lack of planning for skill development and little emphasis placed on higher order thinking skills.

A review of the solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the selection of using student self-monitoring of higher order thinking skills and task management skills to improve fifth grade beginning band students music skills.

Based on the analysis of the data, the use of student self-monitoring had little impact on improving the music skills of the fifth grade beginning band students. Few differences in the test scores, quizzes, and homework were noted between the treatment group and the non-treatment group.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

During the past two years, basic music skills of fifth grade band students have diminished. Evidence of the existence of the problem included performance tests, written tests, and anecdotal records that documented below average performance and student performance. Students with low levels of achievement have also demonstrated low levels of motivation as documented by records of student behavior.

Immediate Problem Context

Building Description

The targeted junior high school is located in a small community (Community A) in the Midwest. The school had an enrollment of 183 students in grades five through eight. The school enrollment by grade level was 33 students in fifth grade, 54 students in sixth grade, 42 students in seventh grade, and 54 students in eighth grade (School Report Card 2000).

Student Demographics

The racial make-up of the school was 99.95% White and 0.05% Hispanic. Sixteen percent of the students were from low-income homes. The attendance rate was 97.10%. The student mobility rate was 4.2% (School Report Card, 2000).

Staff Demographics

The targeted junior high school had 1 principal, 16 teachers, 1 librarian, 1 secretary, 1 aide, 2 custodians, and 2 cooks. One hundred percent of the school employees were White.

Forty-three percent of the school employees were male, and 57% were female. The school's teachers had an average of 16.62 years of teaching experience. Forty six percent of the teachers had master's degrees (School Report Card, 2000).

Target School

Construction began in 1942 and was finished in 1944 on the brick school building. The building, originally intended to be a high school, was converted to a junior high school in 1957. Four additions had been made to the building. The original portion of the building had six classrooms. The first addition, built in 1960, contained the front lobby and two rest rooms. The second addition, built in 1966, contained two classrooms and two locker rooms. The third addition, built in 1972, contained two classrooms and a music room. The forth addition, built in 1974, contained two classrooms, one cafeteria, and one gymnasium. The school had a library and computer lab.

Target Classroom

The classroom for the targeted fifth grade band students was a 228 square meter room. The flooring was brown carpet; the walls were cement blocks painted beige. The room had neither windows nor air-conditioning. The room had one bulletin board and one white marker board. The classroom furniture consisted of 1 teacher desk, 6 filing cabinets, and 75 gray folding chairs. The classroom equipment consisted of 1 bass drum, 43 black music stands, 1 computer, 1 director's podium, 1 set of orchestra bells, 1 strobe tuner, 1 - 26" tympani, and 1 - 29" tympani. The room was used for general music classes in the morning and band rehearsal and lessons in the afternoon.

Programs Offered

The school offers art, band, and chorus. The school extra-curricular activities were baseball, basketball, cheerleading, pom-poms, Scholastic Bowl, speech, student council, track, and volleyball.

Fifth grade students were taught reading, math, social studies, language arts, science, art, general music, and physical education. A county deputy taught D.A.R.E. classes to the fifth grade students during the first nine weeks of each school year.

Targeted Area of Research

One hundred twenty-eight students participated in the school band program. The percentage of students in the band was 69.95%. Thirty of 33 fifth grade students participated in band. The percentage of fifth grade students in band was 90.90%. In addition to the target group of 30 fifth grade band students, 40 students were in sixth grade band, 28 students were in seventh grade band, and 30 students were in eighth grade band (Table1).

Table 1

Student Participation in Band

Grade	Students per Grade Level	Band Students	% of Students in Band
5	33	30	90.91%
6	54	40	74.07%
7	42	28	66.67%
8	54	30	55.56%
Total	183	128	69.95%

The Surrounding Community

School District

The school district is a consolidated unit school district. The district consists of two small rural communities (Community A and Community B). Although the two school districts were consolidated in 1953, both communities kept their individual schools until the fall of 1957. Since the fall of 1957, the consolidated junior high school for Communities A and B has been located in Community A, and the consolidated elementary school and high school for Communities A and B have been located in Community B.

The district's teachers had an average of 15.9 years of teaching experience. Thirty-four percent of the teachers had a master's degree. The average teacher's salary was $37,700. The average administrator salary was $69,246. The instructional expenditure per pupil was $3,630. (School Report Card, 2000).

Elementary School Building Description

The brick elementary school, located within the larger of the two communities, was built in 1963. One addition had been made to the elementary school. The original portion of the elementary school had 10 classrooms, 1 office, and 1 cafeteria. The addition, built in 1974, had eight classrooms and one library.

Elementary School Student Demographics

The elementary school housed 212 students in kindergarten through fourth grade. The racial breakdown was 98.10% White, 0.90% Africa American, and 0.90% Hispanic. The percentage of students coming from low-income families was 18.30% (School Report Card, 2000).

Elementary School Staff Demographics

The elementary school had 1 principal, 18 teachers, 1 librarian, 1 secretary, 2 aides, 2 custodians, and 4 cooks. One hundred percent of the staff was White. Fourteen percent of the staff was male; 86% of the staff was female.

High School Building Description

The brick high school was built in 1919. The high school is adjacent to the elementary school. Two additions had been made to the building. The original portion of the building had six classrooms, one library, one study hall, and three administrative offices. The first addition, built in 1957, had six classrooms, two locker rooms, and one gymnasium. The second addition, built in 1964, had two classrooms, one band room, one chorus room, and one garage. The high school students used the elementary school cafeteria for lunch. Offices for the district superintendent were located in the high school.

High School Student Demographics

The high school housed 178 students in grades 9 through 12. The racial breakdown was 99.00% White and 1.00% Hispanic. The percentage of students coming from low-income families was 4.90%. The attendance rate was 96.70%. The student mobility rate was 1.00% (School Report Card, 2000).

High School Staff Demographics

The high school had 1superintendent, 1 principal, 19 teachers, 1 librarian, 1 secretary, and 2 custodians. One hundred percent of the high school staff was White. Seventy-one percent of the staff was male; 29% of the staff was female.

Community A

Community A, which contains the junior high school, is located 35 miles from a major metropolitan area. The landmass for Community A was 0.44 square kilometers ("Key to the

City," 2001). A total of 179 housing units were in the community. The median value of a home was $47,800.00. The community had twenty rental units. The median rent was $200.00 ("1990 Census of Population and Housing," 2001). It was officially classified as a village ("1990 Census of Population and Housing," 2001). It was home to five churches. The business district was two blocks in length and was located on one street. Five businesses, one United States Post Office, and an American Legion Post were located in the business district. Community A had a volunteer fire department, but had neither a local police department, nor a medical doctor. Each summer, the community hosted a town festival.

Community A Demographics

The population of Community A was 410. Of the 410 community members, 200 were males and 210 were females. The ethnical – racial makeup was 99.5% White and 0.5% Asian or Pacific Islander. The median age was 41.4. The percentage community members under the age of 18 were 22.4. The percentage of community members over the age of 65 (Table 2) was 22.7% ("1990 Census of Population and Housing," 2001).

Community B

Community B, which contains the elementary school and the high school, is located 9 miles from Community A and 24 miles from a major metropolitan area. The landmass for Community B was 2.30 square kilometers ("Key to the City," 2001).

A total of 718 housing units were in the community. The median value of a home was $50,900.00. These were 155 rental units with a median rent of $248.00 ("1990 Census of Population and Housing," 2001). Five churches, 2 banks, approximately 38 businesses, an American Legion Post, a local chapter of Rotary International, a volunteer fire department and a volunteer ambulance squad were in the community. There was a medical doctor, but not a local police department. Each spring, the community hosted a town festival.

Community B Demographics

The population of was 1,910. Of the 1,910 community members, 916 were males and 994 were females. The ethnical – racial makeup was 99.3%White, 0.4% Hispanic, 0.2% African American, 0.1% Native American. The median age was 36.2. The percentage of community members under the age of 18 was 26.5. The percentage over the age of 65 (Table 2) was 19.2 ("1990 Census of Population and Housing," 2001).

Table 2

The Makeup of Population for Communities A and B that fed the beginning band

	Community A	Community B
Population	410	1,910
% Female	59%	52%
% Male	51%	48%
Median Age	41.4	36.2
% Under 18	22.40%	26.50%
% 65 and older	22.70%	19.20%

National Context of the Problem

Great efforts have been made to improve the nation's public school systems. Politicians and scholars have expressed concerns about the academic performance of students in the United States as compared to students in other countries (Romberg, 1997; McQuilian, 2000). As a result, student achievement in education has become a hotly debated issue in today's society.

In 1994, the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) developed the "National Standards for Music Education." The membership MENC is comprised of elementary, secondary and college music teachers that teach all disciplines within music education in many different socioeconomic settings. The MENC standards represent many different philosophies of music

education. Many music educators believe that the performance-driven curriculum of most schools and the MENC standards are, at times, completely contradictory with each other (Matthews, 2000).

The difference in musical achievement between students who started band in fifth grade and students who started in sixth grade has been researched. Hartley (1987) compared the musical achievement levels of eighth grade band students. The results of this research showed no significant difference in the musical skills of students who started band in fifth grade as compared to those who started band in sixth grade. This research leads many music educators to question what the ideal grade level should be of students starting beginning band.

Student achievements of fifth grade band students have not been addressed at a national level. Concern are often heard when budget cuts place music programs in jeopardy of being eliminated, but quality student achievement of fifth grade band students has not been nationally addressed.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

Poor musical performance of students in the targeted school's fifth grade band was evident over a two-year period. In order to document the extent of this problem, anecdotal records consisting of past fifth grade band achievements were collected. When compared to previous years, this evidence demonstrated that the fifth grade band obtained lower levels of student achievement over a two-year period as observed by their teacher. The teacher also reported a higher level of irresponsibility as evident of an increased number of students who reported to lessons or rehearsal without their instrument.

Because the level of performance in the sixth grade band is directly connected to the level of achievement in fifth grade band, anecdotal records were also collected on the sixth grade band. These records indicated a diminished level of proficiency in performance of major scale exercises (see Appendix A) during the same two-year period (see Table 3). Since this was a locally developed test, a standard level of proficiency for this test did not exist. Teacher anecdotal records indicate that it is reasonable to expect 50% of the students to pass the 30-second proficiency test in at least three different major keys, and 30% of the students to pass the 20-second proficiency test in at least three different major keys.

Table 3

Percentage of Sixth Grade Band Students that Successfully Passed Major Scale Proficiency Tests

School Year	Major Key	30 Second Proficiency	20 Second Proficiency
1998 – 1999	B Flat	84%	57%
	E Flat	73%	46%
	F	75%	44%
	A Flat	78%	63%
1999 – 2000	B Flat	71%	38%
	E Flat	46%	29%
	F	19%	12%
	A Flat	14%	7%
2000 – 2001	B Flat	44%	22%
	E Flat	32%	17%
	F	6%	4%
	A Flat	11%	3%

Forty students were in the fifth grade band. A pretest (see Appendix B) was administered to the fifth grade band students. The pretest consisted of two sections: personal information and music knowledge. The music knowledge section consisted of three parts: music symbols, music terms, and music counting.

The personal information section of the pretest indicated that 55% of students were males and 45% were females. Of the 40 students, 37.5% were either currently taking piano lessons or

had taken piano lessons, and 27.5% of the students had a piano in their home (see Table 4). Students, who had received private piano lessons, entered the beginning band program with previously acquired skills and knowledge that other students did not have.

Table 4

Personal Information Results from the Pretest of Fifth Grade Band Students

Male	55.0%
Female	45.0%
Exposure to Piano Lessons	37.5%
Homes with Pianos	27.5%

The second section of the pretest was on music knowledge. On the music symbol recognition test, 55% of the students scored 75% or higher (see Figure 1). The average score on the music symbol recognition section of the pretest was 67.5% (see Figure 4).

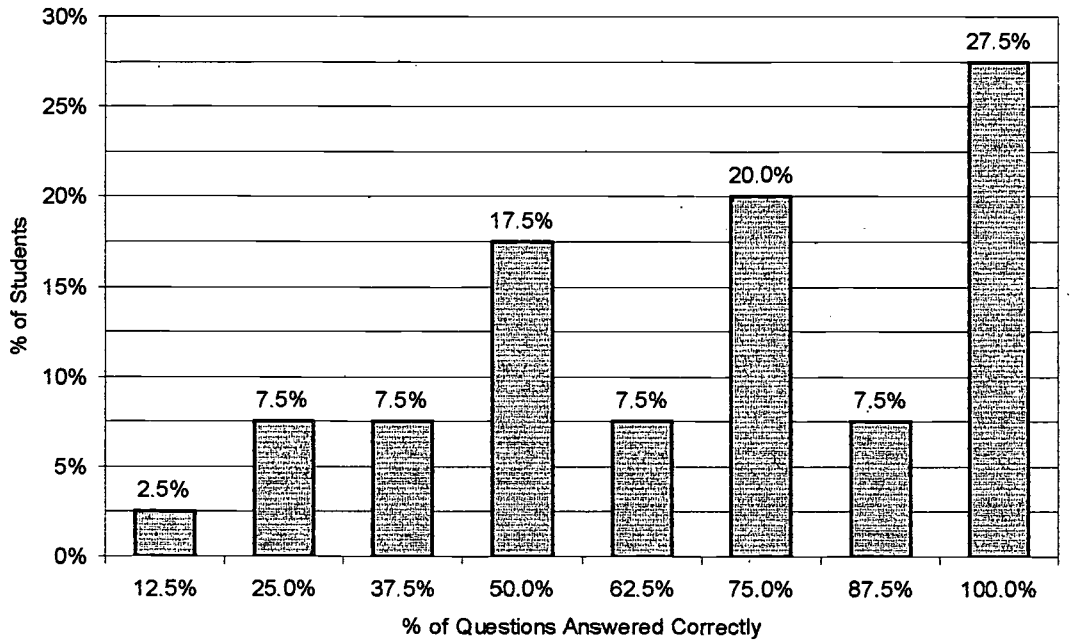

Figure 1. Distribution of scores from the music symbol section of the pretest of 5th Grade band students.

On the music term recognition test, 57% of the students scored 80% or higher (see Figure 2). The average score on the music term section of the pretest was 67.5% (see Figure 4).

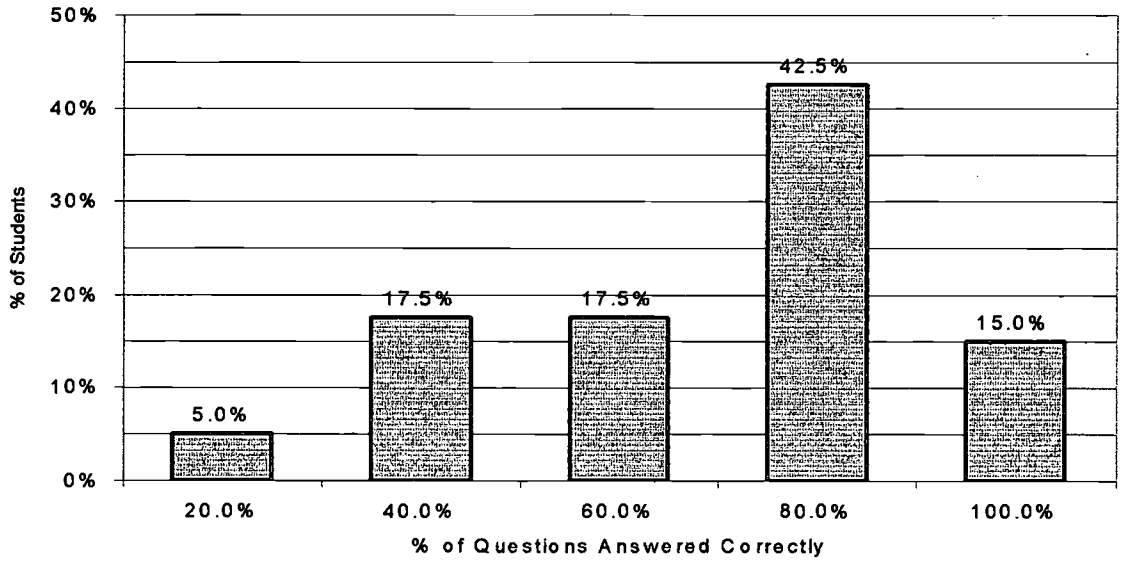

Figure 2. Distribution of scores from the music term section of the pretest of 5th Grade band students.

On the music counting test, 35% of the students scored 70% or higher (see Figure 3). The average score on the music counting section of the pretest was 50.71% (see Figure 4).

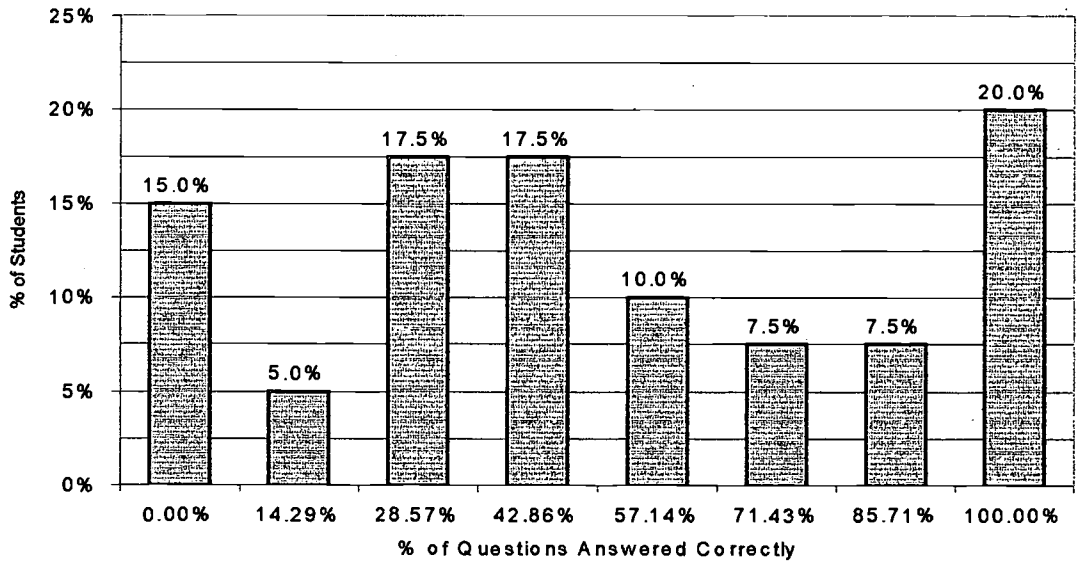

Figure 3. Distribution of scores from the music counting section of the of 5th grade band students. The odd percentages resulted from each questions being 14.29% of their total score.

Students averaged 67.5% on both the music symbol section and the music term section of the pretest. The average for the music counting section of the pretest was 50.7% (see Figure 4).

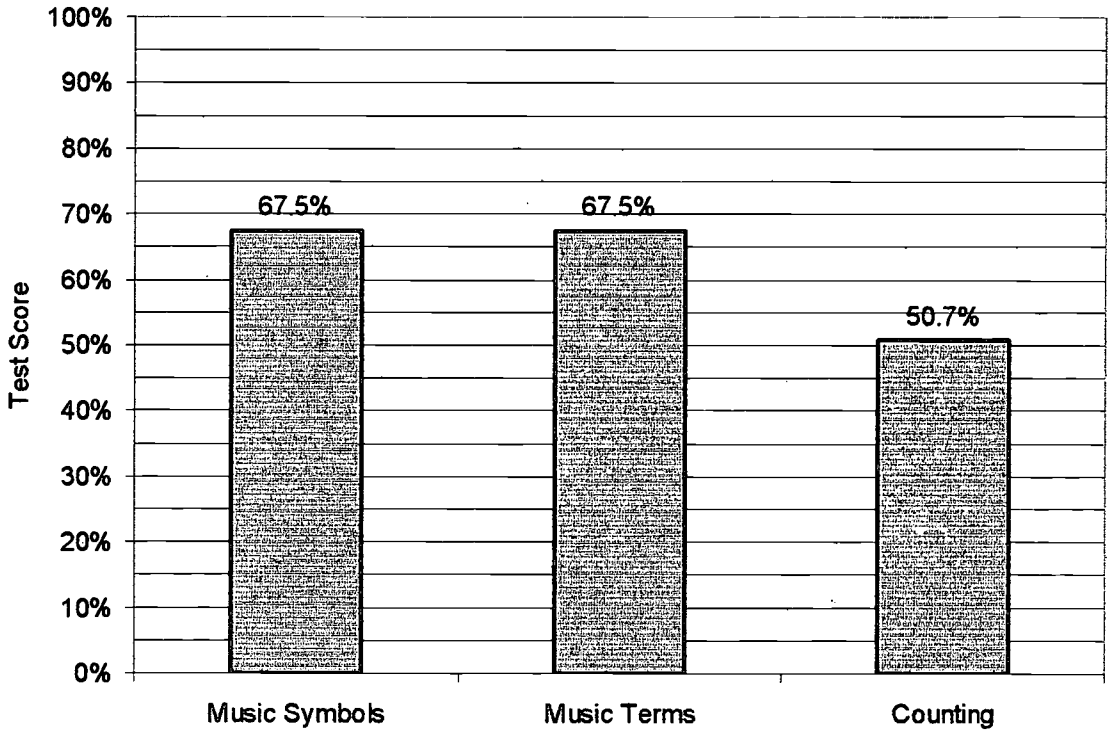

Figure 4. Average scores of the 3 sections from the music knowledge section of the pretest of 5th grade band students.

Probable Causes

During the last two school years, the targeted school had experienced an increase in the number of students who participated in the beginning band program. Forty of 42 students in the fifth grade were in beginning band, 95.23% of the entire class. The percentage of students that participated in beginning band had increased 17.46% over the last two years (see Table 5).

Table 5

Student Participation in Fifth Grade Band

School Year	Total Number of Fifth Grade Students	Number of Fifth Grade Band Students	% of Students in Fifth Grade Band
2001 - 2002	42	40	95.23%
2000 - 2001	33	30	90.90%
1999 - 2000	54	42	77.77%

Although the targeted school had seen an increase in the percentage of students who participated in fifth grade band, the amount of allotted instructional time had remained the same. Though the pupil-to teacher ratio varied with each class size, the ratio of total number of band students to teacher had remained consistent in the targeted school.

Teacher inservice presenters for the targeted school indicated 40% was the normal percentage of student participation in the grade school band. The presenters indicated that the poor student performance in the fifth grade band may be linked to the high percentage of students who participate. Matthews (2001) stated, "With every increase in quantity, quality, at some point, suffers" (para. 7). Since the student population at the targeted school was small, each student had a greater impact on data percentages. With more than twice the average percentage rate of students involved in grade school band, the targeted school has been forced to instruct a higher percentage of students with and without innate musical abilities.

The teacher perception was that the students had not spent an adequate amount of time practicing at home. The lack of practicing at home was also a concern expressed by some parents during parent-teacher conferences. Parental involvement at home during practice time did not

happen. No evidence existed that high-achieving students gained greater success when they practiced less than their low-achieving counterparts had (Sloboda, 1996). Teacher anecdotal records demonstrated that fifth grade students, who were high achievers in their general academic classes, demonstrated a higher level of achievement in band than students who were low achievers in their general academic classes did.

Poor student achievement in band may also be linked to lack of commitment by the student to the band program or to the student's chosen instrument (Boyle, 1995). Teacher anecdotal records indicated that the students who were more successful during fifth grade beginning band would continue to be more successful in the proceeding grades. All fifth grade band students are initially committed to learning an instrument, but when the initial novelty is over, a student's motivation may cease. Teacher anecdotal records showed an increase in fifth grade band students leaving their instruments at school, rather than practicing at home, after the initial excitement of playing in band has passed. The teacher's records also noted that parental involvement in practicing also diminishes after the initial few weeks of band. Legrette (1996) directly links student motivation towards studying music to the achievement of students studying music. Lack of motivation of the fifth grade band students may be directly linked to the students' poor practice patterns. Chandler (1998) finds that the expectations of music students play a major role in the success of that student. Many fifth grade band students find that learning to play an instrument is more difficult than they originally expected it to be. Students, who enter into the beginning band program with a more realistic expectation, may have a higher rate of success.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

The ubiquitous nature of music has been without question. Throughout history, music has played a key role in man's existence. Nettle (1975, p.71) has explained how pervasive music has been, "We know of no culture, no single tribal group in wilderness or jungle, that does not have and has not had, as far back as our knowledge goes, a body of music."

Historical research into music education has varied greatly. Debates between music educators, musicologists, ethnomusicologists, and researchers on the role of music education have been common. Such debates generally surfaced because of different philosophies of music education. Heller (1982, p.2) stated:

> "Music education, then, has two definitions: (1) development of skills and character necessary to listen to, perform, and create sounds (and silence) moving in perceptible form expressive with a context, and (2) the use of music in the processes of acquiring the skills and developing the character necessary for survival in a given culture. The first may be called education in music, the second, music in education."

In education, people tend to teach they way they were taught. This may be truer of individuals who teach music. Music has been taught by a wide variety of individuals. The term music teacher has referred to classically trained professional musicians and to individuals that

cannot read music. This disparity greatly complicates the role of research in music education. The theories and teachings of one music teacher may be the exact opposite of another.

In North America, music education has traditionally been performance driven (Roberts, 1995). Music performance is viewed sine qua non of music education. With a performance driven curriculum, the performance often becomes the means to which student achievement is measured. Kogan (as cited in Roberts para. 4) claimed that the prestigious Julliard School of Music required little more than a "...passing grade in courses that demand little more than attendance." One could conclude from this approach to music education that the highest level of student achievement in music education would be from the most advance music performers. Others educational disciplines are not as performance driven as music education. The performance of a student standing on a stage reciting the multiplication tables would not be used to measure student achievement in a math class, however the achievement of music education students are measured by the quality of their performance.

Music educators have begun to switch from a strict a performance-driven curriculum to include a more aesthetic philosophy of music education (Elliot, 1995; Anderson 1999). This attempt has been used to solidify and justify music within the school's curriculum. Despite this change, music still remains a very unique discipline with very unique problems in measuring student achievement.

The reasons some students succeed when others have failed have been discussed and debated for a long time. Within the classroom, teachers have credited their teaching abilities and students' efforts for student achievement. Outside the classroom, parents and politicians have blamed the schools or teachers for poor achievement by students. As a result of this outside pressure, schools have been forced to focus more on the assessment of student achievement.

Student achievement has turned into a big business. Assessments in music education are quickly changing. More and more music educators are adopting new approaches to teaching. Jones (1999) has put into perspective the need for more research prior to educators adopting new approaches. Jones states, "Ask school officials anywhere what they're doing to improve student achievement, and you'll hear a litany of initiatives. But ask for evidence that the initiatives work, and the answers become more tentative"(para. 1).

Researchers are focusing on the factors that attribute to student achievement. Jones (1999) reported, "A 15-year study at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville found the quality of teaching in a student's past accounted for a differences in standardized test scores of as much as 50 or 60 percentile points". Researchers have linked class size and the amount of time spent learning to student achievement. Walberg (as cited in Jones, p.5) concluded, "American students are severely handicapped in having 180 days, as opposed to 200 or 210 in Europe, 240 in Japan, and 260 in Korea."

Researchers have linked the teaching of higher order thinking skills and the practice of monitoring student learning to increased levels of student achievement (Cotton, 1988). The six levels of Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy of learning coincide with the pedagogical philosophy of many music educators. With the unique personal nature of music, the implementation of higher order thinking skills along with student self-monitoring was chosen as a solution strategy for this research.

Two main goals of educators have been to teach independence and responsibility for one's own action (Benante, 1997). The use of self-monitoring techniques and the teaching of higher order thinking skills have been proven to be effective ways to accomplish these goals.

The benefits of self-monitoring have proven to be numerous. Student self-monitoring has (a) increased or decreased target behavior, (b) helped in learning new skills, (c) improved task

completion, (d) increased productivity, and (e) increased student motivation. Student self-monitoring has been labeled as the highest form of psychological functioning (Gredler, 1997). Ellsworth (as cited in Watson, 2000, para.1) states, "Research indicates that students who are self-motivated, who have a major stake in decisions, and who self-assess, and self-discipline will be successful in learning concepts, creating ideas, and becoming successful citizens."

The student's inability to control their own behavior has been proven to be a major cause of poor achievement by students (Krouse, as cited in Dembo, 2000). Researchers have demonstrated that student self-monitoring can develop a student's ability to take responsibility for his or her actions (Dembo). Dembo states, "If an important goal of education is to produce individuals who are capable of educating themselves, then students must learn to manage their lives by setting their own goals, evaluating their progress, and making the necessary changes to attain these goals" (para. 70).

Lan (as cited in J. Gall, M.Gall, & W. Borg, 1999, p.256) defined self-monitoring as the "...deliberate attention to some aspect of one's behavior." Student self-monitoring has become a widely used strategy for behavioral change (Marder, McCann, 1999). Researchers have expanded the technique student self-monitoring from simple checklists to complex multifaceted assessments. Lan had students record the frequency and intensity of learning activities. Others have had the students compare their own self-monitoring results with the results of the classroom teacher's student assessments (Legette, 1996).

Not all of the researchers on student self-monitoring have agreed on the benefits of student self-monitoring. Lightbourn's (1999) research demonstrated that the use of student self-monitoring had little or no impact on musical performance of university music majors. Lightbourn stated, "...self-monitoring lacks an association with strategic cognition and perhaps with attentional focus. The clarification of this apparent lack of association requires further

research concerning self-monitoring and music performance"(para. 12). Elkind (1984) noted that student self-monitoring can produce a heightened feeling of self-consciousness, which altered the accuracy of the data.

Ross (2001) used student self-monitoring as a stimulus for higher achievement in high school math. After the research, many of the students concluded that they lacked the necessary mathematical ability and withdrew from of advanced math classes. Students placed a greater emphasis on mathematical ability rather than individual effort and attributed their failures to a lack of mathematical abilities. Ross concluded that student self-monitoring "...had at best, no effect on student achievement ...and at worst that its contribution was negative"(para. 30).

Research studies have not been unanimous in the effects of student self-monitoring. Many researchers have concluded that more research is needed. However, the vast majority of educators hold the belief that student achievement is directly linked to the continuous assessment of students and to the teaching of higher order thinking skills.

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result the using student self-monitoring of higher order thinking skills and task management skills from September 2001 through December 2001, the fifth grade beginning band students will increase their level of learning instrumental music in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning. This increase will be measured by pretest and posttest data, checklist and alternate checklist data, and teacher-constructed tests, quizzes and worksheets.

In order to accomplish the project objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Develop materials that will foster learning instrumental music in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.
2. Develop a student self-monitoring checklist that will measure the learning of

instrumental music in the cognitive, effective and psychomotor domains

3. Develop learning activities that address growth in instrumental music in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

4. Develop learning activities that address the problem of task management skills.

5. Develop a student self-monitoring checklist that will record the students task management skills.

6. Unit plans reflecting theses decisions will be constructed.

Project Action Plan

This outline will serve as a working document for the chronological orders of events during the intervention. The band director will administer all phases of the research project. All research with students will be done in the band room.

I. Weeks 1-2

A. Mail parent consent letter for student participation in research

B. Administer premeasurement tool and pretest to all fifth grade students

C. Assign students to either the treatment or the control group based on results of the premeasurement tool and pretest (see Appendix C)

D. Meet with building principal to discuss the research plan

E. Meet with the fifth grade classroom teachers to discuss the research plan

F. Develop objectives (main tasks and subtasks) for the first nine weeks

G. Record events of the first two weeks in the teacher log

H. Follow-up on parent consent letters not returned

II. Week 3

A. Give students in both groups objectives (main tasks and subtasks) for the first nine weeks

B. Instruct students on the definition of higher order thinking skills

C. Instruct students in the treatment group on how to use checklist

D. Instruct students in the control group on how to use alternate checklist (alternate-treatment)

E. Develop spreadsheet to record data

F. Record events of the week in teacher log

III. Week 4

A. Begin treatment phase at weekly band lessons

B. Instruct students in both groups on task management skills

C. Monitor and record data from checklist and alternate checklist

D. Review teacher journal entries from 2000 – 2001 school year

E. Record data from homework

F. Record events of the week in teacher log

IV. Weeks 5 - 6

A. Continue with treatment at weekly band lessons

B. Continue teaching task management skills

C. Record data from checklist and alternate checklist

D. Analysis teacher journal entries from 2000 – 2001 school year

E. Record data from homework, worksheets and quizzes

F. Record events of each week in teacher log

V. Week 7

A. Continue with treatment at weekly band lessons

B. Record data from checklist and alternate checklist

C. Record data from homework, worksheets, quizzes and tests

D. Record events of the week in teacher log

VI. Week 8

A. Begin full band rehearsals twice a week

B. Continue with treatment at weekly band lesson

C. Develop objectives (main tasks and sub tasks) for the first nine weeks

D. Record data from checklist and alternate checklist

E. Record data from homework, worksheets, quizzes and tests

F. Record events of the week in teacher log

VII. Weeks 9 - 17

A. Give students in both groups objectives for the second nine weeks

B. Continue with full band rehearsals twice a week

C. Continue with treatment at weekly band lesson

D. Record data from checklist and alternate checklist

E. Record data from homework, worksheets, quizzes and tests

F. Record events of each week in teacher log

VIII. Week 18

A. Administer posttest to both groups

B. Record data from posttest

C. Record events of each week in teacher log

D. Continue with full band rehearsals and lessons

IX. Week 19

A. Analysis data

1. Pretest

2. Posttest

3. Homework

4. Worksheets

5. Practice logs

6. Checklist

7. Alternate checklist

8. Quizzes

9. Tests

B. Survey students from both groups

C. Conduct one-on-one interviews with students from both groups

D. Survey and interview classroom teachers on effectiveness of intervention

E. Meet with building principal to discuss results of the research

Methods of Assessment

To access the effects of the intervention, homework assignments, test, quizzes, and worksheets covering the content area will be developed. Scoring rubrics will be developed, and interviews with the students will be held as part of the assessment process.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this action research project was to improve the musical skills of the fifth grade beginning band students. The intervention used was student self-monitoring of higher order thinking skills and task management skills. This intervention was chosen to enable students to learn how to accomplish a large task by breaking the task down to smaller subtasks. Self-monitoring was chosen to encourage the students to learn.

During the first three weeks of school, beginning band recruiting sessions were held. The teacher-researcher met twice with each class to discuss the various instruments in the beginning band. At the final recruiting sessions, all fifth grades students met and viewed a PowerPoint slide show that described the district's band program. Throughout the recruiting, the teacher-researcher stressed the need for a balanced instrumentation and gave suggestions to each student as what instrument he or she should select to play. Enrollment in the beginning band took place during the fourth week of school. Of the 43 students in fifth grade, 41 enrolled in the beginning band, representing 95.35% of the total fifth grade class.

In the fifth week of school, students, who had enrolled in the beginning band, were given a pretest to identify their pre-existing knowledge in three areas (a) recognition of music symbols, (b) knowledge of music terms, and (c) ability to write counting for various common-time rhythms. Students were assigned to either the control group or the treatment group. It was

initially planed to randomly assign students to either the control group or the treatment group, but because of difficulties in scheduling, this was not possible. Students assigned to band lessons on Mondays were assigned to the control group, and students assigned to band lessons on Wednesday were assigned to the treatment group.

The treatment group used the student self-monitoring checklist (see Appendix D). The student self-monitoring checklist provided students with a space to record their weekly assignments and then the opportunity to break down each assignment into as many subtasks as they wished. It was originally planed that the teacher would provide all the students with a list of main tasks and subtasks for each student during the intervention phases. Due to the fact that the publisher of the textbook did not ship the textbooks to the school until the sixth week of school, this list was not created. With each main task and subtask, students self-monitored their progress on the assignment and checked either (a) I can define all parts of the assignment. (b) I can explain all parts of the assignment. (c) I can analysis all parts of the assignment. (d) I can perform some of the assignment. (e) I can perform most of the assignment. or (f) I have mastered the assignment. The student self-monitoring checklist had a place for students to record the amount of time the student practiced at home on task. In the fifth week of school, students were given instruction on how to complete their student self-monitoring checklist and how to divide a main task into smaller subtasks.

The control group used an alternate checklist (see Appendix E). The alternate checklist was a form that provided students with a space to record their weekly assignments. The alternate checklist had a place for students to record the amount of time the student practiced at home on task. In the fifth week of school, control group students were given instructions on how to complete the alternate checklist.

Both the alternate checklist and the student self-monitoring checklist were referred to as assignment sheets. The terms control group and treatment group were not used in front of the students.

Beginning band started the sixth week of school. Due to the fact that some students would not have their instruments for another week, the intervention did not start until the seventh week of school. During the seventh week of school, students in the control group were given copies of the alternate checklist, and students in the treatment group were given copies of the student self-monitoring checklist.

Throughout the treatment phase, various changes in the scheduling of lessons were done to insure that each student received the opportunity to have one lesson per week. Whenever school was not in session, student lessons were rescheduled.

At each weekly lesson, students recorded their assignments on either their alternate checklist or the student self-monitoring checklist. Students, in the treatment group, completed the self-monitoring section of their assignment sheet prior to the next lesson. At the start of each lesson, the teacher would review how each student using the student self-monitoring checklist rated their accomplishment and how each student broke the main tasks into smaller tasks.

The intervention phases of the research was initially scheduled to last for fourteen weeks. Because of a serious illness in the teacher's family, the intervention was terminated after ten weeks (the sixteenth week of school). A posttest, consisting of questions on music symbols, terms, and counting of rhythms (see Appendix F), was administered to the students during the eighteenth week of school.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

The effects of the intervention were measured by data collected from students' homework assignments and quizzes. Data was also collected on the students' ability to bring all necessary

equipment to rehearsals and lessons. Necessary equipment was defined as band instrument, band method book, pencil, assignment sheet, and any homework. A pretest and posttest were given. Practice times, as recorded by the students, were collected. Because of the unreliability of the recorded practice times, that data was not used in the analysis of the research.

The data collected on students bringing all necessary equipment showed the treatment group was more responsible in bringing their necessary equipment. One point was recorded for the five items (instrument, book, pencil, assignment sheet, and homework). If no homework was assigned, the students received that point as a free "bonus" point. Students in the treatment group averaged 4.48 points per week, and students in the control group averaged 3.98 points per week. The percentage of all necessary equipment brought to rehearsals and lessons by the treatment group was 90.06%. The percentage of all necessary equipment brought to rehearsals and lessons by the control group was 79.70% (see Figure 5).

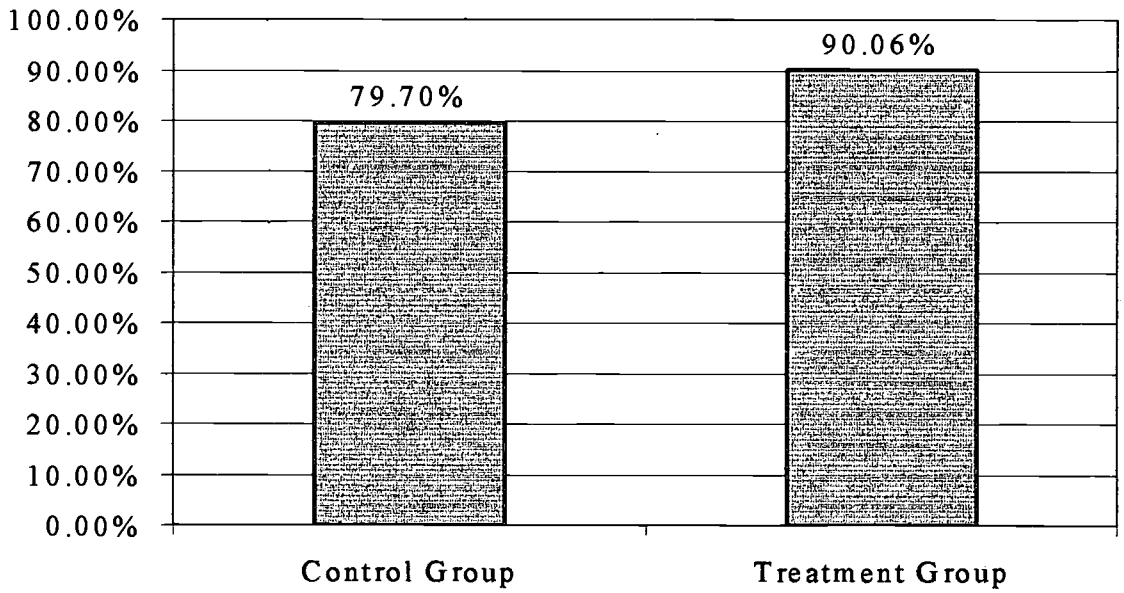

Figure 5. Percentage of the necessary equipment brought to rehearsals and lessons by control group vs. the treatment group. Necessary equipment was defined as instrument, book, pencil, assignment sheet, and homework.

Four written homework assignments were given during the intervention. The control group averaged 93.41%, and the treatment group averaged 91.30%. On the first two homework assignments, the treatment group scored higher, and on the last two homework assignments, the control group scored higher (Table 6).

Table 6

Average Scores on Four Homework Assignments

Assignment	Control group	Treatment group
1	90.91%	92.63%
2	93.18%	94.21%
3	96.82%	91.58%
4	92.73%	86.79%
Average	93.41%	91.30%

Two tests were administered to the fifth grade band during the intervention. On Test One, the control group averaged 93.86%, and the treatment group averaged 95.53%. On Test Two the control group averaged 95.54%, and the treatment group averaged 95.37% (see Figure 6).

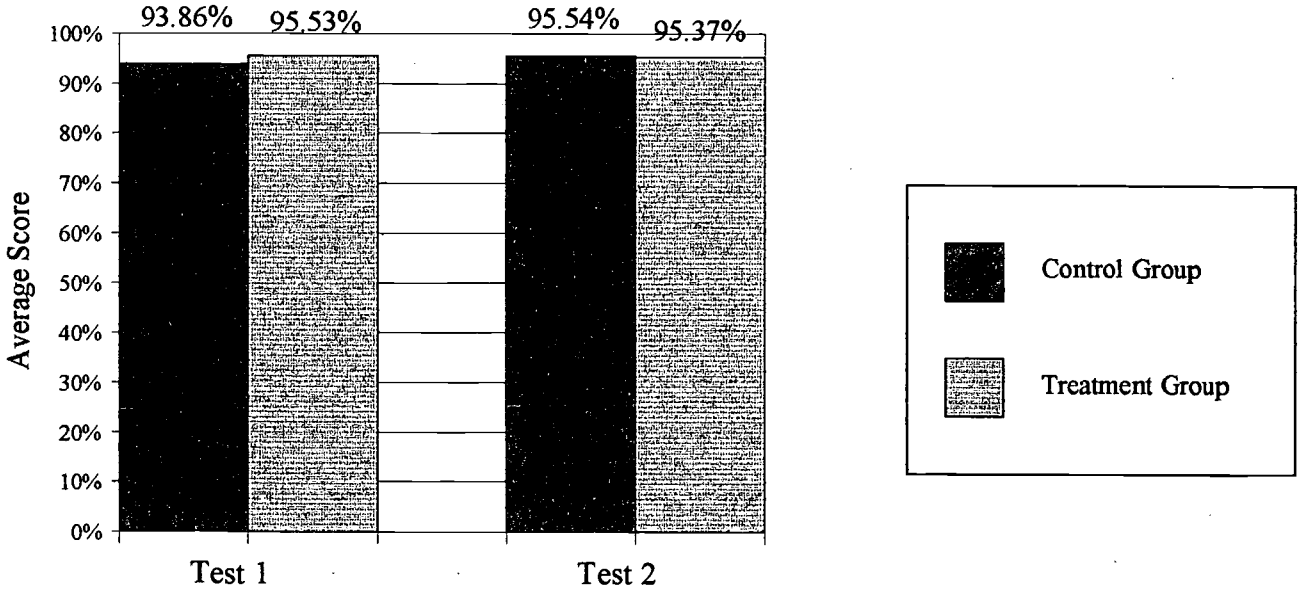

Figure 6. Average scores of treatment group vs. control group on Test 1 & 2.

The posttest consisted of the same questions as the pretest. The questions in the posttest were in a different order from the pretest. On the music symbol portion of the pretest, students assigned to the control group averaged 85.45%, a 20% increase over their average score on the pretest. Students in the treatment group averaged 87.37%, an 18.95% increase over their average score on the pretest (see Figure 7).

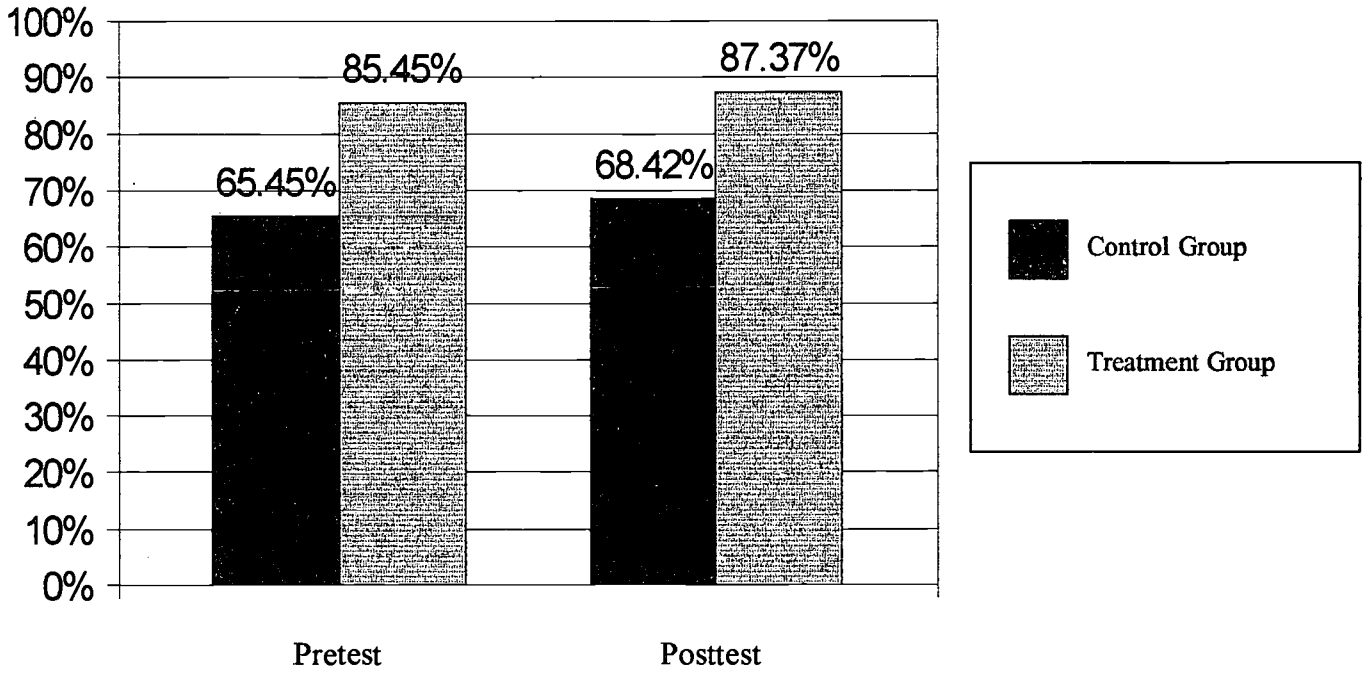

Figure 7. Average scores of treatment group vs. control group on the music symbol section of the pre- and posttests.

Students assigned to the control group averaged 88.07% on music term portion of the posttest, 20.46% increase over their average score on the pretest. Students in the treatment group averaged 88.16%, a 23.03% increase over their average score on the pretest (see Figure 8).

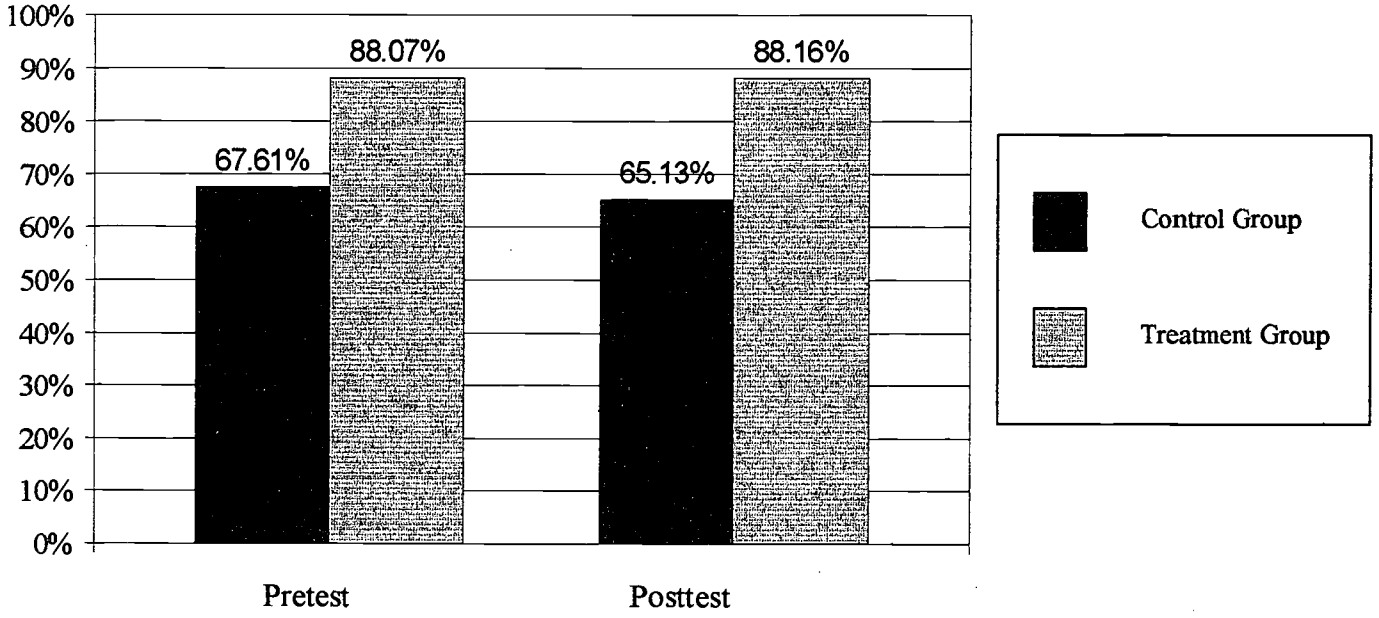

Figure 8. Average scores of treatment group vs. control group on the music terms section of the pre- and posttests.

Students assigned to the control group averaged 75.32% on the music counting portion of the posttest, a 27.27% increase over the pretest. Students in the treatment group averaged 77.44%, a 27.82% increase over the pretest (see Figure 9).

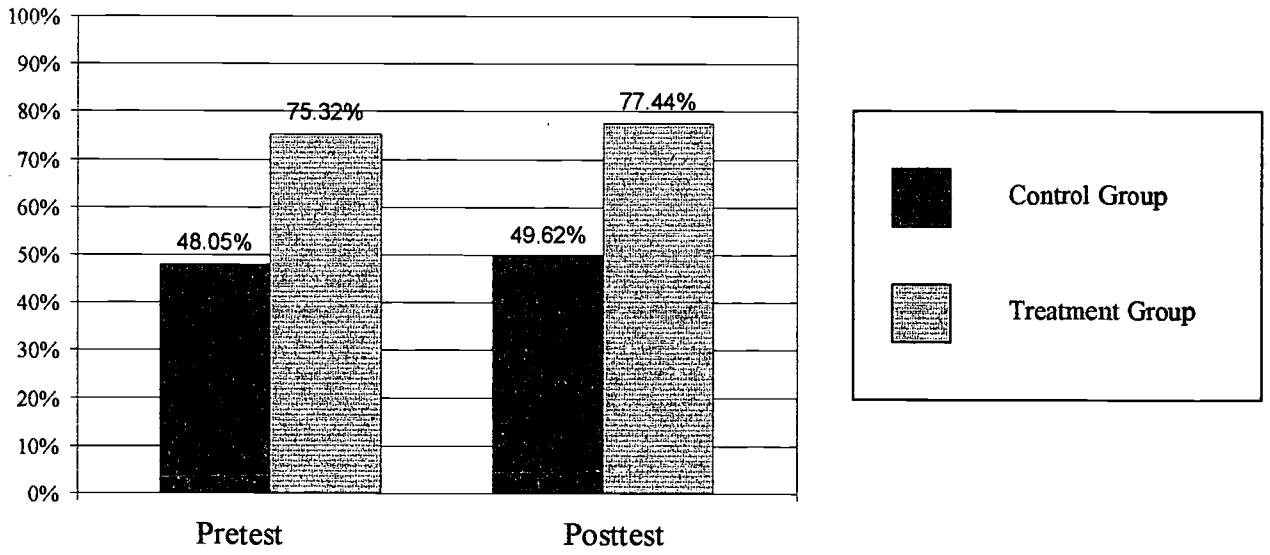

Figure 9. Average scores of the treatment group vs. the control group on the music counting section of the pre- and posttests.

Overall students assigned to the control group averaged 82.95% on the posttest, an increase of 22.58% over their average score on the pretest. Students assigned to the treatment group averaged 84.32% on the posttest, an increase of 23.27% over their average score on the pretest (see Figure 10).

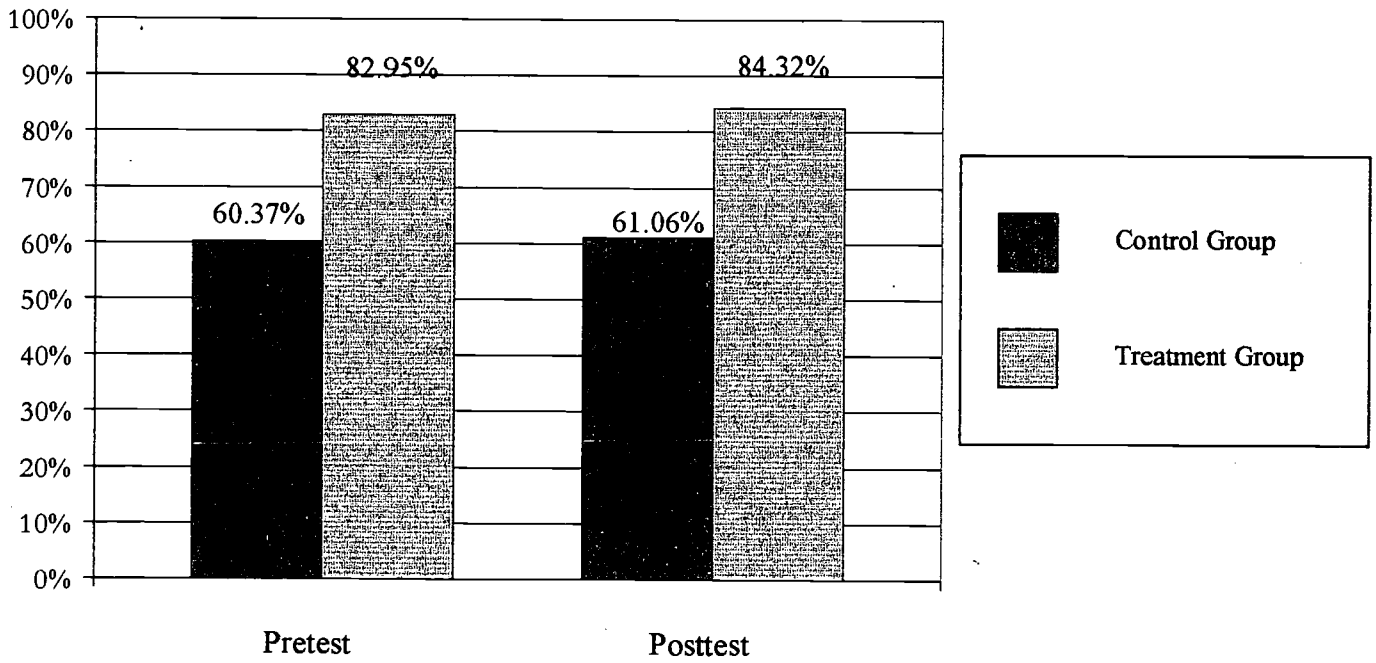

Figure 10. Average scores of the treatment group vs. the control group on all sections of the pre- and posttests.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data, the use of student self-monitoring had little impact on improving the music skills of the fifth grade band members. Besides the pretest and posttest scores, the teacher-researcher noted very few differences on the scores of the classroom tests, quizzes, and homework assignments between the control group and the treatment group.

The treatment group did meaningfully out-score the control group in the category of bringing all necessary materials to class. The treatment group averaged 90.06% of necessary

materials at class while the control group averaged 70.70%. This is noteworthy due to the fact that the school district has received a grant for a special counselor to meet with the fifth grade classes to discuss responsibility. The classroom teachers have informally noted a lack of maturity in this year's fifth grade class as compared to previous years.

The use of a small sample of the targeted sample and not being able to randomly assign the students to either the control group or treatment group hindered the validity of the research. Doing research on beginning band at the start of the school year proved to be very difficult. Due to the fact that some instruments are harder to start on than others, many students are now doing well who were struggling during the intervention phase.

Very little research exists on teaching fifth grade beginning band. The teacher-researcher feels that more research needs to be done on teaching beginning band and that further study on the use of student self-monitoring with beginning band students is warranted. The teacher-researcher plans to continue the intervention and to introduce student self-monitoring to band students in Grades 6 through 8 during the next school year. Although this research did not produce statistically meanifully results, the teacher-research suggests that the research be repeated with the intervention lasting for an entire school year. Learning to play an instrument is a long and complex task; increasing the length of the intervention may produce the results that the intervention may be capable of. The teacher-research also feels that coupling student self-monitoring with a point system would produce greater results.

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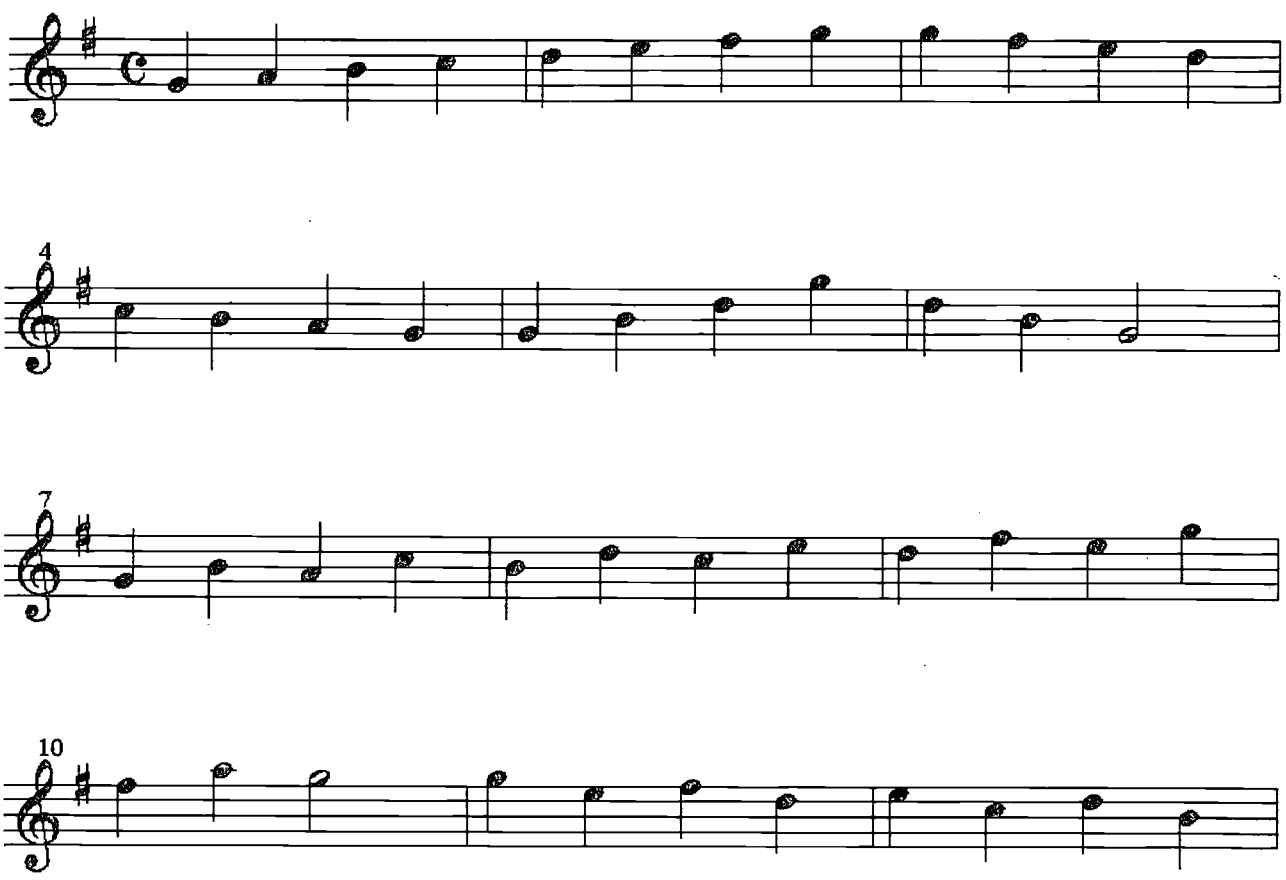
Appendices

Appendix A

6th Grade Major Scale Exercise

Concert G

Flute



Appendix B

Pretest

Name _____

Gender: Boy Girl

What band instrument did you chose? _____

Are you currently taking piano lessons?

Yes No

If yes, approximately how many years have you take piano lessons? _____

Have you taken piano lessons in the past, but are not currently taking lessons?

Yes No

If yes, approximately how many years have you take piano lessons? _____

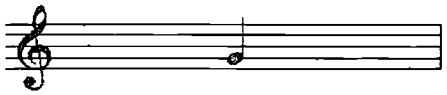
Have you ever played the flutophone or recorder? Yes No

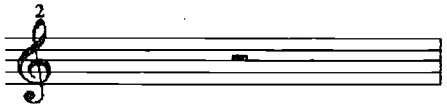
Do you have a piano at your home? Yes No

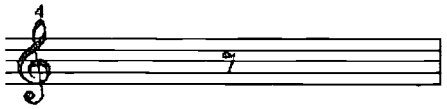
Do you have a stereo at your home? Yes No

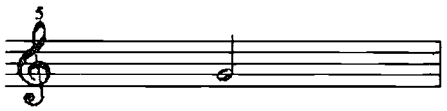
Approximately home many hours a week do you listen to music? _____

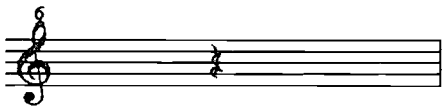
Directions: Draw a line connecting the symbol on the left with the term on the right.

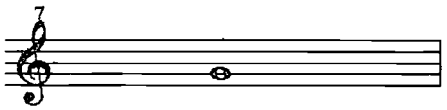


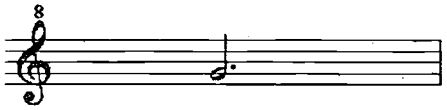












Half note

Quarter note

Half rest

Whole rest

Whole note

Sixteenth note

Eighth note

Sixteenth rest

Dotted half note

Quarter rest

1. Music is written on _____

   A. 4 lines C. 6 lines

   B. 5 lines D. 7 lines

2. Music is divided into _____

   A. 4 lines C. Terms

   B. Squads D. Measures

3. Vertical lines in music that divide music into groups are called _____

   A. Bar lines C. Yard lines

   B. Division lines D. Staff lines

4. The two numbers at the beginning of a piece of music is called a _____

   A. Key signature C. Notation numbers

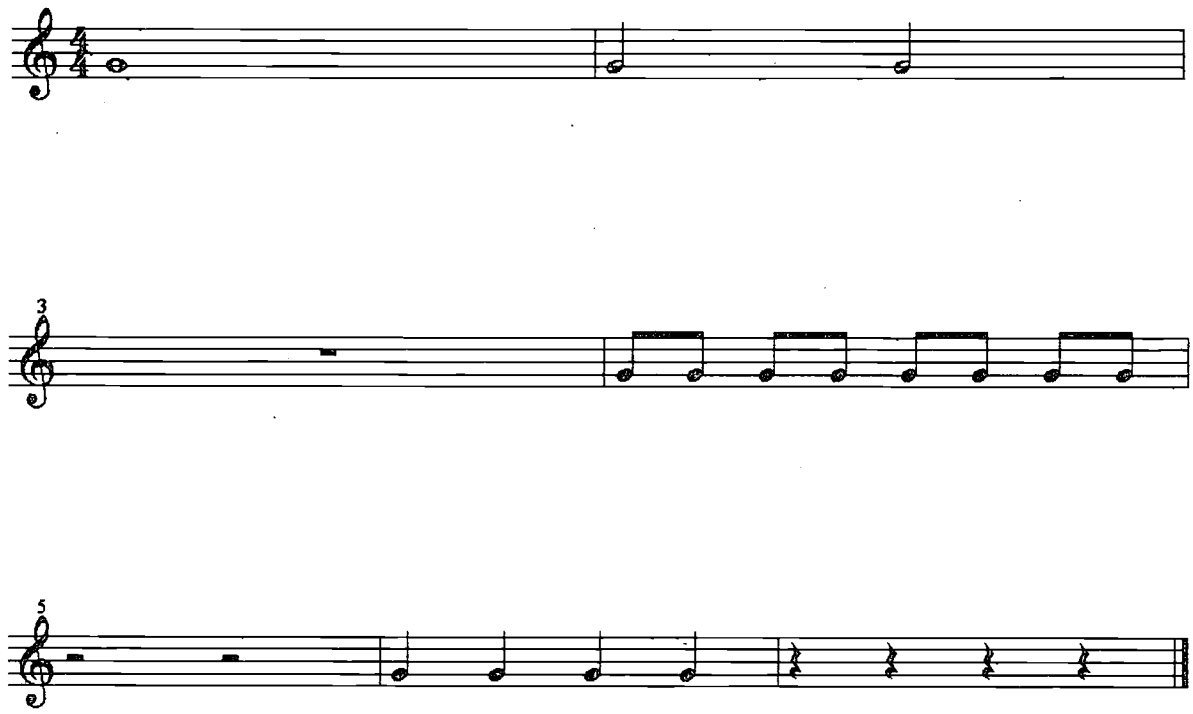
   B. Count signature D. Time signature

5. The sign at the beginning of a piece of music that indicates what pitches will be on what lines is called a _____

   A. Clef C. Accent

   B. Sharp D. Key signature

Directions: Write the counting under the following measures



Appendix C

Categories from which Students will be Randomly Assigned

to either the Treatment or Control groups

Selected Band Instrument	No Exposure to Music	A Moderate Degree of Exposure to Music	A High Degree of Exposure to Music
Flute	*FL 1*	*FL 2*	*FL 3*
Oboe	*OB 1*	*OB 2*	*OB 3*
Clarinet	*CL 1*	*CL 2*	*CL 3*
Alto Saxophone	*AS 1*	*AS 2*	*AS 3*
Tenor Saxophone	*TS 1*	*TS 2*	*TS 3*
Trumpet	*TR 1*	*TR 2*	*TR 3*
French Horn	*FH 1*	*FH 2*	*FH 3*
Trombone	*TB 1*	*TB 2*	*TB 3*
Baritone	*BR 1*	*BR 2*	*BR 3*
Tuba	*TU 1*	*TU 2*	*TU 3*
Percussion	*PC 1*	*PC 2*	*PC 3*

Appendix D

Self-Monitoring Checklist for Treatment group

Assignment Checklist

Name: _____

Instrument: _____

Date: Assignment Began	**Assignments** *Main Tasks and Subtasks*	Date: Assignment Due	I can define all parts of the assignment	I can explain all parts of the assignment	I can analysis all parts of the assignment	I can perform some of the assignment	I can perform most of the assignment	I have mastered the assignment!	Total on-task practice time
	Main Task:___ Subtask:___								
	Main Task:___ Subtask:___								
	Main Task:___ Subtask:___								
	Main Task:___ Subtask:___								
	Main Task:___ Subtask:___								
	Main Task:___ Subtask:___								
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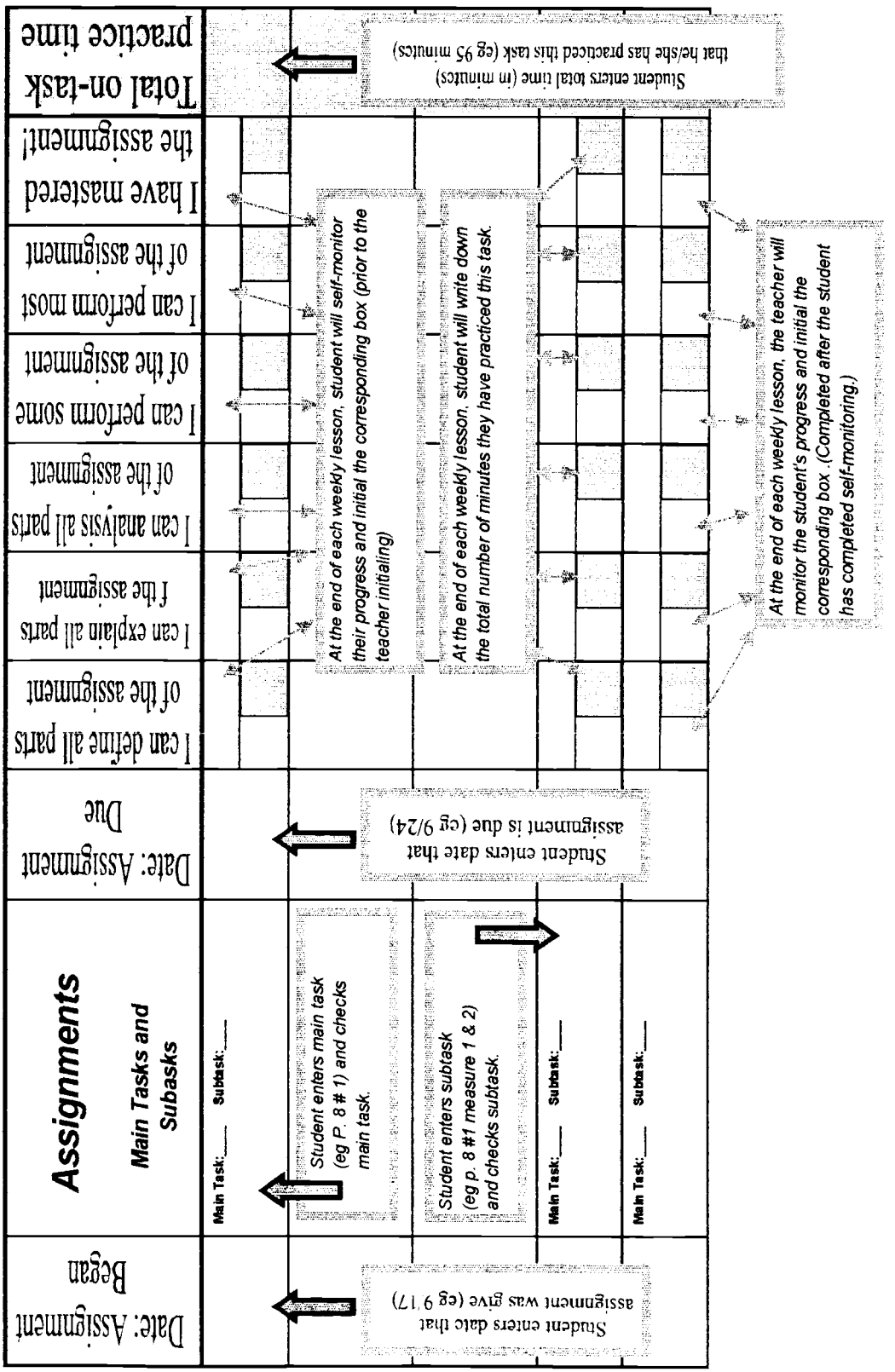
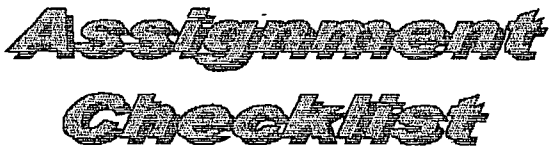
	Main Task:___ Subtask:___								

Instructions for Student Self-Monitoring Checklist



Appendix E

Alternate checklist for Control group

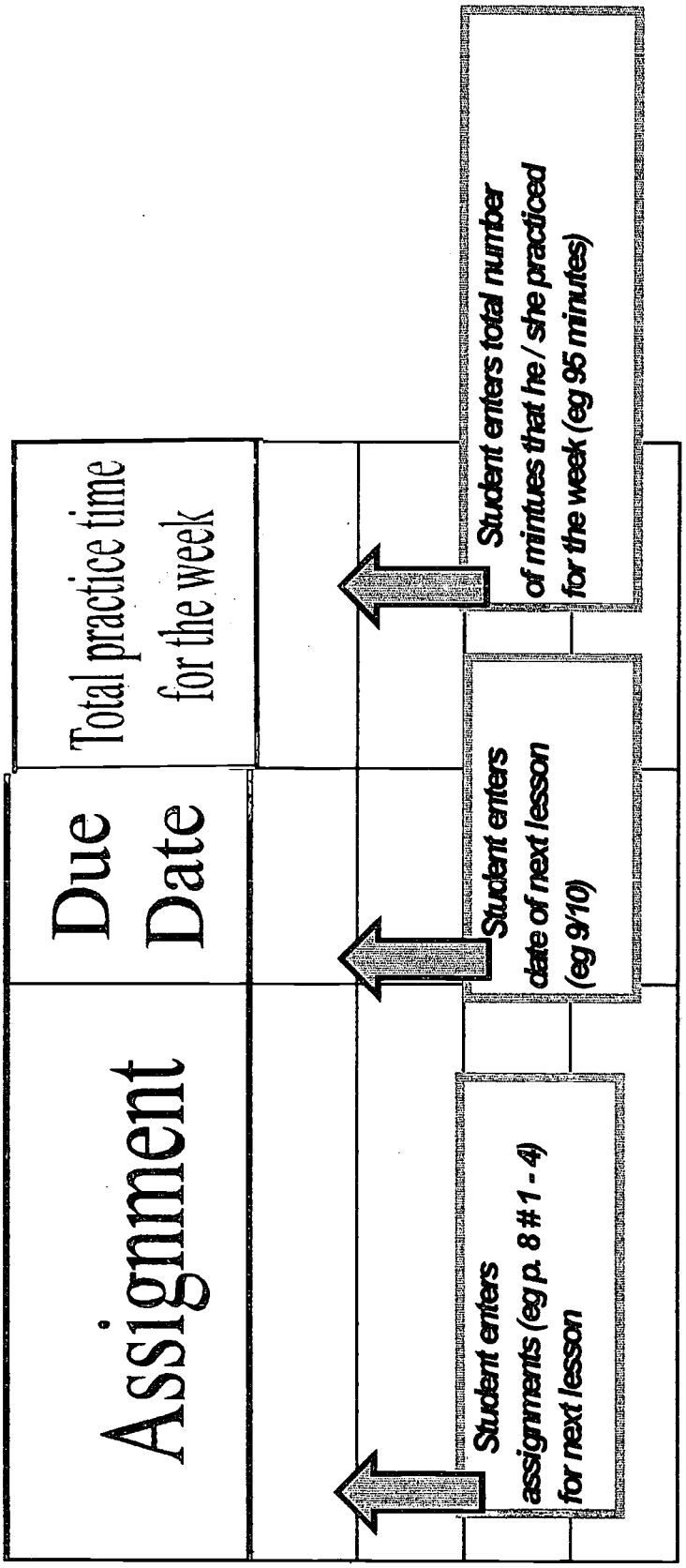


Name: _____

Instrument: _____

Assignment	Due Date	Total practice time for the week

Instructions for Alternate Checklist



Appendix F

Posttest

Name _____

Gender: Boy Girl

What band instrument did you chose? _____

Are you currently taking piano lessons?

Yes No

If yes, approximately how many years have you take piano lessons? _____

Have you taken piano lessons in the past, but are not currently taking lessons?

Yes No

If yes, approximately how many years have you take piano lessons? _____

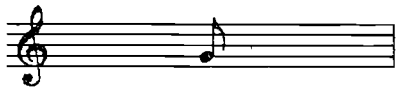
Have you ever played the flutophone or recorder? Yes No

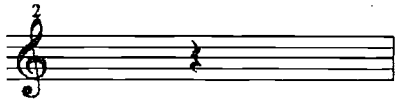
Do you have a piano at your home? Yes No

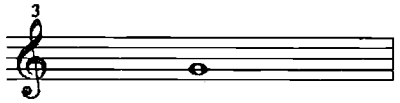
Do you have a stereo at your home? Yes No

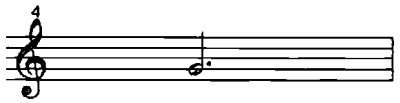
Approximately home many hours a week do you listen to music? _____

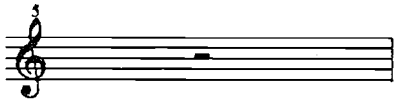
Directions: Draw a line connecting the symbol on the left with the term on the right.

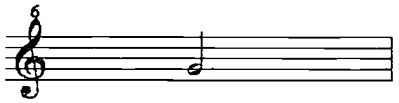


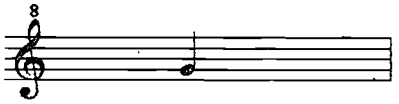












Half note

Quarter note

Half rest

Whole rest

Whole note

Sixteenth note

Eighth note

Sixteenth rest

Dotted half note

Quarter rest

1. Music is written on _____

   A. 4 lines
   C. 6 lines
   B. 5 lines
   D. 7 lines

2. Music is divided into _____

   A. 4 lines
   C. Terms
   B. Squads
   D. Measures

3. Vertical lines in music that divide music into groups are called _____

   A. Bar lines
   C. Yard lines
   B. Division lines
   D. Staff lines

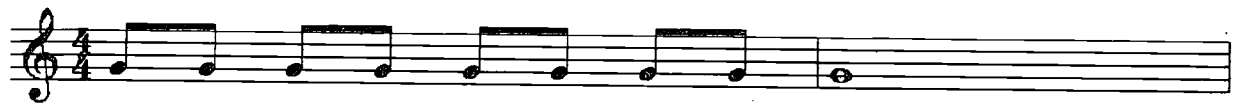
4. The two numbers at the beginning of a piece of music is called a _____

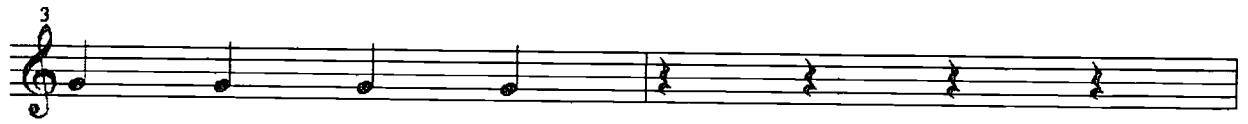
   A. Key signature
   C. Notation numbers
   B. Count signature
   D. Time signature

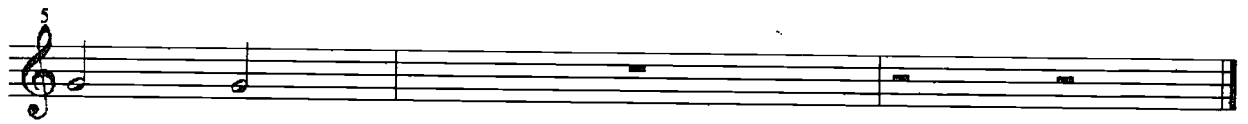
5. The sign at the beginning of a piece of music that indicates what pitches will be on what lines is called a _____

   A. Clef
   C. Accent
   B. Sharp
   D. Key signature

Directions: Write the counting under the following measures







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