



What impact does a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation in the unfamiliar A level Music Listening and Appraising essay question?

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ABSTRACT:

During the last academic year, my colleagues and I have undergone a significant degree of training in school to change the culture of teaching to one where the pupils are 'active participants' in all lessons. I am the only Teacher of Music and in my additional role as Gifted and Talented Coordinator, I have spoken to many colleagues about the challenges of applying appropriate strategies to increase pupil attainment and engender a consistent motivation to learn, beyond that for an assessment. This small, practitioner-led investigation aims to address a specific learning difficulty within the context of the A-Level Music syllabus I follow, Pearson Edexcel ; what impact would a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation to write an essay based on an 'unfamiliar' question 5 from the A-level Music Listening and Appraising examination?

I devised an intervention cycle of seven lessons, with collaboration between pupils being a central feature. Each intervention lesson focused on the mastery of skills including critical listening, appraising and essay writing from the perspectives of Self Determination Theory, Self Regulation Theory and Collaborative Essay Writing. To ensure a broad and deep understanding of the seven participants' perspectives, I have used mostly qualitative methods of data collection. Certainly, the focus group interviews of the pupils, my collaborative partner and the recorded conversations of each pupil group during the intervention lessons offered a rich and expansive set of data to draw on. However, the pupils also completed a survey to ascertain what listening to music meant to them. This approach led to a stronger understanding of the dichotomy between listening to music as part of the A-Level Music curriculum and the pupil's autonomy for listening to music for their psychological well-being, an activity which is

highly significant for many late-adolescents. There was strong evidence to suggest that collaborative essay writing has a very positive impact on the pupils' engagement and therefore confidence in writing an essay about an extract of unfamiliar music. The progression in the quality of their essays towards the end of the intervention period and their final mock examination of the year is evidence of this impact. The collaborative nature of the intervention appealed to the pupils' sense of relatedness, one of the three critical components of Self-Determination Theory. Though the small number of pupil participants meant the pupils already had a strong degree of relatedness prior to the intervention and therefore foundation to support one another in this shared endeavour.

Autonomy was a central feature of this investigation, enabling the pupils to choose the music for analysis in each intervention lesson, based on the most meaningful genre of music to them 'Popular Music and Fusions'. This feature had a very positive impact on the pupil's motivation to complete a piece of extended writing. For most there was a feeling of enjoyment and looking forward to the lessons because of the anticipation of knowing their peers had prepared a musical extract to share, listen to and analyse. Perhaps most significantly, their intrinsic motivation of choosing the music to analyse, together with the external regulation associated with an extended writing task, resulted in the pupil's perception of the task as being more 'achievable'.

Ultimately, this investigation seeks to explore whether autonomy and a self-directed collaborative classroom setting can meet the learning needs of boys, and help them to grow in confidence with the skill of essay writing. I also hope the strategies of this investigation can be of support to teachers of all subjects in the school, so that pupils of all genders can benefit from them.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The ability to critically listen to, appraise and analyse music are crucial skills for all A-Level Music pupils to master and form a fundamental part of the examination assessments in all four major curriculum boards of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The A-Level Music syllabus, Edexcel Pearson (2016, p.66), states the examination known as ‘Component 3: Appraising’ exists “for students to develop their listening and appraising skills through the study of music across a variety of styles and genres” with more specific details made in reference to:

“...reflect on, analyse and evaluate music in aural and/or written form. To achieve this objective they need to use their knowledge and understanding of musical elements, context and language to make critical judgements about the repertoire and context of music within the areas of study.”

The trend of distribution in attainment of these skills is very interesting when viewed from the national perspective. The Notional Grade Boundaries for all components of the 2023 A-Level Music are shown in Appendix A (p.100) with the highlighted area being the focus of this investigation.

The contrasts are striking. 9MU0/01 is the NEA in Performance and in 2023, the grade boundaries stated that to achieve an A*, a pupil needed to attain 92% of the marks. For 9MU0/02, (NEA in Composition), it was 85% to achieve the same grade. Conversely, for 9MU0/03 (Examination), 70% of the marks equated to an A*, and the examination is worth 40% of the A-Level qualification.

This suggests that the questions of the A-Level examination are difficult, hence the low-grade boundaries. To further qualify my perception of this data, I asked my Year 12 pupils what their perception of the difficulty of the examination was. They stated the essay questions were particularly challenging, citing difficulty to not only assimilate the knowledge of the thirteen set works but applying it within an essay.

What does the A-Level Music Examination require pupils to do?

The examination focuses on three skills: listening, appraising and essay writing. In two hours, pupils complete six questions, four in Section A and two for Section B. Both sections are equally weighted with 50 Marks available in each and two Assessment Objectives are applied to the examination, namely, Assessment Objectives 3 and 4. Appendix C p. 102 (Edexcel Pearson (2016, p.80 [A-Level])) explains each of the four Assessment Objectives and how they are applied.

In 'Component 3: Appraising' (examination) questions 1, 2 and 3 require pupils to listen to a short extract of familiar music that they have studied, and answer questions about it. Question 4 focuses on musical dictation, asking the pupils to notate a very short, unfamiliar musical melody by ear. Finally, question 5 and 6 are both essay questions, with 20 marks available for question 5 and 30 marks for question 6. Question 6 requires pupils to discuss and evaluate three elements of music of one of their set works, with no audio track to listen to but instead, an illustrative score.

I decided to focus my intervention on question 5 because according to the data analysis provided by Edexcel Pearson's ResultsPlus service (which provides a detailed analysis on all learner's performance including each examination question) my Year 13 pupils achieved an average score of 6.60/20 compared to the national average of 7.26/20 in 2023. Whilst this was a lower score than the national average, this statistic also suggests that the question is not answered well amongst most candidates taking this examination. This question is a specific area for improvement and features in my Department Development Plan this year: to raise attainment and make a lasting impact on the pupil's success with the examination.

What is the task for Question 5?

Question 5 is an essay based on an 'unfamiliar work'. 'Unfamiliar' is defined in the (Edexcel Pearson (2016, p.78 [A-Level]) as music that is "neither set works nor Appendix 4 Suggested Other music". However, the music chosen will be related to the style of a piece previously analysed from the six areas of study. For reference, the areas of study and accompanying set works (most of which are multiple movements) are outlined in Appendix D (p. 103).

The purpose of this question is for pupils to explain the connections between the musical features of the set works to those of the unfamiliar music. The pupils can listen to the music via an audio track but there is no musical score to read. Therefore, the pupils only have their prior understanding of the style of the music as a guide to the style and musical features of this piece to write an aural analysis.

The challenge of Assessment Objective 4 (AO4)

Assessment Objective 4 assesses the pupil's ability to use skills of analysis and appraisal but crucially, be able to evaluate and make critical judgements about the music. As the music is unfamiliar to the pupils, this ensures these evaluative skills are being assessed and not just the demonstration and application of musical knowledge, which is Assessment Objective 3, an objective the pupils are not assessed on in this essay question.

The pupils' judgements are made within the framework of a specific historical, social or cultural context and must give a full analysis of the music using the spectrum of musical elements to focus their response and show they understand the complexity surrounding the interdependencies of musical elements to make a whole score. The elements of music include melody, dynamics, harmony, tonality, structure, texture, metre, tempo and rhythm.

Sources of Other Relevant Works:

In addition, the Board wish to see evidence of pupils citing a range of sources of music to show their knowledge of musical elements in a broader context. Teachers can decide which pieces to teach as designated sources of 'wider listening' but there is a suggested list by the Board. The phrase 'other relevant works' is featured in all question 5 essay titles and without consistent discussion of examples, the pupils will not attain a high mark because it is deemed part of Assessment Objective 4. To show this in context, Appendix B (p.101) is an example of question 5 from the A-Level Paper of 2019.

Question 5: How does a teacher assess the quality of Assessment Objective 4 in a pupil's response?

There is a two-part marking schema for a question 5 essay. Appendix I (p. 107) is an example of the first part, an indicative list of musical features from each element of music (Pearson Edexcel, 2022). Pupils must discuss all elements in detail, and for a top-level mark, consistently justify why they are used by linking to the purpose of the piece (A04). Pupils must justify their use by citing other sources of wider listening (of their choice) throughout their essay, which support their argument and relevant to the music being analysed. An example of how this is shown in Appendix J (p. 108) in a brief extract from Pearson Edexcel (2016) of an exemplar from a candidate who wrote a full mark response. The examiner's comments are given in Appendix K (p. 108). Secondly, the essay is matched (according to a 'best-fit' approach) to a level descriptor. It is at this time that considerations of indicative content, justification and discussion of sources of WL are examined closely. Appendix L (p.109) shows the Level Descriptions for each band of marks (Pearson Edexcel, 2022, "Mark Scheme Summer 2022", p.14). The final mark is then decided.

School Context: How does this intervention support colleagues beyond my professional context?

The concept of pupils being 'active participants' in their learning has been of particular relevance to my school this year. In January 2024, the Senior Leadership Team provided a day's INSET training on four key techniques from the "Teaching Walkthrus Five-Step Guides to Instructional Coaching" (2020, pp. 90 - 97) given by Tom Sherrington, a co-author of these series of books. The aim was to create a cultural

change to our use methodology and our use of discourse: enabling every pupil to become an active participant in each lesson. A secondary aim was to enable consistent reflection of our teaching practice, and regularly note our progress at implementing these changes with our Head of Faculty. The practice of reflection and coaching is to replace the previous policy of observing teachers each term and is outlined in the School Improvement Plan, (Appendix E, p. 10).

Being the only Teacher of Music and in my additional role as Gifted and Talented Coordinator, I have spoken to many staff about the challenges of applying appropriate strategies to increase pupil engagement, to engender a consistent motivation to learn, beyond simply to complete an assessment. Once my investigation is finished, I will share my findings to enrich colleagues understanding of how the intervention strategies I have applied to my subject relating to pupil autonomy have impacted engagement and learning. This will complement the 'Core Cluster' of WalkThru strategies that have been adopted across the school including 'Cold Calling', 'Think, Pair, Share', 'Check for Understanding' and 'Show Me Boards'.

Why focus on Boys?

My experience of teaching boys within an A-Level Music setting has been brought into sharper focus over the last two years. Despite teaching in a co-educational school, my Year 13 class of 2023 were male and my current Year 12 class of 2024, is also male. The results of my Year 1 project, (where I investigated why GCSE and A-Level Music students were so successful at performing music through the lens of Self Determination and Self Regulation Theories), showed how important autonomy was for

both sexes. A strong degree of autonomic value gave the pupils a very strong sense of engagement and therefore intrinsic motivation that was critical to their success. This could be compounded by their strong self-regulation after many years of practicing their instrument or voice and their subsequent decision to choose to do GCSE or A-Level Music.

To exemplify my findings, 75% of my Year 13 pupils from 2022-2023 “strongly agreed” that: “I enjoy practicing more when I have chosen the music I am practicing.”. More broadly, 86% of the thirty Key Stage 4 and 5 pupil participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they wanted the autonomy to decide the music they would perform for their GCSE or A-Level coursework. The standard deviation reading of 8.44 confirmed this statement, a reading which was almost twice the mean value. To justify my focus for this Year’s project, I considered the autonomous value of Self Determination Theory again; evaluating if it could impact pupil engagement and motivate the male pupils of my class to critically use their skills of listening, appraising and analytical writing. I also wanted to investigate if a Self-Directed and Collaborative Learning approach might offer the pupils a more supportive setting to attain these skills and therefore motivation to do the task.

With the support of my collaborative partner, Peter (pseudonym), a very experienced teacher of A-Level and Head of Music of a neighbouring private Secondary School for boys aged 11 to 18, I was confident that this intervention could support the pupils to meet these expectations. His school contrasts to my own. My school is a co-educational secondary school for pupils aged between 14 to 18 years old. There are 839

pupils on role. Both schools are situated on an island which is self-governing and follows the educational curriculum of the United Kingdom. The school has a population of 279 Year 10 and 11 pupils taking their GCSEs and 526 pupils taking A-Levels in Years 12 and 13. 34 pupils take the International Baccalaureate. My school is an important institution as it is the only non-fee-paying school on Island where pupils can pursue a broad range of A-Level or International Baccalaureate subjects. The music department is very small, with 28 pupils currently being taught the GCSE and A-Level course, of which seven are the Year 12 class.

Summary:

During the literature review, I will seek to explain how Self-Directed Learning (SDL), Self Determination Theory (SDT) and Collaborative Learning (CL) provide a way to understand how to motivate and engage pupils to succeed within the context of listening, appraising and extended writing about unfamiliar music. Continuing from the literature review, I will explain my two research questions and the design of my school-based intervention.

2. A CRITICAL REVIEW of the LITERATURE:

Purpose, scope and rationale:

The initial focus of my literature review was to understand why pupils of all ages (indeed, not only those studying music in school) had such a strong motivation for listening to music on a regular basis. According to my pupils, the requirements of listening to the music of the examination appears to conflict with their intrinsic interest because they must listen and analyse music which is not their autonomous choice. I therefore decided the first section would be focused on understanding the motivation for an adolescent to listen to music and its impact on their psychological development.

An important finding of my research of Year 1, was the concept of autonomous actions being (Yaeger, Lee & Dahl, 2017, p. 437):

“a core value for human motivation that provides individuals with a sense of free will, freedom of choice, self-reliance, and self-governing experience.”

Alongside competence and relatedness, autonomy constitutes one of three essential psychological needs which Deci (1971) stated in the seminal concept of Self-Determination Theory. Fortunately, there was a wide variety of literature available about SDT, to create an intervention which would link autonomous choice of music to the skill of essay writing. However, there was no literature that exactly modelled the theories and outcomes of the type of intervention I created. Nevertheless, I linked the autonomous listening of music to collaborative essay writing using the self-directed ‘Quadrant Approach’ to learning (SDL) and discuss research methods of collaborative writing during my review of the literature.

I decided to structure my literature review into four key sub-headings:

- What is the motivation for an adolescent to listen to music and its impact on their psychological development?
- What is Self-Determination Theory (SDT)?
- Self-Directed Learning (SDL): An Effective Means for Boys to Learn?
- Collaborative Essay Writing: Expectancy for Success

As a result of choosing these sub-headings, my literature review is more focused. The titles of each sub-heading purposefully refer to the key areas in the title of my investigation: ‘collaborative essay writing’, ‘autonomy’ through the scope of Self Determination Theory, ‘Boys’ and ‘Listening to Music’ in the first section of my literature review.

2.1 What is the motivation for an adolescent to listen to music and its impact on their psychological development?

Adolescents often deem music to be of significant value to them, demonstrating this most clearly with a strong motivation to listen to it often (Christenson, DeBenedittis & Lindlof, 1985; Christenson & Roberts, 1998; North, Hargreaves & O'Neill, 1999; Roe, 1985; Zillmann & Gan, 1997).

Adolescents place great value on music in their lives due to the phase of psychological development they are experiencing (Laiho, 2002; Larson, 1995). Music can influence mood (Laiho, 2004, p.49). According to Saarikallio & Erkkilä (2007), mood (affect) regulation is the process of “modifying or maintaining the occurrence, duration and intensity of both negative and positive moods”. In regards adolescents, Behne (1997) states that “compensating listening” activities (which occur when adolescents wish to regulate their mood), is the most important purpose of listening.

Laiho (2004) states there are four main psychological themes that are central to the value adolescents place on music. These themes are emotion, agency, interpersonal relationships and identity with the most common theme being emotion. These concepts are closely aligned to those of SDL, an important metacognitive construct which explains the type of motivation for a pupil’s motivation to do a task.

2.2 What is Self Determination Theory (SDT)?

Self Determination Theory is a construct of learning, whereby pupils are seen to be “taking in and assimilating the values and regulations of non-intrinsically motivated activities as internalisation and integration” (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and therefore developing and expanding on their abilities as a learner. Whilst investigating ‘non-intrinsically motivated behaviours’, perhaps more commonly termed ‘extrinsic motivation’, Ryan and Deci (2016, p. 97) considered these behaviours to be:

“socially valued behaviours (*which*) can become self-valued and motivated as people gain an understanding of the activities’ importance, even if the pupil considers it to be a boring activity”.

A critical understanding of SDT is “intrinsic motivations are seen when an activity satisfies basic human needs” of Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness (Deci, 1971). In essence, humans have basic psychological needs, and whilst interacting with others in their social environment, these needs are either met, leading to psychological wellbeing, or if not, leading to psychological stress.

With reference to music, when an activity is voluntarily done, whether that is composing, performing or listening to music, due to the simple pleasure of what that activity provides, this demonstrates an intrinsically motivated behaviour. Therefore, all pupils will value and judge the activity as important to them and have higher levels of Subjective Well-Being (Przybylski, Weinstein, Murayama, Lynch, & Ryan, 2012).

Autonomous behaviours during Adolescence:

Autonomy is stated as “a developmental milestone achieved during adolescence” (Steinberg, 2011). The development of autonomy is discussed through a variety of lenses, including agency, sense of personal identity, making decisions, wish for independence, and in seeking achievement (Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003). According to Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007), autonomy increases slowly during adolescence but towards the arrival of adulthood, increases more dramatically (Gutman & Eccles, 2007; Wray, Lake, Crouter, & McHale, 2010) and has three key domains:

1. Emotional (Adolescents require less support from their parents)
2. Behavioural (Adolescents behave more independently from their peers and parents)
3. Cognitive (Adolescents demonstrate a strong need to need to act on their own opinions).

In conclusion, adolescents' autonomous motivation is a type of self-determination that is different from their wish for independence. This is due to self-determined motivation providing intrinsically motivated reasons for which they choose to show their autonomy (Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005; Van Petegem, Beyers, Vansteenkiste, & Soenens, 2012).

Competence:

Evans (2015, p.68) states that a pupil's wish to feel competent correlates to "a desire to be effective in one's skills, abilities, and interactions in the social environment (Elliot, McGregor, & Thrash, 2002)". If "effective" motivation is put into action, the natural cause is emerging competence, which according to White (1959) is first known in infants when they know they have caused change to their environment. Evans (2015 p.68), reports that there is a logical link between the competence construct and musical education: "experiences of competence and achievement have a motivating influence, while experiences of excessive difficulty and inability thwart the competence need, leading to feelings of inefficacy". Consequently, pupils will determine that learning is too challenging and stop altogether if their expectancy value is weak. As the syllabus of the GCSE and A-Level Music examination provides pupils with limited autonomy to

choose which pieces of music to analyse and appraise, it is possible that pupils could experience lesser feelings of competence, efficacy and success.

Relatedness:

Pupils form strong alliances with their peers and show a need to do so within their school. One of three key constructs of SDT is relatedness, which is termed “the need to feel close and connected with feelings of belongingness and acceptance by others” (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). A musical learner will encounter relatedness within a variety of relationships with a strong focus on social interaction, for example with teachers, parents and their peers. Therefore, relatedness is a very important motivational facet for a musical learner and particularly in a ‘practical’ lesson of performance, but also within the shared experience of learning within a class setting.

Intrinsic Motivation:

In an early and seminal definition, Deci (1975) described intrinsic motivation as, "actions (*which*) are performed out of interest and require no 'separable' consequence, no external or intrapsychic prod, promise, or threat". Pupils often feel very positively towards the task, showing enjoyment or satisfaction whilst taking part in a musical activity.

Csikszentmihalyi (1975) gave the definition “autotelic” as any action taken where the activity is carried out because of it’s own purpose. Pupils demonstrate intrinsic motivation through actions such as mastering skills or curiosity (Piaget [1971]; White [1959]). This closely aligns to a pupil’s developing curiosity to listen to music. (Maehr,

Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Providing pupils with positive feedback, either from the teacher or from peers about the success of an activity led to further and more profound intrinsic motivation (Ryan, Mims, & Koestner, 1983) and meta-analysis (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999). However, Amemiya & Wang (2018) suggest that 14- to 18-year-olds, (the ages of pupils of this investigation), to be more likely to consider feedback which focuses on effort correlating to their overall ability. This could be a direct result of the school culture moving towards meeting target grades as a measure of performance at GCSE or A-Level.

Ryan and Deci (2000) considered autonomy to be the strongest of the three psychological needs because it creates the greatest emotional fulfilment. Though it is also understood that a balance of all three must be attained. Sheldon and Niemiec (2006), stated if there were an imbalance in pupils meeting these psychological needs, it can create conflict. For example, a pupil might prefer to listen to music alone at the expense of the relatedness of building friendships (Bonneville-Roussy, Vallerand & Bouffard, 2013).

Extrinsic Motivation:

Deci and Ryan's (1985) definition for extrinsic motivation is "doing something for some reason other than the task itself". Therefore, extrinsic motivation is initiated by an external agency. However, through a process of integrating and internalising their emotions, extrinsically motivated behaviours can become intrinsic. If an externally motivated behaviour can become integrated within a person, they will demonstrate more self-regulating behaviours and show behaviours of their own volition

(Kelman, 1961 and Schafer, 1968 [as cited in Argelander). Appendix G (p. 105)

explains the graduations of contrast between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which are best represented using a spectrum. Deci and Ryan (1985), defined the “organismic integration theory” as a sub-theory of Self Determination Theory which described four variations of extrinsic motivation. They were all based on a pupil’s level of self-regulation (Rigby, Deci, Patrick, & Ryan, 1992).

The graduations of motivation show pupils can be externally motivated to listen to the music because they were instructed to by their teacher, because they receive praise from their teachers or for an external reward. Conversely, they may be relatively internally motivated; they understand how valuable it is to practice the skills associated with active listening and appraising for the success of their examination.

Extrinsic Motivation: What types are there?

External regulation is demonstrated by a pupil when their behaviour is subjected by influence from their social environment, perhaps via the possibility of punishment or a reward. There is no involvement of ‘choice’ and when pupils try to regulate their emotions, the only responses are either to comply or defy this external regulation. Examples such as terminal examinations, extreme pressure to do well, monitoring or comparing their ability with peers are types of external regulators.

Introjected regulation is the second type of regulation on the spectrum, though critically, the external regulators are often via rewards and threats of punishment given by the pupils themselves. Therefore self-control and ego become the predominant

means of regulation. Examples of introjected regulatory behaviours include pride, shame and guilt (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Identified regulation is the first type of regulation where pupils begin to experience acting by their own volition and its impact on their sense of self. The pupil will value an activity.

Integrated regulation is demonstrated as a form of extrinsic motivation but is the most internal and self-determined stage. Pupils will identify and assimilate the importance of these motivational behaviours for their goals which will be close to their sense of self.

Ryan and Connell (1989) stated that pupils who were conscientious in school consistently demonstrated Introjected Regulation (controlled motivation) and Identified Regulation (autonomous motivation). However, interjectory behaviours are often associated with pupils feeling anxious whilst in school and having a maladaptive ability to cope with failure. However, identity motivation demonstrated enjoyment in school and an ability to be proactive in coping with failure. Therefore, a pupil who acts autonomously often performs better in school and has an enhanced sense of well-being.

According to Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) a pupil may decide to do an activity because of “controlled motivation”. These motivations are external to themselves such as the social pressures they experience. As listening to music is often understood by many to be a stereotypical behaviour of most adolescents, some pupils themselves

might understand it to be a social measure by which they would feel pressure to listen to music and feel they belong with their peers, family members or with a particular culture. Therefore, some pupils could choose to listen to music to manage feelings of anxiety (introjected motivation), or because of external social pressure (extrinsic motivation).

What is Self-Regulation Theory? (SRT):

Self-regulation involves control of self. Pupils demonstrate this control by having self-awareness as a learner and the processes of how to complete their activities in class. The process of self-regulation is explained by Schunk and Zimmerman (2011) and Zimmerman and Campillo (2003) who developed the social-cognitive framework as initially defined by Bandura and Schunk (1981), and is divided into three parts.

These are:

1. 'Forethought Phase', learners who are highly self-regulated will analyse the task.
2. 'Performance Phase', learners will apply skills of self-control that enable the focus to be only on the task.
3. 'Self-Reflective Phase', an evaluation of the task, how it went and reflective thoughts for further improvements.

Pupils who demonstrate self-regulation often show thinking skills which are considered 'higher-order'. Presseisen stated (Hedegaard, 2011, p.34):

“higher-order thinking means self-regulation of the thinking process. We do not recognise higher-order thinking in an individual when someone else ‘calls the plays’ at every step” Hedegaard (2011, p.34).

Therefore in summary, the concepts surrounding SDT, SRL and in particular, autonomy are central to adolescent motivation. Within the classroom setting, SDL has been shown to be a very successful form of teaching to allow pupils' needs to be met and be actively engaged in an activity.

2.3 Self-Directed Learning (SDL): an effective means for boys to learn?

According to Schweder and Raufelder (2021), “self-directed learning (SDL) meets adolescents' needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness which is essential for their motivation”. Self-directed learning gives the pupils complete autonomy to ask questions and therefore develop their own learning objectives and understanding. This allows them to guide their own learning, independently of adult control and elicits feelings of competence. As each pupil chooses to work by themselves or with a partner, and receives feedback from their peers or their teacher, this gives a stronger sense of both competence and relatedness.

This approach to learning is becoming more popular in some schools as they “effectively address the increasing heterogeneity of pupils” (Vansteenkiste, Aelterman,

Haerens & Soenens, 2019; Vock & Gronostaj, 2017). Research conducted about interventions with a focus on SDL found that the most successful strongly correlated to adolescents' needs for autonomy, relatedness and competence (Dahl & Vanderschuren, 2011; Jetha & Segalowitz, 2012 (as cited in Bates, 2014, p.2088-2090). Therefore, this could support the understanding that girls or boys' needs are better supported via SDL than in a Teacher Directed Learning setting, in which a teacher has designed a formal lesson plan, and all pupils are taught at the same speed. Benson (2011) furthers this understanding to state that TDL activities offer fewer opportunities for pupils to show their prior knowledge and skills.

How are pupil's basic needs met within the framework of SDL?

Pupil's needs of autonomy are supported by providing more flexible learning opportunities, taking a nuanced approach to the pupil's learning objectives and allowing pupils to take responsibility for their own learning (Benita, Roth, & Deci, 2014; Benware & Deci, 1984; Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Sheldon, & Deci, 2004).

Competence is met by providing opportunities for pupils to self-assess, giving formative feedback that supports the pupil's intentions, and allowing pupils to set their own learning outcomes (Hattie, 2009; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009).

The cohesion which emerges whilst working with their peers in the classroom, will bring a natural sense of relatedness (Katz & Assor, 2007; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009) via their social connections and interactions.

Research regarding Self-Directed Learning (SDL) within the context of gender:

As SDL is a form of learning where the pupils choose the topic and method to meet their learning outcomes (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991; Knowles, 1975), it would be presumptive to suggest that because of this, it would reduce any difference in outcome by gender due to the individualised learning approach.

Research on the impact on gender using SDT has found mixed results (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2004). Intrinsic motivation was stronger in girls. They also demonstrated stronger self-regulation and were not as affected by external influences compared to boys (Karsenti & Thibert, 1994; Thibert & Karsenti, 1996).

However, these differences in motivation and self-regulation were not found to be conclusive in a study of 8th Grade pupils in a school in Germany (Raufelder, Scherber, & Wood, 2016). Furthermore, a study of a Norwegian Maths pupils (6th to 11th Grade pupils) discovered girls showcasing lower intrinsic motivation than boys, but boys were less intrinsically motivated than girls in verbal subjects (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2004). Similarly to my initial assessment of pupil motivation using the Music Practice Motivation Scale (MPMS) (Schatt, 2023), the students of this study were given a modified version of the “Self Description Questionnaire” (Marsh, 1990). Similarly, their responses were measured using a Likert Scale which corresponded to scores of 1 to 5 with 5 indicating the highest self-concept. This was an effective and reliable measure of motivation for quantitative statistical analysis given there were 907 students involved in this longitudinal study.

The majority of research-based literature has concluded that pupils' needs and motivation becomes less prevalent in girls and boys during adolescence but much of this research has taken place within Teacher-Directed Learning (TDL) settings. Schweder and Raufelder (2021) sought to understand if this were true among adolescents who participated in a setting of Self-Directed Learning, and the differences in their needs being met. Statements of 754 adolescents in Germany (Female pupils: $n = 372$ and Male pupils: $n = 382$) were empirically analysed and led to the implementation of an intervention whereby every term (twice a year), pupils experienced a week of only SDL lessons approach. The three-phase structure is shown in Appendix F (p.104).

The outcome of the study revealed boys reporting a higher degree of extrinsic and introjected regulation compared to girls. This contrasts to previous findings involving TDL settings which reported boys to be less intrinsically motivated and self-regulated (Alivernini, Manganelli, Cavicchiolo, Girelli, Biasi & Lucidi, 2018; Grouzet, Otis, & Pelletier, 2006; Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992; Vallerand, Blais, Briere & Pelletier, 1989; Vallerand, Fortier & Guay, 1997). The study by Schweder and Raufelder (2021) also revealed boys to have a stronger awareness of autonomy and competence than girls (Diseth, Breidablik & Meland, 2018). These differing outcomes suggest that an SDL intervention can support the psychological learning needs and therefore motivation for girls and boys. Within an SDL setting, the learning objectives a pupil sets are based on their prior knowledge, allowing the pupils to reach an "optimal level of requirement for themselves, regardless of their gender" (Hiebert & Grouws, 2007; Schweder, Raufelder, & Wulff, 2020; Vygotsky et al., 1978). The teacher's role is therefore an assistant. These opportunities to demonstrate competence and autonomy, as well as relatedness

whilst working with peers, means their psychological needs can be fully met (Hiebert & Grouws, 2007; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009).

Conversely, it is possible that the SDL model does not allow all adolescent boys to fulfil their basic psychological needs (Yeager et al., 2017). Delays in their maturity of self-regulation strategies have been noted in some studies. Therefore, boys may feel their learning will be limited using an SDL intervention, which are “intended to build on control capacities expected to have already matured” (Jetha & Segalowitz, 2012 (as cited in Bates, 2014); Lenroot & Giedd, 2010).

Was Autonomy significant to the success of the SDL intervention amongst boys?

Schewder and Raufelder (2021) stated the correlations between autonomy, identified regulation and intrinsic motivation were comparatively weaker in girls than boys. This correlates with previous research that girls’ motivation is less supported via autonomy than boys. (Cheon, Reeve, & Moon, 2012; Diseth, Bredablik & Meland 2018; Jang, Kim & Reeve, 2012). Autonomy was considered as the cause of introjected regulation among boys but not girls. Therefore, creating an autonomous setting for learning could be successful and positive means to encourage motivation amongst boys.

In general, boys also show a less “adaptive learning behaviour” than girls (Duckworth & Seligman, 2006; Mullola, Ravaja, Lipsanen, Alatupa, Hintsanen, Jokela & Keltikangas-Järvinen 2012). Kessels, Heyder, Latsch & Hannover (2014) stated this could be because of a misunderstanding between the concepts of ‘motivation’ and ‘engagement’ and could also explain why there can be more challenging behaviour

amongst boys (Renold, 2001). Therefore, it appears teacher led learning may be disproportionately focused against boys and their motivation to learn (Beaman, Wheldall, & Kemp, 2006).

Furrer and Skinner's (2003) found girls to have a higher awareness of relatedness towards their teachers than boys. However, in comparison to competence and autonomy, relatedness was the "weakest" predictor for pupils' motivation in an SDL setting. This suggests that an SDL intervention may not support pupils' needs for relatedness as strongly as those for autonomy and competence.

SDL supports pupils' learning development using autonomy as the means to organise their learning. Therefore, pupils in an SDL setting may be less influenced by the activities of their peers or teachers (known as perceived relatedness). Schweder & Raufelder (2019) have stated that boys may need clearer instruction to "recognise their social environment as an essential learning resource".

2.4 Collaborative Essay Writing: Expectancy for Success

In a seminal study, Swain and Lapkin (2001) consider collaborative writing "further augments the knowledge bases of the learners as they tap into their peers' writing skills". This view suggests that collaboration and focusing on SDL through discussion, could have a positive impact on both the perception and the completion of a written task.

Early research on the theme of ‘collaboration’ centres on the context of ‘second language’ and the impact of collaborative discussion or what role does the first language have in second language learning (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). However, more recently, the focus of research has been on writing as means for language learning, using collaborative writing activities. Two important examples are Swain and Lapkin (2001 and 2002). Swain and Lapkin (2001) investigated “whether different types of task elicited more or less focus on form”. Pupils produced written work and after taking part in discussions, given a test in the latter stages. Like my investigation, I gave my pupils a pre- and post-assessment to compare their learning outcomes and understand if “languaging” (termed by Swain (2006) as “problem solving through discussion”) in a collaborative writing activity might have also triggered a language (terminology) learning process. Although Alegri’a de la Colina and Garcí’a Mayo (2007) stated that only with repetition of the task would any measurable effects of learning be evident. Swain and Lapkin (2002) further this point of view stating learning will occur when pupils are given multiple opportunities to collaborate through a variety of tasks including writing, rewriting or discussing feedback.

According to Thompson (2015, p.86) coherent use of literacy skills are understood to be fundamental to all curriculum understanding and attainment, and teachers hold this responsibility. However, there are two views of the purpose of literacy, one being to build skills and the other to make sense of the world. For this reason, Thompson believes that “literacy is best viewed as social and cultural practices rather than an exercise in technical skills or competencies” (2015, p.86). Therefore, using any form of literacy within a subject is about finding meaning and acting appropriately within the social and cultural context of their environment.

Schwab (1978) states that substantive (key concepts) and syntactic knowledge (ways of knowing and representing) are essential attributes to any teacher who has a substantial degree of literacy in their subject. Therefore, it means careful planning is needed to design a task that engages an adolescent with the process as well as the product.

Thompson argues that present day expectations for pupils performing well means that lesson plans often centre on the teacher's goals for covering the curriculum instead of placing the demands of learning directly on the pupils. He states that "the objectives or goals of the task design must be focused on the learning of the pupils rather than curriculum delivery" (Thompson, 2015, p. 88). Therefore, teachers need to create lessons where pupils can learn through the lens of social and cultural interaction. This links to the notion of 'Concept Development' by Vygotsky, involving a task which is designed to focus on communication, and by extension self-directed learning.

A Vygotskian Principle of Teaching:

Burgess (2007, p.25) states that Vygotsky's theory, when considered with linguistics and theory together, can cause a strong impact on the quality of literary teaching:

"Vygotskian theory focuses attention is on the transformation of existing psychological functions as new resources from the culture are internalised and appropriated. For this there must be both the interaction of the child with culture as well as culture with the child."

What is interesting from this mode of thought is pupils must respond as active participants in that culture. The design of my intervention aims to encourage active

participation in their communication with each other and create a new culture of learning.

Vygotsky's theoretical framework on learning demands that the teacher focus on both the literacy tasks the pupils complete and that the pupils internalise the psychological tools necessary to complete the task. Vygotsky (1978, p.57) argues that the key to the development of a pupil's mind is social interaction:

“Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological)”.

This approach of assessing 'potential development' is a significant change from the traditional stance of the role of a teacher within the classroom, instead 'assisting' pupils to reach a goal. Unlike traditional ideology where the purpose of learning is to gain knowledge, Vygotsky's (1987) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) considers learning a process, and the evolution of that process is more important than the end goal. The ZPD is the difference between what a pupil already knows and their potential to develop as a learner. This is shown when they can complete a task on their own or with assistance from a more able peer or teacher with greater success and confidence. Vygotsky also considers “collaboration and co-operation (as) crucial features of effective teaching” (Daniels, 2007, p. 311).

Quadrant ‘Four Phase’ Approach:

Collaborative learning aligns very well to the Self-Directed Learning model as stated by Schweder and Raufelder (2021). John Steiner (2000, p.13) stated that learning collaboratively is demonstrated by:

“...fully realised equality in roles and responsibilities’ because participants see themselves engaged in a joint task”

Therefore, by allowing pupils to explore and learn specific concepts within a carefully designed task, the learning environment will encourage their intrapsychological development further.

Newman, Griffin and Cole’s (1989, p.95) suggestion that the classroom environment is a “construction zone for conceptual development” links to Vygotsky’s (1987) theory of “social interpersonal learning leading intrapersonal (individual) development”. This concept of ‘talking’ and interacting amongst pupils is a way to effectively develop a pupil’s ideas and thoughts. Therefore, group task design is a very positive mode of pupil learning. As Vygotsky (1997, p.104), states, if “nothing changes, then nothing has been taught”

What is ‘The Quadrant Model’:

Commonly called the ‘Quadrant Model’, this is a basic but very effective model to sequence a task and was created to support pupils understanding of both their substantive and syntactic knowledge of the curriculum. As I discovered whilst carrying out the third task of the MLT in Year 1, this model can have a very positive

effect on engaging pupils with tasks that are high in ambiguity, such as those of the essay tasks of question 5. This was one of the key reasons why I used this model of teaching within my investigation.

This sequence of learning (Appendix H, p. 106) is based on a Vygotskian framework for “understanding the development of identity” (Harré,1983); which Edwards first used in her “analysis of student teachers’ learning” (Edwards 1995).

The model often takes some time for pupils to both acquire and use their substantive and syntactic knowledge within the framework of the task; they are also being asked to develop higher order thinking and take responsibility for their own learning using quadrants 2 and 3. However, by quadrant 3, the pupils will have developed their knowledge enough to use in problem-solving activities. They then begin to “grasp its potential and limitations and more firmly connect it to a readjusted knowledge schema and the system of inferences that go with it” (Edwards: p.21).

Collaborative tasks often start in quadrant three, with Edwards considering quadrant 3 to be: “open tasks that allow learners to apply key concepts to their understanding of a text through reading or creation of a text through writing”. (Thompson: 2015).

However, any key concepts will have been taught as part of the pupil’s prior knowledge during Quadrant 1. The development of understanding will be demonstrated when the pupils apply their knowledge of terminology more readily and with greater accuracy. This is known as the metalinguistic function of “metatalk” (Swain, 2001). Pupils will be understanding the relationship between the key terminology, the context and the function of the word within the music, through the process of verbalising their ideas.

To conclude, this model is a way of structuring lessons to promote learning and develop

a pupil's understanding via cognitive autonomy, therefore instilling a greater degree of confidence and motivation to learn, particularly amongst boys.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review:

I have sought to define pupil motivation to listen to music and the impact on their learning within the context of collaboration and autonomy. The literature is clear, the motivation to listen to music is complex, but is largely dictated by the emotional needs of the pupils and the autonomy to listen to music of their choice. These affect their sense of agency, identity and social connections and regulates their mood. Within the syllabus of the A-Level examination, the pupils are given little autonomy to decide the pieces they must study, listen to and appraise, therefore investigating SDT, SDL and collaborative learning theories are appropriate to inform my research questions of this investigation.

To summarise, there are two key research questions that will be the focus of my school-based intervention:

1. In relation to the self-determination theory: What role does collaborative essay writing play in supporting Year 12 pupils to develop their confidence to write an essay of this type?
2. In relation to the self-determination theory: What effect does an autonomous choice of music have on motivation to do the essay writing task?

3. METHODOLOGY:

3.1 Practitioner Research:

Practitioner research is taking place when academic research in education is being put into practice within a classroom or school. This type of research was actively encouraged by Hargreaves (1996) who considered it important that teachers engage with quantitative research to inform their own practice. Conversely, Elliott (2001) stated that Hargreaves' approach to be without enough concern for the depth of inquiry needed when discussing education.

One of the consequences of my Year 12 pupils being the subject of my research (subsequently one class member left school in October 2023 leaving a total sample size of seven pupils) was that I would only be able to use Qualitative methods of gathering data to answer my research questions. Indeed, Cohen, Manion, Morrison and Bell (2011, p.144) stated that:

“a sample size of 30 is held by many to be the minimum number of cases if researchers plan to use some form of statistical analysis on their data.”

This statement aligns to my work of last year, where I gathered data using a mixed methods design with a sample size of thirty pupils across all four year groups of my school. However, speaking directly to pupils within a Focus Group Interview setting was of greatest value to my practitioner research and therefore my professional development (McNiff, 2002). The variety and depth of their responses were closely correlated to their age. Being late adolescents and undertaking a heuristic and “exploratory interview” as suggested by Oppenheim (1992, p.65), meant pupils were able to speak freely and honestly about their feelings on what was an emotionally

sensitive topic to them. Cohen et al, (2011, p.161) explains the strength of Qualitative data design well:

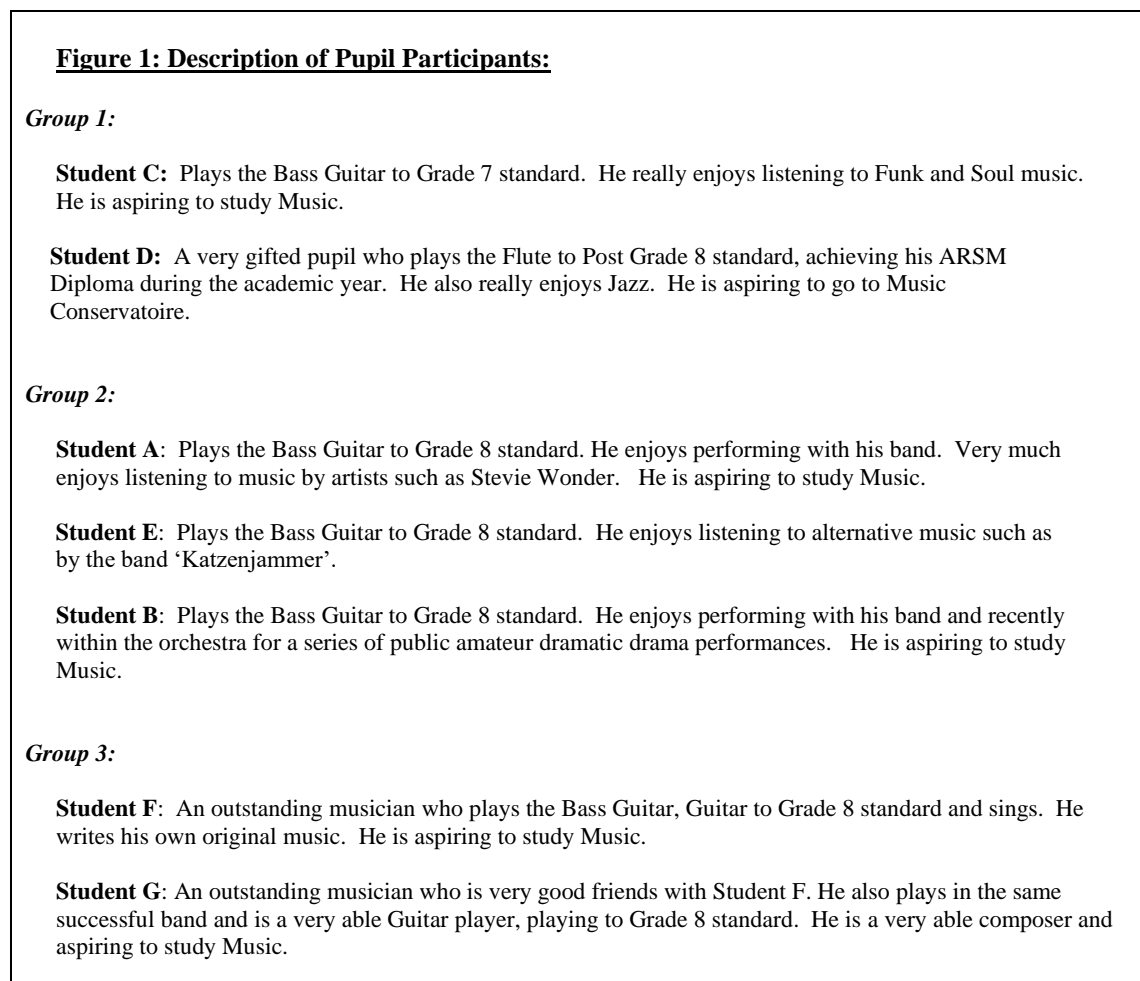
“In much qualitative research is places on the uniqueness, the ideographic and exclusive distinctiveness of the phenomenon, group or individuals in question....it is perhaps unwise to talk about a ‘sample’, and more fitting to talk about a group or individuals”

The typical size of an A-Level Music class is small. As stated in Ofsted’s Review Research Series report on Music (2021), the last ten years has revealed a steep decline in the numbers of pupils taking the qualification. To explain this in context, the average number of pupils taking A-Level Music in England is one or two per school (Ofsted, 2021, “The current context of music education in England” section). Therefore, the class size of A-Level pupils I currently teach are above average and could perhaps be considered a ‘good’ sample size within the context of this subject. For reference my collaborative partner “Peter” taught A-Level Music to three Year 12 boys from September 2023 to July 2024.

For my research investigation this year, I have chosen to pursue the practitioner research model as it provides an effective way for me to collaborate with another colleague from a neighbouring school and gain a deeper insight to the pupils’ optimum methods of learning.

3.2 Participants:

Having taught five of the seven Year 12 pupils a year earlier, they had had experience of being involved in my research project of Year 1, and they appeared enthusiastic to participate again. After the intervention was explained to them, Student F's initial reaction was "This is so cool". The two pupils who had not previously participated did so without hesitation. For reference, all participants and institutions were given pseudonyms to protect their identify. Pupils are identified as Students A to G and "Peter" is the name given to my collaborative partner at "Elizabeth College". Figure 1 discusses the pupil participants individually in the groups they assigned themselves to for each lesson:



To put the level of prior attainment and subsequent A-Level target grades of my pupils into context, the average grade the pupils of this class are expected to attain is a C. However, Students A and E are targeted to achieve B grades and Student D an A grade.

Whilst the pupils willingly participated, recognising the intervention was addressing an important aspect of their course, I was concerned that as the leader of the project, I would cause the reliability of the practitioner research to be less secure. Pupils might have felt pressured as their teacher being so closely involved, but as Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013, p.105) stated, whilst these are very possible risks it is difficult to eradicate completely but they can be “attenuated”.

With regards to my collaborative partner, I used open questioning during the two interviews to establish constructive and honest dialogue of his professional opinions in relation to the intervention. His and the pupil’s responses of my school will contribute to triangulating the data generated.

3.3 Collaboration:

Collaboration was present in two critical aspects of this investigation: forming the basis of the Self-Directed ‘Four-Phase Approach’ of each lesson, and between myself and my Collaborative partner.

Collaboration with and between the pupils:

Collaboration was a particularly prominent feature of this investigation, particularly between the pupils. They formulated their own collaborative pairs, and for a few lessons, worked in a group of three. Formulating groups for collaborative purpose was essential for the Quadrant Theory to be fully realised in the investigation. Pupils had to collaborate and use Self-Regulation techniques to affect their own learning. As John Steiner (2000, p.13) explained, being engaged in this joint task allowed pupils to “fully realise equality in roles and responsibilities”.

Therefore, by allowing pupils to explore and learn specific concepts within a carefully designed collaborative task, the learning environment supported their interpsychological development further.

Collaboration with Peter at Elizabeth College:

To triangulate my understanding of how collaboration impacted my investigation, I felt it was very important to work with a colleague who taught at a nearby single-sex boys’ school. On the day the pupils underwent their first intervention lesson, I recorded my first meeting with my collaborative partner, “Peter” at “Elizabeth College”. The purpose of this thirty-minute discussion, was to ask how he and the boys of his school responded to the competing challenges of essay writing, active listening and appraising music (Appendix P, p.116).

Similarly to my pupil interview (Appendix M p.110), this was also semi-structured based on five questions, to enable broader discussion. Indeed, we discussed marking schema for this essay, the differences between our examination board's approach to the examination (for reference Peter teaches from the WJEC Eduqas syllabus) and eliciting the best types of discussion from pupils within a whole class activity.

This was an excellent opportunity to discuss our differing teaching practices and establish strategies to support pupils within a collaborative and self-directed learning environment (Appendix DD p.132).

I had my second meeting with Peter, after the fifth Intervention lesson, coinciding with the second Pupil Focus Group interview. I showed Peter three examples of pupil work, to showcase the quality of language and application of key terminology at the time in the research process. Evaluating the quality of the pupil's responses with another colleague was an aspect of this discussion I enjoyed very much. However, my collaborative partnership was the only aspect of my investigation which differed from my CUREC application. I planned for a third and final interview with Peter in the second term, but this did not happen due to his busy schedule. Due to ethical considerations, I did not want to put any pressure on him to be interviewed.

3.4 Design of the Investigation and Instruments for Research:

The intervention I created comprised of three overarching stages, taking place over twelve weeks as summarised in Figure 2. I have discussed how each of these stages impacted the outcome of each research question.

Figure 2:

Pre-Intervention Pupil Participant Process :

1. Ethical Clearance Letters were submitted and returned

Stage 1: Preliminary Assessments:

1. Pre-Investigative Survey
2. First Focus Group Interviews: Pupils and Collaborative Partner
3. Assessment of Attainment with Question 5 (independent)
4. Taught the Quadrant Model
5. Pupils received resource explaining the Quadrant Model

Stage 2: Intervention Lessons and Focus Group Interviews:

1. Intervention Lessons 1 – 5
2. Second Focus Group Interview: Pupils and Collaborative Partner
3. Intervention Lessons 7 – 8
4. Pupils completed one essay a week as a group or if they wished, independently and received written feedback

Stage 3: Post Intervention Assessment and Focus Group Interviews:

1. Post Intervention Lessons 1 – 2
2. Assessment of attainment with Question 5 (independent)
3. Final Focus Group Interview: Pupils

3.4.1 Stage 1: Pre-Investigative Survey and Assessment:

In the week prior to the intervention starting in early January, the pupils completed a brief survey of five questions (Appendix N pp.113-114), in hand-written form, to ascertain which types of music they liked to listen to, how important listening to music was to them, how often they listened to music and perhaps most critically to this study, to list their reasons for listening to music. This survey was not a means to retrieve Quantitative data. Instead, it quickly ascertained the pupil's prior intrinsic motivation for this activity and if their views correlated with the literature regarding the impact of music on an adolescent's psychological development. I developed my survey from the types of questions of the Music Practice Motivation Scale by Schatt (2023).

The MPMS survey was featured in a study of eight schools and designed to understand what pupils' motivations were to regularly practice their instrument or sing. I linked each question to a motivational construct of Self-Determination Theory. However, unlike this questionnaire, which used a 7-point Likert Scale to gain subtleties of opinion, the first question of my survey was multiple choice, followed by a question asking for the pupil's giving their preference of musical genre had it not been listed.

The variety in my type of questions was important. According to Cohen et al, (2011 p.384), multiple choice questions can quickly determine frequency of response by also giving respondents the choice to give multiple answers, as I did. There were seventeen options, sixteen of which referred to music of the 20th and 21st Centuries. Whilst Cohen et al, (2011 p.383) outlines the problems in making any assumptions that children have the knowledge and viewpoints that researchers expect, I choose to focus this question on music of the last seventy years, as the literature suggested that music deemed 'present day' would be valued by adolescents the most.

The second question asked pupils to state any musical preference not already mentioned in question 1, to ensure their preference(s) were acknowledged. The third and fourth questions were presented using a 7 and 6-point Likert Scale respectively as, I was aware that they provided a clear differentiation of response. Cohen et al, (2011) stated that pupils will prefer to choose the middle option if there is an uneven number, however for question three, all the pupils defined listening to music as either important or very important. The last question asked pupils to list the reasons why they listened to music. These types of open ended question are according to Cohen et al, (2011 p. 392) a very

“attractive device for smaller scale research or for those sections of a questionnaire that invite an honest, personal comment from respondents.”

The pupils underwent a pre-intervention assessment of their skill, completing a question 5 essay in class (Appendix N p.111) from the AS Level Paper (Pearson Edexcel: 2018) to ascertain their skill and success of attainment at this time. This was important as a means of assessing progression between these and essays completed during or after the intervention.

Stage 1: First Focus Group Interviews with Students and Collaborative Partner

Whilst my pupil survey allowed me to quickly understand their intrinsic motivation for listening to music, interviews, both with students and my collaborative partner formed the main basis of my data. Ercikan and Roth (2006) (cited in Cohen et al, 2011 p.21) were opposed to a "polarisation of research into either quantitative or qualitative....there is compatibility between the two". I used a “Parallel Mixed Design Method” Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) (cited in Cohen et al, 2011 p.25) using data that I gathered during the initial questionnaire to curate the questions for the first Focus Group interview (Appendix M, p.110). To ensure the first qualitative data set was focused on my research questions, the interview questions were focused on themes such as ‘analytical listening’, ‘perceptions of skills to complete Questions 5 and 6’ and ‘perceptions of essay writing in general’.

The interview questions were designed in a semi-structured format (Denscombe, 2010). This allowed me to further challenge the perceptions pupils had and to encourage them

to elaborate on their responses (Marvasti and Freie: 2017). Two groups (of four and three pupils) took part, allowing them to feel at ease and speak at some length, (Denscombe: 2010), Grieg and Taylor (1999, p.132) (as cited in Cohen et al, 2011 p.433). I recorded all interviews to gain an accurate transcript of not only words but dynamic, tone and hesitancy of voice, (Appendix Q p.117). and I recorded all interviews in the familiar surroundings of my classroom for the pupils (Herzog: 2005).

To establish a clear structure to each Intervention Lesson, I taught the pupils about the Quadrant Method in the week before the first Intervention Lesson. I created a resource for the pupils to read (Appendix R p.118), explaining the Quadrant Method as four distinct phases and what they should aim to do during each one.

3.4.2 Stage 2: Intervention Lessons 1 to 5:

Before each lesson, pupils told me their chosen song or instrumental piece to be shared with the group and I formulated the question, (Appendix S, pp.119-120).

All pupils assigned themselves into pairs (occasionally a group of three or one, depending on absenteeism) of their own choosing, and according to Edwards (2015) pupils should choose who they work with. They worked independently at a computer, but they were sat next to their partner, enabling easy discussion.

Pupils had the question e-mailed to their school account shortly in advance of the lesson. Each question contained a YouTube link for the pupils to open and listen to the

extract whenever they wished. There was no score for them to read, therefore all conditions imitated the pupil's experience in the examination.

I was aware that my role as a teacher was significantly changed, acting as a 'prompt' of timekeeping or answering questions when the pupils needed this. Each lesson began with speaking to the pupils as a group, then I suggested the pupils spend twenty minutes investigating the musical features and forty minutes justifying them alongside examples of WL (Assessment Objective 4). In this initial stage it was important for me to support the pupils in their timekeeping. A study by Wigglesworth and Storch (2009) carefully analysed the transcripts of the "pair talk" from 144 participants of university age (one third were male and all met the standard of English literacy to enter an Australian University). They identified the dual roles of collaborating and interacting in the "composing processes" and discovered that brainstorming of ideas (translating to the discussion of musical features in this investigation) took up a large proportion of the lesson and included making notes of their ideas, an issue I wanted to avoid. After the lesson, the pupils were given a week to complete their essay as homework which the pupils reported, often required a further meeting to discuss the music to formulate their essay and submit them to me to mark.

I marked the essays using the official holistic criteria of this essay as stated in Appendix L (p.109) and reported back to each group within two days of their submission.

Appendix T (p.121) is Student G's' marked essay after Intervention Lesson 3. I adopted a colour coded method of marking highlighting all musical features of their essay in Yellow, A04 in Green and relevant Wider Listening in Pink. In conjunction with formative comments, this colour coding system provided an easy mode of

reference for the pupils to quickly understand how they met the marking criteria and what to improve for next time.

The core method of qualitative data collection used during each intervention lesson were audio recordings. Microphones were positioned between the pairs of computers to capture the discussions of each of the groups (Appendix CC p.131). I subsequently made transcriptions of all their conversations for analysis. Whilst this proved to be a “very time-consuming exercise to prepare” (Cohen et al. p.537) it was essential that I did this myself to accurately note not only their conversations but pupil’s inflections of voice, hesitations, silence whilst they were writing, volume, speed and stresses of their speech and I enjoyed the process of listening to their insightful conversations. Despite the small numbers of pupils involved the data generated was certainly “detailed and rich” (Cohen p.539). As suggested by Partlett and Hamilton (1976) (as cited in Cohen et al., 2011, p.539) it is important to enable “progressive focusing”, where the researcher reviews and reflects on salient features that emerge during the research process. After each lesson I wrote key observations and reflections of pupil interactions in the lesson, therefore able to carefully curate the questions I asked for the second Focus Group interviews.

Stage 2: Second Focus Group Interviews:

Since the pupils had experienced five intervention lessons, I wished to understand what the pupil’s perceptions were about the impact this intervention was having on their learning. I framed the thirteen questions around a different motivation

associated with Self-Determination theory, Self-Directed Learning, Autonomy and Collaboration to determine what the evidence of these motivations were.

Having conducted my first pupil focus group interview using a semi-structured format (Denscombe, 2010), this still proved the most appropriate method to use, as it allowed me to further probe the perceptions pupils had had (Marvasti and Freie: 2017). The pupils were assigned to the same groups and were interviewed during their lunchtime, so not to conflict with curriculum time. I was aware to probe pupils in two ways as suggested by Aldridge and Levine (2001:19) (as cited in Cohen et al., 2011 p.421). Either, less intrusive (I might pause to listen and say “mmm” to assure them I was listening carefully) or more intrusive (I repeated a phrase and then asked for more information or summarising the answer to check for my understanding and then following with a question.). Fowler (2009: 139) (as cited in Cohen et al., p.421) advises against excessive probing as bias will become more evident, therefore, I tried to ask one further question per answer. Again, the open-ended nature of the questions meant it avoided an answer of a single word and according to Wright and Powell (2006: 317 (as cited in Cohen et al. p.433) this usually elicits greater accuracy in answers to closed questions, as they are “respondent-driven and respondent-focused” I recorded the interviews to gain an accurate transcript of the pupils’ responses (Appendix U p.122). This proved to an invaluable exercise in knowing how the pupils wanted to direct the final two intervention lessons.

Stage 2: Intervention Lessons 6 and 7:

The pupils wished to complete one more intervention under the usual conditions they had met in the previous five. However, for their final intervention lesson, the pupils asked to undergo a timed response, to see how they would cope with the expectations of writing. This ‘by-product’ of the investigation evidenced a ‘quasi-participatory research’ approach for the Post Intervention Lessons, in order to achieve greater agency with the investigative process (Rudduck and McIntyre, 2007). This was especially pleasing to see, as it demonstrated increasing engagement with SDL and motivation to further challenge themselves as active learners (Creswell, 2013).

3.4.3 Stage 3: Post Intervention Lesson 1 and 2:

The first Post-Intervention lesson involved the pupils analysing a piece I had chosen for them to ascertain their progress at this time. They did this task and all pupils worked independently, only occasionally speaking to their partner but all finished the essay. Appendix BB (p.130) is Student G’s response and showed extensive progression with synthesis of skill in comparison to his Pre-Assessment essay, (Appendix O p.115).

The second Post Intervention lesson coincided with preparations for the Year 12 internal examinations scheduled for the first week after the Easter Holiday. The pupils indicated that they wanted to do a timed response of question 5 and so, they were given twenty-five minutes to do the task independently. The pupils were told in advance that the extract of music would be linked to music of Area of Study 5, ‘Popular Music and Fusions’ and they would be allowed to use their Wider Listening sources list. They all completed the essay under examination conditions.

Post Intervention Focus Group Interview:

After the final Post Intervention lesson, the pupils took part in their final Focus Group interviews. They met in the same groups, and at the same times of the day as previously. Again, I recorded the conversation and later transcribed all recordings. The interview questions were once again framed according to a specific area of motivation associated with Self-Determination Theory, Self-Directed Learning, Collaborative Learning or Self Regulation Theory (Appendix V, p. 123).

3.5 Ethical Considerations and Data Protection:

When considering the ethical issues of undertaking an investigation of this type, I firstly completed a CUREC form (Ref: EDUC_C1A_23_318) explaining how I intended to maintain ethical integrity to ensure all participants gave their consent and from an informed perspective. I received ethical approval in January 2024, after which, I began collecting the data for my investigation.

I informed my Headteacher of my intention to conduct my investigation via an AP15 letter sent by e.mail (Appendix W, p.124) and swiftly received an enthusiastic written reply. I sent letters of permission, information sheet (Appendix X pp.125-126) and Opt-Out forms (Appendix Y p.127) to all parents and I gave pupils an AP25 form (Appendix Z p.128) and information sheet inviting them to participate in the research. I gave all pupils a verbal explanation of the investigation and the commitment this will involve, including seven intervention lessons and three interviews within a group setting. Despite assuring the pupils and parents that they could withdraw from the

research at any time, I never received any Opt-Out replies prior to or during the data collection period. The guidelines of BERA (2018, p.9) are clear; "Researchers should do everything they can to ensure that all potential participants understand, as well as they can, what is involved in a study". Therefore, seeking consent via this method was a very important ethical consideration to this investigation.

The pupils did not receive any pressure to participate in the research (Farrimond: 2017), which I believe improved the pupils' engagement and sense of agency with the research process (Farrimond, 2017; Rees, Garcia, & Oakley, 2007). Due to this approach, all pupils willingly participated. It was encouraging to see there was no 'group think' amongst the pupils (Watts and Ebbutt, 1987); by having a collective opinion or discouraging their personal opinions. There was also little evidence of pupils aiming to please me with their answers. They took the research seriously and the data generated was honest.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013), my research could be construed as "non-maleficent" as it did not compromise any fundamental ethical principles, and the methods of my research could not harm any of the participants. The pupils completed the Focus Group Interviews at lunchtime to stop any conflict with curriculum time. The interviews lasted on average 20 minutes. The pupils were instructed to spend an hour completing their essay for homework each week, therefore, the collective time spent on the data collection process was two hours each week.

I sent my collaborative partner an e-mail formally inviting him to participate in the investigation and attached an AP15 Consent Form for Teachers (Appendix AA p.129) and AP25 Information Sheet (Appendix X pp.125-126). He happily agreed to take part.

I ensured confidentiality and respect was always given to every participant. In accordance with Frankfort-Nachmias and Machmias (1992), I attributed pseudonyms to the participants and institutions involved. All pupil data has been collected and compiled on the school system using a protection password set up by the IT Administrator of the school. The research I have collected has been shared with my collaborative partner, 'Peter'.

Once the MLT has been completed, I will make the research report available to the Senior Leadership Team of my school and in accordance with BERA (2011), to the MLT students at the University of Oxford.

3.6 Limitations:

Attendance:

Absenteeism was a significant limitation within the research process. Of the seven intervention lessons, 'Student B' only attended the first and last lesson. Student B's choice of music was the focus of discussion and analysis during Intervention lesson 7 and was completed three working days later than scheduled. I had considered that this was because of the intervention lessons were on a Wednesday at 9.00am, but when I re-scheduled the lessons to Thursday at 10.15am and Friday at 11.20am, he did not attend these either, even after significant communication to his parents. By contacting his parents, I was concerned that this action would put pressure on him to participate but as the teacher for this class, I had to report Student B's absence as part of the school's Absence Policy. This could be a potential weakness of the data collection process but was very difficult to mitigate for.

Conversely, Student A stated that the collaborative nature of the investigation created a sense of “responsibility” to each other that they must attend each lesson:

Teacher: “Have you felt it important to attend because you are working in a group?”

Student A: “Er...yeah. I mean working in a group in general is a good way to motivate all of you because if you don’t do it, it isn’t a case of “Oh I will do it tomorrow, it’s my kinda fault” you are having to do that so you are staying on the level with the other person making sure they get through it as well, so there is a kind of feeling of responsibility.”

Teacher: “Is that how you feel?” (*speaking to Students C and D*)

Students C and D: “Yeah”

Student A: “It is a good motivatorit is good fun because it not just your opinion but the people coming in and stuff and you can have conversations about it.”

Most pupils discussed the responsibility to collaborate after the lesson as part of the homework, was also important to them and found it to be a very supportive and motivating method of progression in their essay writing.

The challenge of choosing music to analyse:

The pupils became increasingly aware to choose a piece of music that could be analysed by other pupils. If it was too abstract, the task would be too challenging.

With the best of intentions, Students G and B chose pieces that were abstract and for some pupils, very difficult to analyse as the features did not easily conform to analytical or stylistic norms within an A-Level Music context. Student F wanted to choose a piece that had “distinct features”, and he achieved that with his song “Giants”. On reflection, I could have posed the expectation that the pieces had to be chosen within a specific genre or decade, but the factor of autonomy, which was so critical to SDT, would have been somewhat lost.

I had considered as late-adolescents, the factor of “people-pleasing” towards their peers could be evident with their choice of music. Students F and G explained their choices of music, and the influence of their peers:

Teacher: “Was it important to you to make people happy with your choice of music, and if so why?”

Student F: “Yeah” (*Smiled and looked a little nervous*)

Student G: “Yeah...you don’t want people to hate what they are listening to”
(*Laughed*)

Student G to F: “There was something else you wanted to pick and I said “Don’t pick that because no one is going to enjoy it”

Student F to G: “Oh yeah....it was like Psychedelic Folk”

Teacher: “Oh wow”

Student F: “It is really really out there...so I chose Knots because I thought people could think this is a bit more ‘musical’...because the other song was really really strange”

Whilst they found autonomy to be positive, they clearly considered the choice of music before making it the subject of the lesson.

Recording: The impact of the Microphone’s presence:

The presence of a microphone was a feature of each Intervention lesson, placed between the pairs of pupils to capture their conversations and interviews. During the second Focus Group interview, they reflected:

Student D: “At the beginning we saw the Mics and we thought, “oh we had better say something””

Teacher: “Oh right” (*sounds surprised and laughs*)

Student D: “Well it was our inclination because obviously we knew you were going to listen to it so we were like...you know.”

Teacher: “Did that bother you?”

Student D: “Yeah a little at the beginning.”

Student A: “Yeah kinda noticed when you were putting the Mics out and stuff but now you just kinda get on with the work and forget that they are there, and genuinely just having a chat about the song.”

It was encouraging to know the recording process became a ‘normalised’ feature and did not hamper the discussions in later lesson. However, their presence could have had an impact during the first lesson especially. This outcome would have been difficult to mitigate for as other methods of data collection were of limited or no use with the small number of participants. I have also considered that a degree of ‘people pleasing’ is evident in Student A’s comment and could have influenced early discussions.

Microphone: Failing to Record

My second interview with my collaborative partner, Peter, failed to record due to a fault with the device. Therefore, I wrote key phrases and observations of the interview retrospectively and as accurately as possible. Consequently, I have not added conversation transcripts verbatim in the section about ‘Findings and Discussion’ but have included points that add to the overarching discussion.

A Second Cycle: Possibility for further Investigation

The essays of this cycle demonstrated some excellent progress in the quality of their A04 responses. However, this intervention has exposed possibilities of further improvement, where the pupils would benefit from a second cycle of applying the method and their knowledge to different genres of music. The pupils were more confident to analyse their own choice of piece and they were all from Area of Study 5: Popular Music and Fusions. Their confidence was evident during the second Focus Group interviews:

Student F: “Well not necessarily with the intervention but I think we need to do, (because as you said they have all been Popular Music except one that was Fusions) a timed 25 minute Classical thing, just to see how we get one with it, I know people aren’t going to want to do it but...”

Student G: “If we do that. I think it should be separate to the intervention”

Student F: “Yes definitely separate.”

Teacher: “That will be in three weeks, so we could do that then.”

Student G: “Cool, I think that would be a good shout”

The pupils had reflected that completing a timed essay but on a “Classical thing” would be a necessary task but would be a reluctant choice of music to listen to, suggesting Identified Regulation. This, however, is a positive finding, especially as the pupils would not have volunteered to do this task previously to the intervention but felt the confidence to try.

Peter: His decision to move from Pearson Edexcel to WJEC Eduqas:

Peter was no longer following the same syllabus as myself, Pearson Edexcel A-Level, and was clear why:

Rachel: “Are you familiar with the ‘unfamiliar question’ of the Edexcel A-Level exam?”

Peter: “Er..vaguely yeah, we stopped (*following Edexcel*) this year, we are doing Eduqas from this year as I was just so unhappy with Edexcel.”

Peter explained the reason he left the Pearson Edexcel syllabus was asking pupils to write an essay to a standard which is inherently too difficult for them to master in two years.

Peter: “But they are expecting them to write an essay of degree standard.”

Peter's concerns were focused on question 6, the 30 mark essay about a set work pupils have studied. Whilst I share his view that it is very difficult, pupils can meet this challenge if they have strong examples of Wider Listening. As the pupils of Peter's school were studying the A-Level Music syllabus from WJEC Eduqas, the translation of this exact intervention to pupils of Peter's school was more challenging. When I researched the content of the WJEC Eduqas examination, I understood Peter's concerns with the Edexcel Pearson essay tasks. Whilst WJEC Eduqas sets questions of an unprepared nature, they are in different forms depending on which of the five optional Area of Studies are taken. This contrasts very much from my own syllabus which does not have any divergence in assessment style between Areas of Study. The pupils will not be told the name of the piece, be given any lyrics if it were a song or be told what to mention in their response. There also appeared to be no requirement for pupils to state WL references to answer this question.

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis:

To aid the process of analysis, I organised my observation notes written during and after each intervention lesson, chronologically. As interpretation is a common and often inherent process throughout any qualitative data collection process, my method of organising the data enabled me to reflect and improve upon every aspect of my data collection after successive lessons.

According to Dey (1993) "thorough description" is the process where researchers consider and explore the contexts, research and participants intentions, and the research process. I especially focused on this whilst making my observation notes during Stage

2, allowing the formulation of questions for the Focus Group Interviews and gain a broader understanding of the pupil's perceptions of their confidence and success.

To ensure my findings and especially discussion of them remained focused, I adopted different modes of data analysis. I used the research questions and key considerations from my Literature Review to form four sub-categories to group the data. These sub-categories were focused on theories such as 'SDT', the 'Quadrant Method' or themes such as 'Confidence' and 'Motivation'. If any pertinent and consistent points arose by the pupils or my collaborative partner that were not under these sub-categories, then I added them as additional sub-categories.

This method helped me to form close connections for analysis between the pupils and collaborative partner that only related to this study.

4. FINDINGS and DISCUSSION:

To convey the findings of the pre-investigative survey, I have included three tables giving the results of the multiple choice and Likert-Scale questions in Appendix FF (p.134). I will be using this data, alongside the descriptive results of questions 2 and 5 of this survey and the pupils' detailed responses during interview to determine the impact of this intervention in relation to my research questions.

4.1 What is the motivation for an adolescent to listen to music and its impact on their psychological development?

As stated by Christenson, DeBenedittis & Lindlof, 1985; Christenson & Roberts, 1998; North, Hargreaves & O'Neill, 1999; Roe, 1985; Zillmann & Gan, 1997, this data suggests the pupil participants also regard listening to music as a very important feature of their daily lives. Four pupils stated it as 'important' and three as "very important". This is further exemplified by how often in a day they listen to music: four pupils stated they listened "several times a day". Conversely, one pupil said, "three or four times a week".

Perhaps what is more significant however, are the reasons why the pupils listen to music. According to Saarikallio & Erkkilä (2007), mood (affect) regulation is positively maintained via listening to music, and this activity acts as a strong coping mechanism. Almost all pupils referenced "emotions" or "mood" as amongst the first reasons why they listened to music:

5. Please list the reasons why you listen to music (five lines for answers):

Student A: “Emotions, can dictate how I feel and can help me to relax and focus”.

Student B: “Distraction and stimulation – boost a good mood”

Student C: “Enjoyable, allows me to gain inspiration for my own music”

Student D: “Improves mood”

Student E: “Calms my mind”

Student F: “Emotional connection”

Student G: “Emotionally stimulating”

This focus on mood and emotion could be considered a form of “compensating listening” (Behne: 1997) occurring when adolescents consider the most important reason for listening to music to be for the purpose of mood regulation. This could also be a primary reason why the challenge of analytically listening to music is challenging for pupils within an academic setting; the music is not of their choosing and does not meet their emotional needs. Of the seventeen choices of music offered to pupils in Question 1 of the survey, ‘Hip Hop’ was the most popular, with six pupils opting for it. This is not surprising given the literature suggests popular music represents a “clear marker” of adolescence, (Christenson and Roberts: 1998). Indeed, Student E highlighted that he listens to his choices of music as “it represents my life”.

Considering the outcomes of the pupil responses in this survey, it is surprising that pupils did not choose music which would naturally fit in these categories for their intervention lessons. Instead, it would be better to consider most of their choices to be under the category of ‘Fusion’ music, or Area of Study 5. These choices include:

Student A: “Concorde” (Black Country, New Road, 2021)

Student B: “A Progression to Infinity” (The Resonance Project, 2019)

Student C: “Sir Duke” (Wonder, 1977)

Student D: “Victory Dance” (Ezra Collective, 2022)

Student E: “Hey Ho on the Devil’s Back” (Katzenjammer, 2008)

Student F: “Knots” (Gentle Giant, 1972)

Student G: “Who Can See It” (Harrison, 1973)

It was interesting to see the breadth of their choices, often choosing music that was sometimes challenging to analyse because of the virtuosic skill in performance or the obscure nature of the styles. The pupils were clearly keen to establish a sense of knowledge and understanding of the obscure amongst their peers, which could perhaps be determined as an Introjected ‘ego involved’ Motivation.

Pupils wanted to attend the lessons allocated to this intervention (Wednesday, Period 1) because of the excitement of not knowing what they will be asked to listen to.:

Student G: “Cos, you have got your own music that you get to study (*analyse*) and then it is also like ‘Oh...my friend’s music tastes, lets listen’ stuff like that.”

Clearly, they felt it was an opportunity to learn more about their peer’s musical preferences and in essence, create a stronger bond over a common interest.

The intervention required that pupil’s work within pairs, and the pupils happily assigned themselves to work with a co-partner, except Group 2 who was a group of three (subject to absence, which is discussed in the ‘limitations’ section). The anticipation of not knowing what they will be asked to listen to and support of working in a pair, enabled a strong collaborative partnership to emerge.

4.2 Research Question 1: In relation to the self-determination theory: what role does collaborative essay writing play in supporting Year 12 pupils to develop their confidence to write an essay of this type?

There is strong and mixed evidence to suggest that as a result of being allowed to work in a collaborative partnership during each lesson, the pupils developed a greater degree of confidence and quality of essay writing to question 5 style questions. When asked their opinion about the quality of their essay writing since the intervention (during the final Focus Group Interview), their responses included:

Student G: “I think they have changed”

Teacher: “In what way have they changed?”

Student G: “They have become more consistent, like the ones I write now are much better”

Student F: “Yeah, and the more we practice, the easier it gets”

This finding is especially significant when compared to the first focus group discussion, when I asked the pupils “What are your feelings towards essay writing?” The pupils’ (Students B, C and D) immediate reaction was to laugh, followed by Student B stating “scary”. This initial response would suggest the pupils were Externally Regulated, perhaps bordering Amotivated to complete this task, the weakest form of self-regulation (Deci: 1985). This outcome juxtaposes their motivation to listen to music, which as I have already stated, was very strong. The pupils went on to qualify their thoughts in relation to extended writing:

Student C: “I think it takes a lot of like, time to do like a good essay and a lot of good planning and it isn’t easy in like exam conditions. It’s like whereas at home you’ve got like resources, and you can actually do a really good essay.”

Student B: “Yeah I agree, especially since every time you learn like a new format for an essay,A’ Levels, you are more specific....I think in school you have to whittle down like your knowledge a lot more even if you have the same idea of what you want to write”.

It is interesting that Student C’s first comments were regarding the conditions of the essay being completed, suggesting the wrong conditions could undermine their confidence to write the essay. In addition, pupils clearly understood the depth and clarity of knowledge demonstrated at A-Level had to be more significant than their experience at GCSE. This extended writing task therefore challenged their perceptions of their competence, an essential aspect of Self-Determination Theory, which, as stated by Deci (1971) if not fully met, can lead to psychological stress.

Did the pupils have confidence about the Collaborative nature of this intervention?

The students were very receptive to the intervention lessons because it was a collaborative experience. In the Pre-Intervention Focus Group Interview, they clearly expressed confidence that this style of learning could be of potential benefit:

Student B: “I think working in a partnership feels more practical cos you can get ideas and get reassurance more easily and more accessibly, yeah, I think collaboration is a lot more hands on, because you are dealing with like, a person as well. I also think cos we are in a class of like seven people we are a lot closer.”

Student E strengthened Student B’s comment stating:

Student E: “I think it will take the pressure off a bit...I feel that part of it will be quite good, because there maybe things you wouldn’t know or wouldn’t write but other people would”.

Student B and E's responses suggest they considered the intervention lessons to be a motivating and therefore 'low risk' activity, as seven participants were conducive to a close working partnership. Since the start of the academic year, they had certainly established a close working partnership amongst their peers. As stated by Vygotsky, a task which focuses on structured, interactive discussion enables better "concept development" and self-directed learning.

With regards to collaborative tasks involving extended writing, early discussions indicated that any form of "group work" was a rare activity for the pupils, and perhaps understandably, some did not know what to expect as a result of the intervention:

Student G: "Um.....not sure, I mean we haven't really done much essay group work, so I don't really know'.

However, their discussion about the benefits of working collaboratively within a small participant group suggests they felt their 'perceived relatedness' would support their learning activities. With reference to Schweder & Raufelder (2019) who stated boys may need clearer instruction to "recognise their social environment as an essential learning resource". I think this was true, but the pupils quickly ascertained their social environment to be a strength of the investigation and I believe it to be one of the key reasons why they engaged in the activities so well.

How did the collaborative nature of the investigation impact the confidence of higher and lower attaining pupils?

Working in collaborative groups with the support of the ‘Quadrant Method’ was motivating to all the pupils, particularly at the start of the investigation. However, my early observations in Intervention Lesson 2, suggested a Collaborative method of learning became a frustrating method of working for higher attaining students. For example, Student C (a lower attaining pupil) paired with Student D (a higher attaining pupil). I noted in the transcripts of Intervention Lessons 1 and 2 that Student C often asked Student D many questions to confirm his thoughts and gain validation for them, particularly when analysing the music of “Concorde”. This consistent questioning suggests two forms of motivation: Introjected Motivation because his discourse seemed to be seeking approval from his very able co-partner, and Identified Regulation, where he was consciously valuing the activity and felt it important.

Interestingly, Student D had pre-empted this happening during the first focus group interview, and some initial concerns about the learning capability of individuals:

Student D: “Yeah I think working collaboratively is a nicer experience but obviously you and your partner aren’t the same learners, so what could happen is, well we learn differently so someone might have a faster memory.”

As the intervention lessons progressed, I noticed Student D was speaking less to his collaborative partner, an observation I had noted throughout the class, particularly amongst the most able students during Intervention Lessons 6 and 7. However, Student D found it occasionally frustrating to work with Student C, for example during Intervention Lesson 5:

Student C: “But if you go to the bit that is like 45 seconds, that is not in the scale, it sounds different.”

Student D: “What do you mean, are you talking about that one note?”

Student C: “No, that whole section.”

(Silence – Student D listens to the extract of music)

Student D: “It sounds like it stays in the home key”

Student C: “Yeah so is that modulation?”

Student D: *(Sighs)* “It is still diatonic. It doesn’t modulate, it just changes the scale, as in there are different scales in the same key”

Student C: “Oh right yeah”

Student D: “Yeah yeah..I am not very good at explaining” *(sounds despondent)*

This could suggest that Student C was gaining some confidence in their knowledge, whilst also asking for further clarification from their co-partner demonstrating a progression within the Zone of Proximal Development. However, his questioning caused Student D to feel distracted, especially if asked questions that appeared easy to answer. I believe Student D was not lacking in motivation to do the task, but to engage in the Collaboration, and perhaps to have mitigated this, I could have given him a differentiated goal for them both to complete.

However, my presuppositions were changed during the second focus group interview.

Student D suggested that the reason his group was speaking less as the intervention lessons progressed were because of wishing to have less to do for homework and having a clear understanding of what is expected:

Student D: “Well it is obviously nice to get most done in class and then you don’t have to do so much at home, but it is almost like you don’t really need to because both of you know just what you have to do...”

Student D’s comment suggests both ‘Integrated Regulation’ and ‘External Regulation’, two opposing points on the extrinsic motivational scale. He was externally regulated because there was an external reward (or punishment) as he had to complete his

homework but interestingly, external regulation due to his increasing confidence and consistency of being able to carry out the task.

During the final focus group interview, Student D commented that the investigation had impacted his ability to plan and identify musical features at greater speed, write and more critically (to achieve a high attainment mark for this question), to evaluate the best sources of Wider Listening to strengthen his argument. Perhaps this is not an unexpected outcome, as the repetitious structure of the ‘Quadrant Approach’ enabled the pupils to self-regulate the practice of their skills with more acuity as the investigation progressed.

Student D: “I plan less now. My plan now takes like five to seven minutes. I think that has been one of the biggest differences between now and before (*the intervention lessons*). You just naturally know what to write and have more confidence.”

What was the evidence to show the pupil’s confidence during the final stage of the investigation?

This was a critical point in the investigation, where all pupils were confidently reflecting on their own methods of learning, which could be explained using Vygotsky’s (1987) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

The pupils had shown they are able to complete a task on their own or with assistance from a more able peer or teacher with greater success and confidence, and therefore wanted the degree of challenge to increase and demonstrate a strong sense of Self-Directed Learning. During Intervention Lesson 5, this was clearly evident between Students C and D:

Student D: “‘Take the A Train’, it is a classic.”

Student C: “Oh wait we didn’t put extended chords, that is definitely in there”

Student D: “That is interesting” (*lots of typing*)”

28:42 – Student C: ‘What did you put for melody? - I’ll put conjunct’ (*Both students laugh*)

Student D: “We’ll put syncopation”

Student C: “Yeah that bit I was talking about was out of key.”

Student C’s response showed an increased speed of response and improvement in his use of key terminology. Together with lesser feelings of frustration from Student D suggests pupil confidence was positively affected towards the end of the intervention cycle.

However, an important factor which emerged during the second focus group interview was pupils choosing to analyse the same musical elements of music each week, within their pairs.

Teacher: “Is there anything you wish to add or suggest in regards the impact of the intervention?”

Student D: “Well I just thought of this now...we tend to give people (*Student A: interrupts “the same ones each time”*) the same musical elements each time. So I have got really good at Melody, Harmony, Tonality and Sonority but I am really bad at Structure because I don’t do it so we will probably need to switch it up a bit (*laughs a little*). Yeah because obviously, we want our essay to be the best it can be, so we gave what we thought each person was good at.”

Student D: “The essay we just had which included structure, I didn’t know it.”

Teacher: “So now is a good time to change and build your confidence in those areas you have not analysed as a pair.”

Students D, C and B: “Yeah”

I thought it was interesting that Student D used the collective word “we”, speaking on behalf of many of the group. He and Student A identified that whilst the collaborative nature of the investigation was allowing pupils to gain confidence with analysing musical features, they were impeding their progress by choosing not to analyse all musical elements, and regularly use key terminology. The reason was understandable, but motivated by External Regulation, to achieve a good result for their collaborative essay. Therefore, at the beginning of the sixth intervention lesson, I asked the pupils to

analyse all elements of music and after twenty minutes, discuss their findings as a pair before moving onto linking their findings to sources of Wider Listening. I was expecting this change to be a challenge for them, but instead proved a good approach with conversations demonstrating greater confidence in their findings and in a quicker period of time.

Did the pupils feel more confident in citing sources of Wider Listening?

During the first focus group interview, the pupils understood that it was important to cite a broad range of sources of Wider Listening to strengthen the argument of their essay. They also felt confident in deciding which sources of music would be most relevant:

Teacher: “When you read a Question 5 essay title, do you think it is clear as to which Wider Listening sources you should explore?”

Student B: “I think so”

Student D: “Yeah”

Student B: “Yeah also it is easier because we have been given the context for that piece so it’s kinda like, you have to have connections to other facts in your brain.”

Teacher: “So because the title of a Question 5 has a clear context, you think it is easier?”

Student B: “Yeah it gives you like an idea of where to explore, all your facts, yeah”.

This ease of understanding was exemplified during the first intervention lesson. It was very pleasing to hear Students F and G working diligently and confidently during the third of the ‘Four Phase’ Quadrant structure in order to decide on appropriate sources of WL to cite in their essay:

Student G – “We could just write the genres down (*written in the question*) and find the Wider Listening”

Student F – “Yeah”

Student G – “Which ones are they, which will I do?”

Student F – “Student G you do Soul and Jazz”

Student G – “Cool”

30:28 – *Silence while they individually investigate (lots of handwriting heard, and tapping.)*

43:00 – *Teacher asks for “Final conversations before the end of the lesson”*

Student F – “I found some stuff. Soul and Jazz yeah?”

Student G – “I didn’t really get round to Jazz but yep I got “Move On Up” by Curtis Mayfield, “What’s Goin’ On” by Marvin Gaye and “Ain’t No Sunshine” but to a lesser extent it said it was Soul but not sure”.

Student F – “Sound. For Hip Hop “Decisions” by Knuck. “Los Pollos Hermanos Song” as that is similar to the Hook. The instrumentation is more sparse like in the Ezra Collective song as the Horns die down as comes back in on the Verse.’ I also got “Lounging” by Donald Bird and “Off the Record” by the Hieroglyphics.”

All students shared their ideas.

46:20 – **Student F** – “Fun lesson Miss”.

Their prior knowledge of Soul and Jazz was clearly very good, but they still needed to choose relevant sources that exemplified the findings of the unfamiliar music. Their confident approach to this part of the task, demonstrated Integrated Motivation: a consistency and synthesis of the demands of sourcing relevant examples of WL.

During the second Focus-group Interview, two pupils cited the ‘Four Phase’ Quadrant structure of the lesson as having a positive impact on their focus of Wider Listening:

Student A: “I still find things as I am going along as I am listening to Wider Listening. I will listen to something and say ‘oh that is similar to duh duh duh’. I sometimes flick between the two (*finding musical features and Wider Listening*) a little bit. It is more of a focus towards Wider Listening in the second half but also go back to it (*musical features*) to compare it and other stuff.”

Student C: “Yeah I think the split (*Four Phase Approach*) is quite good because you can sort of spend like the whole lesson just trying to look for musical features instead of like doing Wider Listening.”

Teacher: “So you find the structure helpful?”

Student C: “Yeah”

This was very encouraging, particularly as Students A and C had struggled to include examples of WL in their Pre-Intervention essays (as seen in Student G’s example of

Appendix O p. 115), focusing only on musical features. However, according to Students F and G during the Final Focus Group interview, the concern about being able to confidently cite sources of Wider Listening to music other than Popular Music and Fusion or Film was a concern to them for the future:

Teacher: “How would you feel about applying the skills you have practised during the intervention and applying them to Areas of Study 3 (*Film*) and especially 2 (*Instrumental Music*)?”

Student G: “I feel Film music isn’t as bad because Wider Listening for film is quite vast but if it was Classical, it would probably be the hardest for me because it all sounds quite similar.”

Teacher: “So the skill of listening has progressed, but Wider Listening is sometimes still a challenge?”

Student G: “Yeah, yeah”

For a high attaining pupil such as Student D, discovering Wider Listening sources was one of the most valued aspects of the essay, and why he enjoyed the challenge:

Student D: “I think it (*sources of Wider Listening*) is what makes it interesting, that is, what kind of gives you ‘your take’ that is different from everyone else’s”.

This opinion was true of all pupils too, and it was encouraging to hear during the final focus group interview, Student D explaining how he was beginning to plan his essays from the Wider Listening perspective first. He then attributed musical features from the music to the WL choices; in effect doing the essay in a reverse plan. This was an excellent mode of working and suggested a very confident understanding of the true requirements of the essay.

However, their sense of confidence to be able to cite relevant sources of WL were again, correlated to the genre of music the essay was linked to. More broadly, as all the pupils were able to choose their sources of Wider Listening, this gave them

sufficient autonomy to be intrinsically motivated to discover music of Popular Music and Fusions. In many instances pupils felt this to be the most enjoyable part of the extended writing process, especially if they were musically abstract pieces, presenting unusual features.

Collaboration: How did Peter suggest confidence can be built within this type of essay and how does it link to SDT?

For boys to become more confident in their approach to extended writing, particularly in relation to three key criteria linked to SDT, Peter felt it was important to ‘scaffold’ the answers, whilst reminding the pupils of exam criteria.

Peter: “They (*his pupils*) listened to a piece of music and they had to write seven or eight bullet points about it. They could see the criteria that the exam board were talking about in the book (*WJEC Eduqas Revision Guide*)”

Rachel: “I have issued my students with the exam criteria for this question as well”

Peter: “Yeah and it makes such a difference. But the interesting thing was getting them to write and answer based on the bullet points they had in the book, they found that quite hard at first, because they don’t know how to use the language and I think that is one of the biggest problems, is applying the language.”

This point of discussion helped to validate one aspect of my methodology; that it was necessary to issue the holistic mark scheme of question 5 to the pupils, to understand what is required to attain higher marks. As a practitioner, I wanted to maintain high aspirations for all, and the pupils needed to be informed about marking schema and what the level descriptors for each grade meant. Peter also highlighted that boys required a focused framework of reference to work from, i.e “bullet points from a book”. The nature of the SDL Quadrant Theory scaffolded their time in a productive way. Creating the ‘Four-Phase Approach’ resource (Appendix R p.118) was important

as the language directly related to the essay task with use of Edexcel Pearson's own Glossary of key words to assist them.

Peter acknowledged the challenge with enabling boys to feel confident and how he meets this challenge in his own classes:

Rachel: "Edexcel requires them (*the pupils*) to justify why they have decided that (*A03 feature*) in context of the style. They have to give Wider Listening sources..".

Peter: "That is what I found to be really hard. I have only got two boys doing A' Level and they are quite science based kids, not great literary agents as it were, so that does present them with some issues."

Rachel: "How do you challenge that?"

Peter: "I find it very difficult actually, because it is about them having to re-write their questions."

Peter recommended the need for discussion as a central means to encourage confidence. However, a key difference to his approach compared to my intervention was he would question his pupils using a coaching technique; leading them to think more laterally. This was a very valuable discussion, and consequently, each lesson on Tuesday (the day before the intervention), became a 'Listening Lesson', using examples from the book Peter recommended. I used these Popular Music and Fusions questions as a source of discussion for the pupils to explain their thoughts about music. They responded with varying success in regards the written assessments, however they valued the opportunity to understand further potential sources of Wider Listening for their essays and discuss them at length.

4.2.1 Summary:

In summary, there was evidence that the pupils were progressing in their confidence of answering in an extended writing context, as early as Intervention Lesson

5. The second focus group interview confirmed this when I asked:

Teacher: “Why do you think you are speaking less to each other?”

Student F: “I think we know what we are doing more, because as we have been going along, I know I can rely on myself a bit more. I definitely think it is helping our confidence in answering Question 5.”

Student G: “Yeah”

However, this confidence was perhaps limited to music of the 1960s and later (Area of Study 5 Popular-Music and Fusions):

Teacher: “How do you feel now about completing an unfamiliar essay question linked to Popular Music and Fusion?”

Student F: “I would be more confident of answering that now than I would have been three months ago”

Student G: “Yeah”

In general, the pupils performed to their best when writing about their own choice of music, which is to be expected as their prior knowledge was often stronger. They enjoyed discovering the music of their peers and learnt more about each other’s interests. Once the pupils had progressed in their mastery of critical listening of ‘Popular Music and Fusions’, (aided by Peter’s suggestion of pupils discussing how to analyse in greater depth), they were more confident to test these skills with other genres of music. Three weeks later, the pupils underwent their Year 12 end of year examination, sitting the A-Level Paper of 2022. The Question 5 was focused on Film Music: John Williams: Superman, “The Big Rescue” (Appendix EE, p. 133).

I chose this question because the music had a very clear purpose and I was confident the pupils would engage with the question and have the confidence to answer it well. The

results for this paper were wide. I marked their responses against the indicative content of the 2022 Mark Scheme (Appendix I, p. 107) to gauge an accurate understanding of their ability when compared to the most recent grade boundaries. Students D, F and G achieved excellent results (Student D achieved an A* and Students F and G a Grade B) but Student A, E and C achieved two Grade Es and D respectively. Only Student B failed to pass, due for the most part to not writing anything for either essay, saying his mind just “froze”. He has since been diagnosed with mixed ADHD and will receive further support. The results for question 5 were encouraging, showing an application of knowledge and greater confidence than previously.

During the final focus group Interview, Student D stated the investigation had given him the confidence to “Discuss with myself, not with other people”, which is an indication of being highly self-regulated. As evident from the grades, the broader quality of the pupil’s question 5 responses for the Year 12 Mock examination showed progression of their competence, a critical aspect of SDT (Deci: 1971), and therefore self-confidence.

4.3 Research Question 2: In relation to the Self-Determination Theory: What effect does an autonomous choice of music have on motivation to do the essay writing task?

There was very strong evidence to suggest that the pupil’s autonomous choice sustained their motivation to complete a task of this type throughout the investigation. They explained their enthusiasm during the first focus group interview:

Teacher: “Having learnt about this research project and how you will participate, what are your thoughts about this intervention, in particular the idea of collaborative learning and your ability to choose the music to listen to and share with others?”

Student C: “I think it’s good with us choosing our pieces as well, so we are like actively engaged compared to where it’s like random pieces that we aren’t really interested in”

Student F: “I think it is quite exciting that we get to analyse music that we have chosen, it is quite er..because it is different to the actual A-Level because that is set in stone you can’t change like, it is up to us.”

Ryan and Deci (2000) stated autonomy and thereby emotional fulfilment was the strongest of the three domains of SDT. Autonomy was a central feature of this investigation, and consequently impacted the pupils’ sense of competence and relatedness, all of which are critical to a pupil’s psychological well being. However, Student D explained that careful consideration might need to be given to which music was being chosen:

Student D: ‘I dunno...because it matters what your personal preferences are and that is going to be different for everyone,

I interpreted his answer as being suggestive of ‘people pleasing’. Therefore, I asked him a further question to discuss his answer:

Teacher: “Do you think you will choose a piece with your peers in mind?”

Student D: “Yeah I guess a bit.”

I had anticipated that the pupils might choose pieces that other pupils might ‘accept’, but this was difficult to mitigate for. The nature of autonomy means the pupils had “a sense of free will, freedom of choice, self-reliance, and self-governing experience” (Yeager, Lee, and Dahl: 2017, p.437). The pupils chose a diverse range of music for their peers to analyse, and often came as a pleasant surprise to those pupils who

received it. The investigation gave the pupils an intrinsic motivation to show their autonomy, therefore showing a strong degree of Self-Determination as stated by Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005; Van Petegem, Beyers, Vansteenkiste & Soenens, 2012.

Interestingly, the autonomous value of this investigation did not appear to cause a high degree of Introjected Regulation among boys as suggested by Cheon, Reeve, & Moon, 2012; Diseth, Breidablik & Meland 2018 and Jang, Kim & Reeve, 2012. Only if there was 'approval seeking' from their peers of choice of music was there weak evidence of Introjected Motivation. I think the motivation behaviours of the pupils were closer to Integrated Motivation. They were motivated to complete the task because of their intrinsic motivation of the choice of music being analysed. Student G explained the impact of autonomy had on his learning during the second focus group interview:

Teacher: "What affect do you think being able to choose which piece you can analyse and how has it affected your motivation to do the task?"

Student G: "I think the whole class has been more invested."

Teacher: "Do you think so?"

Student G: "Cos, you have got your own music that you get to study it and everyone else is like "Oh...my friend's music tastes, lets listen" stuff like that."

Again, Student G used the collective word "we" to describe his impressions of the class, a strong indication that pupil engagement for the task was high and their subsequent motivation to attempt the task.

Teacher Directed Learning and Student Directed Learning:

It was suggested by Beaman, Wheldall, & Kemp (2006) that Teacher Directed Learning may be disproportionately focused against boys and their motivation to learn,

because they are less able to show adaptive learning behaviours than girls. In this investigation, the collaborative task structure of the Quadrant Theory (Edwards, 2015) meant pupils were directed towards their own learning and allowed the boys to be more adaptive in their learning behaviours. For example, their prior-knowledge and the third stage of the Quadrant Theory allowed for “open tasks that allow learners to apply key concepts to their understanding of a text through reading or creation of a text through writing”. (Thompson, 2015). In groups, they slowly progressed in their ability to apply their knowledge of literacy more readily and with greater accuracy.

Whilst Furrer and Skinner’s (2003) considered girls to have a higher awareness of relatedness with their teachers than boys, the SDL aspect of this investigation, and the small number of pupils involved, meant they had a strong sense of belonging and therefore relatedness. This bond was only made stronger by sharing their personal choices of music for each other to analyse in lessons. Secondly, Furrer and Skinner’s (2003) view that “relatedness was the “weakest” predictor for pupils’ motivation in SDL” was not strongly evidenced in this investigation, perhaps because they undertook the lessons with a degree of maturity throughout.

4.3.1 Summary:

In summary, there was strong evidence that the pupils were motivated to complete an extended writing task due to the autonomous choice of music given to the pupils. As already discussed during the second focus group interview, Student G qualified this result by explaining the impact of autonomy had had on learning.

However, Student A suggested that pupil motivation was affected by the individual styles of the music when asked the same question:

Student A: “Yeah positive, I mean, it depends really on what kind of music you like, I was more inclined to write more about stuff like mine than Student C and Student D’s because it more my style of music”.

This is to be expected. Saarikallio & Erkkilä (2007), stated mood (affect) regulation is the process of “modifying or maintaining the occurrence, duration and intensity of both negative and positive moods”. Therefore, a pupil’s motivation or ‘effort’ for completing an extended writing task will be closely aligned to the affect regulation that arises from that choice of music. Student A’s answer would suggest ‘Identified’ Motivation, or if they have a stronger preference for the music, an ‘Integrated’ form of motivation.

5. CONCLUSIONS and IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 Research Question 1:

Collaborative essay writing did have a positive impact on the pupils’ engagement and therefore confidence in writing an essay about an extract of unfamiliar music. The progression exhibited in the quality of their essays by the end of the intervention period and after, for their end of year mock examination was evidence of this impact.

One of the most conclusive findings was how the collaborative nature of the intervention appealed to the pupils' sense of relatedness, one of the three key components of Self-Determination Theory. Though the small number of pupil participants was a strong determinate for the degree of relatedness amongst the pupils prior to the intervention and therefore the foundation to support one another in this shared endeavour. It would therefore be interesting to research the impact of this intervention on a large cohort of at least 30 pupils, enabling quantitative data to be generated and examined.

During the intervention period, they all felt able to collaborate with one another in a self-directed 'Quadrant' structure. The Quadrant Method (Edwards, 2015) was a successful model for the pupils to draw on whilst self-directing their learning. Using their cognitive autonomy, collaborative learning improved their competence and therefore quality of extended writing.

5.2 Research Question 2:

Autonomy was a central feature of this investigation, enabling the pupils to choose the music for analysis in each intervention lesson, based on their personal musical culture of 'Popular Music and Fusions'. This feature had a profound impact on the pupil's motivation to complete the challenging task of extended writing. For most there was a feeling of enjoyment and looking forward to the lessons because of the anticipation generated from knowing their peers had prepared a musical extract to share, listen to and analyse. This further strengthened their sense of relatedness, bringing greater cohesion. Student G highlighted;

“I think most of us will be more interested in this specifically because a. we get to choose our own stuff and b. its music selected from the people we know, because most of us in the class, we know each other relatively well.”

In relation to SDT, autonomy is the strongest of the three domains (Ryan and Deci, 2000). The pupil’s emotional fulfilment or “investment” (Student G) was evident from an early stage, resulting with their motivational behaviours becoming close to Integrated Motivation, the most ‘positive’ state on the extrinsic scale. Their intrinsic motivation of choosing the music to analyse, together with the external regulation associated with an extended writing task, resulted in the pupil’s general perception of the task as more enjoyable. This was especially evident during the Post-Intervention stage when pupils requested to pursue essay tasks of different genres of music outside their usual norms of choice. This outcome links well to Vygotsky’s theory, as stated by Burgess (2007, p.25). The pupil’s musical culture was appropriated for the benefit of improving their linguistic capability and made them more able extended writers. The pupils responded as active participants and therefore created a new culture of learning in the classroom setting.

5.3 Implications:

Since the period of data collection finished, Peter and I have decided to create an annual Conference for all music A-Level Music pupils of the Island. The first will take place in the Autumn term of 2024 and will focus on the listening, appraising and essay writing skills of our respective syllabi. I would be delighted to support Peter with initiating an adapted cycle of this intervention for his own pupils. The intervention has

not yet been trialled with girls; therefore, there it would be of value to research this further and determine if the outcome might differ due to the variable of gender.

Due to the small number of participants, I was selective in the choices of my methodology to enable my research questions to be answered. Consequently, the nuances concerning EAL, Gifted and Talented or SEN pupils in a class of seven were also small. In a longitudinal study involving at least 30 pupils over the course of the A-Level or GCSE, would be a very interesting area for further research with regards to these pupils and how to support their confidence with extended writing.

5.4 Conclusive Remarks:

As a result of this investigation, my professional practice has changed. Autonomy is central to a pupil's motivation to learn and with a carefully planned self-directed task using structures such as the Four Phase 'Quadrant' approach (Edwards, 2015) late adolescent boys can be motivated to meet the challenges associated with extended writing, beyond that of the pressure of assessment at examination. I think the Edexcel Pearson examination has a breadth of set works which are inclusive of female composers, living composers and works from the 19th Century all of which link to unfamiliar works which is insightful for young people. The examination is challenging, and in my opinion, the Board is right to be aspirational in their academic expectations of the pupils. I believe it to be important to maintain high academic standards particularly as a A-Level subject which is in decline in schools today. However, my pupils have found this examination to be challenging. Therefore, I may re-evaluate whether this A-Level syllabus is the right choice for my pupils in the future, tempering

the expectations of performance and composition coursework in addition to the examination before making any decision to change it.

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APPENDICIES:

Appendix A: The Notional Grade Boundaries for all components of the 2023 A-Level Music.

The highlighted area being the focus of this investigation.

Pearson Edexcel A-Level Music: 2023: 1426 Candidates: (692 Boys)

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Appendix B: Question 5: A-Level Music Paper of 2019, Pearson Edexcel (2019).

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Appendix C: The Four Assessment Objectives: A-Level Music

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Appendix D: The Areas of Study and Set Works

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Appendix E: ‘Walkthrus’: Entry from the School Improvement Plan

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Appendix F: The Three-Phase Lesson Structure: Schweder and Raufelder (2021)

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Appendix G: The Organismic Integration Theory (OIT) taxonomy of regulatory styles (Ryan & Deci, 2000)

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Appendix H:

The Quadrant Method: (Edwards 1995).

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Appendix I: Indicative Content of Question 5: Pearson Edexcel (2022):

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Appendix J: Question 5 Exemplar Response from a Candidate

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Appendix K: Examiner's Comments of Candidate's Response (Appendix F)

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Appendix L: Holistic Marking Criteria for Question 5

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Appendix M: First Pupil Focus Group Interview Questions

1. Do you understand what is required of the Question 5 Essay in the examination?
2. How do you feel about completing an essay of this type?
3. What do you think the skills are that are required for this type of essay and how it differs from Question 6?
4. Can you explain which skills you find easier or more difficult with this type of question?
5. In general, what are your feelings about essay writing?

Appendix N: Pre-Investigative Survey

Pre-Intervention Activity:

Dear Year 12 Students,

Thank you for agreeing to be a part of my research project. As a first activity, please answer the following questions, for me to understand what your musical preferences are:

1. What are your preferred genres of music? Please tick the boxes

- **Classical (1450 - 1900)**

For example:

Baroque (1600 - 1750)
Classical (1750 – 1820)
Romantic (1820 - 1900)

- **20th and 21st Century Classical (1900 - Present Day)**

For example:

Modernism (1890–1930)
Impressionism (1875 or 1890–1925)
Neoclassicism (1920–1950)

- **Avant - Garde and Experimental Music**

For example:

Progressive Music
Underground Music
Psychedelic Music

- **Blues Music**

For example:

Detroit Blues
Rhythm and Blues
Chicago Blues

- **Country Music**

For example:

Country Rock
Bluegrass Music
Rockabilly

- **Electronic Music** ☐

For example:

House Music
Funk Music
Jungle

- **Folk Music** ☐

For example:

British Folk Revival Music
Progressive Folk Music
Celtic Music

- **Jazz Music** ☐

For example:

Jazz Blues Music
Soul Jazz Music
Bossa Nova

- **Hip Hop Music** ☐

For example:

Beatboxing
Rap
Hip Hop Soul

- **Pop Music** ☐

For example:

Indie Pop Music
Britpop Music
Europop

- **R'n B Music** ☐

For example:

Freestyle
Gospel
Disco

- **Rock Music** ☐

For example:

Alternative Rock Music
Progressive Rock Music
Heavy Metal

- **Metal Music** ☐

For example:

Thrash Metal
Alternative Metal
Death Metal

- **Punk Music** ☐

For example:

Folk Punk
Pop Punk
Reggae Punk

- **Regional World Music** ☐

For example:

Bhangra Music
Ragtime Music
Reggae
Samba

- **Film Music** ☐

- Music from Musicals

2. Please list any genre or sub genre of music you enjoy listening to, not already featured on the survey:

.....

.....

3. Tick the statement below which describes how important listening to music is to you.

- Very important
- Important
- Quite Important
- Neutral
- Not very important
- Not important
- Not important at all

4. How often do you listen to music of your choice:

- Several times a day
- Once a day
- Between 3 or 4 times a week
- Between 2 or 3 times a week
- Less than twice a week
- A few times a month

5. Please list the reasons why you listen to music:

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....


Appendix O: Student G: Question 5 Pre-Intervention Assessment

"Discuss how this piece is characteristic of 19th Century chamber music, giving musical reasons for your answer"

MELODY
TONALITY
STRUCTURE
SONORITY
TEXTURE
TEMPO/METER
RHYTHM
DYNAMICS

- Piano and strings - what sounds like a viola* or violin + cello
- Some imitation between parts where the strings + piano take turns playing melodies
- Sounds major throughout or is it minor? why? syncopation is used
- Piano trio
- scalar/conjunct melodies
- Sonata form
- Changes in speed and dynamics: *are they ever extreme?* crescendo, diminuendo
- dramatic dynamic shifts are sudden and dramatic
- instruments take turns playing accompaniment/melody
- virtuosic piano playing
- Chromaticism
- double stopping in strings
- Octave doubling melody in piano
- dissonance *harmonic?* creates tension
- staccato chords
- dramatic breaks of silence
- rapid and various unpredictable changes of key
- piece begins in minor and eventually becomes more major
- pizzicato (plucking) in strings
- downbows in intro
- legato playing in major section - creates dramatic change from previous set which were more rapid

4/15 - E grade.
① try to organise all your points into the musical elements.
② A03 + A04 + WL in that order and throughout is essential.



Appendix P: First Collaborative Partner Interview Questions

1. In your opinion, how do you feel boys respond to essay writing?
2. What do you think the impact of a collaborative approach to essay writing would be?
3. Do you feel that autonomy about which music to listen to and appraise would give them a greater sense of authority about their knowledge?
4. How would you apply this intervention in your school setting?
5. What are the challenges of combining critical listening with essay writing?

Appendix Q: Extract of Transcript: Pupil Focus Group Interview 1

CODE of MOTIVATIONS:

(In): Intrinsic Motivation

(ExR): External Regulation

(Intro.R): Introjected Regulation

(Integ.R): Integrated Regulation

(Ident.R): Identity Regulation

(Amot): Amotivation

Teacher: 'Ok, interesting' (sounding slightly concerned) So can you explain which skills you find easier with Question 5.'

Student D: 'Well I find A03 easier.'

Teacher: 'So finding features is ok?'

Student D: 'Yeah'

Student B: 'It's just weaving them into the paragraphs, I personally find difficult'

Student D: 'It's like comprehension, you just take it up'

Student B: 'It's just like if the question starts with 'Explain' or 'Discuss' these features of this piece you need to weave them (the features in) but sometimes like personally I don't know how you want me to present it. Cos I understand listening and explaining but obviously there is a certain structure to that.'
Discussion here about Essay writing concerns

Student C: I guess it is also with like linking to Wider Listening, it's probably with Question 6 you really have to know, like really well all those features and also the wider listening that you can link to get with it.

Teacher: 'With Question 5, do you think it is as clear as to which Wider Listening sources you can use?'

Student B: 'I think so'

Student D: 'Yeah, because it is just the one that is on there'

Student B: 'Yeah also it is also easier to remember because we have been given the piece, the context for that piece so it's kinda like, you have to have connections to other facts in your brain.'

Teacher: So because the title of the essays is contextual, you think it is easier?'

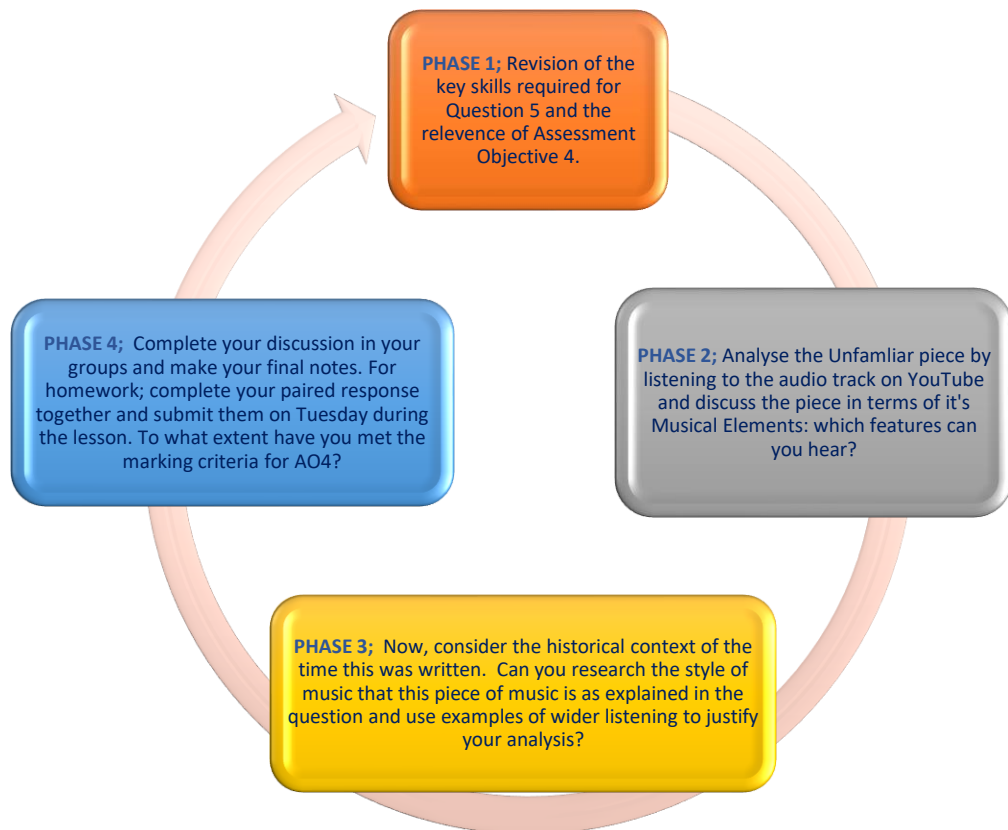
Student B: 'Yeah it gives you like and idea of where to explore, all your facts, yeah'.

Teacher: 'Ok. So, in general what are your feeling towards essay writing?'

All: (Laugh)..Student B: 'Scary'

Appendix R: Resource:

The Four Phase Approach: Analysing and Appraising a Piece of Unfamiliar Music



Appendix S: List of Intervention Lesson Essay Titles

Intervention Lesson 1: Area of Study 5: Fusions Music

Listen to this track on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NiZPsN2pbTM>

This piece is an example of contemporary Fusion music by a 21st-century band incorporating the styles of Afrobeat, Calypso, Reggae, Hip Hop, Soul and Jazz. Discuss how the band reflects this through their use of the musical elements. Relate your discussion to other relevant works which may include set works and other music.

(20 Marks)

Intervention Lesson 2: Area of Study 5: Popular Music and Jazz

Listen to this track on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjC4qXiBRu4>

This piece is an example of contemporary popular music by a 21st-century band incorporating the styles of post rock, chamber rock and art rock. The song is about fame, ambition and the price of success. Discuss how the band reflects these themes and the styles of music through their use of the musical elements. Relate your discussion to other relevant works which may include set works and other music by the same artist or other.

(20 Marks)

Intervention Lesson 3: Area of Study 5: Popular Music and Jazz

Listen to this track **from 2:00 – 4:13 minutes** on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6i24NljMcM>

This piece is an example of Progressive Rock music by a 20th Century band incorporating Madrigal vocal writing. Discuss how the band reflects these styles of music through their use of the musical elements. Relate your discussion to other relevant works which may include set works and other music by the same artist or other.

(20 Marks)

Intervention Lesson 4: Area of Study 5: Popular Music and Jazz

Listen to this track on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZnnX3qu8sc>

This piece is an example of Rock music by a late 20th Century band, fronted by George Harrison, three years after he left the Beatles. Discuss how the band reflects Rock music of this era through their use of the musical elements.

Relate your discussion to other relevant works which may include set works and other music by the same artist or other.

(20 Marks)

Intervention Lesson 5: Area of Study 5: Popular Music and Jazz

Listen to this track on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/6sljSNTS7Fs?si=6lWzOQAIBPiQwcf>

This piece is written in tribute to [Duke Ellington](#), the influential [jazz](#) musician who had died in 1974. The lyrics also refer to [Count Basie](#), [Glenn Miller](#), [Louis Armstrong](#) and [Ella Fitzgerald](#), all strongly associated with Jazz. Discuss how the band reflects music of this era through their use of the musical elements.

Relate your discussion to other relevant works which may include set works and other music by the same artist or other.

(20 Marks)

Intervention Lesson 6: Area of Study 5: Popular Music and Jazz

Listen to this track on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vz8Vp-V9Rgc>

This piece was released in 2008 and is written in a Pop Rock and Cabaret style. Discuss how the band reflects these musical genres through their use of the musical elements. Relate your discussion to other relevant works which may include set works and other music by the same artist or other.

(20 Marks)

Intervention Lesson 7: Area of Study 5: Fusions

Listen to this track on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/pTNTUgqJBC4?si=eMSqM0p8rwFvx2Yh>

This piece is fusion of Progressive Metal and Jazz. Discuss how the band reflects these musical genres through their use of the musical elements.

Relate your discussion to other relevant works which may include set works and other music by the same artist or other.

(20 Marks)

Appendix T: Student G's' Question 5 essay after Intervention Lesson 3

Knots by Gentle Giant

The instrumentation featured within this piece is very advanced and expansive, as the members of Gentle Giant were all virtuosic multi-instrumentalists. This includes the use of bass guitar, electric guitar, tenor and baritone saxophones, xylophone, and various other keyboard instruments. A03 examples of instrumentation are very good, diverse, and include vibraphone and violin. The use of the xylophone and violin are very unusual in this case, the case of this song as instruments like those are quite uncommon in rock music, though Knots is less of a rock song, and more of some sort of Medieval avant-garde rock fusion pastiche. Excellent conclusion.

An example of another band that uses instruments not typically heard in rock music would be the band Jethro Tull. Their whole discography features extensive and very prominent use of the flute, in songs such as "Thick as a Brick" and "Minstrel in the Gallery." Excellent description of this relevant under listening example, well done. What makes Knots chant-globe and medieval?

The melody/melodies featured within the piece are very disjunct and strange as it never feels truly diatonic, never truly sticking to a specific key, besides outside the vocal passages. The melody uses syllabic word setting throughout the piece, you don't hear any legato or melismatic vocal lines. Why do you think this happens? - is it imitating baroque style?

There is another song by Gentle Giant that features a vocal fugue/madrigal called 'On Reflection'. The one from this song is both more accessible than 'Knots' but at the same time not really. 'On Reflection' clearly establishes a sense of key but all the vocals piling on each other create an increasingly more confusing atmosphere.

The phrases sung by each member within the vocal passages are largely staccato, far from the bass which acts more as a pedal line by using more sustained notes. Due to this staccato, the vocals create a very percussive sound.

The piece features very abrupt and sporadic changes of dynamics as it will go from a stripped down, polyphonic xylophone solo with just the xylophone and a piano accompaniment and then abruptly change to a more heavily distorted soft to loud changes. The song constantly uses these changes as each vocal passage is considerably quieter than the more instrumentally full sections. A song with similar soft to loud dynamics is 'Today' by The Smashing Pumpkins. This song features softer passages with clean electric guitar and verses with more distortion; lots of the overdubbed guitars creating a beefy wall of sound. Well done! Excellent and consistent use of wider listening.

The song sounds minor but never really establishes a specific key. The "hook" of the song ("have to tell me all) however seems to be more major.

The song features no noticeable inclusions of 4/4 or any simple time signatures, instead using uncommon and odd time signatures such as 15/8, 9/8, 12/8 and 6/8. Another song that features frequent changes of time signatures/odd time signatures include 'Dance of Eternity' by Dream Theater and 'Logo in Logo' again by Gentle Giant. The former is an especially good example as it features 100 different changes over a hundred different time signature changes. Examples used within the song include 7/8, 5/8, 6/8, 9/8, 7/16, 10/16, 4/16 etc. Why do you believe they use these time signatures?

The piece mainly utilises contrapuntal textures, besides some spots like the 'hook' which is more homophonic and the xylophone solo which is polyphonic. All the instruments play drastically different parts and sometimes seem as though they aren't even playing together and are just playing separate songs. This sort of texture is used a lot throughout Gentle Giant's discography, on songs such as 'Experience', 'Proclamation' and 'The Advent of Pangea'. You could also use Thomas Weelkes 'Sing We At Pleasure' as an example of Madrigal writing and highly contrapuntal writing.

13/20 = B grade.

Appendix U: Extract of Transcript: Pupil Focus Group Interview 2

questions to ask you and for you to give your opinion. So first question...what effect has having the decision to choose which music to analyse affected your motivation to complete this task?

Student A: 'Yeah positive, I mean, it depends really on what kind of music you like, I was more inclined to like write more about stuff like mine, Student C and Student D's because it more my style of music, I like than Student F and stuff because that isn't necessarily what I listen to on a day to day basis.'

Teacher: 'Ah ha'

Student A: 'It just relies on what you enjoy more than anything'

Teacher: 'Yes'

Student A: 'Because that is what you are willing to put more effort into'

(All other students are silent)

Teacher: 'Ok, guys would you like to add to that? (intimating towards the other three students)

Student C: 'Yeah I think it also allows you to understand the music that you listen to and you can use that like within composition for example by knowing the structures, you know, what they are doing'.

Teacher: 'So it has had an impact on your wider thinking about other areas of the course?'

Student C: 'Yeah'

Teacher: 'Interesting, Student D?'

Student D: 'I mean yeah I think it is good as well cos especially since, um...the song that your friend's picked is like, even though you don't know or don't really listen to it, you kind of have more respect for it, just because, that is your friends favourite song. (Teacher: 'Right'). See you're trying to figure out in a sense why they like it and then you know, what is the kind of things that make it what it is, like the A03 and stuff. But it is like (Teacher: 'Are you saying it has an emotional impact?') Yeah, because it has significance on someone. You know what I mean, so if it were just from a book you don't really get that. So you are trying, well you're not just trying to like all the pieces, you are trying to get an understanding of why the people listen to it.'

Student B: 'Yeah I agree, but also I think having it more contemporary makes it like, easier to think about, like there are other elements there, cos...you are like more familiar with it, so you can point out factors easier.'

Teacher: 'So because you understand the piece, or it feels more applicable to you, you think it is easier to find those (pointing at the whiteboard) elements?'

Student B: 'Yeah, like a bar of 6/4 there, random harmony thing there.'

Student D: 'Yeah it is true.'

Appendix V: Extract of Transcript: Post Intervention Focus Group Interview

Intrinsic Motivation:

- Has the intervention lessons impacted your motivation to discuss music of Areas of Study 4 and 5 with a greater sense of confidence?
- How would you feel about applying the skills you have gained and applying them to Areas of Study 3 and especially 2?

Extrinsic Motivation:

External Regulation:

- Have you felt motivated to do these tasks because it has been focused on the Unfamiliar Essay Question, and the skills necessary to improve for the examination?

Introjected Regulation:

- Have you felt it important to attend because you are working in a pair? You mentioned that the collaborative nature of your groups changed during the intervention period, has that continued since the Post Intervention lessons?
- Have you felt more able to work independently since beginning the Post Intervention phase or did you prefer the collaborative Intervention lessons?

Identified Regulation:

- Do you feel the seven intervention lessons you took part in have been beneficial to your understanding of this task? How has that been shown?

Integrated Regulation:

- Since finishing the Intervention lessons, how do you feel about analysing music by ear, without the score in front of you?
- In general, do you listen to music with more analytical awareness now and how do you know?

Self Regulation Theory:

- Since completing the two Post Intervention Lessons, have you approached the task in a different way to before the intervention and if so how?

Self Directed Learning:

- During the Intervention Lessons, you have received some guidance about how much time to spend on Phases 2 and 3 of the learning task. Otherwise, you have had total autonomy to ask questions, and develop your own learning path in order to complete the task.
- Since starting the Post Intervention Lessons, certainly the second one, you have been working independently and hand writing your answers. Can you tell me how you have felt about this approach and how self directed learning has affected your approach to this task and your confidence?

Collaborative Learning:

- Has there been anything you have noticed about the quality and contribution of your discussion in the lesson, post intervention?
- Has there been anything you can comment on about the quality of your essay writing as a result of the discussion, particularly in the most recent post intervention lessons?
- Are there any aspects of this series of intervention lessons which could have been modified to impact your learning further?
- Is there anything else you wish to add or suggest for your two final lessons of this intervention?

Appendix W: AP15 Letter to my Headteacher

<p>UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION</p> <p>15 Norham Gardens, Oxford OX2 6PY Tel: +44(0)1865 274024 Fax: +44(0)1865 274027 general.enquiries@education.ox.ac.uk www.education.ox.ac.uk</p> <p>Supervisor: [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] Student of the Masters in Learning and Teaching Course Oxford University Telephone Number: 01865 274 024</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>What impact does a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation in the unfamiliar A level Music Listening and Appraising essay question?</p> <p>Ethics Approval Reference: [REDACTED]</p> <p>Dear [REDACTED]</p> <p>I am writing to enquire about conducting some research at out school this next academic year. As you are aware, I am completing my Masters in Learning and Teaching at the University of Oxford, supervised by [REDACTED]. In my research study, 'What impact does a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation in the unfamiliar A level Music Listening and Appraising essay question?', I will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. What role does collaborative essay writing play in supporting Year 12 students to develop their confidence to write an essay of this type? B. What effect does an autonomous choice of music have on motivation to do the essay writing task? How does this relate to Self Determination Theory? C. How has this intervention influenced the students' progress in confidently completing a Question 5 style essay, independently and on a piece of music linked to one they have studied? <p>I am looking to encourage student discussion and use a very specific type of intervention to inspire student motivation and confidence with this task.</p> <p>By participating in the research, our school would be contributing to research that will enable the students of this group and in the future to have greater confidence at essay writing, be more active listeners and be able to make perceptive analytical points.</p> <p>As part of my weekly teaching practice, I will observe the students in eight lessons over the course of the first half of the Spring Term. I would audio-record students engaged in whole class discussion, and whilst observing their interactions, take notes, and later photocopy some of the students' written work.</p> <p>AP15_v2.0 Letter to Head Teacher - Date and Version No: 2023 Version 1 Page 1 of 3</p>	<p>Oxford University has strict ethical procedures on conducting ethical research with teachers and students, consistent with current British Educational Research Association guidelines. Before beginning the research, I would inform parents/guardians about the research and offer the students and parents/guardians the opportunity to refuse to participate. Throughout the research, students and parents/guardians will be able to refuse to participate at any time.</p> <p>All participants, including students, teachers and the school, would be made anonymous in all research reports. The data collected would be kept strictly confidential, available only to my supervisor and myself and not used other than specified without the further consent of all involved being obtained. All recordings would be destroyed at the end of the research period, and kept in a file on my password protected school computer until then. I have enclosed copies of the information for parents/guardians and students with this letter.</p> <p>If you need more information about what is involved, please contact me. Whether or not you feel it would be appropriate for your school to participate, I would be grateful if you would complete the pro-forma below, and return it to me.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and attention.</p> <p>Yours Sincerely,</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>AP15_v2.0 Letter to Head Teacher - Date and Version No: 2023 Version 1 Page 2 of 3</p>
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What impact does a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation in the unfamiliar A level Music Listening and Appraising essay question?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Nick Falle

We do not wish to participate in this project.

We would like to find out more about this project.

We would like to take part in this project.

If you would like further information, or are interested in taking part, please give the name of a contact person for your school, and details of the best way to contact him or her.

Contact name: _____

Contact email: _____

Contact telephone number: _____

Please return this form.

Thank you for your help.

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Appendix X: AP25 Information Letter regarding the Investigation

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Director Professor Victoria Murphy



What impact does a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation in the unfamiliar A level Music Listening and Appraising essay question?

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS

Central University Research Ethics Committee Approval Reference: [REDACTED]

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am currently studying for a Master's degree in Learning and Teaching at the University of Oxford. [REDACTED] has agreed to take part in a study investigating 'What impact does a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation in the unfamiliar A level Music Listening and Appraising essay question?'

I would like to invite your child to be part of this study. I very much hope you would like your child to take part, but before you decide, it is important that you understand why the study is being done and what it will involve.

What are we trying to find out?

My Year 12 class is the focus on my investigation, and in particular the students' ability to write succinct, well organised essays that fulfil the criteria for the 20 mark question that has only one assessment objective (AO); AO 4 which asks them to 'use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about music'.

Having only recently started the A-Level, they are just discovering AOs, the concept of wider listening and the rigour required to write a response to an A-Level question such as 'This piece is an example of programme music by a 19th-century composer imagining the music of faraway countries. Discuss how the composer reflects this through their use of the musical elements. Relate your discussion to other relevant works which may include set works and other music'.

This particular question in the examination is an area I would like to address as the students have often found that the 'unfamiliar' nature of the music they analyse and appraise particularly challenging. I address this challenge with an intervention that allows the students to choose the music they would like to analyse, and requires that they work in pairs, to collaboratively develop responses to this essay question.

AP25 Participant Information Sheet v4.9

Page 1 of 5

Given that 40% of the A' Level Music is the examination, this particular study could have a very positive affect on the outcome of Question 5, which accounts for 20% of the examination. This study will also help the students to practice skills of analysis and appraisal that are used in Question 6, the 30 Mark essay which is instead based on a familiar piece of music that they have studied.

More information about the research can be obtained by contacting the research team.

Why has my child been invited to be involved in this research?

We are inviting your child to take part because they are a young person, aged between 16 to 17 years old, studying Music and attending [REDACTED]. We are inviting a total of 8 young people to take part.

Does my child have to be involved?

No. You can ask questions about the study before deciding whether or not to allow your child to participate. If you do agree to participation, you may withdraw your child and their data from the study at any time, without giving a reason and without penalty, by telling me your decision.

What will happen if my child takes part?

The research project will last for six and a half months, however your child will participate for three months.

• Pre - Intervention: First Week of January

1. Complete a brief survey asking what their musical preferences are and why.
2. After the survey I would like to conduct two group interviews (four students each) to know what their attitudes are towards essay writing, how confident they feel about this task and how they would like to be supported in order to progress.

• Intervention: January - March

1. Audio Recordings: I intend to record each of the eight lessons and make field notes of my own whilst observing their conversations whilst they analyse music of their choice. I want to focus on the confidence with which they approach the task and the quality of the musical language they use when describing the musical elements of the piece to each other.
2. To make copies of their work as evidence of the student response.

• Post Intervention: End of March

AP25 Participant Information Sheet v4.9

Page 1 of 5

1. Reflection: To carry out a second pair of group interviews to understand if they felt the intervention enabled them to progress in their understanding of how to write a Question 5 essay and how.
2. To write their own, independent essay based on a piece of music linked to their own set work: as an indication of how they apply the strategies they learnt during the intervention to a question based on music that is not of their choice.

No personal data will be used in the research and your name will be anonymised, as will the school's name. Any data that is made following our discussions and the answers to the questionnaires will only be seen on a secure Oxford University website by my Supervisor, [REDACTED].

What are the possible disadvantages and risks in taking part?

My aim with this project is to have a greater understanding for the motivations of students and therefore, to support them in their learning for this and in the future.

I am aware that I am asking students to work in partnership with one other student in their class during the eight lessons and to showcase music that they particularly enjoy. This could perhaps cause them concern if they don't know the other student well or don't wish to say and discuss music that is particularly meaningful to them. If this is the case, I am happy to discuss their concerns about this activity further before we begin in January.

Are there any benefits in taking part?

While there are no immediate benefits to your child in participating, it is hoped that this research will lead to them being more informed and confident about how to answer this examination question, in particular:

- To understand how to identify key features of all ten elements of music, for example Melody, Harmony or Texture
- To be able to explain why these features exist and inform the reader as to what style of music it is - Assessment Objective 4
- To be able to contextualise music, and explain the social, cultural and historical context in which they believe the music was written - Assessment Objective 4
- To be able to relate their discussion to other relevant works - Assessment Objective 4.

What information will be collected and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research objectives?

Each student will have the following data collected:

1. Survey data about their musical preferences and their attitudes towards essay writing.

AP25 Participant Information Sheet v4.9

Page 1 of 5

2. Two focus group interview conversations, one before and one after the intervention has taken place. This will enable the students to discuss at length, how confident they feel about this task and how they would like to be supported in order to progress.
3. Notes taken on their conversations whilst in the classroom, whilst they work together on the analysis of their chosen music. This type of lesson will be conducted eight times.
4. Evidence of their paired essay writing.
5. Evidence of their independent essay writing.

Identifiable data (including consent forms) will be stored in the Music Office at [REDACTED], which is locked at all times and the data will only be stored there until the end of the research project after which it will be shredded. Other research data will be stored for 2 years after publication or public release of the work of the research.

Opt-out forms will be retained by the school for the duration of the research, and for as long as the school determines appropriate after research activities have concluded at the school.

I will ensure all other data collected in the research has identifying information removed as soon as possible after collection. Audio recordings, notes, and all other data will be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked office at [REDACTED]. At the end of the research, recordings will be erased. Only myself and my supervisor will have access to the research data.

Regular summaries of our findings will be given to the school and will be available to interested families. I will not identify the school, teacher or any students in any reports of the research.

Will the research be published? Could my child be identified from any publications or other research outputs?

The findings from the research will be written up in a dissertation. This investigation will not be published.

Data Protection

The University of Oxford is the data controller with respect to your child's personal data and, as such, will determine how your child's personal data is used in the study.

The University will process your child's personal data for the purpose of the research outlined above. Research is a task that we perform in the public interest.

Further information about your rights with respect to your child's personal data is available from <https://compliance.web.ox.ac.uk/individual-rights>.

Who has reviewed this research?

This research has received ethics approval from a subcommittee of the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee. [REDACTED]

Who is organising and funding the research?

No funding for this research has had to be granted.

AP25 Participant Information Sheet v4.9

Page 1 of 5

Who do I contact if I have a concern about the research, or I wish to complain?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this research, please contact me and my supervisor, [REDACTED], and we will do our best to answer your query. We will acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how it will be dealt with. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford who will seek to resolve the matter as soon as possible:

Chair, **Social Sciences & Humanities Interdivisional Research Ethics Committee**; Email: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk; Address: Research Services, University of Oxford, Boundary Brook House, Churchill Drive, Headington, Oxford OX3 7GB

What should I do next?

Please fill in the enclosed form and return it to the Reception [REDACTED] if you **would not** like your child to take part in this study. Please remember that you may withdraw your child at any time, without penalty and without giving a reason, by notifying me.

If you would like to discuss the research with me beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact me at [REDACTED]

I thank you in advance for your support,

Kindest Regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Appendix Y: AP25 Opt-Out Form to Parents

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www.education.ox.ac.uk

Director Professor Victoria Murphy



What impact does a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation in the unfamiliar A level Music Listening and Appraising essay question?

OPT-OUT FORM

Ethics Approval Reference: AP25 Opt-Out Form MLT Year 2

If you **DO NOT** want your child to participate in the above-named research study please fill out the form below and return it to the school by [REDACTED]

If we do not receive an opt-out form from you [REDACTED] your child may be invited to take part in this study, as described in the accompanying information sheet.

I, the undersigned, hereby **DO NOT** give permission for my child to take part in the study titled: 'What impact does a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation in the unfamiliar A level Music Listening and Appraising essay question?'

Name of child: _____


Name of parent/guardian: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of researcher: _____

Appendix Z: AP25 Form for Pupil Consent

Supervisor: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Student of the Masters in Learning and Teaching Course
Oxford University Telephone Number: 01865 274 024



Consent to take part in a Masters of Learning and Teaching Research Paper

Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC)

Purpose of Study:

What impact does a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation in the unfamiliar A level Music Listening and Appraising essay question?

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet version _____, dated _____ for the above research. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any point until [REDACTED] without giving any reason.

I understand who will have access to personal data provided, how the data will be stored and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.

I understand that I will not be identifiable from any publications, reports for specific organisations, presentations, videos or websites.

Please initial each box if you agree with the statement

Use of quotations: Please indicate your preference (select one option):

a) I do not wish to be quoted. **or**

b) I agree to the use of quotations in research outputs if I am not identifiable. **or**

c) I agree to the use of direct quotations, attributed to my name, in research outputs.

I give permission for you to contact me again to clarify information.

I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint.

I agree to take part.¹

Name of participant

dd / mm / yyyy
Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent

dd / mm / yyyy
Date²

Signature

¹ In certain projects researchers may want to add an additional statement: [I hereby assign to the researcher all copyright in my contribution for use in all work stemming from this project and future projects.]

² To be signed and dated in the presence of the participant. Once this has been signed by both parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form. The original signed and dated consent form should be kept with the project's main documents, which must be kept in a secure location.

Template written consent form, version 4.2, November 2022

Template written consent form, version 4.2, November 2022

Appendix AA: AP15 Consent Form for Collaborative Partner

**UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
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Director Professor Victoria Murphy



CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS

Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) Approval Reference:

What impact does a collaborative essay writing technique and autonomous choice of music have on Year 12 boys' motivation in the unfamiliar A level Music Listening and Appraising essay question?

Please initial each box

- 1 I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
- 2 I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, and without any adverse consequences or penalty.
- 3 I understand that research data collected during the study may be looked at by authorised people outside the research team. I give permission for these individuals to access my data.
- 4 I understand that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee.
- 5 I understand who will have access to personal data provided, how the data will be stored and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.
- 6 I understand how this research may be written up and published.
- 7 I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint.
- 8 I understand that researchers will observe lessons and other aspects of my teaching, as detailed on the information sheet, and discussed and agreed with the researchers.

- 9 I consent to being audio recorded
- 10 I understand how audio recordings will be used in research outputs (please delete as appropriate)
- 11a I give permission to be quoted directly in research outputs and for my name to accompany any quotation
- 11b I give permission to be quoted directly in research outputs against a pseudonym **OR**
- 11c I give permission to be quoted directly in research outputs but only fully anonymously **OR**
- 11d I do not wish to be directly quoted
- 13 I agree to take part in the study

Optional: I agree that my contact details can be retained in a secure database so that the researchers can contact me about future studies. YES/ NO

dd/mm/yyyy

Name of Participant Date Signature

dd/mm/yyyy

Name of person taking consent Date Signature

Appendix BB: Student G's Question 5 Essay: Post Intervention Lesson 1

13/3/24 David Bowie - Let's Dance

The song begins with an intro that focuses on an ascending vocal melody, using vocalisation ('ahs' instead of lyrics). The intro acts as a lead into the verse part, as it works like a small buildup/crescendo. The intro features little instrumentation, it has a drum the drums playing along with the buildup and then a fill to lead into the verse. Besides that there is also a saxophone that joins, harmonises with the vocals. The intro vocal melody is very reminiscent of the Beatles song 'Twist and Shout', as that song has very similar vocalisation in its bridge, using the same ascending pattern with 'ah's'.

When the rest of the band kicks in, instruments like electric guitar and bass electric bass. The guitar part has a lot of delay on it, as does the verse vocals sung by David Bowie. This creates an odd, spaced atmosphere along with the funkiness that is present. The bass that joins appears to also be accompanied by a synth bass. This emphasises the bassline, therefore giving it more prominence within the mix. The synth bass later stops allowing the electric bass to get more spotlight. The horns in the song play stabs that almost follow the rhythm of the bassline.

The drum part has a snare that has been covered in gated reverb, but not as much of an extent to the extent of some of the other bands and artists of the 80s, that being Def Leppard, Phil Collins, Prince etc. Def Leppard in particular used incredibly gated snares to the point of parody. ~~The sound~~ This ridiculous snare sound can be heard on their song 'Lov- some sugar on me!'. The snare is so drenched in ~~the~~ gated reverb that it doesn't even sound

This sort of sound is entirely linked with the 80s, as it has never really been used excessively outside of this decade, besides some ~~examples~~ ^{we} in the early 90s, ~~such as~~ ^{such as} named hair metal bands that came straight out of the 80s without that ~~some~~ any change in sound from the previous decade (as rock music was about to change completely due to grunge). The drum part later adds some delay too.

The vocals sung by David Bowie act as a call and response with the backing vocals ('Let's sway', 'Let's dance'). There is also a lot of ^{silence} space between phrases in the verse. This allows the groove to develop by itself and allow listeners, as the song states, to dance along. The vocal melody he sings is ~~not~~ ^{not} so scale and conjunct, singing similar pentatonic-sounding phrases. Then, in the chorus he sings a ~~more~~ ^{more} disjunct leap 'Tremble like a flower'. The space in the groove that the vocals provide is ^{like} a lot of funk music of the 70s - music that's number one purpose was the groove. ^{the} Songs that would use very simple and repetitive vocal melodies, allowing audience participation as they were easily singable. The ^{simplicity} simplicity of the melodies allows ~~on~~ ^{on} a greater emphasis on grooves and solos. Examples of this include Rollercoaster by the Ohio Players and much of Kool and the Gang's music, namely 'Jungle Boogie' and 'Hollywood Swinging'. The vocals on the last two specifically sound very improvised, like the band members were just messing around in the studio. The songs have a strong focus on fun and having a good time - shown in the upbeat and groovy instrumentals.

12/20 = level 3 B grade.

Appendix CC: Extract of Transcript: Intervention Lesson 4: Students A, C and D

(Yellow highlighted section is the whole group introductory discussion)

Student A: 'Well it is George Harrison so I think it will be pretty good. I'm interested to see what it will be like. I haven't heard this song before.'

Teacher: 'Oh good. Student G, why did you choose this?'

Student G: 'Errrrrr...I don't know. Cos it is kinda unique I guess. I think the chord progressions are really weird. And some of the time signatures, no it's not like crazy though, it's not like what Student F picked. (Student D laughing). It's just really weird chord progressions.'

Teacher: 'So you feel it is possible to analyse in some way?'

Student G: 'Yeah and the structure is relatively simple.'

Teacher: 'Ok, can I therefore ask a couple of things guys. I recognise that some of you are using Wikipedia to do research in order to learn more about the song. You will not have Wikipedia in the exam. (Student laughing and smiling amongst themselves). So try not to rely on it, try to make decisions on your own without focusing on looking at Google. When you think you know, then alright check it but try and make a decision before you look. Can you focus on identifying one features of all ten elements, maybe dividing them up amongst your pairs and discuss them. I am going to give you about 20 minutes to discuss them.'

Student A: 'And the rest of the time is about WL?'

Teacher: 'Exactly, I would like you to do some research, focusing on Rock'

Student A: 'OK'

Teacher: 'This is one of his celebrated solo pieces, and enjoy yourself!'

Student D: 'Here we go guys, it's time.'

Student D: 'Who is making the document?'

Student C: 'Er...'

Student D: '(Laughs) I'll do it.'

(Silence whilst the boys listen)

Typing is heard during the listening to the song from Student D

Student A: 'It is very interesting!' (No response from the other students)

11:30 – Student C: 'Are we discussing it?'

Student D: 'Oh do we have to discuss?'

Student A: 'It's a good song, a very good song'

Student D: 'For real'

Student A: 'Student D.....thoughts.....anybody?' (Student D is singing to himself)

Student D: 'Yeah, it is quite hard to follow the rhythm.'

Student A: 'It's quite hard to hear where it switches from Verse to Chorus and stuff'

Student D: 'Yeah'

Student C: 'Have you tried counting it in six?'

Student D: 'No I haven't, does that work?'

Student C: 'I think so.'

Student D: 'Oh ok.'

Student D: 'I was kinda counting it in three...and I was like, what's this?'

Student A: 'At the start of the verse the guitar kinda imitates the vocals a little bit'

Student A: 'Plays the same notes, just a little bit after.'

Student D: 'Yeah.'

Student A: 'The Piano is pretty there. Is that a Cello in the background?'

Student D: 'I think...'

Student C: 'I put Cello yeah.'

Student D: 'I think so, it sounds like it. There is quite a lot going on'

Student C: 'What would the structure be, it's not really...is it like Verse, Chorus, Verse?'

Student A: 'Ok I'll try and figure out a structure, just give me a sec.'

(Silence – hear the music playing and typing from Student D)

Student A: 'Is there a Pre-Chorus do you reckon...that little minor bit, is that a Pre-Chorus?'

Student C: 'What time is that?... Oh like one minute in?'

Student A: 'Yeah'

Student C: 'That is...'

Student A: 'Cos it is kinda repeated from the verse, but just a bit louder.'

Student C: 'I think it is like a Pre-Chorus.'

(Silence – hear the music playing and typing from Student D)

17:12 – Student A: 'I have the structure, so it is Intro, Verse, Pre-Chorus, Chorus, Verse, Pre Chorus'

Student D: 'Cool Effects? (To Student C)...that's Tech'

Student C: 'That's a thing' – Both Student C and D have not listened to Student A

Student C: 'Like when they put distortion on Guitar'

Student D: 'Is it Guitar, because could it be a really distorted Electric Organ?'

Student C: 'That is actually a good point...isn't it just a Guitar with chords.'

Student A: 'Have you heard a version of 'Move on Up''

Student C: 'No'

(Student A sings melody)

Appendix DD: Extract of Transcript: Collaborative Partner Interview 1

Rachel: So firstly I wondered what your thoughts are about an initiative like that as an experienced A' Level teacher with boys?

Peter: 'I think that would work really well, because one of the problems you have with boys is getting them focused enough to write'

Rachel: 'Yes'

Peter: 'And they won't write enough, they will assume lots when they're writing or they will avoid lots when they are writing. I've always found that. Where as girls will be far more, oh what's the word, rigorous? No, not rigorous, but far more wordy, they will write far more.'

Rachel: 'Oh ok.'

Peter: 'And we just did something where, what did they have? they had a piece of music they had to listen to without a score.'

Rachel: 'Yes, this is what this intervention is based on'

Peter: 'And it's a piece of, I can't think what it was, can I borrow that (picking up the Eduqas study book on A' Level Music), they listened to a piece of music and they could see the criteria that the exam board were talking about in the book here'

Rachel: 'So I have issued my students with the exam criteria for this question as well'

Peter: 'Yeah and it makes such a difference, so it was 'The Birth of Cool' by Gill Evans which is a Miles Davis song and they had seven or eight bullet points about it, then I asked them to listen to another piece which was similar and try to write their own sort of version of that, having done it with one piece and applying it to another, and they are just about on that now.'

Peter: 'But the interesting thing was getting them to write and answer based on the bullet points they had in the book, they found that quite hard at first, because they don't know how to use the language and I think that is one of the biggest problems, is applying the language.'

Rachel: 'Yes'

Peter: 'Applying it in the right way but also not being light about it and saying 'well that's that' but whereas at GCSE they can get away with two or three words, they need two or three sentences.'

Rachel: 'Justification for their ideas. Edexcel requires them to justify why they have decided that in context of the style. They have to say Wider Listening sources, got to back up.'

Peter: 'That is what I found to be really hard. I have only got two boys doing A' Level and they are quite science based kids, not great literary agents as it were, so that does present them with some issues.'

Rachel: 'How do you challenge that?'

Peter: 'All we... find it very difficult actually, because it is about them having to re-write their questions.'

Rachel: 'Yes'

Peter: 'Some of the things I have done with them in the past, you get them doing the same thing, get them to write a bit about melody, get them to write a bit about texture and then in a different way,

asking the same question and they can build on that answer so they can write a little more eloquently and then finally getting them to write the whole thing out.'

Rachel: 'Ok so almost element by element?'

Peter: 'Yeah, and there was something Zig Zag (publishers) did in one of their Edexcel booklets, it might have been the pop music one, and it did a similar thing, it had an exercise where you did that, that sort of thing where you started with one element and the whole question just built up a really good answer.'

Rachel: 'Yes because structure (of their answers) is effectively key to the success of this'

Peter: 'Yes'

Rachel: 'It is the rigour with which you talk about all the elements, and discussion of the Wider Listening at least in Edexcel. But it is the 25 minutes with which they expect them to write an essay like that'

Peter: 'But they are expecting them to write an essay of degree standard'

Rachel: 'Really, I don't know anyone yet who has achieved 30/30 for Question 6, or seen an example.'

Peter: 'No I don't think they have had one, and I think University lecturers are saying it is too difficult, but that is another discussion.'

Rachel: 'One of the things I am trying to get the students to feel is more confident, and they way I am doing that is allowing them to work within groups, which is unusual I know for A' Level, but through collaborative discussion and having a way of talking about it instead of working independently because they have only been doing A' Level music a term.'

Peter: 'I use discussion a lot. Do you remember the old Aural Matters books by Davis Bowman, I use them a lot because he will give you a question and in that question there are five or six points which need to be thought about, but I don't do them as a test but as a live question. We listen to the music and find out what is happening there. And then I will try and lead them down the path, so once they have the answer I will say 'Have a listen to it again, are you sure?, rather than it is a right or wrong'. I have used that approach for all my teaching life with that Aural Matters book because there are things in there that they won't pick up, won't listen to and won't understand, until you show them and once they have seen that, they will say 'Oh I can hear that now' and they can apply that.'

Peter: 'there is a chord sequence, so it's Stefan Grapelli, from the 1930s and they just talk about chord sequences and what happens in the chord sequences. They don't get it. Then you can talk about rounds and all the other little things while going through it and once they have got that chord sequence then the next question is 'what key do they go to So there is always something else to be asked, and that is really useful?'

Rachel: 'So open discussion?'

Peter: 'Open discussion until they get the answer, leading them until they get there.'

Rachel: 'And when do you take a more backward step, and allow them to be more independent?'

Peter: 'I think it is nearly a year, I would say so'

Appendix EE: John Williams: Superman, “The Big Rescue”: Question 5 2022 Pearson
Edexcel A-Level Music Examination:

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Appendix FF: Results of the Pre-Investigative Pupil Survey

Figure 3: Question 1:

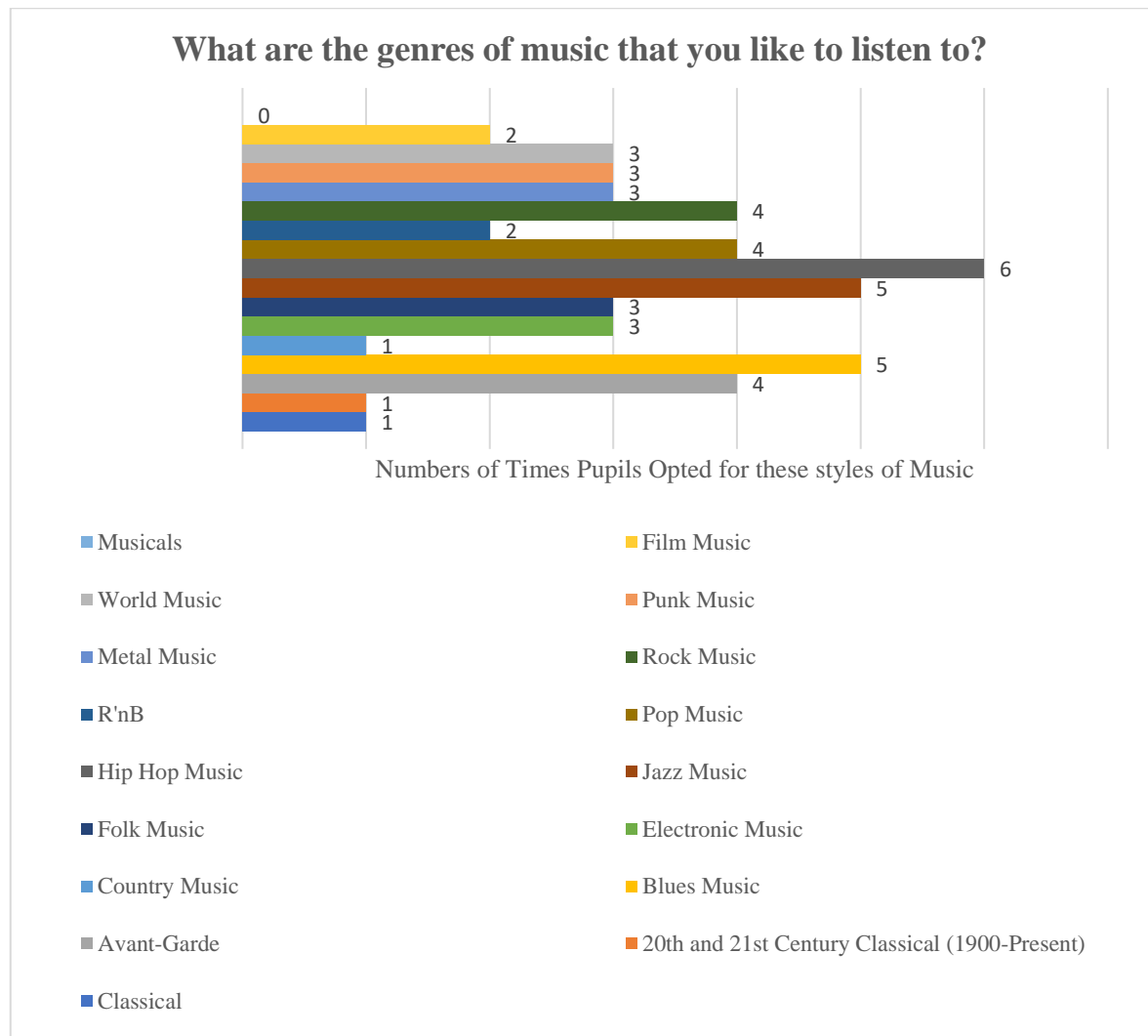


Figure 4: Question 3

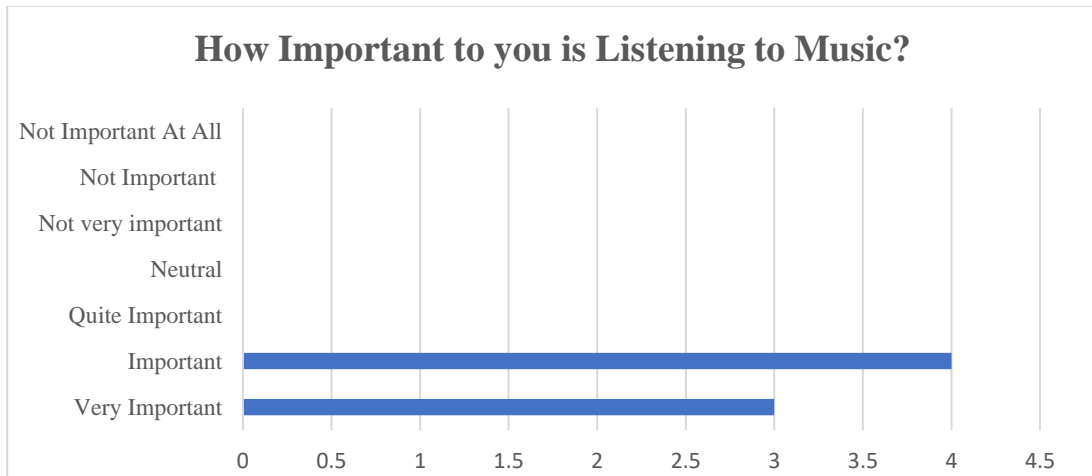


Figure 5: Question 4:

