

Project: Virtual Music Teacher

Team: Possibility Engineering and Research Lab (PEARL)

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Background/Rationale

- There exists opportunity gaps in early childhood music education for children with disabilities. The aim of the Virtual Music Teacher (VMT) project is to design and implement an accessible early childhood music education curriculum that will reduce opportunity gaps while addressing stakeholder needs.
- Music making in early childhood can help kids improve self-efficacy, social skills, fine motor skills and spatial awareness.¹

Research Question

What are the existing learning goals and accessibility considerations in Canada's early childhood music education curriculums?

Methods and Analyses

- A systematic review of provincial curriculums (grades K-3) for early childhood music education involving data extraction.
- Thematic analysis and a mind mapping tool were used to group related learning goals.

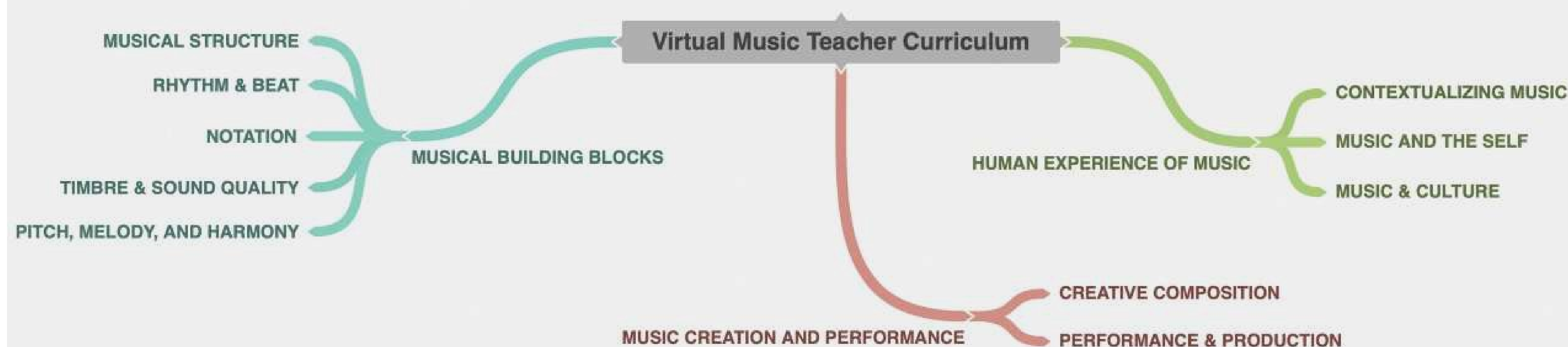
Data Extracted in Systematic Review

- Learning goals
- Suggested activities and prompts
- Accessibility supports

¹Hallam, S. *The power of music: Its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people.* *Int. J. Music Educ.* 28, 269–289 (2010).



Kids with disabilities are not represented in Canadian early childhood music education curriculums.



What We Learned

- A mind map presents the results of the thematic analysis.
- Three areas of focus emerged:
 - 1) Musical building blocks
 - Rhythm, beat and tempo
 - Pitch, melody, and harmony
 - Timbre and sound quality
 - Musical structure
 - Notation
 - 2) Music creation and performance
 - Performance and production
 - Creative composition
 - 3) Human experience of music
 - Music and self
 - Music and context
 - Music and culture
- 1009 activities and prompts to support learning outcomes in each of the musical focus areas were extracted and reviewed.
- Of the 1009 activities/prompts identified, none suggested modifications and/or considerations to accommodate children with physical, cognitive or sensory differences.

Conclusions

Across the provinces, Canada's early childhood music curriculum does not provide guidance to support inclusive education of children with disabilities.

Next Steps

- We will continue to build the VMT app in line with the learning outcomes identified in this review of Canada's early childhood music curriculum.
- Activities and musical media presented in the VMT app will be designed for accessibility and more equitable representation of musicians with disabilities.

Relevance to Holland Bloorview Clients and Families:

The VMT app will break down barriers that many HB clients and their families face in the pursuit of inclusive music education.



SSHRC CRSH



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