

Exploration of Pathways for Cultivating Creative Practice Within Core Competence of Music Education in Primary School Under the Perspective of New Curriculum Standards

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Abstract: *The Compulsory Education Arts Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition) incorporates creative practice into the core competency framework for music education, marking a shift in primary school music pedagogy from traditional, singular creativity training towards competency-oriented, comprehensive skill development. This paper examines the conceptual and practical differences in music teaching before and after the new curriculum standards were issued. By integrating specific implementation strategies such as unit-based holistic teaching and cross-disciplinary integration, it explores pathways for implementing creative practice literacy on music classes in primary school. This provides teaching references for teachers to enhance students' artistic innovation and comprehensive practical abilities.*

Keywords: Music classes, Primary school, Core competence, Creative practice, New curriculum standards, Teaching strategies.

1. The Essence and Educational Value of Creative Practice

2. Differences in Philosophy and Practice of Music Creativity Instruction Before and After the New Curriculum Standards

The Compulsory Education Arts Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition) explicitly define creative practice core competence as 'the ability to integrate multidisciplinary knowledge, closely connect with practical contexts, and engage in artistic innovation and practical application'. This concept builds upon and advances the cultivation of musical creativity from prior curricula. Traditional creativity training often focused on isolated skills in class such as improvisation or instrumental arrangement, whereas creative practice emphasizes interdisciplinary integration and practical application. It transforms musical creation from mere skill-building into the systematic development of students' core artistic competence.

Primary education represents a critical period for nurturing pupils' imagination and creativity, where creative practice in music education holds unique aesthetic value. Music not only cultivates emotional refinement and aesthetic appreciation but also develops intellectual faculties, stimulates imagination, and ignites creative drive, positively shaping pupils' cognitive qualities. Through diverse musical activities such as singing, playing instruments, performing and composing, creative practice ignites pupils' desire for musical expression, enabling them to showcase individuality through active participation. Simultaneously, it deeply connects music with practical contexts and traditional culture, cultivating pupils' problem-solving and collaborative inquiry abilities in practice. This aligns with the new curriculum standards' core requirement for fostering 'innovative spirit and practical abilities', laying an artistic foundation for the comprehensive development of pupils' overall literacy. Moreover, creative practice transforms music learning into a process of active construction and autonomous exploration, effectively enhancing students' interest in music and cultivating the sustainable development of their core musical literacy.

Prior to the new standards' promulgation, primary music creativity education had explored practices such as instrumental arrangement, lyric composition to existing melodies, and musical scenario creation. While these partially transcended traditional 'rote learning' and 'knowledge-centric' teaching models, limitations in teaching philosophy and curriculum design persisted. In terms of teaching objectives, the focus was on the innovative application of isolated musical skills, lacking systematic and structured design. Activities were often fragmented, single-lesson creative exercises that failed to integrate with pupils' musical cognition and emotional experiences. Regarding teaching content, activities remained confined within the music discipline, with insufficient connection to practical contexts or knowledge from other subjects. Creative content revolved around textbook materials, lacking authentic contextual support, resulting in pupils' creative behaviour being predominantly reactive. Regarding assessment, outcome-based evaluation predominates with singular criteria, judging solely on 'accurate composition' and 'fluid performance' while neglecting the creative process and individual expression. Teaching methods remain overly teacher-directed, confining students' creative activities within rigid frameworks and limiting space for autonomous exploration.

Following the promulgation of the 2022 curriculum standards, the cultivation of creative practice literacy has undergone three core transformations, elevating music creation instruction from the 'classroom activity level' to the 'literacy development level'. Firstly, teaching objectives have been structured. Utilizing unit-based teaching as a carrier, abstract competency goals are broken down into actionable, progressive teaching pathways. Specific phased objectives are

set according to pupils' age and cognitive development patterns. Secondly, teaching content has been integrated. Breaking down barriers between subjects and real life, music is deeply combined with knowledge from art, science and other disciplines, placing creative activities within authentic life and cultural contexts. Thirdly, diversified assessment replaces singular outcome-based evaluation with a multi-stakeholder system integrating process and results, balancing skill demonstration with creative thinking. This transformation unifies knowledge with ability, process with outcome, and emotion with cognition, making creative practice an integral component of students' core musical literacy.

3. Strategies for Cultivating Creative Practice Literacy in Primary Music Education under the New Curriculum Standards

3.1 Unit-Based Teaching: Establishing a Systematic Pathway for Creative Practice

Unit-based holistic teaching serves as the primary carrier for implementing core creative practice competence. Its essence lies in overcoming the fragmentation inherent in single-lesson teaching by designing structured, progressive learning activities guided by thematic frameworks, thereby creating a closed-loop system for cultivating creative practice competence. Following the core pathway of 'goal setting-contextual immersion-problem-driven inquiry-integrated learning-outcome presentation', teachers must decompose abstract creative practice objectives into actionable, concrete teaching tasks according to students' developmental stages.

During the stage of goal-setting, teachers are required to employ the strategy of 'activity framework based on problem chains', abandon vague objectives and set specific inquiry goals according to pupils' age and musical foundation. Concurrently, teaching priorities and challenges must be clarified, core questions distilled, and activity sequences designed around these central questions. For instance, in the Shanghai Music Edition's lower-grade unit "Lantern Festival Revelry", the objective is defined as "how to employ singing, playing instruments, and acting to express the bustling atmosphere of Lantern Festival Garden Party". The key focus lies in perceiving the festive atmosphere and recognizing the timbres of gongs, cymbals, and lion drums, while the difficulty centres on establishing connections between these tonal characteristics and the emotional expression within the musical piece.

The design demonstrates progression across educational stages: lower grades prioritize playful singing activities and gamified tasks, embedding music theory within experiential contexts (e.g., simulating lion drum sounds by tapping benches, or clapping to feel gong rhythms). Middle and upper grades introduce progressively challenging themed compositions and improvisational creation, integrating comprehensive composition of melodies, lyrics, and performance styles around topics like 'Festivals of My Hometown'. Through systematic unit-based teaching design, students progressively acquire musical knowledge and enhance creative abilities, achieving systematic cultivation of

creative practice literacy.

3.2 Contextual Immersion and Problem-Driven Approach: Activating the Inner Drive for Creative Practice

The core of creative practice lies in students' active participation in musical creation. Contextual immersion and problem-driven approaches are key to stimulating students' intrinsic motivation for creativity. These two elements complement each other, fostering a desire for exploration through immersive experiences and enabling musical creation through problem-solving.

Teachers must design teaching scenarios that resonate with students' lives and possess cultural depth. Through multi-sensory experiences involving sight, sound, and touch, students perceive the connections between music, daily life, and culture, thereby enhancing their creative immersion. For instance, the Lantern Festival unit centres on lion dancing performances. By screening lion dance videos, displaying traditional percussion instruments, and demonstrating performance postures, students immerse themselves in festive atmosphere. Simultaneously, they explore the musical potential of everyday objects, using desks and chairs to mimic instrument sounds, thereby igniting their desire for independent creative exploration.

Building upon this contextual foundation, teaching objectives are transformed into inquiry-driven core questions, which are then broken down into progressively layered sub-questions forming a chain of inquiry. This empowers students as the primary agents of musical creation. Taking the unit of Lantern Festival Garden Party as an example, the core question of 'How to make the Lantern Festival Garden Party more lively' is decomposed into four sub-questions: choosing the instrument and playing method of lion dancing, singing to express festival joy with the rhythm, playing to craft lanterns and create lantern-reporting movements, and acting to express the bustling atmosphere of Lantern Festival Garden Party through diverse approaches. Students autonomously explore musical expression while solving these sub-questions, transforming knowledge into practical application and naturally generating creative practice through problem-solving.

3.3 Interdisciplinary Integration: Expanding the Boundaries of Creative Practice

Creative practice literacy requires students to 'synthesize knowledge across multiple disciplines.' Interdisciplinary integration thus becomes a vital pathway for broadening students' creative horizons and enhancing their comprehensive practical abilities. Implementation must adhere to the principle of 'music as the primary focus, with other subjects as supplementary', consistently centring on core music teaching objectives to avoid deviating from the essence of the discipline.

The integration of music and art proves most accessible at primary level, offering complementary sensory experiences. For instance, in the Lantern Festival unit, students create simple lanterns using artistic principles of colour and form. This combines lantern design with rhythmic recitation and

movement choreography, integrating the lanterns as performance props within musical presentations to fuse visual aesthetics with musical expression. Alternatively, pupils may create musical mood paintings inspired by song melodies and emotions, transforming auditory music into visual imagery to enhance musical comprehension and aesthetic expression.

Integrating music with language arts and science enriches the scope and depth of creative practice. When combined with language arts, poetry recitation and story creation are paired with musical melodies and rhythms through activities such as composing lyrics for poems or composing background music for fairy tales. When integrated with science, students are guided to explore sound production, instrument construction, and the relationship between music and sound waves. Investigate tonal differences across materials, selecting appropriate instruments to accompany songs, enabling students to grasp both musical knowledge and scientific principles.

Interdisciplinary integration allows students to perceive and create music from multiple perspectives, breaking subject-based limitations. This transforms musical creation into a comprehensive practice activity integrating diverse knowledge and skills, genuinely achieving holistic cultivation of creative practice literacy.

3.4 Diverse Assessment: Ensuring the Sustainable Development of Creative Practice

Teaching evaluation serves as a crucial safeguard for cultivating creative practice literacy, while the presentation of outcomes represents a concentrated manifestation of students' creative practical abilities. The integration of these two elements effectively stimulates students' sense of creative achievement, laying a solid foundation for the sustainable development of creative practice literacy. Under the new curriculum standards, primary music teaching evaluation must fundamentally dismantle the traditional 'single-dimensional, outcome-focused' assessment model. Instead, it should establish a diversified, process-oriented evaluation system encompassing all dimensions of 'listening, singing, playing, performing and creating'.

Regarding evaluation subjects, it should organically integrate teacher assessment, student self-evaluation, and peer assessment within groups, emphasizing the student's central role. After completing creative practice activities, students first engage in self-reflection, organizing their creative thought processes and summarizing gains and shortcomings; followed by peer assessment within groups, evaluating classmates' work across dimensions such as creativity, collaboration, and expressiveness. Teachers then provide concluding feedback, primarily affirming students' creativity and effort while offering specific improvement suggestions for areas needing attention, moving away from solely negative criticism.

Regarding assessment content, both musical performance skills and comprehensive literacy are considered. While accuracy in singing, playing instruments, and other skills is noted, greater emphasis is placed on students' creative thinking, collaborative abilities, and practical skills. When

assessing instrumental arrangements and musical performances, evaluation extends beyond formal completion to include creative design and emotional expression. Group activities are judged on participation levels, collaborative skills, and problem-solving abilities.

The assessment methodology combines a 'process portfolio with performance-based evaluation.' Students maintain personal portfolios documenting creative drafts, performance recordings, and reflective evaluations. Concurrently, platforms such as classroom performances, school music festivals, or themed events—like the class garden party showcase for the Lantern Festival unit—provide avenues for students to exhibit their achievements. This enables them to gain a sense of accomplishment through self-expression, thereby sustaining their interest and motivation for musical creation.

Cultivating creative practice literacy in primary music education under the new curriculum standards represents an evolution of traditional creativity teaching. Its core lies in shifting from 'skills training' to 'competency development,' enabling musical creation to become a vital means for pupils to integrate knowledge, solve practical problems, and express emotions and culture.

Teachers must adopt a learner-centred approach, acting as facilitators who embed creative practice within the classroom through unit-based teaching. This involves employing strategies such as contextual immersion, problem-driven learning, and cross-curricular integration. By prioritizing student-centred teaching and respecting creative exploration, educators can achieve aesthetic education that cultivates students' core artistic literacy and comprehensive abilities.