Creating original opera in a rural school : integration and relevance in discovery learning music education
by Susan Claire Hove-Pabst

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
Montana State University
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Abstract:
This study documented the process which occurred during the creation and production of original student opera by elementary students in a one-room rural school. Interaction between the students and the opera form was observed and described in order to further understanding of the potential of original student opera as a learning and teaching tool within a child-centered, discovery learning setting.

The method for the study was a qualitative case study.

The researcher acted as a participant-observer. As a participant, she guided the students through lessons and activities and acted as a resource as they participated in all phases of creation and production of their original opera. As an observer, she assembled descriptive field notes, recorded documentation, written documentation, interviews, and questionnaires. During and after the gathering of data, she analyzed them for prevalent themes.

Two components of the project became evident and subsequently underwent detailed study: integration of subject areas and relevance to children's lives. It was found that there was integration of subject areas typically found in an elementary curriculum, with prevalence in the areas of music, visual arts, drama, movement, and language. This integration was initiated by the opera form, by the project design, by the personnel involved (students, teachers, and the community), and by the rural way of life. Evidence of relevance to the children's lives was found. This relevance was introduced primarily by the students, reflecting their rural life style in elements of their stories as well as their working conversation.

The researcher concluded that original student opera can be used as an effective tool for learning about self, others, and the world and subsequently for communicating what one knows through an integrated, relevant form. The students expanded their repertoire of learning tools while enriching their lives.

CREATING ORIGINAL OPERA IN A RURAL SCHOOL: INTEGRATION AND RELEVANCE IN DISCOVERY LEARNING MUSIC EDUCATION

by

Susan Claire Hove-Pabst

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

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ABSTRACT

This study documented the process which occurred during the creation and production of original student opera by elementary students in a one-room rural school. Interaction between the students and the opera form was observed and described in order to further understanding of the potential of original student opera as a learning and teaching tool within a child-centered, discovery learning setting.

The method for the study was a qualitative case study. The researcher acted as a participant-observer. As a participant, she guided the students through lessons and activities and acted as a resource as they participated in all phases of creation and production of their original opera. As an observer, she assembled descriptive field notes, recorded documentation, written documentation, interviews, and questionnaires. During and after the gathering of data, she analyzed them for prevalent themes.

Two components of the project became evident and subsequently underwent detailed study: integration of subject areas and relevance to children's lives. It was found that there was integration of subject areas typically found in an elementary curriculum, with prevalence in the areas of music, visual arts, drama, movement, and language. This integration was initiated by the opera form, by the project design, by the personnel involved (students, teachers, and the community), and by the rural way of life. Evidence of relevance to the children's lives was found. This relevance was introduced primarily by the students, reflecting their rural life style in elements of their stories as well as their working conversation.

The researcher concluded that original student opera can be used as an effective tool for learning about self, others, and the world and subsequently for communicating what one knows through an integrated, relevant form. The students expanded their repertoire of learning tools while enriching their lives.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

School children, busily working together on arias, libretto, staging, and other aspects of opera creation and production, may not be what most people envision as part of a typical school curriculum in the remote ranch country of Wyoming. I observed these activities, however, during a study of the interaction between elementary school children and the opera form. The study describes the process of creation and production in detail while assessing the effectiveness of original student opera as part of an arts education curriculum in terms of integration of subject matter and relevance to the lives of the students.

Background of the Problem

This study is set against a backdrop of various educational concerns. Certainly there is a concern about the role of the arts in education (Broudy, 1979; Eisner, 1987; Fowler, 1988, 1990; Kiester, 1985; Lee, 1985; Moody, 1990; National Endowment for the Arts, 1988). Addressing this concern, grants from the United States Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the

National Endowment for the Humanities funded a recent drafting of guidelines describing what every child, kindergarten through grade twelve, should know and do in music, dance, theatre, and the visual arts (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994).

Arts in education is just one facet of total education. Educators and children's advocates are continually seeking appropriate and effective ways of educating throughout the curriculum. Two elements often cited as desirable components of child-centered, discovery learning education programs are (a) relevance to the children's lives and (b) integration of subject areas.

This research examines the study of opera by children and its effectiveness as a tool for learning, particularly in terms of relevance and integration. It has an admittedly narrow focus, but it has clear implications for arts education and education in general.

Arts in Education. Arts educators and advocates emphasize the importance of arts in the curriculum, claiming many and varied benefits. Development of aesthetic awareness, sensibilities, and perceptions is a primary benefit of arts participation (Broudy, 1979; Eisner, 1987, 1991; Fowler, 1988, 1990; Kiester, 1982, 1985; Myers, 1990). Understanding of self, one's culture, and the cultures of others is developed by the arts with the additional benefit of open mindedness and tolerance for differences (Eisner, 1987, 1991; Fowler, 1990;

Kiester, 1982, 1985). Arts literacy gives tools for decoding wisdom and knowledge as well as for expressing thoughts and feelings (Broudy, 1979; Eisner, 1987, 1991; Fowler, 1990; Kiester, 1985). Development of the intellect, including critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity, is nurtured through the arts (Eisner, 1991; Kiester, 1982, 1985; Lee, 1985; Myers, 1990) along with development of feelings and intuition (Fowler, 1990; Myers, 1990). The arts validate and encourage strengths and interests of individuals (Eisner, 1991; Fowler, 1990; Kiester, 1982, 1985; Lee, 1985), while providing our society with citizens of the future who have the imagination to face the challenges and find solutions to key questions (Eisner, 1987; Kiester, 1985; Piaget, 1970).

> For the next century we need a new kind of human being. The huge acceleration in the rate of growth of facts, of knowledge, and of advances in technology requires a change in people and their relationships to the world. We need people who are comfortable with change, who are able to improvise, who can face new situations with confidence and creativity. (Kiester, 1985, p. 24)

The arts deserve a place in the curriculum on their own merit, because of their own intrinsic worth (Kiester, 1985; Lee, 1985). Beyond that, however, "the arts can act as a bridge to all the subjects in the curriculum, illuminating and energizing the entire curriculum" (Kiester, 1985, p. 27). They become a powerful force in the integration of subject areas and in connecting school with life.

Relevance and Integration in Education. Some educators have placed a high value on relevance of the learning experience to the child's life (Dewey, 1959a, 1902; Goodman, 1986; Rousseau, 1762/1956). They have asserted that education should reflect life and not be isolated from it (Dewey, 1900). They have decried educational practices in which facts were "torn away from their original place in experience" (Dewey, 1902, p.6).

One way in which relevance is kept in learning experiences is by means of the integration of subject areas. Dewey suggests that life has a science aspect, an arts and culture aspect, and a communication aspect, but that they are parts of a whole experience. "Relate school to life, and all studies are of necessity related" (Dewey, 1900, p. 91). The National Association for the Education of Young Children also recommends an integrated approach which provides for all areas of a child's development: physical, emotional, social, and cognitive. "Children's learning does not occur in narrowly defined subject areas; their development and learning are integrated" (Bredekamp, 1987, p.3).

Relationships between and among subject areas are not automatically identified and applied by students when learning is presented in separate, isolated subject areas. This interrelatedness can be taught, however, through a curriculum of whole, integrated, relevant experiences (Anderson &

Lawrence, 1982; Bredekamp, 1987; Burnaford, 1993; Paxcia-Bibbins, 1993; Werner, 1990).

Support for integration of subject areas exists in arts education, both as integration among arts disciplines and as integration between the arts and other subject areas (Anderson & Lawrence, 1982, 1991; Kiester, 1982, 1985; Lee, 1985; Myers, 1990; Paxcia-Bibbins, 1993, Werner, 1990). Swanwick (1988) cites Carl Orff and Gertrude Keetman, prominent music educators, as recommending especially that music be reunited with movement, dance, and speech. Upitis (1990) recommends combining music, drama, and visual arts, as modeled after the whole language approach.

Many music educators recognize the need for both integrated and specialized aspects to the arts programs (Anderson & Lawrence, 1982, 1991; Burnaford, 1993; Lee, 1985; Myers, 1990). They express a confidence that "music can maintain its integrity as a worthwhile discipline in its own right and still be part of a holistic experience for the child" (Paxcia-Bibbins, 1993, p. 23).

Opera in the Curriculum. The study of opera is a common component of music curricula, as presented in curriculum guides (Alello, Cade, Hegg, & Hatfield, 1986; Harris, Hunter, Micheletti, Slanina, & Mutch, 1984; Svengalis et al., 1985). The upper elementary grades are the usual recipients of this study, which often includes other forms of musical drama along with opera. Opera is listed in the "form" component and

carries objectives such as "demonstrate awareness of the diverse forms and genres of music, e.g., opera, folk, symphonies, jazz, non-western" (Alello et al., 1986, p. 142).

Music series textbooks also include the study of opera and related musical drama (Culp, Eisman, & Hoffman, 1988; Marsh, Rinehart, & Savage, 1980; Meske, Andress, Pautz, & Willman, 1988). Although there are variations to this format, the suggested lessons usually include discussion of characteristics and terminology, reading a brief form of the story, and following an abbreviated text while listening to recorded excerpts. Students, in a passive role, discuss, respond, and do paper/pencil tasks such as a fill-in-the-blank test (Meske et al., 1988). Active student participation, such as to act out scenes (Culp et al., 1988) or to "participate as performer, director or choreographer in a 'mini-musical' or operetta using instruments, voices and dance" (Svengalis et al., 1985, p. M32), is not frequently suggested.

The decades of the 1980s and 1990s have brought new interest to projects involving children and opera (Music Educators National Conference, 1993). Some projects have continued to place the children in passive, receptive roles, while others have involved them actively in child-centered activities.

The Metropolitan Opera Guild and Opera America are two forerunners in child-centered projects (Fowler, 1981, 1985, 1989; Furber, 1986; Harland, 1990; Lipton, 1982; Winer, 1990).

In the Metropolitan Opera Guild model, teams consisting of a classroom teacher and a music teacher travel to New York City to participate in workshops on guiding students to create and produce opera. These teams return to their school districts to implement the program into their curricula.

One emphasis of this program is to place the students in all roles--as actors and actresses, dancers, musicians, composers, writers, technicians, producers, publicists, researchers, costumers, and visual artists. Another emphasis is to encourage the resultant original student operas to parallel the students' lives, providing relevance. This quest for relevance is echoed by other music educators as well. "Perhaps one of the most prominent and positive changes we have witnessed in schools over the past two decades is the increasingly common view that education should be child-centered, that it should be relevant to the child's life and experiences" (Upitis, 1990, p. 8).

One explanation for the recent interest in educational use of opera lies in its inherent integration of subject matter. According to the Harvard Dictionary of Music (Apel, 1966) opera is "a drama, either tragic or comic, sung throughout, with appropriate scenery and acting, to the accompaniment of an orchestra" (p. 505). While outlining suggested approaches to integration, Anderson and Lawrence (1982) suggest using art forms that are in themselves combinations of different arts. "Opera, for example, combines

drama, costuming, scenery, dance (on occasion), and music" (p. 35). John Dewey recognizes the potential for integration through combined art forms.

> The possibilities for plays, festivals, and pageants arranged on this plan are endless; for it is always possible to find subject-matter which will give the children just as much training in reading, spelling, history, literature or even some phases of geography, as would dry Grad-grind facts of a routine test-book type. (Dewey & Dewey, 1915, p. 131)

The opera form thus offers possibilities for relevant, child-centered, discovery learning, at least in part because of its integrative characteristics.

Statement of Problem

The problem of this study was to document the process which occurred during the creation and production of original student opera by elementary students in a one-room rural school. I observed and recorded interaction between the students and the opera form which occurred during participation in a child-centered, discovery learning project. The resultant data was analyzed in order to further understanding of the role of the creation of original student opera as a learning and teaching tool. Two themes of interest emerged and subsequently were examined in detail. One theme was integration of subject areas, with attention to the prevalence of integration, the subject areas involved, and the source of the integration. The second theme under investigation was relevance to the students' lives. The

examination of these two topics, integration and relevance, and the insight and understanding which the original student opera project brought to these topics, became the focus of my research problem.

Importance of Study

This qualitative case study was designed to contribute to the knowledge base and to inform teaching practice in music education. It is hoped that observation and analysis of this experience will add to the understanding of children's learning in child-centered, discovery method integrated arts education.

Several schools of thought in music education have supported child-centered, discovery learning music curricula. Swanwick (1988) describes "three central pillars of music education: a concern for musical traditions; sensitivity to students; awareness of social context and community" (p. 10). The second pillar reflects music education which focuses on the child as enjoyer, explorer, and discoverer. This is referred to as child-centered, discovery learning methodology.

> This fundamental theoretical shift requires us to see children as musical inventors, improvisers, composers; either in order to encourage something called 'self-expression,' or, more credibly, as a direct way of coming to understand how music actually works through activities calling for decision-making, handling sound as an expressive medium. (Swanwick, 1988, p. 14)

The Orff Schulwerk approach has advocated learning through discovery, learning by doing (Swanwick, 1988; Wampler,

1968; Warner, 1991). As part of this learning, Orff Schulwerk has suggested integrating the performing arts--music and movement specifically, but also speech and drama (Shamrock, 1986; Swanwick, 1988).

The Richards Institute, founded by Mary Helen Richards, has supported the position that "learning is the dual responsibility of teacher and student" (Bennett, 1987, p. 41). At the center, however, is the child.

> In the beginning there is the child--
> He must discover his own way.
> You lead, opening the song for his wonder--
> a wonder that grows as it is shared with the others.
> The child sings, sees, hears and feels the song
> through movement--
> Then he sings, sees, hears and feels the song
> in his inner knowing,
> and creating symbols and new sounds,
> bright in color and with expressive line,
> builds his own understanding. (Richards, 1977, p.1)

Other music educators have focused on student compositions (Regelski, 1981; Schafer, 1976; Thomas, 1970; Upitis, 1990, 1992). In his description of the Manhattanville Music Curriculum project, Ronald Thomas writes that the student "must become involved in the total process, composing, performing, conducting, listening with sensitive awareness, and evaluating" (1970, p. 4). The students' products (compositions, performances, critiques) and processes are evaluated according to appropriate standards, much as for children's paintings or children's speech and written communication. The students are encouraged to consider themselves composers and musicians (Upitis, 1990).

> In this curriculum the student is a musician from the moment of the first strategy. While his level of musical thought will certainly not be comparable to that of the experienced musician, the way in which he functions is parallel. (Thomas, 1970, p.5)

In spite of numerous occurrences of child-centered, discovery learning in music education, there is a shortage of research on this type of music education. According to the Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning, a project of the Music Educators National Conference, "a philosophical basis has been established for discovery learning as a methodology. All that remains is a foundation of research to verify its effectiveness" (Costanza & Russell, 1992, p. 504). If, as suggested by Upitis (1990), we model research after that which the whole language movement has provided, we will use naturalistic studies which "describe the classroom experience, report the curricular decisions made, and examine the learning that occurs" (Weaver, 1990, p. 128). It is this need for research on holistic, child-centered, discovery learning music education that prompted my research on original children's opera; this was the primary incentive for the research.

A more specific incentive for the research was examination of two features of child-centered, discovery learning: relevance and integration of subject areas. Many educators have recommended integration of subject areas and the integrative nature of opera has made it a natural choice for combining the arts with each other and with other subject

areas (Anderson & Lawrence, 1985). Opera's penchant for telling a story has made it a potential tool for relevance (Fowler, 1989; Smith, 1993). But both integration and relevance have to be meaningful, natural components of a learning experience. They cannot be contrived and artificial (Werner, 1990). If an opera is constructed by students, using student-generated stories, music, staging, and production, then, as an authentic arts event, it is a strategy worth investigating for evidence of integration and relevance.

While reviewing the literature on children's opera experiences, I found several descriptions of projects. There was, however, an absence of detailed, in-depth description and analysis of data. This study has attempted to provide rich description as well as analysis and interpretation of data. "It is necessary to have rich descriptions of classrooms where teachers are using research-based knowledge of children's thinking to improve (mathematical) learning" (Fennema, Franke, Carpenter, & Carey, 1993, p. 555).

By adding to theory and practice in original student opera, it is hoped that this study has added to the larger area of holistic, relevant, integrative, child-centered, discovery learning in music education. This in turn becomes part of theory and practice in learning about, in, and through the arts (Fowler, 1988) and in education in general.

As often happens, there are other issues which emerge from or coincide with the main objective. In this study the

place of opera in our culture indirectly comes under examination. It is beyond the scope or power of this study to rescue the art form of opera from what appears to be its declining status in contemporary culture. However, it may provide insight into the potential of this conglomerate of music, drama, story, and visual art, especially in terms of making it more populist (Fowler, 1989; Furber, 1986; Kupferberg, 1975).

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this research project, the following definitions will be employed:

1. Circle story form: A traditional story structure in which the main character begins in a home setting, progresses through a series of events, and ends up back in the home setting.

2. Opera: A staged musical drama, complete with scenery and costumes, in which the actors and actresses sing the words.

3. Original student opera: An opera--complete with drama, music, movement, scenery, sets, costumes, staging, and publicity--which is created, produced, and performed by the students.

4. Libretto: The words of the opera, the text.

5. Integration: The combining of disciplines, subject areas, within the learning experience.

6. Improvise: The impromptu "making up" of music, words, or drama.

7. Lyrics: The words to a song.

8. Discovery learning: Learning in which the student constructs knowledge through interactions with people, ideas, and materials, gained through concrete, hands-on, child-centered activities and experiences.

9. Child-centered education: Education in which the child is the active agent, the explorer, the discoverer in his or her learning. Emphasis is placed on developmentally and individually appropriate instruction.

10. Masterwork: A composition which is an accepted part of a body of traditional music literature.

11. Pentatonic scale: A five-tone scale constructed with no half step intervals between consecutive tones, as exemplified by the tones Do Re Mi Sol La, which is ideal for children's composition because it is nearly fail-proof.

12. Rural school: A school located in the country, often containing just one class. Children of varying ages form a class, taught by one teacher.

Questions to be Examined

The study was intended to examine the overarching question: what happened when this group of children created and produced an original student opera? More specific questions emerged from the study:

1. Did integration of subject areas occur?

2. Which subject areas were integrated?

3. What were the sources of integration: the form of opera itself, the project design, the classroom teacher or music teacher, or the children and their lives?

4. Did the process and product of the creation and production of original student opera reflect relevance to the children's lives?

The Researcher and Opera

During 16 years of teaching as a music specialist in public elementary schools, I continually confronted the task of deciding what to teach and how to teach it, or perhaps better stated, the task of deciding what I wanted my students to gain and how I could facilitate that learning. My search for pedagogy and curriculum was not limited to the field of music. I believed in teaching the whole child and in the interrelatedness of all subject areas. Consequently I accessed other disciplines and specialty areas through classes, literature, workshops, and conferences. I was particularly interested in the areas of whole language teaching and early childhood education, which modeled developmentally and individually appropriate practices. Now, as a teacher of music majors and elementary education majors, I still focus on the issues and challenges of pedagogy and curriculum.

One area of content in the music curricula which I have examined over the years is children's study of opera. My

personal experience with opera has served as one of many sources for this study.

I grew up in a setting similar to that of my students. Although my home was very musical, opera was, as Swanwick said, "strongly identified with another culture" (1988, p. 98), and not part of my life. Until I personally experienced opera in a real, hands-on setting, as an undergraduate music student taking part in a university performance, I did not value it and considered it unimportant to my life.

When I began my teaching career opera was present in the curriculum guides and in the music texts, although I could see little evidence that it was present in the lives of most of my students. They were generally ignorant of and unenthusiastic about opera. The suggested lessons from texts and curriculum guides reflected the educational philosophy that students were passive receivers of a traditional "repertoire of 'masterworks' or the work of master-musicians" (Swanwick, 1988, p. 11).

I began to experiment with learning situations which placed my students in the center of opera and in active roles. In 1973, I worked cooperatively with a classroom teacher, assisting fifth grade students in their production of an opera. They chose a story from their reading book and created lyrics and music. They also designed and constructed sets, costumes, staging, and publicity. The project culminated in a public performance. As teachers we were especially

interested in our students' growth in the academic areas of music, visual arts, movement, language arts, math, and social studies as well as in self-esteem and social skills. There were subsequent small-scale productions, including puppet opera and informal, impromptu classroom opera.

Two occurrences rejuvenated my interest in children's opera several years later. One was the work I did with a group of elementary students and their classroom teacher in a one-room, rural school in McLeod, Montana, during the 1991-1992 school year. I designed and directed several sets of activities intended to integrate the arts and other subject areas. The final project was an original student opera which they created, produced, and performed.

The other stimulus for my renewed interest was the Metropolitan Opera Guild's student opera program. I learned about this program from two South Dakota teachers and their enthusiastic middle school students. This approach has been described in several journals (Fowler, 1981, 1985, 1989; Harland, 1990; Lipton, 1982; Winer, 1990).

During my earlier experiences with children's opera, I had done a minimal amount of documentation. Seeing great promise in original student opera as a learning/teaching tool, I wanted to continue work in this area and to gain insight and understanding about the processes, interactions, and products involved. With encouragement from my doctoral committee at Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana in May, 1992, I

embarked once more on a search. This time I decided to use the method of qualitative case study research to enable me to formalize my description and analysis.

Review of Relevant Theory and Previous Studies

Introduction

The body of knowledge existing relative to children's original opera is categorized in the following manner for this review: (a) information on educational theory which influenced the design of the opera project and (b) information on projects involving opera and children.

Relevant Educational Theory

Information on educational theory relevant to the project came from the field of general education, with additional input from specific areas such as whole language education and music education. The information focuses on child-centered, discovery learning methodology, integration of subject areas, and relevance to children's lives.

Child-centered Discovery Learning. Discovery learning methodologies place children at the center of their own learning. Learners are actively involved in discovery. Learning under this view is a kind of personal research. Personal experience, not verbalization or lecture, forms the basis for their learning (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987; Dewey, 1900; Dewey, 1959a; Kamii, 1973; Piaget, 1970; Rousseau,

1762/1956). The child at the center is a "whole child", a totality of intellect, morality, and affective attributes (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987).

Children transform their learning experiences into knowledge, skills, and attitude as they act upon them (Piaget, 1970). The teacher may set into place the challenge, but the children self-initiate and self-conduct their learning. The students work out problems for themselves (Dewey, 1900, 1959a). Children construct knowledge as they learn through play and through interaction with materials, people, and ideas. In some stages this may involve more than just concrete manipulation. It may include reflective, abstract manipulation and verbal manipulation. But these manipulations must also be spontaneous from the child, not imposed onto him or her (Piaget, 1970).

"Nature wants children to be children before they are men" (Rousseau, 1762/1956, p. 38). "Childhood has ways of seeing, thinking and feeling peculiar to itself; nothing can be more foolish than to seek to substitute our ways for them" (Rousseau, 1762/1956, p. 38-39). Children's thought is qualitatively different than that of adults (Piaget, 1970). Their mental development is influenced by maturity, experience, social interaction, and equilibrium (Charles, 1974). In choosing materials and activities, therefore, educators need to study children in order to identify their capacities and recognize the stages of their growth (Dewey,

1900, 1959a; Dewey & Dewey, 1915). Teaching practices need to be developmentally and individually appropriate (Bredekamp, 1987).

In line with appropriate practices, our expectations of children's work need to reflect an appreciation for their stage of development. We need to "accept the reality of learning through risk-taking and error" (Goodman, 1986, p. 19) and to use "behaviors as indications of developing knowledge and underlying competence" (Goodman, Goodman, & Hood, 1989, p. xiii). Research in whole language has "shown that although the products may be unconventional by adult standards, even two-year-olds have well-developed strategies for exploring written language through reading and writing" (Newman, 1985, p.20). Although traditional approaches have "assumed that readers must possess tacit knowledge of literary conventions and forms before they can uncover the inherent or so-called true meaning of a literary work" (McClure, 1990, p. 9), "the value of invented spelling has become widely recognized by psycholinguists in recent years" (Kamii & Randazzo, 1989, p. 104).

> To the educator worried that children are bad sources of information, we say that they are bad sources if we assume that learning takes place through the transmission and internalization of information. Since children construct their knowledge, they learn not <u>from</u> each other but <u>with</u> each other by going from one level after another of being "wrong." (Kamii & Randazzo, 1989, p. 113)

As teachers place children in the center of their learning and accept their product and process as valid, they

need to investigate the environment in which the children learn. Such an environment encourages not only interaction between a child and materials and ideas, but also social interaction among the children, and between child and teacher (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987; Goodman, 1986; Goodman et al., 1989; Kamii & Randazzo, 1989; Manning, Manning, & Long, 1989; McClure, 1990). "It is through interaction with both peers and teachers, negotiating meanings through language, that children develop the abilities to reflect upon their unique personal constructs or responses" (McClure, 1990, p. 10). This interaction often occurs through activities that require children to work cooperatively in groups (Charles, 1974; Dewey, 1900, 1959a; McClure, 1990; Piaget, 1970).

In this kind of setting the role of the teachers shifts to that of guides (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987; Dewey, 1900; Kamii, 1973; Rousseau, 1762/1956). Teachers are certainly in control of the setting, the materials, and the activities; they are the adults in charge. Yet they become fellow-learners. This kind of teacher,

> as the member of the group having the riper and fuller experience and the greater insight into the possibilities of continuous development found in any suggested project, has not only the right but the duty to suggest lines of activity, and to show that there need not be any fear of adult imposition provided the teacher knows children as well as subjects, their import is not exhausted in bringing out this fact. (Dewey, 1959b, p. 124)

This kind of teacher facilitates the student's construction of knowledge (Kamii, 1973). Carefully chosen questions,

suggestions, and criticism can aid the children's own investigation and bring them to consciousness of what they have done (Dewey, 1900). The teacher can take hold of children's activities and help give them direction, in this way extending their ideas (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987; Dewey, 1900). Teachers must find projects with content that intrigues children and arouses in them a need and desire to figure something out (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987).

Although the social setting is very important, the physical setting can also be conducive to discovery learning. A workshop area, with both a large work space and smaller adjacent areas for individual or small-group work, provides room to work; it should not be a room set up for listening and lecture (Dewey, 1900). "Silence and immobility shall cease to be held as the great scholastic virtues" (Piaget, 1970, p. 102). Set in confusion, bustle, and certain disorders of a workshop, there will be a climate of informality "because experience has proved that formalization is hostile to genuine mental activity and to sincere emotional expression and growth" (Dewey, 1959b, p. 115).

When these general education principles are applied to specific disciplines they retain their validity. Donald Graves, in commenting about process writing, said, "The writing process is discovered by doing it...Students can be lectured on the components of the process, but they still only know process by actually doing the writing, making words

fulfill their intentions" (1983, p. 250). Similarly, students learn to read by reading (Smith, 1976).

In child-centered music education programs, the curriculum focuses on the child as the active participant (Elliott, 1990; Swanwick, 1988; Upitis, 1990, 1992; Wiggins, 1990).

> This fundamental theoretical shift requires us to see children as music inventors, improvisers, composers; either in order to encourage something called "self-expression" or, more credibly, as a direct way of coming to understand how music actually works through activities calling for decision-making, handling sound as an expressive medium. (Swanwick, 1988, p. 14)

Those children learn to construct their own meaning from music, while giving credibility to their own musical creations and performances as well as those of others (Upitis, 1990, 1992, Wiggins, 1990).

In music education, as in other areas of education, it is important to value the children's processes and products during music creation (Upitis, 1990, 1992). This valuing is sometimes hindered when "we make judgments of their compositions based on adult standards" (Upitis, 1990, p.3). This problem is rooted more deeply when

> current concepts of "development" as progress towards perfection lead us to see both children and earlier notation systems as deficient. Yet our seeing them as deficient may reflect rather our failure to understand them in their own terms. (Upitis, 1992, p. ix)

Upitis (1992) recommends that we honor children as learners, encourage them to take risks and accept errors, and recognize

and accept children's original works. "Surely part of the secret of becoming a musician or a composer (or whatever) is that one is encouraged to think that one already <u>is</u> those things" (p. 3). Through the tools that enable children to be actively involved in discovery

> lies something bigger than whole music or whole language. It is more like whole mind: the human mind at work through symbol systems, which represent and also shape our perceptions, our worlds, both outer and inner. Giving access to the many languages of the human mind is the work of education. (Upitis, 1992, p. ix)

Not all music educators subscribe to the philosophy of child-centered education. Some focus instead on the traditional body of music or the content. "A music curriculum based on children experiencing <u>only</u> their own musical products would starve and impoverish musical insight and development" (Swanwick, 1988, p. 15). Child-centered music teachers relate the children's knowledge and skills to music of their own creation and to the traditional body of music (Upitis, 1990; Wiggins, 1990).

<u>Integration in Education</u>. Much of the curriculum presented in traditional schools is divided into individual pieces; facts are "torn away from their original place in experience" (Dewey, 1902, p.6). "In a so-called 'egg carton' curriculum, the subjects of math, language arts, science, social studies, art, music, and dance are taught separately" (Werner, 1990, p. 130.). There is certainly convenience and sometimes appropriateness in this approach (Anderson &

Lawrence, 1982). In child-centered discovery learning, however, "integration becomes the central motif" (Goodman, 1986, p. 30).

Dewey (1959a) characterizes a child's life as an integral, total one, with no conscious isolation. "We violate the child's nature and render difficult the best ethical results, by introducing the child too abruptly to a number of special studies" (Dewey, p. 25). The National Association for the Education of Young Children suggests that "developmentally appropriate curriculum provides for all areas of a child's development: physical, emotional, social, and cognitive through an integrated approach" (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 3). Problems and learning in real life do not come in narrowly defined subject areas (Bredekamp, 1987; Schubert, 1986). Thus integrated learning reflects a more natural approach.

One important benefit of integration seems to be the interrelatedness of learning. Students do not necessarily relate what they learn in different subject areas; they do not automatically make the connections. However, when teachers direct the students in their learning through activities designed to reveal the connections, students begin to relate various subject areas to each other and to out-of-school experiences (Anderson & Lawrence, 1982). In addition they become more capable of making connections between old and new material and ideas (Burnaford, 1993).

One tool for integration, the project method, was popularized by the Progressive Educators of the 1920s and 1930s and remains in child-centered methodologies. The project method "involved students in an overarching project and related many subject areas to it" (Schubert, 1986). The workshop approach of John Dewey offered a synthesis of the various subjects. "These things may be introduced, then, not as isolated studies, but as organic outgrowths of the child's experience" (Dewey, 1900, p. 113). Worthwhile projects, as prescribed by Dewey, were "sufficiently full and complex to demand a variety of responses from different children" (Dewey, 1900, p. 122). However, "an integrative model cannot be contrived. Each subject matter must keep its form without sacrifice so as not to dilute the art forms through integration" (Werner, 1990, p. 130).

Anderson and Lawrence (1982) outline various approaches to integration: analogous concept, common theme, geographic area, historical era, and large inherently integrative works that combine art forms. Certainly dramas meet the qualifications for an integrative arts work. "Such projects should not only interrelate the arts more closely but should relate the arts to the total school program" (Anderson & Lawrence, 1982, p. 32).

Dewey places promise in the use of drama to give opportunity for use of the body, the voice, movement,

construction skills, writing skills, musical composition, and performing skills, as well as knowledge in many subjects.

> The possibilities for plays, festivals, and pageants arranged on this plan are endless; for it is always possible to find subject-matter which will give the children just as much training in reading, spelling, history, literature, or even some phases of geography, as would dry Grad-grind facts of a routine text-book type. (Dewey & Dewey, 1915, p. 131)

DeVries and Kohlberg (1987) also address drama in their discussion of Piagetian concepts of play. Particularly applicable are symbolic play, in which imitation and dramatization represent a form of thought and language for children, and the more advanced games of construction that Piaget described.

Many music educators are advocates of integration of music with other arts and throughout the curriculum (Anderson & Lawrence, 1982; Burnaford, 1993; Kiester, 1982, 1985; L. Kleinman, 1990; Lee, 1985; Myers, 1990; Paxcia-Bibbins, 1993; Upitis, 1990, 1992; Werner, 1990; Wiggins, 1990). These supporters either come from the music education philosophy which views integration as a means of placing children at the center of the learning experience (Swanwick, 1988) or else arrive there because of their emphasis on common and uniting elements of the arts (Plummeridge, 1991).

The development of the whole child is addressed through integration of the curriculum with an infusion of the arts (Paxcia-Bibbins, 1993). Aesthetic education is enhanced along

with the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains (Myers, 1993).

> Feelings, senses, and intuition, as well as the intellectual and physical self, are nurtured, with particular emphasis on critical thinking, individual creative expression, and social responsibility. (Myers, 1993, p. 72)

Upitis (1990) suggests that integration, "as modeled by the whole language approach" (p. 8), makes music more accessible to children. Music in this scenario would be integrated "through an attitude and style of teaching that uses arts processes as naturally as books, chalkboards, and lectures" (Myers, 1990, p.72).

Advocates of integration emphasize the futility of separating the subject content areas. "Music is not separate from other disciplines: it is a part of language, a part of mathematics, a part of movement, a part of dance. No subject, if studied deeply enough, is separate from the others" (Upitis, 1990, p. 9). Further, if one observes what artists do, they often cross boundaries and make categorizing ineffectual. "What I am suggesting is that categorizing the arts themselves is essentially nothing more than useful fictions developed by critics, consumers, and academicians, scientific and otherwise" (S. Kleinman, 1990, p. 126).

Not all music educators are supportive of integration among the arts or between arts and other subject areas. Some prefer to concentrate on the distinct features of individual arts (Plummeridge, 1991). They are concerned that the arts

will lose their identity in integrated contexts (Werner, 1990). An illustration of this stance may be seen in this statement: "dance as a discipline has its own body of knowledge...each subject matter must keep its form without sacrifice so as not to dilute the art forms through integration" (Werner, 1990, p. 130).

Many music educators align with a stance which suggests both an integration of subjects and the arts taught as pure subject matter (Anderson & Lawrence, 1982, 1991; Burnaford, 1993; Kiester, 1985; Lee, 1985; Myers, 1990; Paxcia-Bibbins, 1993).

> Though the arts can act as a bridge to all the subjects in the curriculum illuminating and energizing the entire curriculum, the justification for the arts in school does not depend on these kinds of relationships alone. The arts belong in the curriculum because of their intrinsic worth. (Kiester, 1985, p. 27)

Thus the arts may be both infused throughout the curriculum and taught as separate areas of study. This dual approach addresses commonalities and connections among subject areas but also specialized skills and knowledge necessary to a proficiency in the individual art forms. Both aspects contribute to a common goal: the education of children (Paxcia-Bibbins, 1993).

Relevance to Children's Lives. Within child-centered, discovery learning methodologies the starting point is the child's own instincts and powers. His or her interests and functional needs are considered in planning and guiding

learning experiences. Educational experiences and activities should be vital and real to the child, much as his or her life experiences and activities outside of school (Dewey, 1959a; Rousseau, 1762/1956; Schubert, 1986). Education should reflect life, not be isolated from it. "Relate the school to life, and all studies are of necessity related" (Dewey, 1900, p. 91). Interactions with people, materials, and ideas are more likely to happen and to be productive if the child identifies a function, a reality, a relevance to the experience. According to Dewey (1959) this relevance is increased because of the demands of social situations in which the child finds himself or herself.

Although education is often geared towards preparing children for the future, the emphasis should be on the present learning situation and should be relevant to the child at the present time (Dewey, 1959a; Rousseau, 1762/1956). Dewey explains that it is not even possible to prepare the student for exact future needs, but that education

> means to give him command of himself; it means so to train him that he will have the full and ready use of all his capacities; that his eye and ear and hand may be capable of grasping the conditions under which it has to work, and the executive forces be trained to act economically and efficiently. (Dewey, 1959a, p. 22)

This kind of education will not only serve a child in the future but will enable him or her to function better now.

The emphasis on relevance to a child appears in the methodology of several content areas. In science, students'

knowledge and conception of the world are valued as starting points of instruction and situations familiar to students are used to teach process skills (Berliner, 1987; Casanova; 1987). Mathematics teaching methods are examining how children think about their mathematical learning in structuring curricula (Fennema et al., 1993).

In language arts the whole language and process writing movements center around concrete, authentic, functional, real language materials and activities which are rooted in the children's own experience (Altwerger, Edelsky, & Flores, 1989; Goodman, 1986; Goodman et al., 1989; Graves, 1983; Manning, Manning, & Long, 1989). The classroom experiences mirror language use in daily life, in the real world (Manning et al., 1989; Newman, 1985). In discussing what makes learning easy, Ken Goodman (1986) writes

> It's easy when:
> It's real and natural.
> It's whole.
> It's sensible.
> It's interesting.
> It's relevant.
> It belongs to the learner.
> It's part of a real event.
> It has social utility.
> It has purpose for the learner.
> The learner chooses to use it.
> It's accessible to the learner.
> The learner has power to use it.
> (p. 8)

In music education, child-centered, discovery learning teachers also value relating students' learning in school to their own experiences and to life (Burnaford, 1993; Upitis, 1990).

> If music is important at all, then it is important because it is a part of life. Music enriches our lives. Music gives us a powerful way of interpreting our worlds. Music, just like any other subject if it is explored deeply enough, can offer the means of delving into any number of inquiries about mathematics, language, physics, history, and art. I view music as a means of teaching and learning about life, as a vehicle for making our lives more challenging, as a vehicle for making our lives fuller. (Upitis, 1990, p. 31)

In music education, as in other curricular areas, this kind of learning is "rooted in firsthand experience and genuine problem solving" (Altwerger et al., 1989, p. 19).

Studies on Opera in Education

The Opera Form. According to the Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, as cited by the Harvard Dictionary of Music (Apel, 1966), an opera is "a drama, either tragic or comic, sung throughout, with appropriate scenery and acting, to the accompaniment of an orchestra" (p. 505). As the most important of the forms resulting from the combination of music and theater, it enlists many different arts in its service: music, drama, poetry, acting, dance, stage-design, and costuming (1966). The opera form has certain conventions, "the most important of which is that the persons of the drama express their thoughts and feelings by means of song rather than speech" (p.505). This affects the temporal element in that sometimes there are periods of slow action or alternating periods of action and repose, as evidenced in recitative and numbers (arias, ensembles).

Charles Hamm (1966) lists several characteristic parts of an opera. These include singers, words (libretto), music, recitative, aria, duet, trio, finale, ensembles, chorus, finale, introduction, orchestra, overture, and dance.

Historically, music drama "has always been part of the life of man, from his earliest beginning...Even the most 'primitive' tribes which have survived to be studied by anthropologists have some kind of music drama" (Drummond, 1980, p. 14-15). Classical Greek tragedies and liturgical dramas and mysteries were early forms of musical drama (Apel, 1966; Drummond, 1980). Secular opera as we know it is only about four hundred years old. During its development it has changed, with shifts in importance of music and drama. Wagner transformed opera into a super-art form, Gesamtkunstwerk. He unified music and drama to the extent that constituent parts were transfigured, sacrificing individual identity for a larger possibility. He accomplished this partly through eliminating division of the music into numbers and eliminating unessential display scenes (Apel, 1966).

Despite constant renovation, sometimes opera has been "accused of being too firmly rooted in the past, of living on ancient glories rather than future prospects" (Kupferberg, 1975, p. 147). Composers have explored new techniques and have expanded opera's dimensions. It "shows every sign of remaining a viable and vital art form" (p. 149).

Opera in Child-centered Discovery Learning. Certain features of opera make it compatible with a child-centered discovery learning educational setting. One such feature is the integrative nature. "It is by its very nature a collaborative art form" (Furber, 1986, p. 51). It "combines drama, costuming, scenery, dance (on occasion), and music" (Anderson & Lawrence, 1982, p. 35). In addition opera production needs "creative writers with an understanding of philosophy and history and languages" (Furber, 1986, p. 51). Thus not only the arts are related, but also the total school program (Anderson & Lawrence, 1982).

Opera provides relevance to a child's life, important to child-centered education. "All opera/musical theater works explore the human condition" (Furber, 1986, p. 51). In addition several recent children's opera projects have focused on using problems from their lives as plot material (Fowler 1981, 1989; Lewis, 1991; Lipton, 1982; Winer, 1990).

There is a wide variety among children's opera projects in regard to how active or passive the role of the child is. Sometimes the children serve as audience, while other times they serve in roles of actor/actress, musician, composer, writer, stage hand, costumer, set constructor, producer, and publicist (Furber, 1986).

Several of the reviewed programs used opera masterworks as the material (Cohen, 1981; Fowler, 1985, 1989; L. Kleinman, 1990; Levin, 1980; Miller, 1984; Strittmatter, 1984; Wignall,

1988; Windeler, 1980). Live performances, recorded performances, and pre and post activities were standard. Other programs used musical plays written by contemporary professionals (Hill, 1980; Lewis, 1991). In a project described by Hill (1980), professionals wrote the libretto and music but left them unfinished. The students participated in the completion. In a project using the Aesop Fables (Thoms, 1982) a music teacher set classic folk tales to music. Students adapted existing children's literature and composed original music for an opera in a project described by Speake (1993).

Several of the programs emphasized that the students were responsible for all phases of creation and production of their operas (Fowler, 1981, 1985, 1989; Hove-Pabst & Anderson, 1993; Lipton, 1982; Winer, 1990). In other opera projects the students were responsible for the story and much of the music, but had substantial teacher input (Davies, 1982; Edwards, 1982). Real life experiences and relevant social and emotional issues, presented from the students' perspective, were often the subjects of student written and composed operas.

Opera America's textbook series (Fowler, 1985, 1989; Furber, 1986) includes a two-prong approach encompassing many of the characteristics of the other programs. Through four levels of curriculum, with manuals, study books, recordings, and other materials, the students are guided to listen to and

discover information about the works of others, so-called masterworks of opera. They explore the world of music and theater while becoming familiar with basic repertoire, the world of stage, and the roles of composer/librettist. They develop analytical skills and knowledge which help them become observers and evaluators. However, the other prong of the program's approach includes direct experience, in which the students themselves are responsible for all aspects of creation and production of musical theater.

Among the programs reviewed, there was wide variety in the methods and approaches used. Some of the programs involved the students in fairly passive, receptive roles. In a program described by Miller (1984) students listened to recordings after the teacher gave them information and invited them to use their "imaginative visualization". They did sing along on some of the melodies and used the presentations as a springboard for studying the elements of music. In the Levin (1980) program, she lectured prior to field trips to performing arts centers. In addition, she gave the students a written essay and synopsis ahead of time. The program included study booklets for the classroom teacher for pre or post performance use. In the Wignall project (1988) the music teacher presented lessons to the students throughout the term. The activity which culminated the experience was a marionette presentation of a masterwork. Although the program was very teacher directed, the materials did involve the children by

learning songs, writing narrative scripts, arranging some accompaniments, designing sets, and some rather marginally connected activities like drawing pictures of the characters.

In Thoms's (1982) presentation of Aesop's Fables, the teacher wrote the libretto and music. The students performed it, and faculty helped with costumes and props.

Professionals involved students in the productions in several projects. In Lewis's (1991) environmental education musical theater an adult wrote the play and professional actors performed it. The actors involved the students through interaction with them during the performance. Post-performance materials were made available to teachers, suggesting a wide variety of activities which the students could do. Some of these activities included art, dance, sculpture, poetry, and music activities.

Teaming the students with professionals was a tactic in several programs. In Dayton (Windeler, 1980), Opera Guild members produced shows within the schools. They came prepared with props and costumes. The adults performed narration and solo work, with recorded music and a professional accompanist. The students, however, filled several of the roles. Students in the audience were actively involved as well as those on stage. In an educational experience which joined a professional opera company and junior high students, one performance used Donizetti's Don Pasquale, with rather extensive adaptation, including a narration and extra parts

for students. Professionals filled the major roles (Strittmatter, 1984). In a project based on The Mikado (L. Kleinman, 1990), junior high students worked with professionals in the production itself, filling minor roles and learning about acting, costumes, make-up, and publicity through actual participation. Perhaps the most unique blending of students and professionals occurred in a program, "The Arts from the Inside Out," in which a student from a gifted program was teamed with a professional and actually helped during performances. This involved stage work as well as educational workshops (Cohen, 1981). In a project described by Hill (1980), the librettist and composer brought unfinished work to the school and the students helped with the completion. This process extended over a ten-week segment of time. Small groups of students worked with an adult in the creation. The students then performed the music theater piece.

In several projects classroom teachers and/or music teachers directed and guided the productions, but the students did most of the creating and producing, as well as all of the acting (Davies, 1982; Edwards, 1982; Hove-Pabst & Anderson, 1993; Speake, 1993). In the Davies project (1982) twenty children, age 11-13, wrote the plot; developed the characters; composed the songs; wrote the dialogue; devised instrumental pieces; designed and constructed costumes and staging; and produced the musical play. They worked on the episodic story

in small groups. Davies found that the students were initially preoccupied with the story line and needed to be prompted to consider staging possibilities and character development. She also reported a need by the students to have a final production, but along with that final production a sense of ownership and a freedom from fear of errors predominated. A major goal of her project appeared to be using opera as an integrating force. "It has long been recognized that young children do not think in terms of separate subjects, hence the development of integrated projects and topic work in the primary school" (Davies, 1982, p. 18). Davies also credited the experience with providing her, as the teacher, with insights into her students. She concluded that there are different ways to teach music and that while this format may not be the appropriate one for all musical tasks, i.e. teaching the mechanics of instrumental playing, it is appropriate and natural for combining dance, drama, music, art in a project in which process gains importance over just product.

An original first grade operetta (Edwards, 1982) also emphasized the process of a musical drama as it grew out of the children's own experience. The Edwards project had its beginning when a child announced that she had a loose tooth. The students' stories about their teeth were set into rhythmic chants and eventually couplets, which were set to music. The children developed the words and melodies individually with

some teacher editing. They developed the couplets into a rondo form and added pentatonic ostinati as accompaniments. The students presented the resultant opera, staged and produced by them, to the local Parent Teacher Association. Edwards felt the project addressed the problem of where and when to begin creative experience, stating that "the creative experience is the most meaningful part of music education" (1982, p. 44). In addition, the experience provided a springboard to the study of more traditional musical concepts.

Constance Speake (1993) describes a project in which the classroom teacher and music teacher guided the students to adapt children's literature to a play set to music. The classroom teacher integrated the experience throughout the curriculum. The music teacher used the experience to teach skills and knowledge in music.

In a Montana rural school, students, grades K-4, wrote; composed; staged; acted; and produced an original opera as a culminating activity in an integrated arts project. The classroom teacher and a music specialist acted as resources and guides, but the process and product belonged to the students (Hove-Pabst & Anderson, 1993).

Several projects followed the Metropolitan Opera Guild's educational department's children's original opera format (Fowler, 1981, 1985; Lipton, 1982; Winer, 1990) and one was loosely based on a similar format provided by England's Royal Opera House (Harland, 1990). In these projects adult

professionals served only as resources and guides. The students formed an opera company, complete with composers, writers, production managers, publicity workers, actors, and singers. The writers wrote stories based on real-life situations, relevant to the students. All of the roles and tasks of a theater production were in the hands of the students.

In Opera America's new K-12 curriculum (Fowler, 1989; Furber, 1986) students learn about opera through prepared curriculum materials. These materials include manuals and study books. In one phase of the materials, students proceed through a creation and production phase, in which they write, compose, stage, produce, and act an original opera production. The program promotes understanding and appreciation of the opera form, but also targets the students' skills, thinking, and sensibilities.

Integration in Previous Opera Studies. All of the reviewed studies of opera in education involved integration of subject areas to some extent because of the definition of opera itself; it is a combination of music, drama, visual arts, and often other areas. "It is, by the very nature of the product, interdisciplinary arts education" (Smith, 1993, p. 61).

In some studies this integration existed chiefly among the arts. In a project involving gifted students in grades two through six, a goal was to give the students a wide base

of experience and exposure in many art forms. They would then be better able to select areas for specialization. They participated in workshops with topics such as set building, lighting, and prop building. Later each student apprenticed with a professional in some aspect of production (Cohen, 1981).

Other opera projects integrated not only the arts but also other content areas. A project in which the main goal was using the arts to educate children about environmental issues, had suggested follow-up lessons in art, drama, music, sculpture, and poetry (Lewis, 1991).

Fowler (1989) describes the interdisciplinary nature of many productions citing history, language, and literature in particular as components. In her description of a performance by junior high school students, Strittmatter (1984) mentions involvement of math in designing staging and scenery, of industrial arts in building sets, of home economics in making costumes, of social studies in researching the historical period, of English in writing bulletins and programs, of physical education in choreography, and of camera club with audiovisual offerings. Winer (1990), who writes about a project in which children created all aspects of the production, cites inclusion of music through composition and performance, of English in the writing of scripts and development of plot and characters, of math in measuring for

flats, and of science in learning about volts and amps as part of lighting.

Speake (1993) describes a project involving the students' adaptation of an existing piece of children's literature from their language arts class. In addition, the classroom teacher purposefully centered work in physical education, social studies, science, and language arts around the opera.

Harland (1990), reporting on a student original opera in an English residential school for troubled youth, includes integration throughout the curriculum as a major goal of their project. They intended to relate all areas of study to the opera during one phase of their project. This goal, however, fell far short of their expectations in their first opera attempt.

Language arts was a curricular emphasis especially in those studies which involved the children's own writing (Davies, 1982; Edwards, 1982; Hill, 1980; Hove-Pabst & Anderson, 1993; Lipton, 1982; Winer, 1990). Fowler (1989) describes the structure of story--plot, characters, and setting--which received much attention. Davies (1982), working with children ages 11-13, prescribed in-depth exploration of characters and plot after realizing that her students were preoccupied with the episodes of the plot. In the Cohen (1981) study students explored various ways of recording and communicating their experiences with the arts. They used

interviews, vocabulary books, video and slide presentations, and personal logs.

In a study by Hill (1980) the librettist brought a nearly-finished opera to the students. They revised and finished it as a combined effort of a professional writer and students.

Students used television writing as a model in an opera creation study by Lipton (1982). They studied the structure and used the component parts: opening teaser, exposition of characters and situation, crisis and resolution, and a final tag. In a music teacher's operatic setting of Aesop's Fables (Thoms, 1982), traditional literature and ethics lessons were presented and studied.

These studies show ways that other subject areas contribute to opera. They also demonstrate how opera can input "new life and interest in subject matter of the regular school curriculum" (Frischkorn, 1961, p. 105).

Relevance in Previous Opera Studies. Opera, whether a masterwork or an original student creation, provides a means for humans to tell a story (Fowler, 1989; Smith, 1993). Marthalie Furber, educational director of Opera America, says of storytelling:

> That process is one of the most important means for learning about ourselves and the world we live in. Story sharing and story telling are important ways we learn to cope. They teach us the lessons of life, and that is one of the essentials of opera. (Fowler, 1989, p. 36)

In a general sense opera tells of the human condition and values (Cohen, 1981; Fowler, 1989; Levin, 1980). It is an expression "of what mankind tries to say about itself" (Lipton, 1982, p. 58).

In several of the opera studies, the students wrote the stories which form the basis for their opera. These stories often were about their lives and their problems or about social issues which are important to them (Edwards, 1982; Lipton, 1982; Winer, 1990).

In the study by Edwards (1982) the origin of the story was a first grade student's telling about losing a tooth. Soon other students were telling their stories about tooth-loss. These tales eventually became the libretto for the opera.

The projects modeled after the Metropolitan Opera Guild student operas specifically addressed social issues relevant to students (Fowler, 1981, 1989; Harland, 1990; Lipton, 1982; Winer, 1990). The students' stories originated in their own experience and from their own lives. Thus the project became a forum for students' concerns.

Relevance extended beyond the plots and characters of the operas. Students could apply the skills, knowledge, and experience which they gained from the opera projects to their lives, both in and out of school.

The goals of some programs contained an emphasis on the value of aesthetic experiences (Cohen, 1981; Edwards, 1982;

Fowler, 1989; Speake, 1993). Aesthetics education is certainly a facet of arts education, as well as of life. "Aesthetic experience is as pervasive as cognitive and practical activity, and...there are skills of aesthetic impression and expression that can, if cultivated under tuition, change the quality of that experience" (Broudy, 1979, p. 348). The opera projects attempted to teach skills of aesthetics. These experiences altered sensibilities, aroused curiosity, increased sensitivity, and heightened perceptions, serving outside of school as well as in school (Fowler, 1989).

General thinking skills, creativity, and problem solving were emphases in some programs (Cohen, 1981; Edwards, 1982; Fowler, 1989; Harland, 1990; Hill, 1980; Lewis, 1991; Thoms, 1982; Winer, 1990). These skills are not gained through drill nor dispensed by a teacher to a student,

> but if you give him confidence and responsibility and tools for thinking, he's way ahead in every discipline. That's what this project does--it uses opera as a vehicle for learning, and it teaches the whole child. (Winer, 1990, p. 45)

Certainly one of the life tools developed through the projects was that of communication and expression. Practice in speaking before others was gained through rehearsal and performance (Frischkorn, 1961). Students also benefitted by using opera as a medium with which to communicate a viewpoint, through written language, dramatization, speech, and body language (Cohen, 1981; Fowler, 1981, 1985, 1989).

The opera projects targeted the affective domain. Observers noted personal assets such as pride, heightened self-esteem, accomplishment, independence, and confidence (Cohen, 1981; Harland, 1990). Work in small groups as well as large groups and partnerships promoted cooperative learning and collaboration (Davies, 1982; Edwards, 1982; Fowler, 1985, 1989; Frischkorn, 1961; Harland, 1990; Lipton, 1982; Winer, 1990).

The Projects involved parents and community members in various ways. Many projects resulted in performances at the end of the projects (Davies, 1982; Edwards, 1982, Frischkorn, 1961; Harland, 1990; Hill, 1980; Hove-Pabst & Anderson, 1993; L. Kleinman, 1990; Lipton, 1982; Strittmatter, 1984; Thoms, 1982; Winer, 1990). In one study (Fowler, 1981) the adult facilitators met with parents to explain the goals and procedures of the project. The local newspaper and community businesses were supportive in the Harland study (1990). In fact, they printed and circulated T-shirts to advertise the event.

Several studies addressed career possibilities which were investigated through the opera projects (Cohen, 1981; Harland, 1990; Fowler, 1981). In the Cohen project each student teamed up with a mentor in the field and worked backstage in real productions as an apprentice (1981). The Metropolitan Opera Guild models put the students in the actual structure and roles of a professional company, with very real job