



ONTARIO MUSIC  
EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION

# EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE MUSIC EDUCATION

Resource Selection Guidelines

*Revised June 2022*



# ABOUT

This document aims to support music educators in the selection and use of resources by centering equity, diversity, and inclusion. Educators will be encouraged to consider their and their learners' identities and positionalities in order to ensure the creation of responsive and relevant music education environments. We invite educators to extend the application of this framework to other aspects of education and music-making practices.

# OVERVIEW

## MOVING TOWARDS EQUITY LITERACY IN MUSIC EDUCATION

“**Equity** is a process through which we ensure that policies, practices, institutional cultures, and ideologies are actively equitable, purposefully attending to the interests of the students and families to whose interests we have attended inequitably. By recognizing and deeply understanding these sorts of disparities, we prepare ourselves to respond effectively to inequity in the immediate term. We also strengthen our abilities to foster long-term change by redressing institutional and societal conditions that create everyday manifestations of inequity.”

- Paul Gorski - [Equity Literacy Institute](#) -

- **EQUITY** - A CONDITION OR STATE OF FAIR, INCLUSIVE AND RESPECTFUL TREATMENT OF ALL PEOPLE.
- **DIVERSITY** - THE PRESENCE OF A WIDE RANGE OF HUMAN QUALITIES AND ATTRIBUTES WITHIN A GROUP, ORGANIZATION OR SOCIETY.
- **INCLUSIVE EDUCATION** - EDUCATION THAT IS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF ACCEPTANCE AND INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS.

- [Culturally Responsive Pedagogy](#) - Ministry of Education, Ontario, 2013 -

## IN THIS DOCUMENT:

**NOTICE:** (pg.4) "***We Don't Know What We Don't Know***" Consider the identities of *all* those in the learning environment.

**NAME:** (pg.5) "***Who/what is 'in'? Who/what is 'out'?***" Respond by intentionally creating spaces and learning opportunities that affirm learner identities

**NOW WHAT?:** (pg.6) "***It's not the resource, it's how we use it.***" Analyze how the resource fits into the bigger picture of equitable and inclusive music and learning.

**FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS:** Extend conversations about music and equity in education

**GLOSSARY:** Key terms for further learning

# NOTICE

*"We don't know what we don't know."*

## CONSIDER:

- **"Who am I?"** Our own identities, lived experiences, biases, and knowledge.
- **"Who are the learners?"** Learners' multiple, intersecting social identities and how these interact with the world.
- **"Who are we together?"** The relationship between ourselves and our learners, issues related to power and privilege, and power dynamics within the classroom.

***We must interrogate the limits of our music instruction and personal belief systems when decision making.***

### GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS

- Do I hold positive and affirming views of all learners?
- How do my positionality, power and identities and reflect on how I examine and challenge my biases and assumptions about music practices, programs & procedures on an ongoing basis, to take an anti-racist stance
- What learning about my own positionality, power and identities do I need to do to work towards racial equity
- Have I reflected on the difference between opinion and informed knowledge?
- How do I value lived experience?
- Am I missing something?

### REFLECTION AND ACTION

#### ***For example:***

- I don't make assumptions about my learners based on their prior learning or prior music education.
- I connect with all my students to see their potential for growth.
- I engage in journaling, discourse with colleagues and self-reflection to unpack my biases

# NAME

*“who/what is in, and who/what is out?”*

## CONSIDER:

- **Designing learning experiences to be relevant and authentic:** Enable learners to see themselves in the daily learning of the classroom to send a message that student, parent/community knowledge and experiences have value and are important to the learning in school.
- **Recognizing and responding to different ways of learning:** Differences may be connected to background, language, family structure, and social or cultural identity.
- **Making a better space for everyone:** Inclusion is not bringing people into what already exists; it is making a new space, a better space for everyone. This mindset enables educators to work creatively and effectively to support all learners in diverse settings.

*We must recognize the ways in which teaching practices and the curriculum define what is, and what is not valued in our schools and society.*

## GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS

- Is this resource accessible to all learners?
- Can this resource contribute to a collection that affirms the identities of all learners?
- Is the language gender inclusive?
- What pre-teaching or scaffolding of skills or understanding will support all students to engage with this resource successfully?
- Does this resource avoid tokenism and appropriation, and promote meaningful engagement with world musics?
- Does this resource include the most appropriate and current language when talking about various musics and identities? If not, how can we update it before presenting it to learners?

## REFLECTION AND ACTION

### *For example:*

- I scaffold and differentiate when planning for instruction and assessment to meet learners where they are (eg. honouring prior knowledge, co-construct anchor charts)
- I hold an inclusive worldview of music and music practices (eg. *Include the contribution of artists from diverse identities and communities, de-centering the traditional canon*)
- I ensure my understanding is current and replace instructional practices and resources in the music which only contribute to one way of knowing or doing.

# NOW WHAT?

*"It's not the resource, it's how we use it."*

## ANALYSE:

- **Culture is a resource for learning:** Use a variety of resources, including community partners, to ensure that students and the community are reflected in the daily workings of the classroom and present both local and global perspectives.
- **Learners bring knowledge to school:** Knowledge building is derived from personal and cultural experiences and is central to learning. To overlook this resource is to deny access to the knowledge construction process.
- **Hold high expectations for all students:** Ensure both academic rigour and a variety of resources are accessible to all learners.
- **Co-create cultural competence alongside students:** Integrate a learner's background knowledge and prior home and community experiences into the curriculum and the teaching and learning experiences.
- **Guide students to develop a critical cultural consciousness:** The uniqueness of each student is not just acknowledged, but nurtured.

*We must use an inquiry-based approach to invite learners to play an active role in crafting and developing learning experiences for themselves and their peers.*



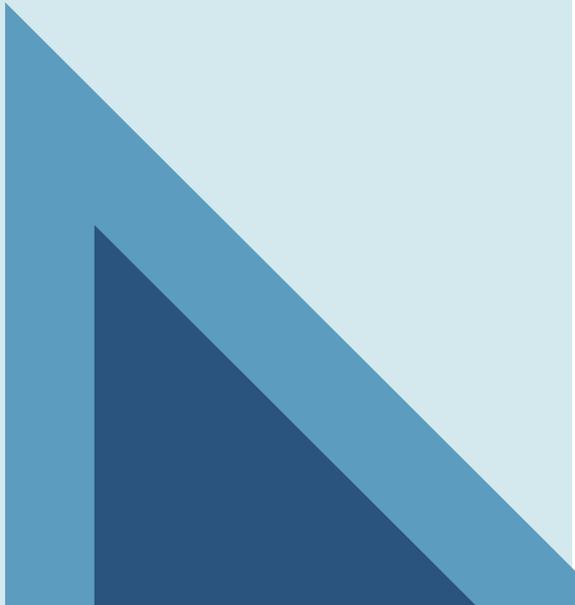
# NOW WHAT? CONT...

## GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS

- Does this resource require learners to source materials to engage in the learning? If so, are the materials safe and accessible for all learners?
- How can this resource offer students opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the fundamental concepts? Are there non-performance learning goals and success criteria?
- Does this resource offer students choice when gathering evidence of learning (eg. *portfolios, exhibits, oral presentations, debates, etc.*)
- How can this lesson promote the student's development of their own musical identity?
- Does the assessment for/as learning move the student closer to the learning goal?
- Are my assessments fair, valid & reliable?  
The goal of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.
- Why this resource? Why now?

## REFLECTION AND ACTION

### **For example:**

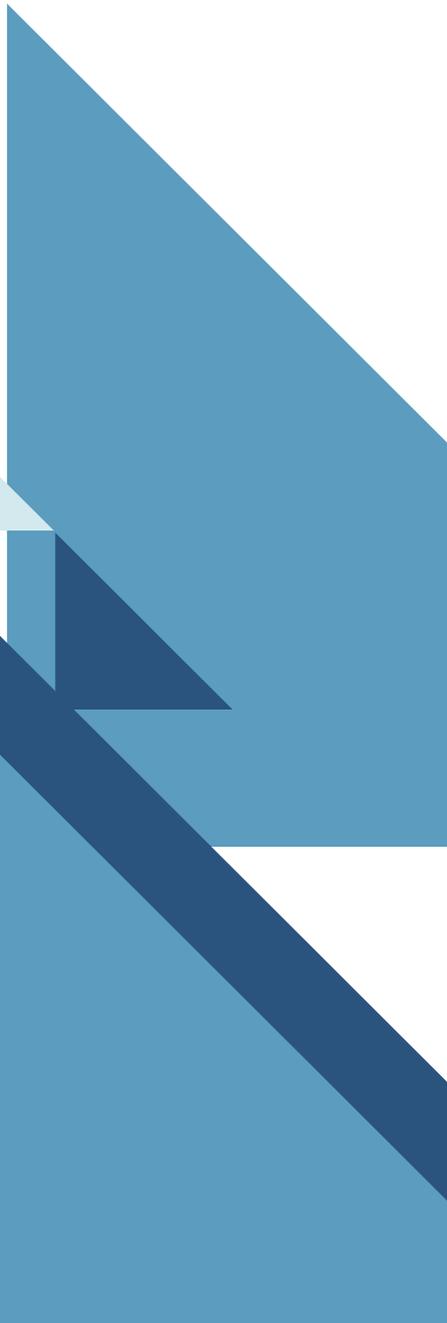
- I ensure all materials are accessible (*format, language, content, ability*) for all learners.
  - I centre students' lived experienced and realities (eg. *students can learn to reflect and critically analyze the music chosen for/by the group*)
  - I encourage students to position themselves in a global community of musicians.
  - I partner with students to choose performances from various diverse sources
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**“The focus has been on how that which is called  
“the arts” presumably challenges racism and  
encourages social justice, with very little  
attention to how the opposite is also the case.”**

**Dr. Ruben Gaztambide-Fernandez**

## **FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

- Whose music are we valuing through our resource selection?
  - Do we actively value music and musicians from a variety of cultures and traditions?
  - Is feedback the most frequent method of assessment (assessment for/as learning)?
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# GLOSSARY

- Appropriation** The unacknowledged or inappropriate adoption of elements on a non-dominant culture by members of another typically more dominant culture, in a manner that does not credit or benefit, as well as contributes to the oppression of the non-dominant culture
- Cultural Competence** An individual or organization's knowledge and understanding of different cultures and perspectives, as well as an awareness of one's own cultural identity and biases
- Inclusion** The result of having created spaces in which all individuals or groups can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive environment embraces differences and offers respect for all people involved through words and actions
- Power** The possession of control, authority or influence over others. Power imbalances exist in all relationships and can be based on age, ability, class, ethnicity, employment status, gender, geographic location, race, religion, sexual orientation etc. All power imbalances are socially constructed
- Tokenism** The act of making a symbolic or perfunctory attempt to be inclusive of a marginalized group