# Musicians' Perspectives on Self-Regulated Learning in an After-School Music Program

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# Purpose and Methods

- To showcase musicians' perspectives on supports for self-regulated learning (SRL)
- To share an innovative approach to studying SRL

#### **Research Questions**

- What SRL promoting practices did musicians use?
- How did they perceive these practices supported their teaching and students' learning over time?



We present data from a larger research project: Promoting Positive Outcomes for Children and Youth: Supporting Self-regulation through Music Education

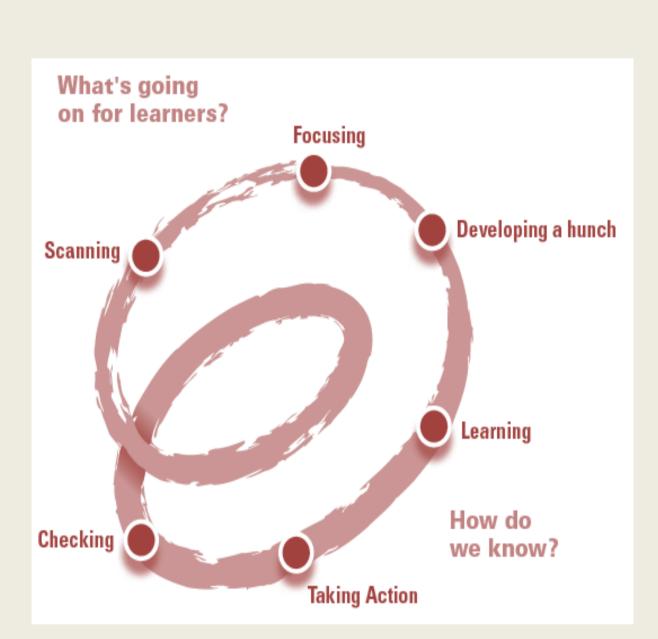
### Context

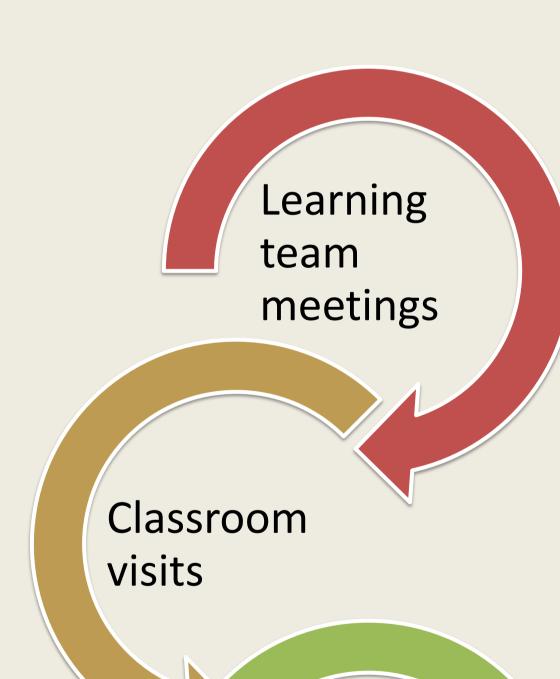
After school music education program in a low SES portion of a city in Western Canada.

- Teachers are musicians
- Students are children who live and attend school in the neighbourhood (culturally and linguistically diverse, wide ranging abilities, face adversity)

We used a case-study participatory approach (Perry et al., 2015), operationalized as teachers actively driving and engaging with researchers in cycles of inquiry to:

- (a) Learn about, design, and implement practices known to support SRL
- (b) Support children 's development of self-regulation and self-determination





Children tell

When teachers engage in collaborative and iterative cycles of **inquiry** as a form of professional development they:

- their story of learning Generate situated and sustainable changes to their practice
- Enhance children's learning experience and motivation for learning

(Halbert & Kaser, 2013; Butler & Schnellert, 2012)

#### **Participants**

Nick and Laura are two of 12 professional musicians teaching in the project. Nick has taught at the music program for 3 years and has no formal teaching education; Laura has taught there for 4 years and has teaching training.

#### Data sources

- Musician's reflections from learning team meetings
- What did you try? What happened?
- What did you learn about teaching and learning? About supporting SRL?
- What will you try next?
- Classroom observations

## **Categories of Analysis**

Different classroom practices support children's development of and engagement in self-regulation and SRL (Perry, 2013):

#### **Providing Structure**

Clear expectations and instructions Tasks

Accommodation for individual differences

## Giving students influence

- Choices, involvement in decision making Control over challenge
- Self-reflection, self-assessment

# Supporting learners (teachers and peers)

Scaffolding and co-regulation Embedded assessment Interest and emotional support

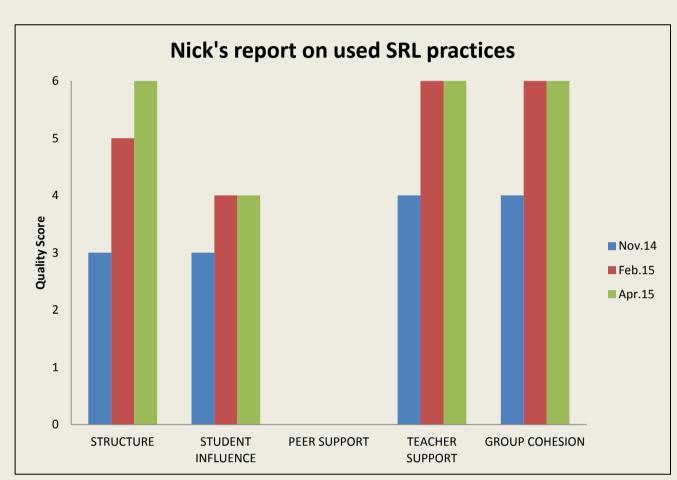
## Creating a community of learners

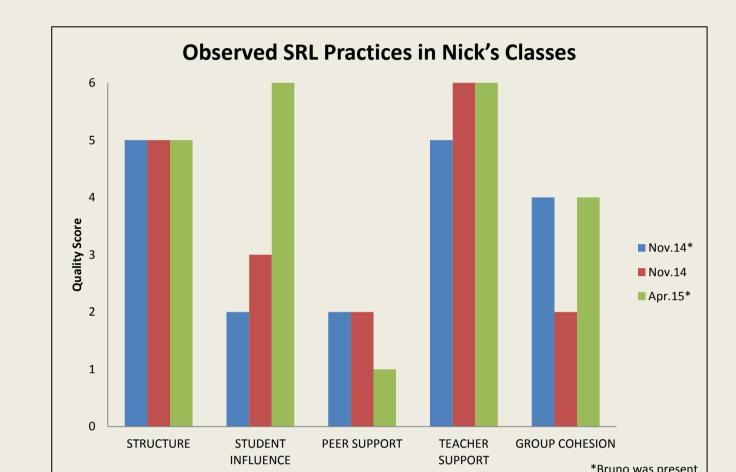
Active participation in the group Shared goals Cooperation

## Findings

## What SRL practices did Nick and Laura use?

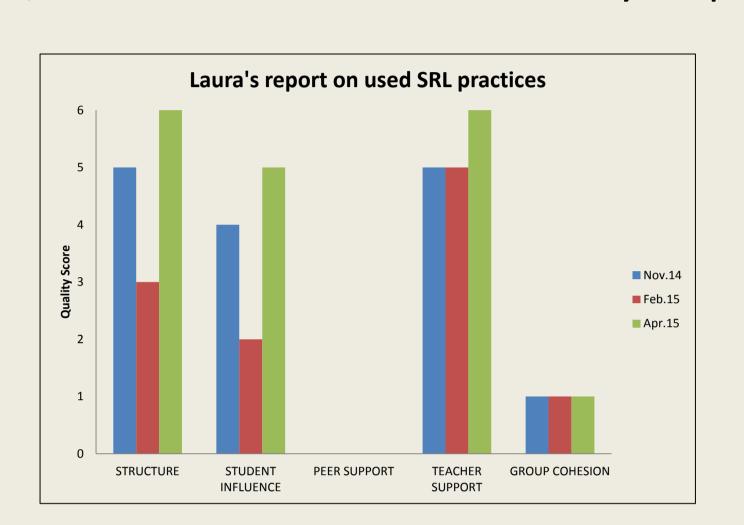
Nick's goals: To foster engagement and teamwork (i.e., cooperation and respect) in class, and to encourage Bruno to participate meaningfully in group activities

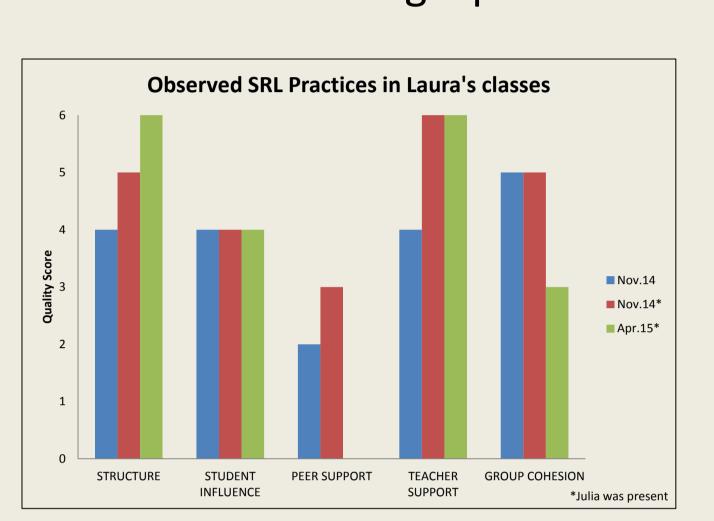




- Nick uses a variety of SRL supportive practices in his classes and his reflections show an improved quality over time in the practices he used.
- Researchers observed Nick tends to use a blend of each SRL supportive practice in his classes. Providing students influence over their learning experience is the practice he developed the most over time. However, the quality of his support and the opportunities for creating a community of learners (group cohesion) also showed dramatic improvements.

Laura's goals: To motivate Julia to set learning goals and follow through with them in class, and to remember her own key steps to success in learning a piece of music





- Laura reported using a blend of SRL promoting practices particularly around providing structure, giving students influence and supporting learners. Over time, Laura reported having used more complex SRL supportive components in her lessons.
- Researchers observed that Laura combines all SRL supportive practices in her classes and that her teaching practice developed over time. She engaged her students in strategic learning, provided opportunities for self-reflection and offered them instrumental support.

# How did Nick and Laura perceive these practices supported their teaching and students' learning?

"Students responded VERY well to having choice, they sprawled out on the floor or in corners and worked very diligently with unprecedented focus" (Nov. 2014)

"Students like choices and crave some control over how they learn. They like having their own space and feeling OK to go at their own pace" (Nov. 2014)

"I was able to invite Bruno to be more engaged in group activities by offering him an opportunity to creatively take ownership of an activity . He composed a piece of music and the class performed it in the final concert. He was visibly proud" (Apr. 2015)

> "I noticed that, besides the activity involving his piece, he became a bit more engaged and cooperative during other activities as well...became gradually more comfortable being in a group" (Apr. 2015)

"I learned that I need to find things to celebrate and encourage the child in smaller steps in order to accomplish a larger goal" (Nov. 2014)

"SRL skills of breaking down a task and being able to start a task on your own are important and really help the child feel that she is getting better, even if the goal of playing a new and 'harder' piece of music is a long way off" (Nov. 2014)

"I have observed significant changes, Julia managed her own engagement throughout the class ... She is much more confident in offering suggestions and answering questions. She also has developed grit, an ability to keep trying a task over and over until she can get it right" (Apr.2015)

"Julia responded favorably to the self-reflection moment at the end of each task" (Apr.2015)

Nick: "My involvement with the learning team and SRL, was helpful for me to reflect on my teaching process and to have some feedback from observers. I got some new ideas by reviewing those articles [reading materials] and thinking about how they related to my classes. The [learning team] meetings were a welcome opportunity to chat with other teachers".

Laura: "This project has radically shaped my experience of teaching at the music program. Music teachers aren't often taught how to teach, I have training in the specifics of teaching group piano, but now how my students are learning and what to do when I see that they aren't able to do the things that I'm teaching team has helped me understand my students better by giving me tools to encourage them towards achieving their own goals. It's given me the specifics of how to help students who can't naturally jump into the group dynamic to work their way forward rather than just getting discouraged on the sidelines. I would have been too discouraged to continue teaching after 2 years on my own, had this program not come in to keep me motivated to experiment and try tools that I know work in other places".

# Significance and Next Steps

- Our participatory approach to research is innovative in the field of SRL and particularly meaningful for our musician participants who perceive their teaching practice evolved.
- SRL theories and practices can be implemented in non-traditional education contexts to support diverse and vulnerable school-aged children.
- Researchers will analyze the wealth of data that continues to be collected from the larger sample of teachers and merge it with students' stories to better understand how teachers are supporting children's development of self-regulation and self-determination.
- The study will enter its third year of data collection in the Fall of 2016 and, as one extension, will broaden its focus to investigate how SRL-promoting practices in the music classroom may impact the lives of student's beyond the after-school program.