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Diolch o galon.
Abstract

This thesis investigates the experiences of Key Stage 2 children, aged 7-11 years old, when making music in outdoor rural locations. A framework of music literacy is constructed using analysis of the data obtained from interviews with the children and their teachers, together with observations from the researcher. The social-constructivist view of literacy (Lankshear and Lawler, 1987, Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, Lambirth, 2011, Gee, 2014), that sees literacy as a social practice, is the theoretical underpinning of this model. Within this perspective, literacy is “expressive fluency through symbolic form” (Barton, 2014, p.289) and therefore there is no one singular definition of literacy. Furthermore, literacy is viewed as being transformational (Freire, 1996), creative and something that is enacted. Moreover, the object for the purposes of our exploration into music literacies is not a pure noun, ‘music’, but rather conforms to Small’s (1996) concept of ‘musicking’, which is a gerund. Music here is viewed as a verb, ‘to music’, as music, like literacy, is something that people do.

Interpretivism was the paradigm within which this research study operated. The analysis aimed to interpret the experiences of those that participated in the investigation. The study adopted a grounded approach (Charmaz, 2017) whereby the theorising was led by the data collection and analysis. The investigation began by exploring children’s experiences of making music at a prehistoric site, because previous research seemed to show that these sites had provided the children with rich music-making opportunities. Subsequent research and data analysis indicated that it was the outdoor rural nature of the location, rather than its prehistoric connection, that was having a significant impact on the children’s experiences (Adams and Beauchamp, 2018). Therefore, further data collection focussed on children’s experiences in outdoor rural locations rather than at prehistoric sites.

Analysis of the data revealed that the children experienced a heightened connectivity to nature while making music in the outdoor rural environment. Their music-making in these environments had also created a sense of freedom; a heightened sensual experience; and had enabled an augmented ‘life of feeling’, an affective and imaginative experience. These three categories (freedom, senses, life of feeling) are not discrete as the data show that they overlapped. Most significantly, the data consistently show that these categories had allowed the children to experience an unusual state of mind, an experience of ‘flow’ (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) that included a liminal...
(Turner, 1969) state or change in consciousness. This change in consciousness in turn had led to a feeling of transcendence, or what could be called a peak experience (Maslow, 1970), ecstasy (Laski, 1961) or communitas (Turner, 1974). During these transcendent or optimal experiences, the children reported feeling an increased sense of wellbeing feeling more complete, calm and focussed. These experiences are also related to conceptions of spirituality, (Best and Kahn, 1996; Hay and Nye, 2006; Schein, 2018) and Buber’s (1970) philosophy of dialogue.

It is hoped that the framework of music literacy provides useful insight into children’s experiences of music-making. In addition, the findings provide evidence for the benefits of making music outdoors in rural environments. Combining music-making with being surrounded by nature seems to have resulted in the children feeling an enhanced sense of interrelatedness with nature and having optimal experiences. The analysis suggests that these optimal experiences are akin to what might be described as spiritual moments (Schein, 2018). These findings could be of significance for increased understanding of children’s spiritual development and the impact music-making can have on children’s holistic development and wellbeing.
Publications

The following publications have resulted from this research project:


Adams D. and Beauchamp, G. (2016). A study of the experiences of learners and teachers from six different primary schools making music in outdoor rural locations. BESA conference 2016, University of Wolverhampton


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A framework of music literacy based on the experiences of KS2 children, and their teachers, when music making in various outdoor, rural locations

1. Introduction and Rationale

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the context and background to the research. It outlines why the focus was chosen and how it developed.

1.1. Why investigate music literacies outdoors?

After obtaining my Masters degree, I continued to enjoy research and became a freelance educational consultant. Collaborations with the National Museum of Wales and CADW involved me working with primary school children at different prehistoric sites across Wales. The children seemed to really enjoy making music at these prehistoric sites and I was fascinated to explore what could be learned from their experiences. In addition, there seemed to be a lack of research into children’s experiences when making music. I am in agreement with Csikszentmihalyi (2002) who states that in music education “too much emphasis is placed on how they (children) perform, and too little on what they experience” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p.112). Therefore, I proposed to research the children’s experiences in order to give insights into the power of music and its educational benefits. I began by researching children’s music-making at prehistoric sites. My research was taking a Grounded Theory approach where the theory would come from analysis of the data. As Charmaz (2017, p.1) highlights “grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves”.

The children were asked about their experiences of making musical ceremonies at prehistoric sites. An initial thematic analysis revealed a number of common themes in their answers. The data was
indicating that the children felt that their music-making had expressive capabilities. They felt that their music could communicate ideas and affected their imaginations (Adams and Beauchamp, 2017). At this point my reading of theory about literacy and knowledge of Christopher Small’s (1998) theory of “musicking” fused with initial analysis of the data to produce the idea of investigating the children’s music literacies. Small’s theory is discussed in the literature review, but to summarise and to give a definition of musicking, Small positions music as a verb and states that: “To music is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing musical material for performance (what is called composing), or by dancing” (1998, p.9). Small’s (1998) philosophy of music, to view music as a verb, with its gerund, ‘musicking’, resonates with Barton and Hamilton’s (2012) theory that “literacy is something people do” (Barton and Hamilton, 2012, p.3). This is analysed in greater depth in the literature review chapter. My research was aiming to investigate the children’s experiences, their musicking. I was not interested in passing judgement on their performances or musical compositions, my interest was in how the children felt about their musicking. As St. John (2010, p.67) explains:

The ability to appraise experience rather than outcomes in children’s music-making seems not only desirable but necessary if teaching strategies are to acknowledge the child’s creative responses, honor the child’s emergent understanding, and foster the child’s agency in the learning process.

Therefore, I was interested in investigating the children’s musical experiences because the data was showing me that this was what they felt was important. It was at the heart of what they did and why they did it and so arguably was the essence of their music literacies. Investigating how the children feel about their musicking can be seen as an exploration into their music literacies if we take the social constructivist view of literacy that sees literacy as an activity rather than some kind of quantifiable standard. Barton and Hamilton (2012) explain that literacy:

is an activity, located in the space between thought and text. Literacy does not just reside in people’s heads as a set of skills to be learned, and it does not just reside on paper, captured as texts to be analysed. Like all human activity, literacy is essentially social, and it is located in the interaction between people. (p.3).

The research was not focussing on the children’s musical products, it was not analysing their musical “texts”, their pieces of music. It was exploring their musicking by asking them how they
felt whilst they were making their musical ceremonies. This has links to phenomenological approaches because it investigates the children’s subjective experiences (van Manen, 2016). It aimed to find out how the children felt in the moments of their musicking. It was aiming for an account of their realities during the time of their musical ceremonies.

To apply Barton and Hamilton’s (2012) theory that literacy exists between text and thought to music making, the data seemed to be revealing that the children’s music literacy was located in the space between their thoughts and their sounds. The data was showing that the children’s musicking was allowing the children to transform their mind states. This is what the children were reporting. Analysis of the data showed that these changes in mind states were the most significant aspects of the children’s musicking according to the children themselves. Therefore, the design progressed to focus on constructing a framework of music literacies based on children’s experiences of musicking at prehistoric sites. The research focus was dictated by or grounded in the analysis of the data. It was therefore a grounded theory approach (Bryant, 2017, Bryant and Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2008; Charmaz, 2017; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Urquhart, 2012) as the theorizing was led by the data.

1.2. Musicking in rural locations

The research continued to take a grounded theory approach throughout whereby its direction was being led by the ongoing data collection and analysis (Bryant, 2017, Bryant and Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2008; Charmaz, 2017; Urquhart, 2012). Analysis of the data showed that the children’s responses were emphasising the significance of musicking in nature more than the fact that they were musicking at prehistoric sites. It was the outdoor setting in the rural location that seemed to be having the biggest impact on the children’s musicking and on their experiences. Therefore, analysis of the data caused a change in direction as the study began to focus on locations where the children could be surrounded by nature, rather than having to be prehistoric sites. The locations were now widened to include beaches and woodlands as well as fields, but the aims remained the same. I was interested in finding out how the children felt about their musicking at these locations and aiming to construct a framework of music literacy based on the children’s experiences.

1.3. Musicking in nature
Another important aspect of the children musicking in outdoor rural locations is the benefits that learning outdoors can endow on the child. There is increasing interest in the educational value of outdoor learning around the world (Dillon et al., 2005; Elliott and Young, 2016; Gray and Martin, 2012; Rickinson et al., 2004; Scrutton, 2015; Vanderbeck, 2008; Wyver and Saneter, 2018). In addition, each country in the UK has a statutory requirement for children to learn outdoors (Adams and Beauchamp, 2018). There is also a growing body of evidence that suggests children are increasingly having less contact with nature. (Bragg, 2013; Charles, 2018; Clements, 2004; 2012; Louv, 2008; MacQuarrie & Nugent, 2017; Malone, 2007; Malone and Waite, 2016; Moss, 2012; Ridgers et. al., 2012; Soga and Gaston, 2016; Waller et.al. 2017). Bergen (2017) uses the phrase “technology play-creep” (p.55) to describe the way that the natural world is gradually being replaced by the virtual world in the world of children’s play. Chris Packham (British naturalist and writer) goes further declaring: “The children out in the woods, out in the fields enjoying nature on their own—they are extinct.” (MacFarlane, 2015, p.324). This is despite the wealth of research showing that children can benefit from feeling connected to nature (Charles and Wheeler, 2012; Capaldi et.al. 2014; Capaldi et. al. 2015; Collado et. al. 2016; Chawla et al. 2014; Faber, Taylor and Kuo 2009; Gill,2014; Gurholt and Sanderud, 2016; Piccininni et. al. 2018; Sobel, 2017; Swank et al. 2017; Tillman et. al. 2018; Ulset et. al. 2017). However, children’s relationship with nature spaces is not straight forward. There are those that highlight that children’s engagement with nature spaces are not inevitably positive (Dickinson, 2013; Hordyk et al., 2014; Malone, 2016). Clarke and McPhie (2014) dispute the very idea that anyone can be disconnected to nature “because we are so deeply attached to it — we are it” (p.11). Therefore, it was hoped that this investigation into children’s music making at outdoor rural locations would provide further evidence of the impact learning outdoors can have on children.

1.4. Literacy, music and the curriculum

During the study I was the leader of the Primary Education Studies’ course and the Literacy Pathway leader at Cardiff Metropolitan University. The definition of literacy is hotly contested in academia and arguably at the epicentre of the debate about what education is and ought to be about (Meyer and Benevot, 2013). High literacy standards are one of the highest priorities currently, for schools in Wales and literacy has perhaps become synonymous with education (Lambirth, 2011). Educationalists have long argued that music can play a crucial part in a child’s development (Orff, 1948, Paynter and Aston 1970, Swanwick, 1999, Green, 2005, Hallam and Creech, 2010; Finney
and Laurence, 2013). Since the beginning of the twenty first century neuroscientific evidence has increasingly, added weight to these arguments (Levitin, 2006; Patel, 2008; Patel, 2010; Habibi et. al., 2017; Zatorre and Peretz, 2001).

At the time of writing, music is a discrete subject in, and statutory part of, the national curriculum in Wales for children in Key Stage Two (KS2) those aged seven to eleven years old. The KS2 national curriculum document states that: “Through active involvement in performing, composing and appraising, learners will develop their sensitivity to and understanding of music” (Welsh Government, 2008, p.10). However, the curriculum in Wales is changing and a new curriculum is currently being designed by “Pioneer Schools...Estyn, Qualifications Wales and other Welsh and international experts” (Welsh Government, 2017). This new curriculum will have “a final version published in January 2020; and used throughout Wales by September 2022.” (Welsh Government, 2017). In this new curriculum, at least in the primary education sector, music will no longer be required to be taught as a discrete subject. Instead provision for music will be part of the “expressive arts”, one of six more general “areas of learning” (Welsh Government, 2015).

Therefore, there is to be greater emphasis on cross-curricular learning in the new curriculum (Donaldson, 2015). Music’s place in the curriculum is already accompanied by a strong chorus of voices singing its praises in terms of its ability to enhance other areas of learning (Hallam, 2014; Hallam and Creech, 2010; Kalmar, 1982; Wolff, 1979; Simpson, 1969; Hamann et al., 1990; Koutsoupidou and Hargreaves, 2009).

The children composed musical ceremonies outdoors and these could be seen as cross-curricular activities as there was potential for development in dance and drama. In addition, designing and performing musical ceremonies could allow for improved understanding in history, geography, religious education and science. Furthermore, as is argued in the analyses, the children seemed to have benefitted from enhanced wellbeing and an augmented understanding of their own wellbeing as a result of their music making outdoors. However, the purpose and focus of this research was not curriculum development. The research was guided by the aim of trying to understand children’s experiences when making music. It was driven by my belief that we may be able to better understand the nature of music making through children’s experiences of making music. Moreover, it was motivated by my experiences both as a student and as a teacher that showed me the positive effect music making can have on children.
In today’s world of film, computer games, multiple television channels, tablet apps, smart phones, digital radio, the internet and streams of downloadable music, every child engages with a plethora of non-verbal sounds on a daily basis. Music has been theorised as a language (Cooke, 1959), and that it can be “true to the life of feeling in a way that language cannot” (Langer, 1978, p.243). If music has some kind of communicative or expressive ability then it would seem reasonable to suppose that not only are there music literacies, but that also as a subject in education it deserves to be taken seriously. Despite this, the fences of the primary school classroom have been closing tightly around the supposed safety of numeracy, literacy and digital technology. The ‘Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales’ (Donaldson, 2015) recommended that literacy, numeracy and digital competence are given priority in the primary curriculum. As highlighted above, music is no longer to be given individual status, but is rather to be part of a larger group of subject areas called the “expressive arts” (Donaldson, 2015). The future of music in primary education in Wales is arguably unclear. If music is “a core element of our identity as a species” (Levitin, 2008, p.3), what is the nature of music literacy? Are there music literacies that all children could benefit from and experience? These are the questions that inspired this research.

They also chime with my longstanding interest into the nature of music and music education and my role as leader of the Literacy and Primary Education Studies undergraduate degree courses. In addition, being a professional storyteller, I am also naturally interested in the musical language of sounds and the impact of place on performance and creativity. This includes being interested in how the soundscape (Schafer, 1994) of the performance space can impact on music making. Schafer highlights how “space affects sound not only by modifying its perceived structure through reflection, absorption, refraction and diffraction, but it also affects the characteristics of sound production.” (1994, p.217). Therefore, this research moves the scenery of debate about the nature of music and the priority of music in primary education to the outdoors. It is an attempt to build a framework of music literacy based on children’s experiences of making musical ceremonies in outdoor rural locations.

The research followed a grounded theory approach whereby the data shaped “the conceptual contents and direction of the study” (Charmaz, 2017, p.302). This meant that the data analysis was not attempting to prove or analyse a fixed preconceived theory. Instead the analysis of the data would lead the theorising. As Charmaz (2017) explains:

Grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves. Thus researchers construct a theory grounded in their data (p.1).
It could be argued that the data analysis occurred before the literature review. However, as we shall see, the literature review and data analysis were ongoing, occurring simultaneously, in an iterative relationship. Each informed the other. It is arguably unrealistic and misleading to pretend that thinking about relevant literature and theory does not begin until after data has been collected. As Strauss and Corbin (1990, p.48) clarify “we all bring to the inquiry a considerable background in professional and disciplinary literature”. This is also highlighted by Charmaz (2017) who argues that “the disputes over when to conduct the literature review miss a crucial point: any researcher should tailor the final version of the literature review to fit the specific purpose and argument of his or her research report” (p.307). Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that in a grounded approach the theory emerges from the data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) explain that: “The resulting theory is developed inductively from data rather than tested by data, although the developing theory is continuously refined and checked by data” (Hood, 2007, p.154). This means that grounded theorists “evaluate the fit between their initial research interests and their emerging data” (Charmaz, 2006, p.17) ensuring that preconceived ideas and theories are not forced upon the data.

Therefore, the following aim and research questions were devised after the initial data collection and analysis:

1.5. Research Questions

Aim: To develop a framework of music literacies, of Key Stage 2 children’s musicking in outdoor rural locations, based on the perceptions of the participating children and their teachers.

What are children’s perceptions of their experiences of musicking in outdoor rural locations?

What are teachers’ perceptions of the children’s musicking in outdoor rural locations?

How do the children’s experiences of musicking in outdoor rural locations fit with and accord with conceptual understandings of how music affects states of mind?

How do the children’s experiences of musicking in outdoor rural locations expand on conceptual understandings of how music affects states of mind?
Initially the children were asked how they felt whilst making their music. The interviews began by asking questions such as: What was it like? How did it feel? What was the most memorable part and why? These interviews were semi-structured and open-ended so that the questioning was led by the children’s ideas, their responses. The aim was to have a better understanding of their experience rather than answer specific questions. As described above, the preliminary data showed that the children felt that the outdoor rural location had affected their overall musical experience. Analysis of this preliminary data, alongside initial exploration of relevant literature, led to the formulation of the research questions outlined above.
2. Review of Literature

2.1. Music and the musical experience

Before we are able to design a framework of music literacy it would first seem crucial for us to arrive at an agreement about what we mean by music. This task is not as simple as it may first appear. Not only are there seemingly endless varieties and types of music, there is also no agreement on its definition. The wide variety of music that has been created may, at least partly, contribute to the predicament of a lack of clarity surrounding an agreed definition of music. Molino (2000) highlights this predicament stating that “nothing guarantees that all forms of human music contain a nucleus of common properties that would be invariant since the origination of music.” (p.169). Turino, (2008, p.1) similarly, declares that: “music is not a unitary art form: music...refers to fundamentally distinct types of activities that fulfill different needs and ways of being human”.

Despite this there is a canon of literature that investigates the problem of arriving at a definition of music. Not only would it seem inappropriate to ignore this debate, I also hope to show how the theories overlap into the debates surrounding the definition of literacy. Therefore, scrutiny of these arguments would seem to be both useful and essential if a framework of music literacies is to be constructed. Meyer (1956, p.62) states that “while recognising the diversity of musical languages, we must also admit that these languages have important characteristics in common.” Cage (1961, p.3) attempted to make a case for a definition of music that encompasses all types, genres and sounds, regardless of personal preference for a particular aesthetic by stating that music is “the organisation of sound.” He argues that “if this word ‘music’ is sacred and reserved for eighteenth and nineteenth-century instruments, we can substitute a more meaningful term: organisation of sound” (Cage, 1961, p.3). His famous piece “4’33” (Cage, 1939) consisting of a pianist sitting at a piano, but not playing it, seemed to demonstrate this definition perfectly. All the sounds that could be heard in the auditorium became the music. These sounds might include coughing, sneezing, shuffling of feet, whispering or even audible sounds coming from outside the concert hall. Therefore, Cage appears to have shown how “the world is infinitely musical” (Hegarty, p.6). As Cage asserts: “There is no such thing as silence. Something is always happening that makes a sound” (Cage, 1961, p.191). One could criticise Cage’s definition of music as being “the organisation of sound” pointing out that speech also organises sound, yet when we speak, we do not always make music. However, Cage was arguably warning against an aesthetic exclusivity where only some sounds are considered
worthy of being included in music. Cage (2009) argues that “sound and rhythm have too long been submissive to the restrictions of nineteenth century music” (p.87). He makes the claim that electronic music will allow us to “hear freedom” because “nineteenth century composers have given us endless arrangements of the old sounds.” (p.87).

Others agree (Russolo, 1986, Schafer, 1994), highlighting how it is important that any sound or noise can be considered as being musical. As Stockhausen declared “nowadays any noise is musical material.” (Quoted in Maconie, 1989, p.109). For Merriam (1980), however, this angle of attack on the problem of defining music is pointless because “music cannot be defined as phenomenon of sound alone, for it involves the behaviour of individuals and groups of individuals, and its particular organisation demands the social concurrence of people who decide what it can and cannot be.” (Merriam, 1980, p.27). Here music is positioned as a social activity and as such is a social construct. Perhaps music is therefore in a sense in the ear of the beholder. It depends on what differing cultures and sub-cultures hear as being music. Tauruskin (2009) highlights however, that even within the western classical tradition debates have long raged about what counts as music. Younker (2014) appears to agree and outlines the problem thus:

“How can music be defined as “it” and thus serve as a definition for music in all of its styles, genres, forms, and contexts, culturally, politically, socially, and last, but not least, musically? Or might a definition be musically bound or experientially bound, culturally bound or contextually bound? Might there be multiple definitions as opposed to a definition?” (Barrett and Webster, 2014, p.14).

Gardner seems to concur as “each domain features its own characteristic constraints and opportunities” (1991, pp. 238). He states that musical understanding is only achieved when one experiences music and that “such a perspective reveals that, in the arts, (process and) production ought to lie at the center of any artistic experience.” (Gardner, 1991, p.239). However, Goehr highlights how Cage, rather than undermining the western classical view of music being a piece of work, has actually reinforced this concept. She states that “whatever changes have come about in our material understanding of musical sound, the formal constraints of the work-concept have ironically been maintained” (Goehr, 1992, p.264). Goehr argues that our western classical view of music has become so pervasive that it has produced “conceptual imperialism” (1989, p.58). In other words, we are obsessed with seeing music in terms of a musical product, a piece, a work of music. This even includes classical music that was never intended to be replicable as standard pieces of music. She argues that we tend “to classify most, if not all, avant-garde or aleatoric music as works.” (1989, p.57). This means that the musical performance and the musical experience are
undervalued and we risk “alienating music from its various socio-cultural contexts” (Goeher, 1989, p. 59). Elliott and Silverman (2015) similarly claim that musical understanding is “working understanding” and is deeper than verbal knowledge about musical products.” (p.229). They argue that “the word working suggests a practical, situated, experiential, intuitive and embodied form of knowing - knowing anchored in the contexts and purposes of specific musical praxes.” (Elliott, 2015, p.229). Elliott takes issue with seeing music as a product. Instead he argues that music is a “deliberate form of doing and making” (1995, p.49). This view is in opposition to the perspective that values the finished piece of music above anything else. Elliott and Silverman (2015) describe this as the “work-centered concept of music.” (p.66). The problem with the work-centred concept for Elliott and Silverman is that it means musical meaning is limited as “musical values are sealed in the structured sound properties of the music itself” (Elliott and Silverman, 2015, p.67).

Elliott and Silverman label this viewpoint as a “Western work-concept narrative” (2015, p.67). They claim this definition of music fails “because it ignores the numerous ways in which the social situatedness of musics, including classical musics, influences people’s experiences of all types of music listening, music making, musical interpretation and expression, creativity, musical-emotional experiences, musical preferences, and musical-human values” (Elliott and Silverman, 2015, p.71). These arguments are important for this study because they contest the meaning of music and therefore will impact on a theory of music literacy. However, they are also relevant because the study investigates the children’s experiences of making musical ceremonies. The musical ceremonies were designed to be experienced by the children at the time of their performances. Many of the ceremonies included improvisational elements and the performances were not meant to be repeatable. They were also not recorded and were not intended to be heard after the event. Instead they were created as musical ceremonies, as things to be done and experienced at that time. These views chime with Christopher Small’s call to view music as not only pluralistic, but as a verb, “to music”, rather than a noun. “Music is not a thing at all, but an activity.” (Small, 1998, p.2). We shall therefore now discuss Small’s (1987) concept of musicking as it relates to the concept of music to which this study related.

2.2. Musicking

Small argues that music is not a thing, a noun, but is rather an activity: “an activity in which we engage” (Small 1987, p. 50). He therefore positions music as a verb. Small states that: “To music is to take part in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or
practising, by providing material for performance (what is called composition), or by dancing” (Small 1998, p.9). Small (1977) was not the first to position music as something people do. Elliott and Silverman (2015) reference Nicolaus Listenius discussing music as an activity in his book ‘Musica’ (1537). Sessions (1950) in his book, ‘Musical Experience of Composer, Performer, Listener’, also argued that music should be viewed as something that is done. He states that “music is an activity: it is something done, an experience lived through” (Sessions, 1971, p.9). Sparshott (1987) similarly declared that it is important that we view music as something that people do, as then “we have some idea what is it to do that thing rather than something else, and can apply this distinction to the behaviour of people who do not themselves have any such concept in their language” (p. 43). Small (1998) agrees with Sparshott (1987) in assessing music making as being a universal human trait that is “of central importance to our very humanness” and that “every normally endowed human being is born with the gift of music” (Small, 1998, p.8). The belief in the universality of music was partly the reasoning behind Small’s (1987) original exploration of perceiving music as something that is done. Small states provocatively that “there is no such thing as music” (1998, p.2). This is because “the apparent thing music is a figment, an abstraction of the action, whose reality vanishes as soon as we examine it at all closely.” (1998, p.2). He therefore warns against the modern western philosophy of art that sees value only in the product, “the created art object itself.” (Small, 1998, p.4). In contrast he conceptualises music as a verb, ‘to music’, because this is how it is conceptualised in other cultures past and present. Small (1998) states that “to music is to take part in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composition), or by dancing.” (1998, p.9). He declares that the verb to music is descriptive not prescriptive and is therefore value free. Rather than addressing the meaning behind a piece of music he asks us to address the “more interesting question: What does it mean when this performance (of this work) takes place at this time, in this place, with these participants?” (Small, 1998, p.10). In the introduction to Felicity Laurence’s (2017) book, ‘Music and Solidarity’, Small highlights how the meanings behind a musical work are not permanent or stable. He uses the song, ‘If I had a hammer’, as an example to show how the meanings can fluctuate. He demonstrates that the song has been used by both left-wing and extreme right-wing political groups for entirely different reasons. Therefore, the song’s meanings are “labile and changeable, with each new context in which performance takes place.” (Small, 2017, p.3). As discussed above in this chapter, Elliott and Silverman (2015) concur with Small and explain that: “A piece of music or musical product is not something that simply comes to us or that we receive or perceive passively. It’s something we do, something we do or construct in time.” (Elliott, 2016, p.285). Elliott (1995) coined the term
“musicing” to describe the doing of music. Pointedly, this word differs in spelling from Small’s “musicking” (1998). We shall now examine how there are also conceptual differences. In viewing music as an activity that is created by people in specific contexts, Small and Elliott both highlight the importance of relationships to the music making. Elliott asserts that “embodied and enactive forms of musical understanding cannot be separated from the contexts in which they’re learned and used” (Elliott and Silverman, 2015, p.231). Elliott (1995) therefore examines the relationship between the musical work and the context of its performance as the source of its meaning. Small argues that these relationships “are to be found not only between those organised sounds which are conventionally thought of as being the stuff of musical meaning but also between the people who are taking part” (Small, 1998, p.13). In other words, Small argues that the meanings created by the musical act are to be found in the relationships brought into existence when the musicking takes place. These relationships are “among the performers, between the performers and listeners, and among the listeners” (Small, 2017, p.6). Elliott (1995) stresses that music listening is very much part of “musicing” and is an activity rather than a passive act. “Musical doing always includes another kind of doing called music listening.” (1995, p.41). However, Small contends (1998) that the “musickers” include anyone involved in the musical performance, including concert ticket sellers. In contrast, Elliott (1995) states that “musicing is an inceptional property of music as an auditory presence” (p.49). Therefore Elliott’s (1995) musicing entails the making of, or performing of, a piece of music and acknowledges that this always involves actively listening to the piece of music. Odendaal et. al. (2014) highlight how Elliott’s view differs from Small’s as for Elliott “music amounts to what ‘is done’ in musicing, and brings forth musical products, or ‘listenables’ for the listeners to ‘listen-for’ attentively” whereas for Small “musicking takes place as a socio-cultural event” (1995, p.164).

The anthropologist Alan Merriam also emphasises the importance of recognising that music making is a socio-cultural event. He states that: “music cannot be defined as a phenomenon of sound alone, for it involves the behaviour of individuals and groups of individuals, and its particular organization demands the social concurrence of people who decide what it can and cannot be.” (Merriam, 1964, p.27). This view is in harmony with Small’s (1996) view that musicking is a sonic-social activity that involves relationships between the sounds, the physical space in which they occur, and the people associated with their creation. Small argues that “since musicking always takes place in a social context, its meaning has a social as well as an individual dimension” (Small 1987, p. 50). As Odendaal et. al. (2014) explain in relation to Small he “thus assumes that musicking is a universal social activity which reflects local cultural norms and presuppositions” (p.166). Green (2005)
concurs and explains that “recognition of the social, collective definitions of what counts as music is a necessary component of what makes something music.” (Green, 2005 p.7). Therefore, all music transmits cultural delineations and is a social construction. This means that “when we listen to music, we cannot separate our experience of its inherent meanings from an awareness of the social context that accompanies its production and/or reception.” (Green, 2005 p.7). Green also stresses the unique nature of each musical experience. She argues that music makers “imbue the music with a delineated content of their own” (Green, 2005, p.91) and that this gives music freedom “from previously taken-for-granted assumptions and definitions”. She labels this freedom as being music’s “logical moment of autonomy” arguing that it grants music freedom from previous social and cultural contexts whilst also revealing in the music new “social content and significance” (Green, 2005, p.91). This is of relevance to this study because the research centred on the experience of the children involved when collectively making and experiencing the music. Paynter (2000) similarly highlights the social significance of music making, but also suggests that music can contain a purity that renders it impervious to inevitable cultural attachment. He states that “music is able to mean anything anyone wants it to mean only because at root it means the same thing to everyone: we assume that all music will behave musically.” (Paynter, 2000, p.25). He then asks: “Does not this underlying universal sensitivity to music as music suggest very strongly that composing and performing are, jointly, the true basis of music education?” (Paynter, 2000, p.25). This is an important question because before music can be a part of any curriculum one must have some sort of idea about what music is and what type of music education should be prioritised. In addition, if this thesis is to present a framework of music literacies based on Key Stage Two learners’ experiences of making music, and if it is to present new and useful knowledge to the field of music education, then we must be clear about how it relates to present ideas about pedagogy. It must also at least be informed by knowledge of the statutory requirements of music education as laid out in the curriculum. Therefore, it seems appropriate that we shall now turn our attention to the debate about music’s place and purpose in the curriculum.

2.3. Music Education, Curriculum and Pedagogy

The Key Stage Two music curriculum in Wales declares that: “Music education enables learners to engage with and enjoy making music. Through active involvement in performing, composing and appraising, learners will develop their sensitivity to and understanding of music. (Welsh Government, 2008, p. 10). It goes on to outline that “pupils should perform, compose and appraise music focusing their listening (in all musical activities) on the musical elements (pitch, duration,
pace, timbre, texture, dynamics, structure and silence).” (Welsh Government, 2008, p.12). Therefore equal weight is given to the three areas of composing, appraising and performing. However, in February 2015 the Welsh Government published an independent report into recommendations on assessment and learning in Wales. This report advocated that rather than being treated discretely, the “arts” subjects should be grouped together in the curriculum under the term “the expressive arts” (Donaldson, 2015). The debate about how to organise music education has had a turbulent history in the UK and beyond. It will be useful now to contextualise an overview of the different positions. Allsup (2016), Elliott and Silverman (2015) and others have highlighted how music education has traditionally been viewed as being split between the aesthetic viewpoint and the praxial perspective. These two differing conceptual lenses involve ascribing contrasting priorities to music education and contrasting values and purposes to music. If we are to design a framework of music literacy based on children’s experiences of making music in outdoor rural locations, then we need to be clear about the paradigm that we are operating within. Therefore, we shall now briefly explore an overview of these opposing views.

2.4. The Traditional Aesthetic Concept of Music

Smith (2014) outlines how the aesthetic concept in relation to arts education traditionally relates to the belief that “outstanding works of art” are able to generate a “special point of view, mode of attention, interest or experience” (Smith, 2014, p.3). Therefore, Smith argues that the term aesthetic suggests that arts education should prioritise “the perception and contemplation of things rather than their creation... looking listening or reading rather than making” (Smith, 2014, p.4). Elliott (1995) argues how this has produced a work concept of music where the focus was on the work or piece of music created. He describes this as a “product centred” view of art where by one focuses on the aesthetic qualities “in abstraction from the object’s context of social use and production” (1995, p.22). In the work concept view of music, listening is of paramount importance because listening to music allows for an “aesthetic experience” to be achieved (Elliott, 1995; 2015). Elliott (1995) however, is critical of this perspective stating that “a truly musical experience is not aesthetic in its nature or value” (p.125). Instead Elliott offers a praxial view of music that emphasises the value of making music and declares that: “Authentic music-making is a valid and valuable educational end for all students” (Elliott, 1995, p.76). As has been discussed above in this chapter, Elliott (1995) believes that music making or musicing should be the prime focus in music education. This is because Elliott advocated musicing as “praxis”, a way of transforming and improving the lives of
the musicers. We shall explore the idea of music as praxis in more depth below in this chapter. In contrast to Elliott, Reimer (1989) supports the work concept view of music. He declared that:

Performing, in the general music program, is an essential but contributory mode of interaction with music. It is a powerful means among others, for enhancing musical understanding and experience. But the balance between listening and performance will favor listening.” (p.185)

Reimer’s emphasis on listening is because it is through listening that one is able to achieve an aesthetic experience. He calls for music education to be arranged so that aesthetic experience is central (Reimer, 1989). Here he is echoing the views of other predecessors such as Broudy (1958) Leonrad (1959) and Mursell (1934) who called for the aesthetic experience to be at the heart of music education. These advocates of the aesthetic concept of music believed that good music education would allow young people to grow up and appreciate good music and that those who were not destined to be specialists should be able to appreciate music so they could better enjoy listening to it. Reimer argued that the musical needs of the majority of the population had been neglected favouring instead “the few who choose to perform-and only secondarily serving the people who will become (and already are) musical partakers of the music produced by specialists.” (1997, p.34). This has resulted in most people regarding music education “as special education for the interested and talented.” (Reimer, 1997, p.34). Reimer clearly sees a division between people who are musicians or “specialists” and those who will be consumers of music produced by specialists. In opposition to this view there are those that believe making music should be prioritised and open to all (Allsup, 2017; Bowman, 1993; Elliott, 1995; Green, 2001; Welch, 2010; Wright, 2010). Welch (2005, 9.117) states: “The primary function of music educators is to nurture and develop each individual’s inherent musicality.” Elliott similarly (1995, p.76) explains that “the values of musicing in music education cannot be tied to its use as an educational means”. He argues that people do not make music just to improve their understanding of music or “their ability to listen to music” (p.76). Instead, people engage with music and make music “for the sake of musicing itself.” (Elliott, 1995, p.76).

The boundaries of specialist and non-specialist in the twenty-first century have arguably become increasingly blurred. Partti (2009) highlights how advancements in technology have meant that young people can now compose and perform music from their own home. They are also able to broadcast their music to wide audiences via the internet. This revolution is happening regardless of what is happening in the classrooms. Partti and Karlsen (2010) warn of the dangers of ignoring it.
Neglecting the task of bridging this dichotomy may, at its worst, lead to a situation where the gap between music learning environments outside and inside school grows so wide, so that students will regard the values and practices of school-based music education as increasingly alien and meaningless. (p.10).

The twenty-first century has also seen a new movement in music education in the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America that has at its heart a faith in the value of informal learning and pupil choice. The Musical Futures organisation states:

Musical Futures is a tried-and-tested yet innovative approach to music learning, based on a pedagogy that is driven by the musical culture of the participants. It brings real-world music learning processes into schools and other formal settings, engaging and inspiring all and promoting inclusion and diversity. (Musical Futures, 2018).

The organisation was influenced by Lucy Green’s (2001) research into how popular musicians learn. Green echoed earlier music educationalists such as Paynter (1970) by calling for children to be “operating both as performer and composer with like-minded friends and having fun doing it” (2001, p.216). She argued for “a music education which makes music not merely available, but meaningful, worthwhile and participatory.” (p.216). Green (2001) advocates using the music that pupils listen to outside school as the gateway for their music education. This approach aims to ensure that their musical experience in school is relevant to them. She also advocates more opportunities for learners to experiment, improvise and jam together during informal sessions that mirror the way pop, rock and folk musicians compose and make music (Green, 2005). These ideas are relevant to this study because the children created their musical ceremonies by experimenting and improvising with sounds in groups. These approaches link with Green’s (2001; 2005) work and her call for music-making to be meaningful, worthwhile and participatory. There are also links to be made with Elliott’s (2005) view of music education as praxis. Therefore, we shall now explore this in more detail.

2.5. Music education praxis, democracy and eudamonia

Elliott outlines his vision of a praxial music education philosophy by declaring that music should involve “critically reflective action” as it needs to be “dedicated to human flourishing and well-being and “the positive transformation of people’s everyday lives”. (2015, p.52). Here Elliott is clearly emphasising the need for praxial music education to be about the effect music has on people, its impact on wellbeing, human development and its transformative capabilities. He argues that
music education should be more than just the practicing of musical skills and performance. It should have an ethical dimension due to its “transformative capabilities” that allows it to be praxial (Elliott, 2015). Regelski (2011) also emphasises the difference between musical practice and musical praxis. Praxis must have an ethical dimension otherwise it is merely musical practice, something that is done. Regelski (2011) states that it is a form of “phronesis” as it “focusses on the need for ethical foresight and prudence” (p.80). Regleski (2011) criticises the ideal of the “disinterested listener” that is valued as a way of achieving an aesthetic experience and argues for a praxial music education that does not accept the “radical relativism that all teaching is good enough” (p.81).

Instead a praxial music education can promote the “value of a life well-lived through music.” (2011, p.82). Regleski declares that: “In other words, music is not value-free and therefore music education should help to improve people’s lives for the betterment of all” (2011, p.81).

Attali (1985) echoes similar themes when arguing about the importance of values in music making arguing that music is prophetic. He states that music is “ahead of the rest of society” as it is able to explore “much faster than material reality can, the entire range of possibilities in a given code” (1985, p.11). This allows us to “understand what we actually value and where our values are leading us” because it “gives us a vision of ourselves” by making “audible the new world that will gradually become visible.” (1985, p.11). Blacking (1987) after having explored the musical practices of indigenous peoples from different parts of the world similarly declared that “music may express the true nature of the predicament of people before they have begun to express it in words and political action.” (p.60). Small (1998), while emphasising the social nature of music and the importance of people’s relationships in music making, also suggests that these relationships go beyond the drive for mere entertainment. He explains that music-making establishes relationships “between person and person, between individual and society, between humanity and the natural world and even perhaps the supernatural world. These are important matters, perhaps the most important in human life.” (Small, 1998, p.13). Others have chosen to map the ideals of democracy with music and music education (Allsup, 2004, 2009, Woodford, 2005, Vakeva & Westerlund, 2007; Hanzlik, 2010; Karlsen & Westerlund, 2010). Woodford declares that music education should involve: “challenging individuals to rethink their own limited, habitual, or assumed musical understandings while in pursuit of a more just, humane, and inclusive society.” (Woodford, 2005, p.89). Allsup (2012) draws on inspiration from the etymological origins of the term democracy in Greek and Chinese to capture the essence of an ideal music education. He proposes music education as “a journey of growth and discovery...profoundly connected to the Deweyian ideal of democracy as a way of living through life” (Allsup, 2012, p.178). This philosophy has resonances with Small’s (1998) democratisation of
music by advocating the value in the act of music making rather than the end musical product, as has been discussed above in this chapter. In short, music is seen as something people do, an act of music rather than a piece of work (Small, 1998). This aligns with Barton and Hamilton’s (1998) view of literacy, as highlighted earlier, as being something people do. However, for Allsup (2012), Small’s philosophy falls short of being truly democratic because it calls for music to be value free. Small claims that “the term musicking can be taken as a conceptual tool that remains useful, as long as we keep our value judgements clear of it.” (Small, 1996, p.9). However, this is not to say that Small believes musicking is a neutral activity. As discussed above in this chapter, Small states that these are important matters, “perhaps the most important in human life.” (Small, 1998, p.13). Therefore, the values of musicking are tied to the relationships enacted on each occasion that musicking takes place. Each performance is unique and what’s more, the values unfold for the duration of the musicking. They are not predetermined by the musical piece. This is not to say that they do not exist for it is in these relationships where music’s meanings and values reside. The sonic relationships may be value-free, but the relationships involved in the musicking are not (Small, 1998). As Odendaal et. al. (2014) explain:

Even if Small also seems to accept that musicking embraces specifically musical values, and that these values are realised within a cultural setting, he does not introduce musicking as a normative point of departure that determines what action is proper for a given setting of musicking. (p.165)

In contrast, Allsup argues that “Small’s vision is insufficiently venturesome, leaving critics struggling to articulate an open inclusive concept of music education in which a multitude of values and perspectives intersect.” (Allsup, 2016, p.133). For Allsup and others (Bowman, 2005; Elliott, 2015, Green 2005), the sonic events in music cannot be viewed as being neutral because of the cultural and sociological settings in which they are enacted. Green (2005) theorises that music has the ability to communicate delineated meaning through the cultural and sociological messages it conveys and also has the ability to express meanings in the music itself. These inherent meanings are cross-cultural and universal and can be linked to the idea of music being a universal language. As Green (2005) explains, this double power, far from meaning that music is neutral, should mean that we handle music carefully. She warns that music “acts back on us, through its capacity to influence our beliefs, values, feelings or behaviour.” (2005, p.7). Bowman agrees and states that “to separate the musical from the social, and consequently from the political, is not just to make a serious mistake, it is itself a political act with political consequences.” (Bowman, 2005, p.163).
2.6. Eudaimonia

The idea that music education can involve liberating acts potentially expressive of and leading to a better understanding arguably resonate with the ancient Greek philosophy of eudaimonia. Eudaimonia is a Greek word that is discussed in Aristotle’s (IV century B.C.) Nicomachean Ethics. It originates from the words “eu” (“good”) and “daimōn” (“spirit”). Those theorists that view music education as having a higher purpose rather than just training musicians, composers or music producers of any kind, could be seen to be in step with the ideals of eudaimonia. As Elliott and Silverman (2015) explain:

the primary values of music and music education as a social praxis - including happiness, enjoyment, fellowship, health and well-being, intellectual engagement, self-identity, self-esteem, and more - are the same life values endorsed by the greatest thinkers in human history. In short, music and music education understood and implemented as social praxes are unique and major sources of eudaimonia. (p.145).

Bowman (2002) similarly links music education to eudaimonia as it “is crucial to human flourishing” (p.64). He argues that “music teaches us things about our common humanity that are worth knowing, and renders us less vulnerable to forces that subvert or compromise human well-being. Studying and making music changes who we are and what we expect from life.” (2002, p.64). This perspective finds resonance with Small’s (1998) vision of musicking. Small declares that art is a means “by which we explore our inner and outer environments and learn to live in them.” (Small 1998, pp. 3–4). It is in the process of musicking, rather than the musical product, that the power of music resides. Small acknowledges that the nature of music making allows for people to explore, affirm and celebrate their sense of who they are, “or who they would like to be thought of as being.” Therefore, a musical experience “not only reflects those ideal relationships, but shapes them.” (Small, 2017, p. 6). Musicking allows us to understand and improve “our relationships with other people and the other creatures with which we share our planet.” (Small 1998, p. 13).

Aspin (1991) in his chapter titled “Justifying Music Education” writes that music can “be used to create and furnish new insights into the world...In music it is possible to conceive of new worlds.” (p.219). He continues that this “can not only decorate and enrich the cultural milieu in which we live, but also add new insight and illuminations to it and thus act so as to transform the world and make it better.” (Aspin, 1991, p.219). Blacking (1987) echoes the view that music making can lead to an enhanced perception as:
Humans are not only social but subject to the force of phylic communion, the sense of being members of the same species. The importance of phylic communion and the heightened perception of the world that it provides are major subjects of music and the arts. (Blacking, 1987, p.61)

The idea of that music can result in an enhanced perception seems to be acknowledged by both those who favour a praxial approach to music education (Allsup, 2017; Bowman, 2002; Elliott and Silverman, 2015) and those who advocate cultivating the ability to achieve an aesthetic experience (Broudy, 1958; Leonhard, 1959; Mursell, 1934; Reimer, 1989).

2.7. A Praxial Aesthetic Experience - An Enhanced Perception

Westerlund (2003) argues that it should be possible for the musical experience to be both aesthetic and praxial. She draws inspiration from Dewey’s book ‘Art as Experience’ (1934) to present a different perspective of the aesthetic experience that allows for praxial action and transformation. Westerlund states that aesthetic experience is an experience that positively transforms life. She states it is “a fulfilling and inherently meaningful mode of engagement in contrast to the mechanical, the fragmentary, the nonintegrated and all other nonmeaningful forms of engagement.” (2003, p.49). She highlights how Dewey (1934) emphasises the holistic nature of art in terms of its intellectual and emotional properties, arguing that it “is not possible to divide in a vital experience the practical, emotional, and intellectual from one another...the emotional binds parts together into a single whole” (Dewey, 2005, pp.56-57). For Dewey, art has an “esthetic quality” that is emotional, intellectual and is determined by relationships formed between those taking part and the environment within which the esthetic experience takes place. (Dewey, 2005). Art is therefore transformative because it contains the promise of “delightful perception which is esthetic experience” (Dewey, 2005, p.19). This aesthetic response is neither purely emotional nor intellectual, but a new way of knowing and becoming. Dewey (2005) argues it is the enhanced and progressive states of perception given by the aesthetic experience that allows art to improve our lives. He states that “art is not nature, but is nature transformed by entering into new relationships” (p.82) that evoke affective and cognitive responses. Reimer (1989) in contrast claims that the aesthetic experience comes solely from appreciation for the beauty of the work of art. However, Dewey argues that aesthetic experience “signifies active and alert commerce with the world; at its height it signifies complete interpenetration of self and the world of objects and events.” (2005, p.18)
Westerlund (2003) agrees with Dewey and therefore asks why “music as praxis and music as aesthetic are set as opponents” (pp.56-57). She contends that doing music can “transform experience for ‘us’ here-and-now.” (p.52) In support of Dewey (2005) she explains that music making is a “consummatory experience that is valuable as an end in itself, but also is instrumental for further ends” (p.54). We are better after the doing of music than we were before we had the musical aesthetic experience. It gives us new insight as it “involves individual and communal possibilities not present in actuality” (Westerlund, 2003, p.57). These new insights are gained because of the aesthetic experience that is achieved via the doing the of music. This philosophy is a praxial aesthetic concept that allows for a “holistic aesthetic education” (Westerlund, 2003, p.57).

Westerlund (2003) describes this philosophy as being: “interested in taking actions not merely to improve individual apprenticeship in various musics, but also...to determine the direction of interest and attention and hence affect desire and purpose” (Westerlund, 2003, p.57). Therefore, music making has power beyond merely the finished piece of music. It is able to affect perspectives and identities, and to give insight into new possibilities. As Dewey explains:

A work of art elicits and accentuates this quality of being a whole and of belonging to the larger, all-inclusive, whole which is the universe in which we live… We are, as it were, introduced into a world beyond this world which is nevertheless the deeper reality of the world in which we live in our ordinary experiences. We are carried out beyond ourselves to find ourselves. (Dewey, 2005, p.202).

These experiences and meanings are to be found and created within the relationships involved in the music-making. The music-making affects these relationships and has the ability to improve those involved. This can be linked with Small’s concept of musicking (1998) as Small (1998) states that the relationships are “to be found not only between those organised sounds which are conventionally thought of as being the stuff of musical meaning but also between the people who are taking part” (p.13). Viewing music as a socio-cultural event in this way has profound implications for music education. Musicking becomes a means by which we can better understand ourselves and our relationships with all living things (Small, 1998).

2.8. The current and future state of the music curriculum in Wales

In 2014, the then Minister for Education and Skills, Huw Lewis, stated that the arts are “vital” for a child’s self-esteem (Welsh Government, 2014). This followed a review of the curriculum into the value of the arts in primary education. The resulting final report by Professor Dai Smith recommended that creativity and the arts have more prominence in the curriculum (Smith, 2013).
The Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment in Wales (Donaldson, 2015) also stated that: “The expressive arts provide opportunities to explore thinking, refine and communicate ideas, engaging thinking, imagination and senses creatively. They also promote exploration of issues of personal and cultural identity” (p.43).

Despite this Smith (2013) concluded that not enough schools were allowing children to benefit from engaging with the expressive arts due to an over-emphasis on literacy and numeracy. He argued: “the current, and very necessary, emphasis on literacy and numeracy is narrowing the focus of schools and limiting the opportunities for young people to engage in creative practice that can – ironically - lead to improved standards in these areas” (2013, p.31). However, Philpott (2012, p.48) suggests that the “soft justifications for educational music have ultimately undermined it being taken seriously...perpetuating an arts-science dualism constructed as a ‘soft’ subjective counterbalance to a ‘hard’-nosed objectivity.” He goes on to claim that “music deserves to be justified in the curriculum as a language(s) capable of the full expressive range found in all symbolic modes” (Philpott, 2012, p. 52). At the time of writing, the Welsh Government has implemented a new primary curriculum based on the recommendations in the Donaldson report (2015). The new curriculum (Donaldson, 2015) clearly advocates the power of music, stating that the arts allow for new ways of “interpreting and expressing meaning” (Donaldson, 2015, p. 44). If music has expressive meaning, is music therefore to be considered a language? If so, then this would impact on any framework of music literacies. Therefore, we shall now explore the concepts surrounding music as a language.

2.9. Music as a language

Stating that music has the ability to interpret and express meaning is considerably less controversial than attempting to determine what exactly music can communicate or whether it can be viewed as a language. The belief that music has a power to communicate to the “life of feeling” (Swanwick, 1999, p.17) beyond words is well supported (Tolstoy, 1930; Langer, 1934; Collingwood, 1937; Cooke; 1959; Bernstein, 1976; Sloboda, 1985; Budd, 1994; Swanwick; 1999; Juslin and Sloboda, 2001; Tomaino, 2009; Juslin, 2013). Juslin (2013) explains how music has long been regarded as expressive of “motion, tension, human characters, identity, beauty, religious faith, and social conditions. However, the most common hypothesis is arguably that listeners perceive music as expressive of emotions” (Juslin, 2013, p.596). This is supported by research undertaken by Juslin and Sloboda (2004). One hundred and forty-one participants were asked if they thought music
expressed anything and if so, what it was. They were given options to choose for answers as well as being able to provide their own additional answers. All of the participants felt that music was capable of expressing emotions.

Despite this, the area of music and emotion is complex and highly contested, and there is disagreement as to whether music is capable of expressing or describing emotion. Stravinsky (1936, pp. 91-92) famously once said: “I consider that music is, by its very nature, powerless to express anything at all….if, as is nearly always the case, music appears to express something, this is only an illusion, and not a reality”.

Gabrielsson (2002) supposes that this may be because there is too often a failure to distinguish between the expression or perception of emotions and the arousal of emotions. Theorists such as Bell (1914) and Hanslick (1957) have claimed that music cannot and does not express or represent emotions. Meyer (1956) famously explained the apparent expression of feelings in music as happening “when an expectation - a tendency to respond - activated by the musical stimulus situation, is temporarily inhibited or permanently blocked” (p. 31). In other words, the apparent expression of emotion or provoking of emotion felt by the listener is actually recognition of tension inherent in the music itself. We expect the sounds to progress in a certain way, or we want them to change and yet they do not. This creates tension and we associate this tension with emotion. Alternatively, they do progress as expected or the tension is resolved and we associate this with positive emotions (Meyer, 1956, Huron, 2006). Others such as Cooke (1959) have proposed that music can communicate emotions.

De Nora (1999) argues that, while music does not communicate specific emotions, it can act “as a resource for the conduct of emotional “work”, and for heightening or changing energy levels” (p. 31). De Nora interviewed in depth 52 women between the ages of 18 and 78 from the USA and the UK. She aimed to examine music's role in the daily life of the women and used open-ended questions focussing on respondents’ music collections and daily routines. The musical practices included “karaoke evenings in a local pub, creative music therapy sessions, aerobics classes, and retail clothing outlets” (1999, p. 33). Even though much of the data involved listening to music, it is still relevant to this study because it examined how the women felt and what they did with their musical experiences. It explored their doing of music in the same way that this study explored how the children experienced the doing of their music. De Nora (1999) found that when the women engaged with music they used a “number of musical strategies devoted to emotional self-management, from 'revving up' to 'calming down' to 'venting' strong emotions, to producing mental concentration” (p. 34). It was found that music was used to “shift mood or energy level” (De Nora,
However, she positions music not as a communicator of emotions, but as means to regulate, express, explore and understand emotions. DeNora (1999) emphasises that music is not used simply “to express some internal feeling state” (p.41). Instead it is used as a resource so that aspects of how one feels are “elaborated and made into a body of knowledge” (1999, p.41).

DeNora’s (1999) analysis of the women’s responses shows that they use music to develop a better understanding of past events due to reliving past times through the music that is associated with those events. Thus, music is “active in the constitution of the shape of subjectivity and self-identity” (p.48). This means that the use of music is closely bound with the women’s understanding of themselves and their identity. DeNora (1999) states that the “respondents literally find themselves in musical structures” (p.49). She concludes that music is a “cultural resource” and a “technology of the self” that “actors may mobilize for their on-going work of self-construction and the emotional memory and biographical work such a project entails” (DeNora, 1999, p.32). DeNora (2000, p.176) later summarises her position by stating that music provides a “container for feelings...music is a resource for the practical constitution of entities we know as ‘selves’ and also for emotions and states that we refer to as ‘intersubjective’”.

DeNora (2000) argues that shared musicking involves “co-subjectivity”. This differs from “intersubjectivity” because it does not involve cognitive acts that use interpersonal dialogue to arrive at a collaborative reflexivity. In contrast, co-subjectivity “is the result of isolated individually reflexive alignments to an environment and its materials” (DeNora, 2000, p.153). This is supported by McGuniess and Overy (2011, p.245) who argue that “while communication can be found in music, one of the attributes that distinguishes music from language is that music provides an intimately shared, embodied experience rather than communicating a specific message”. DeNora (1999) and McGuiness and Overy (2011) here are arguably echoing the philosophy of Langer (1978) who disputed music’s ability to “communicate” in the way that languages do. Langer in her seminal work ‘Philosophy in a new Key’ (1942) argued that music “reflects the morphology of feeling” (1978, p.228) and yet to call it a language of the emotions is not satisfactory. Langer claimed that music symbolically represents, through sound, the life of feeling and inner consciousness. She argued that music cannot communicate specific things in the same way that a language does. “Not communication, but insight is the gift of music...music is our myth of the inner life” (Langer, 1978, pp.244-245).

Langer theorised that what differentiates humans from animals is that we are able to use symbols to express meaning and that these symbols in turn influence our understanding of meaning. They
create our own reality. “In the fundamental notion of symbolization — mystical, practical, or mathematical, it makes no difference — we have the keynote of all humanistic problems... In it lies a new conception of ‘mentality’, that may illumine questions of life and consciousness” (Langer, 1978, p.25). Therefore, language and art have different abilities and fulfill different needs. She contrasted the reality conceived by art in comparison to language arguing that language when used literally is “a stiff and conventional medium, un-adapted to the expression of genuinely new ideas” (Langer, 1978, p.201). In contrast, as art has no consequence “it gives form to something that is simply there, as the intuitive organizing functions of sense give form to objects and spaces, color and sound.” (Langer, 1978, p.201). In further analysis of her theory, she highlighted how the forms and structures of music bear close similarity to the forms of human feeling, for example, speed, resolution, slowing, flowing etc; in other words, their temporal and dynamic essence: “the greatness and brevity and eternal passing of everything vitally felt.” She equates these logical patterns or forms of sentience as being the same patterns and forms of music “worked out in pure, measured sound and silence. Music is a tonal analogue of emotive life” (Langer, 1953, p.22). Langer (1978) claimed that music cannot communicate specific emotions, but it can symbolically express the concept of emotions. “The true power of music lies in the fact that it can be ‘true’ to the life of feeling in a way language cannot; for its significant forms have that ambivalence of content which words cannot have” (Langer, 1978, p.243). Langer (1978) did not believe that music was the “cure or cause of feelings, but their logical expression” (Langer, 1978). This is why, she explains, that music can not only put us in touch with emotions which we have felt previously, it can also “present emotions and moods we have not felt, passions we did not know before.” (p.218). She goes on to explain that

its subject-matter is the same as that of self-expression and its symbols may even be borrowed, upon occasion, from the realm of expressive symptoms; yet the borrowed suggestive elements are formalised, and the subject matter distanced in an artistic perspective (1978, p.222).

Budd (1994) similarly claimed that music has a close relationship to emotions. He declared, “music can penetrate beneath the surface of emotion to its innermost core: music is not restricted to the outer world of the expression of emotion but reaches as far as the inner world of emotion itself” (Budd, 1994, p. 176). Clarke (2011) echoes these views, stating that: “music models, moulds and makes audible the flow of our inner subjective life” (Clarke, 2011, p.1). Swanwick (1995, p.29) explains that music can have expressive meaning for a child because it can be described in terms of its size, weight, stiffness for example and these descriptions can be interpreted as relating to specific
emotions. He states, “the metaphorical nature of such meanings may account for the power of music to stir and move people”. Regardless of why music has long been associated with emotions, Walker (1990, p.145) notes that: “most people nowadays have little difficulty in recognising the musical imitations of various sentiments”. Swanwick seems to be agreeing with the idea that music can express feelings when he says that it presents “imitations of various sentiments” (1994, p.176). He explains that: “As in all forms of symbolic discourse, music has the potential to take us beyond ourselves, our own small space in time and our local tribe; extending knowledge, enlarging mind, keeping open our capacity for knowing.” (1994, p.176). The idea that music is a “symbolic discourse” that can take us “beyond ourselves” will be revisited later when we consider music’s relationship to consciousness and what might be meant by music literacy or music literacies. However, discussing what music is able or not able to express and communicate would seem important if we are to investigate the area of music literacies. Scherer and Zentner, (2008) claim that music can arouse aesthetic emotions unique to a musical experience. They argue that the specific nature of music-evoked emotions is “aesthetic and reactive rather than utilitarian and proactive” (p.595). They go on to explain that the many ingredients brought together by a musical experience create a potion that allows for a unique experiencing of musical or aesthetic emotion.

Specifically, music emotion experience is conceived as the result of a multiplicative function of structural features (e.g., rhythm, melody, harmony), listener features (e.g., personality, music preference), performer features (e.g., performer skills, state), and contextual features (e.g., type of event, environment). (Scherer and Zentner, 2008, p.596).

Sloboda seems to echo the views of Langer (1978) by describing the ambiguity of music’s relationship to emotions as we “feel there is an emotion present…but we cannot quite tie it down” claiming that in this ambiguity is where its expressive power resides. He suggests that it is in this mysteriousness that we experience: “the profound and mystical experiences that music seems to engender. Our own subconscious desires, memories, and preoccupations rise to the flesh of the emotional contours that the music suggests.” (2000, p.226). Therefore, the power of music is “in its emotional cue-impoverishment. It is a kind of emotional Rorschach blot” (Sloboda 2000, p.226). Juslin (2013) proposes, however, that the emotions experienced because of music are linked to everyday emotions and are not unique to a musical experience. He argues that the answers to music’s affective ability are found in how our ancestors heard sound. This is because “the survival of our ancient ancestors depended on their ability to detect patterns in sounds, derive meaning from them, and adjust their behavior accordingly” (p.236). The neuroscientist Ramachandran (2011) also argues that our experience of music connects to how our ancestors experienced art. He suggests that
our perception of movement has been used and exaggerated in art since prehistoric times and that this dynamic experience is conveyed through music. Additionally, he claims that the use of metaphor is not simply a linguistic device, but that this cross modality or ability to imagine synaesthetically allows us to convey meaning through artistic expression, including music (Ramachandran, 2011). He investigates the neural pathways of music using a variety of techniques, including neuroimaging, theoretical analyses, acoustic research, and comparative studies of non-human animals. He has also explored how patients who have neurological damage have experienced enhanced or reduced musical abilities. It seems significant to highlight that we appear to have psychologists and neuroscientists giving competing accounts of music’s relationship to emotions that mirror the debates, already discussed (Hanslick, 1957; Meyer, 1956; Langer, 1953; Budd, 1994) that exist in the realms of music philosophy and musicology. Essentially, what it is that music can communicate remains unresolved. It is perhaps summed up in the contrasting views of Konecni (2003, p. 332), who argues that “music cannot directly induce genuine emotions in listeners” and Sloboda (1992), who claims that “there is a general consensus that music is capable of arousing deep and significant emotions” (p.33). What does seem to be agreed upon, however, is that musical sounds are imbued with meaning (DeNora, 2000; Langer, 1953; Meyer, 1956; Juslin, 2013; Patel, 2008). For the purposes of this study, if music can express something then it would seem to follow that this would be significant if a framework of music literacies is to be created. Before we explore this further, we shall now turn to the discussion surrounding literacy.

2.10. What is literacy?

If we are to design a framework of music literacies, it would seem of paramount importance of course that we outline a position concerning the meaning of literacy. Only after we have decided on an understanding of what is meant by “literacy” will we then be able to apply this concept to what might be meant by music literacy.

2.11. Literacy as reading and writing

The problem with literacy is that it is considered vitally important and yet resists any commonly agreed definition. Hannon states that “Literacy has been, and continues to be, fundamental to political aspirations and to contemporary human culture.” (Hannon, 2001, p.1) Yet, as Roberts (1995) highlighted over twenty years ago “the problem of defining literacy has bewitched scholars, policy makers and practitioners.” (Roberts, 1995, p.412). More recently, Goodwyn (2011, p.1)
declared “there is only one agreement about the nature of literacy and that is that there is no exact agreement about what it is.”

The Oxford Dictionary (1990) stated that literacy is “The ability to read and write.” This definition clearly limits literacy to reading and writing. Aers (2008, p.32) seems to agree when stating: “Most children learn to talk fairly easily. In contrast, learning to read and write is a laborious process. It is the ability to read and write which makes a person ‘literate’, with varying degrees of fluency.” However, the national curriculum in Wales states that literacy involves reading, writing and oracy (Welsh Government, 2015). The United Kingdom Literacy Association also states that it supports a “broad based view of literacy...which focuses on the development of reading, writing, speaking and listening across a range of contexts”. Kress (2005), however, rejects any pluralistic view of literacy beyond the ability to read and write using an alphabet. He attempts to simplify matters by claiming that: “literacy is the term to use when we make messages using letters as the means of recording that message.” (Kress, 2005, p. 23). He warns of over pluralising literacy as “it has become so broad, in its aim of inclusiveness, that it has lost any real ‘bite’, or any usefulness as a technical term.” (Kress, 2005, p.27).

Kress appears to be returning literacy to its original understanding as a term first used in the nineteenth century. Literacy was then seen as the possession of the skills needed to decode and encode text (Williams, 1983, Gurak, 2001). As definitions go this would arguably appear to solve a problem that has, as we shall see, become fairly complex. However, as Roberts (1995) highlights, reducing literacy to just reading and writing does not inevitably avoid problems. He argues that defining literacy as just reading and writing “is to make an incomplete statement.” (1995, p.413). This is because questions surrounding “what one reads and writes, and how much ability in reading and/or writing is required in order to be considered literate, are left unanswered.” (Roberts, 1995, p.413). Lawton and Gordon (1996) agree with this view and additionally highlight that literacy is recognized internationally as one of the priorities of education. They argue that in the eyes of policy makers literacy involves the ability to read and write “to an appropriate level of fluency.” (1996, p.138). However, they point out that there is no agreement on what ‘an appropriate level’ is and conclude that “there is no universal standard of literacy.” (Lawton and Gordon, 1996, p.138). Does this mean therefore that the problem of defining literacy arises merely because there is no agreed universal standard? If we could decide on a universal standard does this mean that there could also be a universal standard of music literacy? To obtain a universal standard there would, presumably,
need to be an appropriate standardised test to measure the agreed standard. If literacy is able to be measured by some standardised test, then could music literacy also be measured quantifiably? Levine (1986, p.39) highlights how traditionally someone was considered literate if they possessed a reading age of at least nine years. More recently, the organisation for economic cooperation and development (OECD) established the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in the year 2000 to test fifteen-year-old students’ skills and knowledge in science, numeracy and literacy (OECD, 2015). League tables have been calculated ever since on the basis of the results. Since the year 2000, students representing more than 70 economies have participated in the assessment (OECD, 2015). Nevertheless, there are many arguing that PISA’s call for standardised tests should be resisted (Meyer and Benevot, 2013, Meyer and Zahedi, 2014, Grubb & Lazerson, 2006). It is claimed that the countries cannot be neatly positioned in league tables because the tests are inaccurate as a form of assessment and therefore unfair because they are unreliable.

Guadalupe (in Hamilton, Addex and Maddy, 2015, p.111) questions how feasible it is to develop reliable data from large-scale standardised assessment of literacy skills. He uses experiences from his leadership of UNESCO’s Literacy, Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP) between 2007 and 2012 as evidence to support this view. Citing LAMP recommendations, he states that: “Literacy skills and their uses entail a set of social settings with manifold intervening settings” (Hamilton, Addex and Maddy, 2015, p. 117). Guadalupe argues that ignoring the cultural and linguistic characteristics of those participating in a study is “not only contestable on political and ethical grounds, but also on technical ones: it compromises the validity of knowledge endeavour” (Hamilton, Addex and Maddy, 2015, p. 124). Alexander (2007) warns of how this impacts on the quality of education, arguing that performance becomes more important than learning. He argues, “the literacy juggernaut appropriates and shapes teaching schemes, learning goals and assessment” (p.104) resulting in pedagogy being “twisted into a kind of ‘service’.” (p.104) This leads to a culture of performance and “transmission type teaching, to atomised skills which are amenable to measurement and to the proliferation of learning outcomes which can be enumerated and audited.” (2007, p.104). Illich (1973) suggests a more sinister outcome as a result of the drive towards measurement, arguing schools slot people into boxes and hierarchies which reproduce and perpetuate an oppressive social order. Roberts (1995, p.416) similarly, declares: “Measurable people are manageable people. Assigning people to their appropriate place on an educational or social hierarchy requires a system for distinguishing between individuals”. Taylor (1977, p.2) also claims that “race, gender and socioeconomic status are all factors that critically affect whose ‘literacy’
counts.” This means that “not all types of knowledge or ways of knowing are recognised”. (p.2).

These fears seem to resonate with Meek (1991) as she suggests:

The great divide in literacy is not between those who can read and write and those who have not yet learned how to. It is between those who have discovered what kinds of literacy society values and those who know how to demonstrate their competencies in ways that earn recognition (Meek, 1991, p. 9).

Others also claim that aligning literacy with just reading and writing is limiting and fails to acknowledge different literacies being practised in other cultures (Lankshear and Lawler, 1987, Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, Lambirth, 2011, Gee, 2014). They argue that this view is Western-centric (Collins and Blott, 2003, Cook-Gumperz’ 2006) and unsatisfactory because it fails “to take into account the true diversity of the world’s literate cultures” (Cook-Gumperz, 2006, p.2). In contrast they argue for a pluralistic view of literacy where there is not one standardised literacy, but a plurality of literacies (Lankshear and Lawler, 1987, Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, Lambirth, 2011, Gee, 2014).

2.12. The cognitive-psychological view of literacy

This view of a plurality of literacies is in opposition to what has been called the cognitive-psychological view of literacy where literacy learning takes on a linear step-wise progression in keeping with cognitive-psychological theory (Ehri 1987, 1995). Within this view children need to be taught specific skills and knowledge in reading and writing at specific ages. It is presumed that these skills and knowledge can be learnt by all cognitively normal pupils and that tests can determine if the pupils have achieved these skills (Gee, 2014). This is what Roberts (1995) describes as the quantitative view of literacy. He argues that mapping literacy to quantifiable measures has become important because it allows politicians to apparently demonstrate rising literacy standards. Alongside this “quantitative definitions are often promoted as quasi-essentialist constructions” (1995, p.417). Therefore, no attempt is made “to theorize the ‘nature’ of literacy or to show how arbitrary placements on a scale (of years of schooling or reading ‘ages’) portray the ‘true’ meaning of literacy” (Roberts, 1995, p.417). The cognitive-psychological perspective also claims that reading and writing can lead to improved cognitive abilities (Havelock 1963, Ong, 1977). Some claim these improved cognitive abilities have been essential for the advancement of western civilisation and culture. Ong (1982, p.14) states that “without writing, human consciousness cannot achieve its fuller potentials, cannot produce other beautiful and powerful creations”. Ong argues that writing was the next natural step for human beings after orality had been established. He
explains, “orality needs to produce and is destined to produce writing.” (Ong, 1982, p.15) This is because otherwise “there is a vast complex of powers forever inaccessible” (Ong, 1982, p.15).

Graff (1979) challenges this viewpoint declaring that the conventional view of literacy was a “myth” because the cognitive-psychological view was overly-simplistic and its powers were exaggerated. Cole and Scribner (1981) then published research that seemed to show that reading and writing has no real effect on cognitive abilities. Scribner and Cole (1981) studied the Vai (a community from west Africa) that had developed their own writing system. There are three sorts of literacy amongst the Vai: English; Vai syllabic script; and Arabic (for religious purposes). Some in the community can read and write in all three forms, some in two, some in one and some in none. Literates in either of these forms did not do any better on problem solving tasks. In other words, they found that reading and writing did not lead to improved cognitive abilities.

Street (1984) also criticises an autonomous view of literacy that involves a neutral set of skills that can be easily learned by all regardless of their background, culture or daily use of language. Street and Street (1991) explain that if literacy is viewed “as if it were a ‘thing’, then it is distanced from both teacher and learner, imposing on them external rules and requirements as though they were passive recipients.” (Street and Street, 1991, p. 144). Gee elaborates further, highlighting how seeing literacy through this lens means it is seen as “a set of abilities or skills residing inside people’s heads” (Gee, 2008, p. 2). Gee, suggests we should understand that literacy has “no meaning - apart from particular social, institutional, political, and cultural contexts in which it is used.” (2013, p.48). This leads to “different effects in different contexts and cultures.” (p.48). Therefore “learning a new type of literacy - new literacy practices - can, like learning a new language, become a matter of a change of identity and culture” (Gee, 2013, p.48).

2.13. The social-constructivist view of literacy

Gee’s beliefs have their roots in a social constructivist view of the definition of literacy. The social-constructivist view claims that what is considered the normal view of literacy has emerged because of the prevailing power structures in society. As Cook-Gumperz (2006) argues that literacy is socially constructed and “is best regarded as part of an ideology of language, a socio-cultural phenomenon where literacy and orality coexist within a broader communicative framework not as opposites, but as different ways of achieving the same communicative ends.” (p.3). Therefore, if literacy is an “ideology of language” and a “social-cultural phenomenon”, then creating a simple
definition becomes difficult because it may vary depending on one’s ideology and the culture in which literacy is practised.

The social-constructivist model sees literacy as a social practice (Lankshear and Lawler, 1987, Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, Lambirth, 2011, Gee, 2014). Lambirth (2011) explains how in this view literacy is seen to be acted out in social situations and is neither neutral nor singular. Theorists such as Street (1984), Lankshear and Lawler (1987), Giroux (1987), Gee (1993), and McLaren (1988), among others, argue that ideas about 'literacy' are always historically situated and socially formed. In other words there is a ‘discourse’ (Gee, 2014) that is created when people engage in literacy practices, and the choices, grammar and meanings of words are changed depending on the group that is using them and the context in which they are being used. Different literacies therefore are enacted in, and allow people to understand, different genres, disciplines and contexts (Gee, 2005). Olson (1996, p.43) argues that “literacy is not just a basic set of mental skills isolated from everything else. It is the ability to exploit a particular set of cultural resources.” Within this view literacy is ideological and cannot be seen as merely a functional set of skills tied to reading and writing (Olson, 1996). Lambrith (2011) explains that “autonomous models see literacy as being a unified set of specific skills that can be taught and applied across all context [whereas] “the ideological model sees literacy as only existing within a social context.” (p.61). He concludes that literacy cannot be separated from its “social, historical, cultural and political contexts” and is therefore “many things and not one”. He warns against any perspective which “attempts to promote one form of literacy as being universally superior”(Lambirth, 2011, p.61). This has resonances with Wittgenstein’s theory of a language game (2002) where he claims that we should look to the uses of words to teach us their meaning as “the meaning of a word is its use in language” (Wittgenstein, 2002, p.18).

The idea that knowledge is intertwined with the cultural, historical and social context in which it exists is supported by the theories of post structuralism (Derrida 1978; Spivak, 1987) and post-modernism (Jameson, 1991; Lyotard 1979). These schools of thought believe that “knowledge is to a significant degree a product of the identity of the person who is articulating that knowledge. Truths do not exist by themselves, but are framed by the social meanings ascribed by language” (Cope and Kalantzis, 2015, p.25). Therefore, it is argued there are multiple literacies and a singular unitary definition of literacy is inadequate. Cope and Kalantzis call this ‘a theory of multiliteracies’ (2009) and are part of a group of academics that developed this philosophical stance in 1996 (The New London Group). They argue that a new pedagogy of literacies was needed for two reasons. Firstly, English was diverging into multiple Englishes and secondly, technology was ensuring that
communication was becoming increasingly multimodal. Cope and Kalantzis (2009) argue that a new pedagogy of multiliteracies is needed that recognises “the enormous role of agency in the meaning-making process” (p.175). New technologies and “multiple Englishes” mean that learners are no longer merely “passive recipients… of received, sanctioned and authoritative representational forms” (p.175). This new pedagogy is claimed to be more creative, innovative and emancipatory than traditional literacy pedagogy because it is more authentic (Cope and Kalantzis, 2009). It is more authentic because it allows the learner to learn in ways and about ways that are relevant to her or him. Cope and Kalantzis label this as “learning by design” (Cope and Kalantzis, 2015). This is not just a practical shift in approach, but is as a result of a different way of viewing knowledge that seems to resonate with the philosophies of Wittgenstein (1958) and Rorty (1989). These are social constructivist viewpoints that contend that “knowledge is not just the stuff that ends up in our minds. It is what we do and make” (Cope and Kalantzis, 2015, p.32).

Lankshear and Knobel (2011) proclaim a philosophy that similarly demands a new pedagogy of literacies because of the rise of digital technologies. They argue a pedagogy of new literacies requires a different “ontological” perspective to conventional literacies. This is because ‘new’ literacies “consist of a different kind of ‘stuff’ from conventional literacies” (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, p.28). Lankshear and Knobel explain that this different ontological “stuff” new literacies are made of consists of “technological” stuff and “ethos” stuff. The technological stuff involves “‘post-typographic’ forms of texts and text production” (2011, p.28). The ethos stuff is “more participatory’, more ‘collaborative’, and more ‘distributed’; less ‘published’, less ‘individuated’, and less ‘author-centric’” (Lanskear and Knobel, 2011, p.29) than conventional literacies. The musical ceremonies created by the children arguably contained similar ethos stuff to this philosophy of new literacies as they were participatory and collaborative rather than being published, individuated or ‘composer-centric’. Supporters of the new literacies pedagogy claim literacy is a social practice and therefore always changing, depending on the context in which it is being carried out. Therefore, knowledge is always socially constructed (Barton and Hamilton, 1998; Cope and Kalantzis, 2015; Gee, 2007; Lankshear and Knobel, 2011; Leu et al. 2007). Lankshear and Knobel describe literacy as “the notion of being able to communicate or make meaning - as a producer or receiver.” (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, p.21). They contend that literacy cannot be reduced to a fixed standard. Instead there are a plurality of literacies and these literacies “are socially recognised ways in which people generate, communicate and negotiate meanings” (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, p.32). This research study aligns with this view of a plurality of literacies. As explained by Barton and Hamilton (1998), the belief is that “literacy is primarily something people do” (p. 3).
Therefore, the framework of music literacies is constructed from what the children did, from their experiences of doing music in outdoor rural locations. The children’s experiences also evidence how their musicking was transformative. It therefore can be linked to Freire’s (1997) view that literacy is a transformative endeavour.

2.14. Freirean Literacy

Freire maintained that not only were there a plurality of literacies, but that literacy education should involve critical thinking and “the continuing transformation of reality, on behalf of the continuing humanisation of men.” (Freire, 1997, p.73). Freire’s philosophy is important because it is relevant to debates about literacy and also has relevance to theories about music and music education. Freire’s philosophy demanded that literacy should require nothing less than the transformation of reality and the humanisation of men. The transformation of reality Freire described as “reading the world” and “re-writing it”. (1985) He declared: “There is a permanent movement back and forth between “reading” reality and reading words — the spoken word, too, is our reading of the world. We can go further, however, and say that reading the word is not only preceded by reading the world, but also by a certain form of writing it or rewriting it” (Freire, 1985, p.19). Freire claimed that learning functional literacy skills is insufficient if one is to acquire literacy. Literacy needs to be creative and should involve a reading of the world and a rewriting of the world in order to improve it. In addition, Freire (2015) felt that this rewriting causes a self-transformation and so literacy should be more than just “psychologically and mechanically” learning reading and writing techniques. He contends that literacy should be “an attitude of creation and re-creation, a self-transformation” (Freire, 2015, p.45).

Freire criticised literacy education that merely teaches techniques and rules. In its place he called for a pedagogy of what he described as emancipatory literacy (Freire and Macedo, 1987). To teach literacy, the pedagogy should involve what he termed “problem-posing education” (1996, p. 62). This contrasts in his opinion with the dominant status quo in teaching that advocates what he called the “banking concept” (1996, p. 56) of education. In this banking model “education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor” (1996, p. 56). Freire (1996) criticised this didactic pedagogy because it inevitably avoids any critical or creative thought. He argued that the students “memorise the contents narrated by the teacher” and so no do not “practise any act of cognition, since the object towards which that act
should be directed is the property of the teacher” (Freire, 1996, p.59). This argument has resonances with Plato’s criticism of treating students like empty vessels to be filled by knowledge from the teacher instead of “turning the eye of the soul towards the light” (Jowett, 1892). In contrast to the banking-model, Freire’s supported a problem-posing model that “bases itself on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality.” Moreover, he claimed that this problem-posing model honours ‘the vocation of persons as beings who are authentic only when engaged in enquiry and creative transformation” (Freire, 1996, p. 65).

Freire believed the definition of literacy is not only at the heart of the debate about education, but also reveals the purpose of the human condition. He believed people are only being authentic as human beings if they are engaged in creative transformation. Freire declares that the goal of literacy is an ongoing questioning of the dominant discourse and status quo in order to change and improve society, resulting in the liberation of the people. It is the continuing “transformation of reality” that holds the key to liberation and this liberation will mean the “humanisation of men” (Freire, 1997, p.73). Freire (1996) believed one cannot have liberation without humanisation; the two are inextricably linked. Literacy therefore should be nothing less than the purpose of life and should be the pursuit of what makes us human. Freire describes this as “the quest for human completion” (Freire, 1996, p.29). In contrast, “The banking approach to education...attempts to turn women and men into automatons - the very negation of their ontological vocation to be more fully human” (Freire, 1996, p.55). Freire’s beliefs come from a Marxist viewpoint where he criticises those who believe that “having more is an inalienable right” (Freire, 1996, p.41). This view, he believes, can only lead to those who have more becoming oppressors and those who do not have enough becoming the oppressed. Yet Freire maintains that both of these groups need liberation and it is the oppressed who may be able to free not only themselves, but also their oppressors.

As the oppressors dehumanise others and violate their rights, they themselves also become dehumanised. As the oppressed, fighting to be human, take away the oppressors’ power to dominate and suppress, they restore to the oppressors the humanity they had lost in the exercise of oppression (Freire, 1996, p.38).

Literacy education therefore must involve us freeing or helping each other, for this is what allows us to be “engaged in the ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human.” (Freire, 1996, p.49). Ultimately, Freire calls upon us all to “risk an act of love” (1996) and states that “true solidarity is found only in the plenitude of this act of love in its existentiality, in its praxis” (Freire, 1996, p.32). Freire’s theory of literacy has clear links to theories about music education. Freire believed that literacy education should result in praxis. He describes praxis as “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.” (Freire, 1996, p.89). It was this
ability to be praxial that Freire believed separated man from the animals as animals “are unable to separate themselves from their activity and thus are unable to reflect upon it” (Freire, 1996, p.78). This ability to reflect, Freire believed, is what makes us human. However, he also believed that to achieve praxis we must use this reflection not only to help ourselves, but to help each other. To do this he stated that we must enter into dialogue, and when doing so we must show compassion, empathy and love, otherwise the dialogue will not be authentic. “If I do not love the world-if I do not love life-if I do not love people-I cannot enter into dialogue.” (Freire, 1993, p.71). Freire was bold in his assertion that such a positive outlook was necessary because he believed it was our birthright as human beings. In short, it is who we are. The quest for human completion was important not only for moral reasons, but because he believed that was the purpose of life, the very nature of the human condition. He stated that authentic humanisation required “indisputably, the adoption of a utopia” (Freire, 1998, p.89). His confidence in such a claim was founded on his belief that nothing less would enable us to achieve humanisation and that “the destiny of men is to become authentic human beings” (Freire, 2013, p.16). In other words, this goal is what we need to achieve and it is also who we are; it is our ontological vocation.

Despite this, Freire warned that creative or critical literacy causes the “discovery of the tension in which my humanity places me.” (1985, p.129). He contended that history is “becoming” - it is always in flux, always changing. However, rather than fearing this tension he calls on us to “discover in that tension the joy of being” (Freire, 1985, p.129). The value of joy is something that Freire returns to in his theorising about literacy and education. He says that “learning is a joyful experience” and that “it is false to consider seriousness and joy to be contradictory, as if joy were the enemy of rigor...teaching and learning are not possible without the search, without beauty and without joy” (Freire, 1998, p. 125). For Freire, the search or quest are not preliminary happenings on the way to joy, rather they engender it. As Freire explains, “joy does not come to us only at the moment of finding what we sought. It comes also in the search itself” (Freire, 1998, p. 125). In Freire’s view, literacy is nothing less than the quest for human completion and this involves a “universal human ethic” that calls on all of us to seek freedom for ourselves and for others. Freire declared it is “humanity’s ontological vocation, which calls us out of and beyond ourselves” (Freire, 1998, p. 125).

As highlighted earlier in the review of literature, there is a body of evidence that suggests that music is also an essential part of the human condition and that music can be transformative. The idea that literacy and literacy education should be a praxial pursuit has also been paralleled by theories about the purpose of music and music education. These theories of music enabling humans to enter into
heightened states that provide enhanced perceptions find resonance in the views of Csikszentmihalyi and Maslow with their investigations into “peak” or “flow” experiences. The next section will examine some of these theories and explore ideas that music, just like Freire said of literacy, can call us out of and beyond ourselves.

2.15. Flow, Peak Experience and Phyllic Communion

There are many theories that refer to an apparent enhanced perception caused by music making. Two of those theories, “peak experiences” (Maslow, 1971) and “flow” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) will be examined here as they seem to have particular resonance to the children’s experiences of making music in this study. Maslow studied what he called “self-actualising people” who were happier, more at peace, more spontaneous and more fulfilled than other people. They were also “motivated in other higher ways” (Maslow, 1999, p.289). These ways he termed “being values”, “B-values” or “the intrinsic values of being” (Maslow, 1964, p.64). He outlined values or “characteristics of the world as it is perceived in our most perspicuous moments” (Maslow, 1964, p.64). These values included: truth, beauty, justice and goodness. He admitted that defining self-actualisation, however, was not a simple task and that “its meaning can be indicated rather than defined.” (Maslow, 1999, p. 30). Maslow claimed that whilst studying self-actualising people he found that they were “able to perceive realities...to which others were blind” (p.83). Moreover, he suggested that self-actualising people “can be more acutely and penetratingly perceptive” (Maslow, 1999, p.83). Maslow explained that the height of these perceptive faculties was experienced during what he called “peak experiences” and that during these experiences one realised his “real self” and became a “more real person” (1964, p.67). In peak experiences he explained that “perception can be relatively ego transcending, self-forgetful and egoless.” (Maslow, 1999, p. 90). He related these experiences to those expressed in eastern religious writings such as Taoism, Buddhism and Hinduism that describe transcendental states. In accordance with these philosophies Maslow emphasised that peak experiences not only “make life worth living” but are also the “ultimate goals of living and the ultimate validations and justifications for it.” (Maslow, 1999, p. 91). For Maslow (1971), transcendence had two main components. The first was the forgetting of oneself and one’s self-consciousness. This is “the same kind of self-forgetfulness which comes from getting absorbed, fascinated, concentrated…this particular sense of transcendence of the ego or of the conscious self. (p. 269). The second element of transcendence was going beyond oneself and sensing oneself as part of something larger. Maslow explained that during peak experiences one’s existential understanding is changed and augmented. He stated that “transcendence refers to the very highest and most inclusive or holistic levels of human consciousness”. Therefore, it involves “behaving and
relating, as ends rather than as means, to oneself, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos.” (Maslow, 1971, p. 279). Here we can draw parallels to Blacking’s theory (1974) of “phylic communion” and the claim he made that music making can lead to heightened perception. Bernard (2009) makes the case for music’s long history with transcendental consciousness outlining two qualities that create transcendent music making. Firstly “the performer is functioning at the height of his or her abilities” and secondly “the performer has a sense of being a part of something larger than him or herself in some way.” (2009, p.1). Furthermore, she claims, “the concept of transcendent music making experiences provides powerful insights into a unique feature of musical engagement.” (Bernard, 2009, p.1). Bernard (2009) therefore argues that music making has a close relationship with transcendental states. Maslow (1971) seems to agree as he declares that “the two easiest ways of getting peak experiences (in terms of simple statistics in empirical reports) are through music, and through sex” (Maslow, 1971, p. 175). Csikszentmihalyi’s theory of flow seems to resonate with Maslow’s theory of ‘peak experiences’ (1968) and transcendental states of consciousness. Peak experiences and experiences of flow only occur due to certain conditions and are not ‘every day’ experiences. Csikszentmihalyi’s theory of flow and Maslow’s peak experiences seem to create a new consciousness as they “provide a sense of discovery, a creative feeling of transporting the person into a new reality.” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 74).

Csikszentmihalyi defines flow experiences as being optimal experiences that can include a number of defining characteristics. He lists nine main elements that are mentioned repeatedly by individuals who experience these optimal, flow states.

1. There are clear goals every step of the way
2. There is immediate feedback to one’s actions
3. There is a balance between challenges and skills
4. Action and awareness are merged
5. Distractions are excluded from consciousness
6. There is no worry of failure
7. Self-consciousness disappears
8. The sense of time becomes distorted
Flow and peak experiences result in total immersion in the activity. Maslow calls this “total attention” and declares how the activity “is seen as if it were all there was in the universe, as if it were all of Being, synonymous with the universe” (Maslow, 1968, p. 85). Csikszentmihalyi (1990, p.59) quotes a mountaineer who says “it’s incredibly real, and you’re very much in charge of it. It becomes your total world.” As is highlighted in the last four elements listed as features of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), action and awareness are merged; there are no distractions or concerns about success or failure; there is no self-consciousness and there is a different or no sense of time.

In other words, those in peak experiences and flow seem to transcend ordinary reality and experience. One of the reasons for these augmented experiences may be that, during flow states and peak experiences, the total immersion experienced removes any concerns about the future. As Csikszentmihalyi (1997) explains: “It is the pursuit that counts, not the attainment.” (p. 122). In other words, it is an autotelic experience. The word “autotelic” comes from two Greek words “auto meaning self, and telos meaning goal”. It represents a self-contained activity where the experience is an end in itself. Csikszentmihalyi (2002) explains that the activity is “done not with the expectation of some future benefit, but simply because the doing itself is some reward” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p.67). Similarly, Maslow described peak experiences as involving enjoyment of the experience, of being in the moment: “The peak experience is felt as a self-validating, self-justifying moment which carries its own intrinsic value with it.” (Maslow, 1968, p. 90). Maslow (1964) highlighted how there is a distortion of time or perhaps a different experience of the temporal nature of being during peak experiences. He declared, “This is like experiencing universality and eternity...This kind of timelessness and spacelessness contrasts very sharply with normal experience” (1964, p.63). Csikszentmihalyi (1997, p.113) explains how during ‘flow’, minutes can seem like seconds and seconds can seem like minutes. He states that “flow activities do not depend on clock-time...they have their own pace, their own sequence of events” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, pp.66-67). Happiness and joy are reported conditions experienced during flow and peak experiences. Maslow describes peak experiences as “a generalization for the best moments of the human being, for the happiest moments of life, for experiences of ecstasy, rapture, bliss, of the greatest joy” (1971, p.105) Csikszentmihalyi (1990) describes flow activities as creating a “profound sense of enjoyment” (p.75). Maslow reported that these peak experiences and heightened positive emotions create a joyful, transcendental and fulfilled sense of being. During these times one is at their happiest and these thrilling moments “are also moments of greatest maturity, individuation, fulfillment – in a word, his healthiest moments” (1968, p. 97).
Csikszentmihalyi argues that flow is closely related to creativity and unveils the true nature of our being. Flow “lifts the course of life to a different level” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p.69). Maslow similarly stated that “peak-experience seems to lift us to greater than normal heights so that we can see and perceive in a higher than usual way.” (Maslow, 1964, pp.61-62). Csikszentmihalyi describes flow states as creating heightened experiences as they “provide a sense of discovery, a creative feeling of transporting the person into a new reality” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 74). He quotes a dancer who describes: “A strong relaxation and calmness comes over me. I have no worries of failure. What a powerful and warm feeling it is! I want to expand, to hug the world. I feel enormous power to effect something of grace and beauty” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, pp. 59-60).

Csikszentmihalyi relates flow experiences to transcendental consciousness and argues that these experiences are not necessarily limited only to self-actualised personalities, but are accesible to all individuals. To illustrate the sense of immersion, loss of ego and autotelic nature of flow experiences, Csikszentmihalyi gives the example of a Japanese motorcycle gang member describing a joint motorbike “run”:

I understand something when all of our feelings get tuned up. When running we not in complete harmony at the start. But if the run begins to go well, all of us, all of us feel for the others...When our minds become one. At such a time it’s a real pleasure...When all of us become one, I understand something...All of a sudden I realise, ‘Oh, we’re one’. (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p.63).

It seems therefore that flow experience can be considered both a “state”, as something related to circumstances (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, 2000) and a “trait”, as something dependent on one’s values and actions (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993). As Csikszentmihalyi (1993) explains, regardless of why or how the flow state is caused, it results in feelings of transcendence and a raised consciousness “as if the boundaries of the self, had been expanded.” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993, p. xiv). Csikszentmihalyi (2002) argues that flow activities occur when there is sufficient complexity in the activity so that the person can become absorbed in it. The activity also needs to be of high interest to the person undertaking the activity. However, he also warns that optimal experience is a form of energy and “energy can be used to help or destroy.” (Csikszentmihalyi ,2002, p.69).

Csikszentmihalyi (1997) states that if the activity leads to “personal and cultural growth” (p.124) then it is more likely to lead to lasting happiness. In these conditions, “the more flow we experience in daily life, the more happy we are likely to feel overall” (Csikszentmihalyi ,1997, p.123), p.123). For the purposes of this study we are interested in flow as a state caused by music making. Evidence for the experience of flow with musical activity has been successfully provided by
numerous studies (Custodero, 2002, 2005, 2012; Byrne et al. 2003; Bailey and Davidson, 2005; Bernard, 2009; Freer, 2009; Manzano et al., 2010; Nijs et. al., 2012; Wrigley and Emmerson, 2013) These include recent investigations into the relationship of flow to improvising and composing activities (Chirico et.al., 2015; Hart and Di Blasi, 2015; Van der Hoorn 2015; Gaggioli et. al. 2017).

Chirico et al. (2015) explain that they believe the shared relevance of sensorimotor-coupling (feeling and movement) in music and flow explains the relationship between them. They argue that “overcoming the dichotomy between cognition and emotions, it is possible to posit that there are interactions among these poles and environment that bring forth the relationship between flow and music” (Chirico et al. 2015, p.10). They propose that to resolve the cognition and emotion dichotomy, or to use Swanwick’s (2002) model ‘analysis and intuition dichotomy’, music and flow could “be seen as an emergent embodied system” (Chirico et al. 2015, p.6). Before we explore ideas of embodiment and their relevance to music making in terms of this study, there are other themes that need discussing at this juncture. This is because these themes follow on appropriately from discussions about perceptions of changed consciousness due to enhanced experiences. The first is Dewey’s concept of the artistic experience in education.

2.16. Dewey’s theory of ‘an experience’

Dewey believed the goal of education was to inspire students to want to live enhanced lives through worthwhile experiences. He makes a distinction between ordinary experiences and a heightened experience and calls the latter “an experience” (Dewey, 1934). In contrast to an ordinary experience, Dewey describes an experience as “so rounded out that its close is a consummation and not a cessation”. He argues that “such an experience is a whole and carries with it its own individualizing quality and self-sufficiency. It is an experience” (Dewey, 1934, p. 35). Dewey’s description of an experience can clearly be related to flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002) and peak experiences (Maslow, 1968). Its own individualizing quality and self-sufficiency is describing its autotelic nature. Describing its close as a consummation directs us towards its immersive quality. Stating that it is not a cessation hints at its transformative ability. In a phrase that can be related to Csikszentmihalyi’s flow, Dewey describes the forward and dynamic movement of an experience as “every successive part flows freely, without seam and without unfilled blanks, into what ensues.” (Dewey, 1934, p. 36). As with peak experiences and flow, Dewey’s concept of an experience is not just something that is an all-encompassing moment of escape. It transforms consciousness and
knowledge simultaneously creating a “heightened vitality” (1934, p.19). Dewey claims that the transactional quality of an experience results in a sense of harmony with the world as “at its height it signifies complete interpenetration of self and the world of objects and events” (Dewey, 1934, p.19). Its profundity is because it paradoxically achieves a glimpse into a better future, an understanding of past experiences and at the same time is the lived, embodied appreciation of the human condition fully realised in the moment (Dewey, 1934). Importantly, as with flow and peak experiences, it causes joy, hope and an augmented reality in the receiver through its widening perception of human potential. What is more, Dewey asserts that art is a portal to such experiences as art lifts us to “possibilities that are felt as a possession of what is now and here” (1934, p.17). This enables us to feel “fully alive” as “art celebrates with peculiar intensity the moments in which the past reinforces the present and in which the future is a quickening of what is now” (Dewey, 1934, p.17).

Dewey claims that the arts, and particularly practical experience of the arts, are portals because they endow us with perception of things rather than mere recognition. It is important that Dewey claims that when this happens we are more “fully alive”. This reverberates with Freire’s (1996) literacy philosophy that calls for people to claim their freedom for themselves and for others in order to feel fully realised. We shall return to this theme of feeling more fully alive as it may be central to an idea of music literacy. Before doing so we need to explore Dewey’s distinction between perception and recognition in order to understand his theory. He explains that: “Recognition is perception arrested before it has a chance to develop freely . . . In recognition we fall back, as upon a stereotype, upon some previously formed scheme. . . Recognition is too easy to arouse vivid consciousness” (1934, pp. 52-53). Here Dewey is emphasising the power of full perception or an experience. It is significantly different from everyday experiences in the way that it consumes our state of being, heightens our senses, liberates us from the concerns and limitations of our ego, augments our knowledge and thus elevates our consciousness. Thus, we perceive things, rather than merely recognise things, we perceive our state of being as it truly is (Dewey, 1934). But how does art and particularly music allow for these moments of perception?

For Dewey, like others (Langer, Swanwick, Elliott) music is able to both enhance and embody the lived experience. He explains that the visceral and profoundly meaningful nature of music has a “primitive passional quality...Responses become internal and implicit thus enriching the content of perception” (Dewey, 1934, p.248). Therefore, the conditions of actual experience are expressed and experienced. He states that music “gives us the very essence of the dropping down and the exalted
rising, the surging and retreating, the acceleration and retardation, the tightening and loosening, the sudden thrust and gradual insinuation of things” (Dewey, 1934, p.216). Dewey (1934) emphasises the significance of “being” as part of the human condition that can be especially expressed through artistic activity. He argues that our being consists of cognition and action in an environment. Our action exists as a transaction between our thoughts and the environment and art heightens our awareness of this state of being. Dewey maintains that all the arts possess this power to perceive being as it truly is. Like Small’s (1996) verb musicking he believes that “Art” is not genuinely a noun. “It is an intrinsic quality of activity” (Dewey, 1934, p.223). Dewey believes that, in terms of the authentic meaning of the arts, they cannot be separated or sub-divided because they all contain the power of perception. “Whatever path the work of art pursues, it, just because it is a full and intense experience, keeps alive the power to experience the common world in its fullness” (Dewey, 2005, p.138).

Jackson (1995) in analysing Dewey’s concept of artistic experience explains that during these activities “our ability to think, to feel, to appreciate, to experience through all of our senses - come into play at once.” (Jackson, 1995, p. 149). It is during these moments that “our various capacities not only are realised (i.e., become real) but are also momentarily fused and unified. Only then do we experience what it is like to be fully human” (Jackson, 1995, p. 149). Experiencing the world in its fullness (Dewey, 2005) what it’s like to be fully human (Jackson, 1995) clearly resonates with Freire’s (1996) claim that literacy should call on people to realise their ontological vocation as being the quest for human completion. Freire (1996) states that, when this happens, people realise “the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation” (Freire, 1996, p.64). He claims that it is only then that people “respond to the vocation of persons as beings who are authentic only when engaged in inquiry and creative transformation” (Freire, 1996, p.65).

Freire’s description of “a reality in process” can be related to Dewey’s understanding of “being” as a transaction between cognition and the environment. Freire’s call for creative and joyful transformation can be related to Dewey’s description of art as being “a process of creation, perception and enjoyment” (Dewey, 2005, p. 48). Freire declares that “In order to be, it must become. Its “duration” is found in the interplay of the opposites permanence and change.” (Freire, 1996, p.65). This description of an educational experience evokes a sense of movement and change. This again is also found in Dewey’s description of artistic experience. Dewey states that “because of continuous merging, there are no holes, mechanical junctions, and dead centers when we have an
experience. There are pauses, places of rest, but they punctuate and define the quality of movement” (1934, p.36). Dewey emphasizes that an artistic experience has a dynamic quality as “different acts, episodes, occurrences melt and fuse into unity, and yet do not disappear and lose their own character”. During this “continuous interchange and blending.” (Dewey, 1934, p.37) there is a sense of becoming, of progress towards an improved state. Freire’s description of the authentic nature of the human condition similarly argues that our calling to humanization is “because we are this being - a being of ongoing, curious search, which ‘steps back’ from itself and from the life it leads”. Moreover, freedom is an indispensable part of this vocation and this is “the way we are” (Freire, 2014, p.88). For Freire the “ongoing, curious search” for freedom must be lived in life as a vocation as it is this that humanizes us and makes us fully human. This is praxis, the only authentic way it can exist, in ongoing action. In Regeleski’s (1996) celebration of a praxial music philosophy we can also hear Freire’s cry for “humanization”. He claims that a praxial music philosophy “emphasises making music...It approaches music from the inside...music in and through human action - on the enhancing of meaning and value in life through music” (Regeleski, 1996, p.45).

Jackson’s (1998) analysis of Dewey’s conception of the artistic experience similarly reverberates with the call that it shows and inspires the person with not only a better existence, but one’s true existence. He explains that Dewey shows us that artistic experience: “lead us to an enriched understanding of the experience object and, ultimately, to a deepened understanding of the self. The arts reveal, in other words, what more of life could be like and, concomitantly, what we ourselves could be like if we really worked at it” (Jackson, 1998, p. 194). Freire’s calling to search and to question also resonates in Dewey’s (1934) illumination of the dynamic nature of music as he states that music is able to “introduce incredibly varied complexities of question, uncertainty and suspense” (Dewey, 1934, p.248). This sense of dynamism coupled with a simultaneous perception of a fuller human experience and absolute understanding reverberates through theories of flow, peak experience, Freire’s (1997) critical literacy and Dewey’s (1934) theory of an experience. At their heart there appears to be a belief that the significant aspect of these experiences is that they augment human understanding in some way. They are transformative because they reveal a heightened perspective on the human condition. These theories also perhaps share, through their descriptions, a sense of liminality. We shall now explore how these theories express the fundamentally liminal aspect of the human condition.
2.17. Liminality

The word liminal comes from the Latin word for threshold, “limen”. The anthropologist van Gennep (1909) first developed the concept of a liminal state when undertaking ethnographic research. He developed a theory that identified different stages that rituals and rites of passage journeyed through. He studied rites of passage in different cultures of “semi-civilised peoples” (2011, p.3) such as aboriginal people in Australia. Analysis of ritual dynamics and ceremonial patterns revealed consistent evidence of transition rites that occurred during rites of passage ceremonies such as childhood to adulthood, marriage and initiation rites (van Gennep, 1909). He concluded that the rites of passage or threshold were not “union ceremonies properly speaking, but rites of preparation for union themselves preceded by rites of preparation for the transitional stage” (van Gennep, 2011, p.21). His observations led him to identify three distinct stages that he felt were universally enacted in these rituals. There were: “the rites of separation from a previous world, preliminal rites, those executed during the transitional stage liminal (or threshold) rites, and the ceremonies of incorporation into the new world postliminal rites” (van Gennep, 2011, p.21). Turner (1970) was an anthropologist who later developed van Gennep’s theories, particularly focussing on the transitional, liminal stage. Turner began this development of van Gennep’s theory whilst investigating the ritual system of the Ndembu people of north-western Zambia (Turner, 1970, p.1). He observed that during this ritual there is a liminal period where the participants are “neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremony” (1970, p.97). During this time Turner observed the wearing of masks that “combine the features of both sexes, have both animal and human attributes and unite in a single representation of human characteristics with those of the natural landscape.” (Turner, 1970, p.105). However, he also stated that we are not dealing with structural contradictions when we discuss liminality, but with essentially “unstructured (which is at once destructured and prestructured)” and may also have a “close connection with deity or with superhuman power. What is, in fact, often regarded as the unbounded, the infinite, the limitless.” (Turner, 1970, p.98). Turner observed that the participants in these rituals were considered to be “in another place” (1970, p.98) as if inhabiting a different reality to their everyday existence. Moreover, it is not so much about acquiring new knowledge rather it is “a change in being” (Turner, 1970, p.100).

Turner (1974) later elaborated on this definition to use the concept of liminality as a state of being that is experienced in different cultures throughout the world when people deliberately experience new roles and are free from their normal personas including, but not exclusive to rituals and
Here he was developing van Gennep’s (1909) theory of the universality of rites of passage where it was stated that “the life of an individual in any society is a series of passages from one age to another and from one occupation to another” (van Gennep, 1909, p.2). Turner advanced the theory of liminality, exploring its role in human society through its presence in cultural practices and structures (Turner, 1974; Turner, 1979; Turner, 1982). He was interested in how liminality could invert the normal roles and existing power structures. He declared that “the liminality of the strong is weakness - of the weak, strength. Or again, the liminality of wealth and nobility is poverty and pauperism - of poverty”. During liminal times people could “act and feel in ways opposite to or different from their standardized modes of behaviour” (Turner, 1970, p.200). However, Turner noted that in “tribal” (pre-industrial) societies these liminal rituals merely served in reinforcing the status quo as after the liminal experience as there is always a returning to the “structural realm” (1970, p.110). This is despite the fact that during the “phenomena and process of mid-transition” the “basic building blocks of culture” are exposed. (Turner, 1970, p.110) Despite this apparent containment of liminality within societal structures Turner (1970) states that liminality cannot be easily pinned down as it is an ambiguous state that can inhibit full social satisfaction yet “gives a measure of finiteness and security”. (p.77). On the other-hand liminality may be “the acme of insecurity, the break-through of chaos into cosmos, of disorder into order” (Turner, 1970, p.77). After initially developing van Gennep’s (1960) concept of liminality (Turner, 1969), Turner (1974) later drew a distinction between liminal acts and liminoid activities. He differentiated between the liminal "tribal and agrarian ritual and myth from what we may perhaps call the "liminoid," or leisure genres, of symbolic forms and action in complex, industrial societies” (Turner, 1974, p.72). If existing power structures are subverted, then this is a liminoid rather than a liminal state. In contrast, Turner (1974) contends that liminal activities invert rather than subvert power structures. He compared liminal activities to a mirror explaining that “a mirror inverts but also reflects an object. It does not break it down into constituents in order to remould it, far less does it annihilate and replace that object.” (p.72). However, he argued that art and literature often do subvert. This is in contrast to the “liminal phases of tribal society” which usually do not subvert the status quo, therefore ensuring the structural forms of society remains intact. Turner claims the reason for this is “chaos is the alternative to cosmos, so they had better stick to cosmos, that is, the traditional order of culture” (Turner, 1974, p.72). Turner therefore later developed a theory of liminoid activity that he felt had replaced liminal rituals in post-industrial consumerist societies. He saw liminoid moments existing “where creativity and uncertainty unfold in art and leisure activities.” (Thomassen, p.15). Crucially, he differentiated liminoid from liminal because “Liminoid phenomena, unlike liminal, do not so much invert as subvert quotidian and prestigious structures
and symbols” (Turner, 1979, p.493). Turner wrote that his thoughts about this differentiation had been inspired by his reading of Sutton-Smith’s cross-cultural research into children’s games. Sutton-Smith (1972) argued that “we may be disorderly in games and, I would add, in the liminality of rituals, as well as in such "liminoid" phenomena as charivaris, fiestas, Halloween masking and mumming, etc.” (p.17). He continues that this is “either because we have an overdose of order, and want to let off steam (the "conservative" view of ritual disorder, such as ritual reversals, Saturnalia, and the like), or because we have something to learn through being disorderly” (1972, p.17).

Turner (1974) addressed the differences between liminal and liminoid activity. He stated that he was most interested in how Sutton-Smith's formulations see “liminal and liminoid situations as the settings in which new symbols, models, and paradigms arise - as the seedbeds of cultural creativity” (Turner, 1974, p.60). Nevertheless, much of his earlier writing does not delineate between liminal and liminoid, and much of his earlier theorising can be seen to be relevant for our unfurling exploration into music literacy. Therefore, for the purposes of our discussion, for the main we shall use the word liminal unless using direct quotations. Turner was also a contemporary of Csikszentmihalyi and they both taught together in the University of Chicago in the 1970s. This was when Csikszentmihalyi was first developing and writing his theory of flow and Turner (1974) wrote about flow when explaining his theory of “communitas”. We shall now briefly explore Turner’s theory of “communitas” (1970) and particularly “spontaneous communitas” as it is of relevance in light of our investigations into music literacy.

2.18. Communitas

Turner (1974) used the anthropological theory of “structure” in societies to highlight the existence of communitas. Turner described structure as “the patterned arrangements of role-sets and status sequences consciously reorganised and regularly operative in a given society” (1975, p.201). Turner (1975) proposed that communitas was the opposite of structure because it involved self-motivated, intrinsic and authentic togetherness. However, communitas “is not structure with its signs reversed” (p.202). Instead it is a type of “anti-structure” that involves the “liberation of human capacities of cognition, affect, volition, creativity...from the normative constraints” of the structures in society (Turner, 1974, p.75). He argued that these structures of status, sex, gender, age, class, family, nation, race etc. create inevitable hierarchies and divisions and that “full human capacity is locked out” (Turner, 1974, p.77). In contrast “communitas strains towards universalism and openness” (Turner, 1975, p. 202). It is therefore a release from structure “to eliminate divisiveness, to realise
non-duality” (Turner, 1975, p.203). Turner (1974; 1975) was interested in the times when human beings experience a bond or kinship whilst being together as part of a group. The powerful effect of this bond meant that Turner was not satisfied that the word community was an adequate label, as groups could exist or interact together as a community without experiencing this powerful bond. Therefore, Turner argued that he preferred “the Latin term ‘communitas’ to ‘community’ to distinguish this modality of social relationship from an area of common living” (2008, p.96). Turner (1974) argued that liminal states provide the portals to communitas. These liminal portals are moments when: “the past is momentarily negated, suspended, or abrogated, and the future has not yet begun. There is an instant of pure potentiality when everything trembles in the balance” (Turner, 1974, p.75). During these liminal moments when structure is abandoned, people are able to realise each other as equals and this can lead to a sense of communitas (Turner, 1974). Turner (1970, p.101) stated that “people can be themselves when they are not acting institutionalised roles.” Therefore, disrupting the structure of society can liberate people from “actors of roles” (Turner, 1967, p.99). As Edith Turner explained: “Much of what has been bound by social structure is liberated in liminality, notably this sense of comradeship and communitas” (Turner, 2012, p.83).

Communitas and liminality are both therefore “anti-structure” or “pre-structural”. They involve true equality whereas structure involves inequality. (Turner, 1974; Turner, 1975). According to Turner (1975), liminality and communitas share many characteristics. Both represent moments of positivity and potentiality being like “a spring of pure possibility.” (Turner, 1975, p. 202). Communitas and liminality are states to which the structural view of time is not applicable, “an eternal now”, moments “in and out of time” (Turner, 1975, p.238). However, liminality may be a time of chaos, disorder and uncertainty, and liminality leads to the feeling of resolution and completeness that communitas brings. Turner compares communitas to the hole of a wheel: “the emptiness at the center.” (Turner, 1970, p.127). He states that communitas is what is achieved by Hindu mystics when they reach the Atman, the spirit of all life that exists in all beings, therefore “embracing nature as well as culture in communitas” (Turner, 1975, p.203). Turner also likens it to the Zen algorithm, “all is one, one is none, none is all.” (Turner, 1970, p.113) That is not to say that communitas is only achieved by those who are religious or spiritually devoted. Rather he states that “communitas is a fact of everyone’s experience.” (Turner, 1975, p.231). This is because communitas is “almost everywhere held to be sacred or holy, possibly because it transgresses or dissolves the norms that govern structured and institutionalized relationships and is accompanied by experiences of unprecedented potency” (Turner, 1970, p.128). Turner (1970) identified three different types of communitas: spontaneous, normative and ideological. Ideological communitas is
part of utopian societies, normative is when the communitas becomes part of the existing cultural hegemony and power structures, and spontaneous communitas is that which occurs spontaneously, beyond the tight control of society’s normative power structures (Turner, 1974). Describing spontaneous communitas Turner states:

Spontaneous communitas...it has something 'magical' about it. Subjectively there is in it a feeling of endless power. Is there any of us who has not known this moment when compatible people - friends, congeners - obtain a flash of lucid mutual understanding on the existential level, when they feel that all problems (not just their problems), whether emotional or cognitive, could be resolved, if only the group which is felt (in the first person) as "essentially us" could sustain its inter-subjective illumination. (Turner, 1974, p.79).

Turner positioned communitas in the context of Csikszentmihalyi’s flow theory claiming that "Flow may induce communitas, and communitas flow." (Turner, 1974, p.80). He explained, however, that whereas an individual experiences flow, “communitas in its inception is evidently between or among individuals” (Turner, 1974, p.89). Turner (1977) referenced communitas therefore as being a type of shared flow. He highlighted how flow and communitas involve complete absorption in the moment and acknowledged that this leads to an ego-less state. He declared that “flow involves a merging of action and awareness, an ego-less state that is its own reward and that communitas too has these attributes” (Turner, 1977, p.50). He differentiated communitas from flow, however, because communitas can arise from a lack of structure (Turner, 1977). He also criticised Csikszentmihalyi’s (2002) concept of flow as Turner argued that flow can occur due to various criteria and does not require standard conditions or “rules” for it to be experienced. He explained, “I do not agree with him that flow requires “formal rules” and circumscription in time and space as preconditions. Communitas is a sort of shared flow - but it can and does occur in both structured and unstructured situation” (Turner, 1977, p.50). In contrast, he argued that communitas “has something of a "flow" quality, but it may arise, and often does arise, spontaneously and unanticipated - it does not need rules to trigger it off. In theological language, it is sometimes a matter of "grace" rather than "law.” (Turner, 1974, p.89). Turner (1974) therefore positioned flow in the domain of structure, whereas “communitas is always prestructural.” (p.89) Turner therefore claimed that communitas is a person’s natural state yet may be reached as a result of flow. Turner argued that flow is “one of the ways in which "structure" may be transformed or "liquefied" (like the famed martyr's blood) into communitas again.” Turner, 1974a, p.89). Finally, Turner (1982) ex communitas as a state of being rather than a state of action. “It is not team-work in flow that is
quintessential, but "being" together, with "being" the operative word, not "doing" (Turner, 1982, p.48).

The “being” described here is not inertia, nor is lack of action essential to experience communitas. Rather the emphasis on “being” refers to the fact that Turner (1982) believes communitas is an ontological reality. It is both a part of and a purpose for every human being. He argues that too often humans are “nothing but a homo-hierarchicus” (Turner, 1974b, p.250). Whereas in contrast, when we are being homo-sapiens, wise and truly human, unmasked by the hierarchies and social constructs of society, we experience communitas, expressing “equality and comradeship as norms” (Turner, 1975, p.232). Despite the assertion that communitas differs from Csikszentmihalyi’s flow (1990) it is difficult not to see aspects of flow and Maslow’s peak experience (1970) in Turner’s (1974) description of communitas. In particular, all of these states involve a transcendence of ordinary reality and entering a level of consciousness whereby the ego is left behind. Turner (1974) identifies spontaneous communitas as being the type of communitas that is most distinct from everyday reality. He states that “individuals who interact with one another in the mode of spontaneous communitas become totally absorbed into a single, synchronized, fluid event” (1974, p.790). He explains that due to their “gut-understanding of synchronicity in these situations” allows them to experience and understand the metaphysical concepts involved in the “eucharistic union and the I-Ching” (Turner, 1974, p.790).

We can clearly relate this to Maslow’s (1970) peak experiences, Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990) flow and Blacking’s (1987) phylic communion. There are further synergies to be found with these optimal states in Turner’s (1974; 1979) analyses of liminality. As highlighted above, Turner spoke of liminality causing time distortion akin to the removal of clock time described by Csikszentmihalyi, Maslow and Blacking. Turner stated that “since liminal time is not controlled by the clock it is a time of enchantment when anything might, even should, happen” (Turner, 1979, p.465). This sense of viewing time as moments when anything can happen can be linked to the emphasis on hopeful transformation in Freire’s (1996) critical literacy pedagogy. Turner’s (1970) liminality leading to communitas resonates with the idea of a dynamic movement towards an augmented consciousness and the will to create new perspectives as in Freire’s (1997) critical literacy. Turner described liminality as “a fructile chaos, a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities, not by any means a random assemblage but a striving after new forms and structure” (Turner, 1970, pp. 11-12). Liminality as the vehicle for change then provides the “conditions for communitas, a kind of flowerbed ready, waiting for it” (Turner, 2012, p.4). As discussed previously
in this chapter, Freire (1996) claimed that reflection is at the heart of critical literacy, but that this reflection causes us to reassess our relations with and experience of the world. Here we can recognise the liminality and communitas expressed in this philosophy. Freire (1996) explains that “authentic reflection considers neither man abstract nor the world without people, but people in their relations with the world.” (p.62) It is during these relations these times that “consciousness and world are simultaneous: consciousness neither precedes the world nor follows it” (Freire, 1996, p.62). We can view this as a liminal time whereby our sense of identity and relationship with the word departs from our normative experiences. This then leads to a sense of harmony, or communitas, when our consciousness and world are simultaneous.

2.19. Buber I-Thou relationship

This positioning of liminality as “people in their relations with the world” also appears to have clear resonances with Buber’s dialogic philosophy. Buber (1970) positioned man in his relations with the world as being authentic only when experienced as a dialogic relationship. He described this state of being as a principle of “I-thou” as opposed to “I-It”. Buber declared that only when people acknowledge the inter-subjective nature of experience are they entering into an I and Thou relationship. Unless we experience our existence in relation to others with our whole being, then we are merely having a relationship with other things, a subject-object, I-It relationship. The I-Thou relationship is one of mutuality and reciprocity, a subject-subject relationship (Buber, 1970). Buber claimed that an I-It relationship prevents a true experience of the world and denies man’s authenticity. He declared: “And in all the seriousness of truth, hear this: without It man cannot live. But he who lives with It alone is not a man” (Buber, 1970, p. 34). Buber (1970) therefore argued that people’s ontological state is realised through the I-thou principle. He differentiated his existential philosophy from merely experiencing the world by explaining his ontology as being a dialogic relationship between ourselves and “others”. He felt that “the man who experiences has not part in the world. For it is “in him” and not between him and the world that the experience arises” (Buber, 1970, p.12).

Here Buber positions experience as belonging to the primary word “I-It”, whereas “the primary word I-Thou establishes the world of relation” (1970, p.13). There are three “spheres” that he outlines in which this world of relation, this dialogic relationship arises. The first is “our life with nature”, the second “our life with men” and the third “our life with spiritual beings” (Buber, 1970, p.13). Buber describes this dialogic philosophy as a form of communion. He states that it involves
“a genuine change from communication to communion, that is the embodiment of the word dialogue” (Buber, 1970, p.21). Buber (2002) calls this experience of communion “the essential we” if this occurs within “a host of men” (p.208). He explains that if one experiences a group of people as “Thou” then this is the “essential we”. “As there is Thou so there is a We” (Buber, 2002, p.208). However, this can only be experienced if the group “meet not as members of a party, but in genuine community” (Buber, 2002, p.209). Therefore Buber (2002) claims “the special nature of the We is shown in the essential relation existing, or arising temporarily, between its members...Only men who are capable of saying Thou to one another can truly say We with one another” (p.208). Despite this, Buber (1970) claims his philosophy does not necessarily coalesce with the eastern philosophies that later influenced Maslow’s peak experience (1999) and Csikszentmihalyi’s flow (1990). His theory does not advocate immersion and the loss of self. Buber (1970) argues that if this were the case, when this “singleness of being” ends and one returns to “earthly affairs” one would “find that his being is split asunder” (p.68). Rather than advocate the dissolving of the ego and experiencing a oneness with the universe, Buber instead suggests that this would mean his philosophy of I and Thou “perishes in the feeling of a unity that does not and cannot exist” (1970, p.69). Similarly, Turner (1974) claims that communitas “preserves individual distinctiveness” (p.77) and “does not merge identities”, but liberates them from conformities (Turner, 1975, p.174). Buber (1947) argues that there is inevitable differentiation between I and Thou, but that there is also a connection. The state of this experience owes its allegiance to neither individualism nor collectivism. Buber declares it is ‘Between Man and Man’ (1947; 2002). Buber (2002) calls for man to seek “the life of dialogue” as it is here where true community will be found. Community is thus a state of being rather than a fixed entity. It is “the being no longer side by side but with one another of a multitude of persons.” (p.37) He explains that “this multitude, though it also moves towards one goal, yet experiences everywhere a turning to, a dynamic facing of the other, a flowing from I to Thou.” This positioning of community as a state of being, an experience rather than merely a societal structure is emphasised in his declaration that “community is where community happens” (Buber, 2002, p.37).

Buber (2002) emphasises that there is “dialogue which is not the dialogue of life, that has the appearance, but not the essence of dialogue” (p.22). Therefore, the I-Thou experience is not to be found in all forms or manifestations of dialogue. It is powerful only when it involves the acknowledgement of a shared reality. He states “The I is real in virtue of its sharing in reality. The fuller its sharing the more real it becomes” (Buber, 1970, p.52). Within this sharing is where spirit in its human manifestation resides. Buber explains that the “spirit is not in the I, but between I and thou” Man lives in the spirit, if he is able to respond to his Thou. He is able to, if enters into relation
with his whole being. Only in virtue of his power to enter into relation is he able to live in the spirit” (1970, pp.35-36). There are clear parallels to be drawn between Turner’s (1969) communitas and Buber’s (1970) I-Thou philosophy. Both theories argue for a existential philosophy that is dialogic in the sense that a person’s true nature is realised in their relationship with others. Buber’s (1970) I-Thou concept and Turner’s (1969) theory of communitas both claim relationships with others are authentic only when any sense of hierarchy, status or categorisation is dissolved. Turner (1975) himself acknowledged these similarities: “The bonds of communitas are undifferentiated, equalitarian, direct...existential, I-Thou relationships” (Turner, 1975, p.274). Similarly, both philosophies argue that they can be experienced through "grace" rather than "law" (Turner, 1974, p.89). Buber (2010) states: “The Thou meets me through grace, it is not found through my seeking” (2010, p.17). As has been discussed above, the concepts of I-Thou (Buber (1970) and communitas (Turner, 1969) also both claim to cause experiences of time and space that transcend normative values. There are clear parallels here to be drawn with Csikzenmihalyi’s (2002) theory of flow and Maslow’s theory of peak experience, as discussed above in this chapter. These experiences therefore can all be said to represent changes in consciousness. As has been highlighted, Buber (1970) and Turner (1969) contend that people can only feel complete and authentic during these experiences. Buber (2010) states that: “Where there is no sharing there is no reality” (p.52). Turner explicitly acknowledges the links his communitas theory has with Buber’s I-Thou philosophy and declares: “The notion that there is a generic bond between men, and its related sentiment of ‘humankindness,’ are not epiphenomena of some kind of herd instinct but are products of ‘men in their wholeness wholly attending” (Tuner, 2008, p.128). Again, we can draw parallels with Csikzenmihalyi’s (2002) theory of flow and Maslow’s (1969) theory of peak experience, as discussed above in this chapter. Csikzenmihalyi (2002) explains that: “When an important goal is pursued with resolution and all one’s varied activities fit together into a unified flow experience, the result is that harmony is brought to consciousness” (2002, p.217). Maslow similarly declares that: “In peak experiences, there is a tendency to move more closely to a perfect identity, or uniqueness, or to the idiosyncrasy of the person or to his real self, to have become more a real person” (1970, p. 67). As has been highlighted above in this chapter, Maslow (1970) argues that his research into peak experiences shows that our true nature is revealed during these optimal moments. He describes this as our “unitive consciousness” and states that during these experiences we are given “a sense of the sacred glimpsed in and through the particular instance of the momentary, the secular, the worldly”. Maslow concludes that “the whole of Being, when seen at its best...is only neutral or good” (Maslow, 1999, p.92).
In contrast, Csikzenmihalyi (2002) declares that flow experiences are neither inherently good nor bad. “It is good only in that it has the potential to make life more rich, intense and meaningful: it is good because it increases the strength and complexity of the self” (Csikzenmihalyi, 2002, p.70). Buber’s (2010) I-Thou and Turner’s (1969) communitas theories, however, argue that our true nature is spiritual, and our ontological vocation is to realise this fact. Turner (2012) states that: “We are a spiritual species. A mystical participation exists. We do not form it. It is there all the time, everywhere” (Turner, 2012, p.52). Buber (2010) similarly declares: “With every thou we are stirred with the breath of the thou, that is, of eternal life” (p.52). We can draw parallels here also with Freire’s (1996) theory of literacy. Just as Freire describes his philosophy of literacy as being authentic humanisation and the ontological vocation of mankind (Freire, 1996), Buber (1970) describes the I-thou relationship as unveiling the cradle of “Real Life”. In addition, Buber claims I-Thou as the “eternal source of art...the act of man’s being” (1970, p.16). Buber elaborates upon this in his essays “Between Man and Man” (2002) where he states that all art is the expression of this dialogic relationship being expressed and experienced through the individual modality of each particular type of art. He declares that “all art is from its origin essentially of the nature of dialogue.” (p.30). Essentially, all art relies on a viewer, a listener and “they all say, to him who receives them, something (not a feeling, but a perceived mystery) that can be said only in this one language” (Buber, 2002, p.30). This can perhaps be related to Turner’s (1969; 1975) proposition that experiences of communitas and flow are not always the same. He suggests they will be different for each art that engenders them. He states “surely, the processes of communitas and flow are imbued with the meanings of the symbols they either generate or are channeled by.” He asks the questions “are all flows one and do the symbols indicate different kinds and depths of flow?” (Turner, 1974, p.90). If the children’s musicking induced flow and communitas, then the kinds and depths of flow they manifested are arguably intrinsically linked to the way that we experience music. This is perhaps particularly pertinent for this study because the children made music for a musical ceremony in rural locations that, as is discussed in the results and analysis chapter, involved physical expressions and experiences of musicking. We shall therefore now turn our attention to relevant literature that explores how we experience music and how music affects our consciousness.

### 2.20. Music and Consciousness

We now expand on the question of the relationship of music to the human condition. This question has been partly discussed earlier in this chapter when we addressed music’s relationship to our emotions. This section of the literature review will now explore theories surrounding music’s
relationship to the body (embodiment - bodily knowing) and then progress to how one experiences time during music making. In doing so, it highlights theories that claim music has a special relationship to the human condition or, to put it another way, music both mimics and gives insight into human consciousness. The discussion will analyse various theories that claim music not only has a special relationship with consciousness, but can also alter it. Of course, the nature of consciousness is a vast philosophical debate that could justify a whole separate thesis. Miller (1962) eloquently expressed this predicament when he said that "consciousness is a word worn smooth by a million tongues" (p.40). Nevertheless, it is important to clarify a definition before we can explore the nature of music’s relationship to consciousness.

Dennett (1991; 2003) argues that one of the main reasons consciousness has defied an agreed definition is because people wish to make it more magical and mysterious than it really is. He claims that consciousness can be explained as a function of the brain and “is a physical, biological phenomenon...exquisitely ingenious in its operation, but not miraculous or even, in the end, mysterious” (Dennett, 2003, p.7). His argument is that we must not be concerned with our subjective experiences of consciousness. He explains that “a good theory of consciousness should make a conscious mind look like an abandoned factory, full of humming machinery and nobody home to supervise it, or enjoy it, or witness it” (Dennett, 2003, p.16). Only then will we be able to understand how the brain creates consciousness as this will allow us to appreciate “all the non-mysterious ways in which the brain can create benign user-illusions” (Dennett, 2003, p.19). In contrast, phenomenologists such as Merleau-Ponty (1968) contend that consciousness can only be understood from a first-person subjective position. It is argued that consciousness is rooted in temporality, spatiality, language, sociality and embodiment (Merleau-Ponty, 1968; van Manen, 2016). Moss and Keen (1981) explain that “the conscious human being does not reside in his head, mind or brain, rather he inhabits the space of the world...The space and time of human consciousness are also the space and time of the human body” (pp.110-111). Clarke and Clarke (2014) sum up the differences between these two opposing positions by highlighting that “for the rigorous empiricist, any explanation of mind that is not grounded in matter would smack of metaphysics: there must be nothing more.” Whereas for others to describe consciousness “in purely neurophysiological terms would be unthinkably reductionist: there must be something more” (Clarke and Clarke, 2014, p.79). For the purposes of this study, however, it is not necessary to analyse in depth why or how we experience consciousness. We are concerned with literature that could relate to the children’s experiences of their musicking. Therefore, literature that involves how music may relate to, or perhaps change our experience of consciousness is relevant. To explore this
realm, we need not answer the question of why we have consciousness or how we have consciousness. We only need to come to a reasonable definition of consciousness that may allow us to explore how the children’s musicking may relate to or affect it. Clarke (2014) links consciousness with our ability to be conscious of things and ourselves. He states: “we are conscious because we are conscious of something; that consciousness is a result of our intentions towards the world including our selves” (p.1). Hobson (2017) similarly states that “consciousness may be defined as our awareness of our environment, our bodies, and ourselves (p.127). This awareness in turn acknowledges a “recognition that we are conscious beings.” (2017, p.127).

Having a conscious recognition that we are conscious beings may seem like an endorsement of Descartes’ (1637) famous maxim “je pense, donc je suis”, translated as “I think therefore I am”. This has been highlighted as giving rise to a mind-body duality that views the essence of the mind as being thought and the essence of the body as being spatial extension (Shear, 1999). However, it is debatable whether Descartes’ (1637) position intended to endorse a mind-body duality (Alanen, 1996). Whether the mind-body duality is Cartesian or not is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Nevertheless, what is important to acknowledge is that this mind-body duality perspective exists and crucially, that it is opposed by those that believe the body provides important ways of knowing and understanding. As has been highlighted above, theories from phenomenology stress the importance of first-hand experience for human understanding. It is argued that there is a purity and complexity to the lived experience that cannot be captured after the event. (Gadamer, 1975, Husserl, 1989; van Manen, 1997). Morse (2015, p.114) explains how “perceptual qualities of interrelating within the surrounding environment will always be difficult to describe via what must ultimately be post-reflective recollections of experience”. This is supported by Schneider and Velmans (2017) who succinctly capture the essence of the theory by declaring, “every moment of your waking life, and even when you dream, there is something it feels like to be you” (p. ix). Jay (2005) similarly, states “however much we may construe experience as a personal possession. No one can take my experiences away from me”. (p.7).

2.2.1. Embodiment

The idea of the human condition providing a subjective knowing that is first experienced through the body reverberates through the theories of embodiment. This is relevant for this study because the children made musical ceremonies outdoors that involved movement with their bodies. In the results and analysis chapter we shall explore how the data show that the children felt their
musicking was expressed with, and experienced through, their bodies. In other words, these were embodied experiences. Gordon (2014) states that the term embodiment “could be said to refer to the biological and physical presence of our bodies, which are necessary preconditions for subjectivity, emotion, language, thought and social interaction” (p.122). The theory of embodiment is expressed in the theories of various phenomenologists including Merleau-Ponty (1962). In his preface to ‘The phenomenology of perception’, Merleau Ponty outlines the purpose of phenomenology as aiming towards “achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world, and endowing that contact with a philosophical status” (1962, p.vii). Past philosophical theories on existentialism had traditionally viewed the body as being in the same category as objects in the physical sciences. In contrast, human consciousness was in the category of the subject. It is argued that Descartes developed this subject-object dualism, which is termed the Cartesian tradition (Cooper 1996, pp.19-20). Merleau Ponty (1962, p.82), rejects this dualism in his ‘Phenomenology of Perception’ and concludes “I am conscious of the world through the medium of my body” explaining that [my body] “is my point of view on the world” (Merleau Ponty, 1962, p.70). Friedman (2014) agrees and declares that “knowledge of the world is embedded in our bodies in a completely non-cognitive (i.e. non-representational) fashion...Perception, inextricably linked with action, involves, or simply is, our entire orientation toward and within the world.” (pp.176-177).

These phenomenological theories of embodiment are relevant to this study because the children seemingly experienced their musicking through their bodies. The belief that music is experienced through the body can find support in various phenomenological theories. In Gendlin’s (1997) philosophical treaty on the nature of meaning he claims that meaning always involves a felt experiential dimension. He states “any concept, thing, or behavior is meaningful only as some noise, thing, or event interacts with felt experiencing” (Gendlin, 1997, p.1). What is more Gendlin argues that our body provides a primacy of knowing; our first understanding of things are felt. Gendlin (1997) says “The body knows the situation directly...A living body knows its environment by being in it” (p.27). The importance of children’s bodily experiences is emphasised by phenomenological enquiries into children’s experiences such as Nielson’s (2012) investigation of children’s embodied experiences of movement and the work of Kirova and Emme (2012) who explore immigrant children’s bodily experiences of their immigration. Kirova and Emme (2012) explain how the body “is always with me” and provides a primacy of knowing as “I am in it first and then in the world of objects around me that I may or may not know, but could encounter through my body” (p.142). This resonates with Bowman’s (2000) call for greater emphasis on the value of embodiment in music education. She alleges that theories surrounding music education
have a bias that lean towards prioritising cognitive understanding. This means favouring “the reliability, orderliness, safety, security, and trustworthiness of masculine reason over the sensuous, embodied feminine” (Bowman, 2000, p. 46). She asserts that “music qua music is always already a body-thing” and we need to “recover the material/corporeal moment of consciousness in which body and mind co-originate” (Bowman, 2000, p. 50). Leena and Westerlund (2001, pp.208-209) claim that acknowledging the body’s role in experiencing music allows music to be transformative. “The body is intended as well as unintended in ‘empowered’ agency. Consequently, the experience of the relational body-mind cannot be examined only as something that happens inside the skin and behind the eyes” (pp.208-209). The idea that music can be transformative will be re-visited later in this chapter. For the moment it will be appropriate to further explore theories surrounding the role the body could play in our experience and use of music and how these theories could relate to a framework of music literacy.

Philpott (2001) outlines a theory of what he calls “musical literacy” and positions the body as being fundamental to one’s engagement with and understanding of music. It is important to note that Philpott’s definition of musical literacy for the purposes of his theory uses a pluralist concept of literacy involving elements of the social-constructivist model of literacy, as discussed previously in this chapter. He states that musical literacy involves “using, understanding, reading and writing, in a wide range of traditions” (Philpott, 2001, p.80). Philpott does not explore this broad definition in any great depth. Instead he focusses on how musical literacy is achieved (including understanding, reading and writing of music) and argues that the body plays a continual role in musical learning and cognitive development. He highlights that reducing musical literacy to being able to read music is contentious because of traditions that do not involve music notation (Philpott, 2001). He also warns of introducing children too early to music notation because of a lack of “readiness” and suggests that learners progress towards attaining musical literacy without exploring what musical literacy entails. Instead he outlines fundamental areas of, musical learning as being “the dynamic body, sensory-motor experience, the physical movement, dance, active learning, play” (Philpott, 2001, p.87). Philpott states that an exploration of the definition of musical literacy is not his intention; rather, he asks “What are the links between body, music, cognitive development and a broad notion of musical literacy?” (Philpott, 2001, p.80). Philpott’s (2001) contention that the body contains a key role in a child’s engagement of music is of relevance to our investigation into children’s experiences of making music in outdoor rural locations. This is because the children created and performed musical ceremonies where their bodily movements were integral to their musicking. This is in keeping with Philpott’s (2001) assertion that: “the body and its dynamic
relationship with the world is a fundamental component of musical literacy at all levels of development and musical cognition” (p.80). He claims that our understanding of music is fundamentally experienced in the body regardless of a person’s age. He makes the case for the dynamism of the body being crucial to learning and experience. He argues that movement is central to bodily experience, including emotions, our heartbeat and even our thoughts (Philpott, 2001). In addition, he states that our sense of being in the world is characterised by movement because of its temporal nature and “our dynamic experience of relationships with others, society and various institutions” (Philpott, 2001, p.81). Drawing on theory from Piaget (Piaget and Inhelder, 1969), Vygotsky (1962) and Bruner (1966) he contends that “the rudiments of learning and cognition can be found in dynamic sensory experiences and physical actions of the body.” (Philpott, 2001, p.87). He concludes that the body is central to musical expression because music is “literally a moving and bodily experience” and because of its cognitive demands, music has “a special role in placing the body in the mind” (2001, p.90).

O’Regan, Myin and Noë (2005) in their analysis of consciousness discuss how the existence of and inevitable movement of one’s body affects all perception. They label this concept “corporality” echoing Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological theory of embodiment (as discussed earlier) as Merleau-Ponty’s French word for embodiment is “corporalité”. They explain how movement of the body causes one’s incoming sensory information to change. This includes auditory information as “turning your head immediately affects the phase and amplitude difference between signals coming into the two ears; approaching a sound source increases the amplitude, etc.” (O’Regan and Noë. 2005, p.374). Therefore, it is argued our bodies and their movements are symbiotically tuned with our perception of the world. It is claimed our bodies affect and change our consciousness. These ideas can be linked to those that claimed that our embodied experience of music can be transformative (Blacking, 1973; Bowman, 2000; Leena and Westerlund, 2001; Philpott, 2001). John Blacking (1973) argued that embodied musical experiences set us in sympathetic resonance with others, thereby contributing potentially and potently to a richer, more inclusive, and more vivid sense of our common humanity. Leena and Westerlund (2001) similarly outline that: “In Dalcroze eurhythmics, mental, emotional and physical, or bodily, aspects are inseparable, and are approached through music ... Each of these aspects penetrates the goals of eurhythmics...: better awareness, concentration, social integration, realisation, experience and expression of nuances of time, space, energy and sound-feeling” (Leena and Westerlund, p.211).
This statement about having a better awareness and experience of the world echoes ideas about embodiment that resonate through the field of somatics, which examines internal physical perception and experience (Hanna, 1988). Hanna states that somatics “is a way of experiencing the world from the “inside out, where one is aware of feeling, movements and intentions, rather than looking objectively from the outside in” (1988, p.20). Somatics advocates experiences of time that move beyond clock-time (Hanna, 1988). There is a canon of thought in phenomenology, beginning with Husserl, that contends that experiencing temporality is integral to consciousness. Husserl argues that consciousness is about the flow of time and can only be understood within the flow of time. (Husserl, 1989). He declared: “All constitution, of every type and level of existence, is a temporalizing” (Husserl, 1970, p.169). The significance of the flow of time to consciousness has caused many theorists to highlight that music, as it is exists in time, has a special relationship to consciousness. For example, Husserl (1991) used our experience of hearing a melody as a way of explaining his theory of how we experience time consciousness. He argues that the idea that we experience a pure present moment is an illusion. Instead he explains that every moment is understood or comes into consciousness because of three interrelated phases; retention, primal impression, and protention (Husserl, 1991). Our perception of the present moment, the “primal impression”, only exists because of our understanding of what went before, “retention”, and our knowledge that something will follow, “protention” (Husserl, 1991). In other words, our consciousness “intentionally retains, in the new now of each case, what is already past, and manages to be certain of a lapse of past in the mode of an evident datum” (Husserl, 1982, p. 80).

Husserl (2012) likens this to our experience of hearing a melody as we do not perceive single isolated notes, but instead hear and perceive the notes in relationship to each other.

James (1890) similarly described our perception of consciousness as being a stream of consciousness. He argued consciousness “does not appear to itself chopped up in bits...It is nothing jointed; it flows. A river or a stream are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. In talking of it hereafter, let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life” (James, 1890, p.239). Yet experience of this temporality cannot be quantified and is not akin to experiencing clock time. Instead it needs to be felt, an embodied experience. As Held (2003) explains, “temporality makes up the form of how consciousness exists, and, strangely enough, it does this in such a way that consciousness simultaneously innerly ‘knows’ this as its own form. This is ‘inner time-consciousness’” (p.43). These ideas seem to chime with Schutz’s theory about music making as dwelling in “inner time”. Schutz proposes that experiencing music within this inner time causes our musicking to be transformative. He explains that inner time contrasts with
clock-time because: “I may take the world into myself, without cognitively objectifying it, simply as stuff of my being-here and as material of my existence: accepting, processing, and transforming it” (Schutz, 1982, p. 31). Schutz argues that our consciousness is not naturally linked with clock time, but rather exists in this inner time that is experienced inside and by the body. He makes the case for music being able to express our consciousness because of its common bond with experiencing inner-time. Furthermore, he explains that when people share musical practices together, they experience this inner time together, something he calls “quasi-simultaneity.” This sharing of “inner time” expresses the experiential sense of “we” or a collective communication, our common humanity, and can transform our experience of existence. This position is supported by DeNora (2016) who states that because music is rhythmically organised, it can “align individuals and potentially inchoate our unruly bodies into shared time...music provides in other words, an intensive way of literally being together in time” (p.3). Collective acts of musicking therefore arguably involve a shared embodied and temporal consciousness. This view is reinforced by the theory of McGuiness and Overy (2011), as highlighted above in this chapter, who state that “music provides an intimately shared, embodied experience” (p.245).

The idea that music can express consciousness and a shared understanding because of its relationship to temporality is voiced by others such as Clarke (2011) who states that “musicking captures in its very temporal essence the temporality that is essential to the knowing of being - i.e consciousness” (Clarke, 2011, p.1). Montague (2011, p. 31) similarly declares that “if all conscious experiences are temporal, then music most closely approximates this quality of flow...Music both takes place in time and moulds time in its passing”. Here we can see clear links with Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990) theory of flow, discussed earlier in this chapter, that describes how our sense of time is altered and we perceive new understandings of time or temporality. In essence it could be argued that musicking achieves this flow state and causes our consciousness to be changed. Csikszentmihalyi explains (2002) that control over, or the ability to change, one’s consciousness is an idea that has existed throughout history. He highlights that “the yogi disciplines in India, the Taoist approach to life developed in China, and the Zen varieties of Buddhism all seek to free consciousness from the deterministic influences of outside forces - be they biological or social in nature.” (p.20). We can see then it is argued that music is a vehicle for expression, that it has power to change one’s consciousness and that in achieving these elevated states it transforms one’s perspective yet also seems to embody the very essence of the human condition. As Schafer (1975, p.20) asserts “music exists so that we may feel the echo of the universe vibrating through us”. Music is able to represent the human condition because of its relationship to the life of feeling,
yet its physical, temporal nature means that it also causes an embodied, heightened experience of what it means to be human. Part of this ability arguably stems from a sense of freedom or agency that people gain through musicking. As DeNora (2000) outlines: “Music has power. It is implicated in every dimension of agency...Music may influence how people compose their bodies, how they conduct themselves, how they experience the passage of time, how they feel - in terms of energy and emotion - about themselves, about others, and about situations” (p. 17).

Aldridge (2006) in his book, ‘Music and Altered States’, argues that music throughout history and across cultures has been seen as a medium that creates altered states of consciousness. However, he argues that rather than seeing music as a way of achieving altered states of consciousness, instead we should see consciousness as fluid and in states of flux. He describes music and consciousness as things we do and as dialogical activities that we do with awareness of others (Aldridge, 2006). Using the etymology of the word consciousness he explains:

Achieving con-sciousness, from the Latin con (with) and scire (to know), is the central activity of human knowledge. At the heart of the word is a concept of mutuality, knowing with others. Our consciousness is a mutual activity; it is performed. Consciousness is also a means of personal knowing, our self-consciousness (Aldridge, 2006, p.10).

Clarke and Clarke (2014) state that music may have a strong relationship to consciousness “based on the way that it combines social, conceptual, technical, emotional, perceptual and motor attributes” (p.80) They also note that music has a high value placed upon it throughout the world and yet no culture uses music as its primary mode of communication. Therefore it “escapes formalized social controls, arguably remaining closer to a less obviously ideologically regulated imprint/reflection of ‘what it is like to be a human.” (2014, p.81). It may not immediately seem obvious why music’s relationship to consciousness is relevant for an investigation into music literacies. However, if we accept that the music literacies will be created by what the children do (their musicking) then we can understand that their experience will be affected by how they “do” and how they experience their music. Their consciousness will be intrinsically wedded to their musicking. As Noë (2006) explains: “Experience is not something that happens in us. It is something we do. Experience itself is a kind of dance – a dynamic involvement and engagement with the world around us (p.130). We shall return to concepts surrounding consciousness, time and embodiment later in this chapter when we examine theories about outdoor learning. At this juncture it is important to explore further music’s relationship to optimal experiences and how these are
known as alternative states of consciousness. These phenomena involve states of consciousness that
differ from the everyday states of consciousness normally experienced (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990;
Maslow, 1969; Turner, 1969). However, that is not to say that these states can only be experienced
by unusual people with unusual abilities. As is discussed above, Csikzentmihalyi (2002) stated that
flow experiences are the birthright of all human beings. Turner (1974) also argued that liminality
and communitas are our natural pre-structural states and reveal “the authentic human essence”
(p.77). Instead it is only when we are conditioned to play roles in society that our “full human
capacity is locked out” (1974, p.77). Similarly, Laski (1961) explored experiences of “transcendent
ecstasy” in people and concluded that these were “wholly human experiences” that involved a
human being’s “creative and generalising capacity” (1961, p.374). She gathered data from
questionnaires from 63 people asking whether they had experienced transcendent ecstasy. Out of
the 63 people, 60 answered that they had known a “sensation of transcendent ecstasy” (Laski, 1961,
p.9). We shall now explore these ideas in more detail as there are useful links with music making
and the optimal experiences examined above.

2.22. Ecstasy

Laski was a novelist who had experienced transcendent ecstasy whilst writing a novel. This led her
to ponder the following questions:

Why does an ecstatic experience sometimes give a feeling of being outside time?
Why does an ecstatic experience sometimes feel like a transition to a simpler, purer state?
Why does an ecstatic experience sometimes feel like contact with a transcendental spirit? (Laski,
1961, p.1)

These questions, based on her experience of ecstasy, resonate with what is experienced during flow
states (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), peak experiences (Maslow, 1969) and both liminal moments and
experiences of communitas (Turner, 1970). The question about time distortion, or the idea that
“timelessness was the reality” (Laski, 1961, p.1) clearly converges with the way time is described as
behaving differently during the optimal experiences analysed above (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990;
Maslow, 1969; Turner, 1969). The idea that an ecstatic experience is the realisation of a simpler,
purer state also relates to Csikszentmihalyi’s (2002) assertion that flow experiences are accessible
to everyone who can create the conditions needed to generate “flow”, describing it as a human
being’s optimal state. Similarly, the idea of ecstatic experience being a realisation of a purer
consciousness chimes with Maslow’s claim that: “In peak experience the nature of reality itself may be seen more clearly and its essence penetrated more profoundly” (Maslow, 1999, p.92). This also resonates with Turner’s (1974; 1975; 1979) claim that experiences of liminality and communitas are not only anti-structural, but pre-structural. In other words, they are the manifestation of our pure authentic, original selves free from the constructs of society. As Turner (1974) explained, the “anti-structure” of communitas results in: “The liberation of human capacities of cognition, affect, volition, creativity, etc., from the normative constraints incumbent upon occupying a sequence of social statuses” (p.75). Just as Maslow (1968) and Csikszentmihalyi (2002) suggest that peak experiences and flow will be more common place in future, better evolved humans, Turner (1975) also stated that liminal states and experiences of communitas can lead to: “A global view of man’s place in the cosmos and his relations with other classes of visible and invisible entities.” (Turner, 1975, p.240). Therefore, Turner acknowledged that there is a sense of order experienced and that liminality and communitas belong to “a structure of a kind” (Turner, 1975, p.240). However, Turner declared this structure is liberating and a representation of the pinnacle state of human existence. Similarly, Maslow (1968) declares that “people in peak experiences...are closest to their real selves.” (p.115). He explains that they are the “peak of their powers” and that “a person now becomes a pure psyche and less a thing-of-the-world living under the laws of the world” (Maslow, 1968, p.120). Even though Csikzenmihalyi (2002) warns against viewing flow experiences as good or bad in an absolute sense, he nevertheless advocates that all human beings should seek the flow that is experienced during creativity. He argues that purposeful creativity allows humans to enter this optimal state, declaring that creative individuals “live exemplary lives” (1990, p.125). He suggests that it is by pursuing creativity “human consciousness will grow beyond the limitations of the past.” (Csikzenmihalyi, 1990, pp.125-126). This seems to resonate with Laski’s (1961) hypothesis that ecstatic experiences were “perhaps a foretaste of a next development of man when knowledge would be wordless and greater” (Laski, 1961, p.1). Laski described ecstasy experiences as seeming as though they “derived from a praeternatural source.” (1961, p.5). They are extraordinary as they seemingly “lie outside the normal course of events”. She stated that they are “joyful, transitory, unexpected, rare, valued” (Laski, 1961, p.43).

2.23. Joy and Transcendence

The significance of joy and transcendence in ecstatic experiences (Laski, 1961) is equally present in the optimal experiences of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) peak experiences (Maslow, 1968), and liminality and communitas (Turner, 1969). As is highlighted above in this chapter, Maslow (1968)
and Csikzentmihalyi (1990; 2002) describe these optimal states of consciousness as amounting to a transcendence of ordinary reality. This transcendence is felt like a release from material pressures and identities of the ego, creating “a sense of deep enjoyment” (Csikzentmihalyi, 2002, p.49). Csikzentmihalyi (2002) explains that “flow activities have as their primary function the provision of enjoyable experiences” (p.72). This is because their autotelic nature allows for total immersion in the activity, which causes the participants to “achieve an ordered state of mind that is highly enjoyable” (2002, p.72). Csikzentmihalyi (2002) argues that when an activity requires sufficient, but not too much challenge, this can cause an optimal flow experience. This can cause complete absorption in the activity whereby a person stops “being aware of themselves as separate from the actions they are performing” (Csikzentmihalyi, 2002, p.53). As discussed above in this chapter, Maslow (1968) also stresses how peak experiences allow perception to be “ego-transcending, self forgetful, egoless” (p.90). This means that an extraordinary state of consciousness is attained whereby things are object-centred rather than ego-centred. Maslow describes this as a different reality where “we may even speak of identification of the perceiver and the perceived, a fusion of what was two into a new and larger whole” (p.90). Laski (1961) outlines a scale of ecstatic experiences that involves different levels of ecstasy. She contends that ecstatic experiences can differ in intensity ranging from “adamic” to “knowledge-contact” and finally to “union” (p.94). She postulates that “ecstatic experiences become more something as they progress along this scale” (Laski, 1961, p.94). Adamic ecstasy is “joyful, purified and renewed”, but does not involve any sense of “knowledge gained or contact made” (p.94). The knowledge or knowledge-contact ecstatic experience describes a sense of understanding new existential knowledge. Laski (1961) categorised respondents to her questionnaire as having had a “knowledge-contact” ecstatic experience if they described an encounter with God, a new reality, a mystical understanding. This meant that “in ecstasy they could know by experience that hitherto they had known only by description” (Laski, 1961, p.116). The highest level of ecstatic experiences is the level of union “in which the ecstatic and what is believed to be encountered become more or less one” (Laski, 1961, p.122). There are clear links here between flow, peak experience and Laski’s ecstatic experiences as they share a state of egoless wonder and a sense of oneness or unity with everything. It is important to note that the optimal experience theories of Csikzentmihalyi (1990), Maslow (1969) and Turner (1969) all involve a merging of activity and consciousness. Turner (2012) describes how musical activity can induce communitas as “the peak effect when music opens into the unio mystica, the experience of revelation. Through this experience at its height, the musicians’ eyes may be open but are unseeing because they have become the music.” (Turner, 2012, p.45).
Maslow (1968) similarly outlines results of peak experience that involve everything feeling connected, interconnected and “the whole of the world is seen as unity” (p.98). Conversely, he highlights how this change of consciousness can also be engendered through an aesthetic experience where “one small part of the world is felt as if it were for the moment all of the world” (Maslow, 1968, p.98). Csikzentmihalyi (2002) emphasises that in flow consciousness, people “stop being aware of themselves as separate from the actions they are performing” (p.53). Therefore, this new or heightened perception, whereby there is a loss of ego and a sense of oneness with the universe, is an important part of flow (Csikzentmihalyi, 2002), ecstatic experiences (Laski, 1961), peak experiences (Maslow, 1968) and communitas (Turner, 1974). Schein (2018) in her investigation into spiritual development in children also describes this sense of harmony with oneself and the world occurring during what she calls “spiritual moments”. At these times children feel “transcendent and deeply connected to the world” (p.109). An in-depth discussion about the nature of spirituality is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, it is important to highlight how some concepts and definitions of spirituality may relate to the children’s experiences of making music outdoors in rural locations.

2.24. Spirituality

Schein (2018) highlights how spiritual moments are linked with concepts of transcendence. She uses as evidence the etymology of the word transcendence, explaining that it comes from the Latin word meaning “climbing over”. Schein argues that spiritual moments are not only essential for a child’s wellbeing, but also provide new perspective and insight that can impact on a child’s values and development (Schein, 2018). Of course, the difficulty with the idea of “spiritual moments” is that spirituality is a contested term. White (1996) states that discussions about spirituality often descend into “semantic wrangles” (p.30) because they are attempting to describe inner experiences that are inevitably difficult to put into words. Others such as De Souza and Halafoff (2018) and Nye (2009) agree, arguing spirituality is best captured as something that is felt and experienced. Schein (2018) asserts not only that spirituality is to do with transcendence, but also that nurturing a child’s spirituality is essential for their healthy holistic development. This is because spirituality involves “love connections and relationships” and these “lead to a positive sense of self” (Schein, 2018, p.9). DeSouza and Halafoff (2018) agree describing spirituality as holistic and “essential to the flourishing and wellbeing of the human person” (p.9). Schein (2018) outlines a system of spiritual development where “complex dispositions” (acts of caring, kindness, empathy and reverence) are linked to loving relationships and a positive sense of self. Spiritual moments help foster these
complex dispositions and a positive sense of self. Buttigieg (2017) likewise outlines that spirituality “is the connectedness that a child feels to himself/herself, to others, and to the world and beyond.” Spirituality “emphasises the potential of right relationships to be life-giving and transforming” (Buttigieg, 2017, p.161). DeSouza and Watson (2016) also contextualise spirituality as being “an awareness that one is connected to something more” and that this reveals an “existential reality” (p.345). DeSouza (2016) explains spiritual development and wellbeing as “an awareness that the Self is Whole which also comprises the Other, and, for some, includes the Transcendent Other” (p.36). Macquarrie (1972, p.40) concurs and focuses on the concept of transcendence as being a key ingredient of spirituality. He contends that spirituality is part of becoming “a person in the fullest sense” and explains that “this dynamic form” can be viewed as “a capacity for going out of oneself and beyond oneself; or again as the capacity for transcending oneself.” (Macquarrie, 1972, p.40).

Others also emphasise the link between spirituality and transcendence, including Hay (2006) who describes spirituality as “a form of awareness, different from and transcending everyday awareness, which is potentially present in all human beings” (Hay, 2006, p.22). Hay and Nye (2006, p.4) claim that children have a natural tendency to access this awareness, which they describe as being a “relational consciousness” (Hay and Nye, 2006, p.113). This “unusual level of consciousness” is experienced in terms of how the child relates “to other things, other people, him/herself and God” (Hay and Nye, 2006, p.113). Hay and Nye (2006) describe this relational consciousness as being experienced as a “felt sense”. It is not cognitively worked out, but it is a feeling that accompanies this experience or consciousness. They claim that “focusing on the felt sense is the natural knowing of young children before they become inducted into the intellectualism that is our inheritance” (Hay and Nye, 2006, p.70). However, because of present normative standards it is “an unusual plane of consciousness or perceptiveness” (Hay and Nye, 2006, p.109). DeSouza and Halafoff (2018) also argue that experiences of transcendence are essential for children’s spiritual development and that the arts can provide a source for these experiences that “arouse a sense of unity and oneness” (p.9) and yet these opportunities are being neglected. Wills (2018) similarly criticises music education policy in England as it fails to promote opportunities for “the spiritual aspects of connectedness, open-ended creativity and transcendence” (p.103). DeSouza and Halafoff (2018) claim that the more occasions they have these optimal experiences “the more likely that this may lead to a sense of harmony and balance in their everyday lives and relationships with others” (p.13). They also highlight that “for some, this nurturing of wellbeing and happiness may be equated with spirituality” (p.13). Rodger (1996), in his search for an educational rationale for spirituality, concurs as he states that spiritual development can come about only through experience and awareness. He
links this type of awareness with the concept of ecstasy. He argues that “of first importance in spiritual development is awareness” and that this “awareness must come about through ek-stasis (ecstasy).” (p.59). He explains that this is “the process of being taken outside the ‘normal’ (pre-structured) way of perceiving is a process of being put in touch with reality – with things as they are in themselves” (Rodger, 1996, p.59).

Perceiving spiritual development as being taken outside of one’s self and the normal (ek-stasis), climbing over (transcendence) and becoming fully-human chimes with ideas previously examined in this literature review chapter. We can draw clear parallels with Laski’s contention that experiences of ecstasy, despite being “outside the normal course of events”, nevertheless are “derived from a praeternatural source” (1961, p.5). There are also links with Freire’s (1996) concept of literacy as being an act of transformation that involves the quest to become fully human. In addition, they can be related to Maslow’s (1969) contention that peak experiences are the highest level of human maturation, where “conflicts are fused, transcended or resolved” (p.101). Similarly, these ideas relate to Csikzentmihalyi’s (2002) assertion that flow states are optimal experiences for humans and Turner’s (1975) positioning of communitas as a pure, pre-structural way of being. This notion of spiritual insight, new knowledge and an augmented perception of an improved or more authentic reality is reflected in descriptions of all these optimal experiences (Buber, 1970; Csickzentmilahyi, 1990; Dewey, 1938; Laski, 1961; Maslow, 1970; Turner, 1969). In all these concepts of optimal experience there is a sense that they reveal an improved consciousness. A sense of harmony and oneness is revealed, the ego is transcended, and this is felt to be more authentic than the so-called normal reality. Laski highlights that “a common effect of ecstasy...is an apparent cleansing of the doors of perception, a feeling that after an ecstasy the world appears afresh and new and gleaming.” (Laski, 1961, p.86). Turner (1975) states that when experiencing communitas one is able “to eliminate divisiveness, to experience non-duality.” (p.203). He links the state of consciousness attained during experiences of communitas with the claims of Hindu mystics who experience reaching “the root, the Atman” (p.203), the pure love that exists in all human beings. This state of being is accessible to all because it is our true essence. (Turner, 1975). Turner (2012) also stresses that the spiritual insight gained through communitas is not only an optimal experience, but a natural state of being that is there to be accessed. “We are a spiritual species. A mystical participation exists. We do not form it. It is there all the time, everywhere.” (p.52). Maslow (1968) likewise argued that peak experiences were as a result of a human being’s “self-actualization”. As has been discussed above in this chapter, he felt that this was not only an improved, but a natural state of consciousness. He explained that a person “becomes in these episodes more truly himself,
more perfectly actualizing his potentialities, closer to the core of his Being, more fully human.” (1968, p.106).

This idea of being more “fully human” as has been highlighted above, resonates with Freire’s (1996) concept of literacy. It is also present in the concept of communitas (Turner, 1975; Turner, 2012) and Laski’s (1961) documenting of ecstatic experiences. Csikzentmihalyi (2002) similarly outlines how flow is an optimal experience that “lifts the course of life to a different level” (p.69). However, Csikzentmihalyi (2002) highlights how “optimal experience is a form of energy, and energy can be used to help or destroy.” (p.69). The activities that cause flow are not always wholesome and can be destructive. Csikzentmihalyi (2002) suggests flow consciousness can be experienced during criminal acts and during acts of war. For the purposes of this study, however, we are interested in how flow consciousness might be experienced by children making music in outdoor rural locations. Csikzentmihalyi (2002) argues that positive or sophisticated flow activities transport the person into a new reality and result in a “growth of self.” (p.74) They are not only enjoyable, but also result in an enhanced state of wellbeing (Csikzentmihalyi, 2002).

Csikzentmihalyi (1997) stresses that happiness is a distraction during flow consciousness. During flow, the immersion generates feelings of peace, a loss of self-consciousness that leads to “self-transcendence, to a feeling that the boundaries of our self have been pushed forward.” (2002, p.64). Happiness is only experienced after that activity has stopped and only if the activity leads “to personal as well as cultural growth.” (Csikzentmihalyi, 1997, p.124). Maslow (1968) similarly explains the after-effects of peak experiences as being “total discharge, catharsis, culmination...emptying or finishing.” (p.122). Yet during the peak experience “the individual is most here-now, most free of the past and of the future, in various senses most ‘all-there’ in the experience” (Maslow, 1968, p.120). Laski (1961) outlines how there is “an instant of calm at or immediately after the climax of an intensity ecstasy” (p.85). She highlights how one of the respondents to the questionnaire likens this to a “standstill feeling” (p.85). There are links here to be made with Turner’s (1970) use of the analogy of the emptiness at the centre of the wheel (as described above in this chapter) to describe the sense of stillness and peace felt during experiences of communitas. This arguably also has connections with theories surrounding mindfulness. Later in this chapter we shall explore how the concept of mindfulness relates to musical experience and also to making music when surrounded by nature.

What is important to note at this point, in our examination of literature relating to making music in outdoor rural locations, is that we have seen how there is a body of work that positions music as
being ideally suited to create optimal experiences and a change of consciousness. Significantly, these optimal states are viewed as people becoming fully human and perceiving an authentic reality. For example, Edith Turner (2012) explains communitas as providing “a vision of the wholeness of the total community whose units are total human beings.” (2012, p.183). She stresses how experiencing a sense of oneness, harmony and collective joy mark these moments. Those who experience communitas transcend the ego, feel the presence of spiritual power and gain a heightened perspective (Turner, 2012). Linking communitas with spiritual insight she emphasises that music is a particularly powerful conduit for spiritual experiences as it “is a fail-safe bearer of communitas.” (Turner, 2012, p.4). She explains that because music is unchained from the demands of communication and because it uses sound it “provides a clean path to spirituality, [allowing] the spirit language to enter it easily.” At times music is a channel for spirit and “at certain moments music is the spirit; it incorporates all one’s consciousness at these times, and spirit is right there.” (Turner, 2012, p.45). As we have discussed, Csikzentmihalyi (2002) Maslow (1968) and Turner (1975) all claim that music is a particularly potent activity in terms of its ability to activate optimal states. Laski (1961) also found that “music was the most frequently named art trigger” (p.190) of ecstatic experiences. She declared that “of all the more common triggers to ecstasy, music would be the most rewarding to study in any attempt to find a relation between the qualities of triggers and the effects produced.” (Laski, 1961, p.190). Turner (2012) suggests that “music does not so much change consciousness as it is simply there, and a different kind of consciousness applies to it.” There seems to be common agreement that music has a special ability to alter human consciousness. In addition, these theories seem to converge on the idea that this different consciousness reveals humans being fully complete. We can draw comparisons here with Freire’s (1996) concept of literacy that argues literacy allows for authentic human beings and the quest for human completion. These theories are of particular relevance to this study as we are attempting to construct a framework of music literacy. Could it be that the children’s music making in outdoor rural locations allows them to be more authentic and to feel more complete, and that this is the essence of music literacy? Before we return to analyse these ideas, we must first explore the relationship dance has to music and the impact dance has on music’s ability to affect consciousness. The children were making musical ceremonies, and movement or dance was very much an integral part of their experiences. Therefore, it is important we examine relevant ideas surrounding dance and music.
Music and Dance

Music has always had a close relationship with movement and dance. Levitin (2006) reminds us that “it is only in the last five hundred years that music has become a spectator activity...And it has only been in the last hundred years or so that the ties between musical sound and human movement have been minimized.” (p.251). Dalcroze also laments that the western classical tradition meant that music had forgotten “its origin, which is in the dance, and men lost the instinct...not only in the art but also in everyday life (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930/1985, p. 188). Ball (2010, p.11) argues that “music is not merely structured sound.” He highlights that “in the language of the Igbo people in Nigeria, music is synonymous with dance, and in Lesotho there is no distinction between dance and song” (p.11). Similarly the Sanskrit word “sangīta” (Bohlman, 2002) and the Thai “wai khruu” (Balkwill and Thompson, 1999) encompass both music and dance. Small (1996) highlights how in “many cultures if no one is dancing then no music is happening, so integral is dance to the musical act.” (p.9). Godoy (2013, p.230) asserts that “most listeners, regardless of their musical expertise or training, know more or less what kinds of movements ‘fit well’ to whatever music they are listening to or imagining”. He argues therefore that “sensations of body movement are integral to musical experience...that the perception and cognition of music is a fusion of auditory and motor sensations.” (Godoy, 2013, p.230). Vygotsky (2004) argued that young children do not see a clear division between the performing arts (drama, dance and music). He explains children’s artistic expressions as being ‘syncretic’. In other words, “involving creation in which individual types of art are still not separated or specialized” (Vygotsky, 2004, p.67). Vygotsky describes children’s early artistic endeavours as being acts of creativity rather than art and that in these expressions there is a “kinship between art and play.” (Vygotsky, 1971, p.257). For Vygotsky, a child’s artistic creation has its roots in play which “serves as the preparatory stage for his artistic creation” (Vygotsky, 2004, p.7). When analysing artistic expression in his work, The Psychology of Art, he maintains the importance of our bodily experience asserting that “art performs with our bodies and through our bodies” (Vygotsky, 1971, p.253). Dalcroze (1921) also makes the case for the value of experiencing music through the body. He designed a programme called “Eurhythmics” that used movement to teach children about rhythm, structure, and musical expression. He declared that “musical sensations of a rhythmic nature call for the muscular and nervous response of the whole organism” (Dalcroze, 1921, p. vi). His belief was that music needed to be experienced and for music to be truly experienced it needed to be felt through the body. “The aim of eurhythmics is to enable pupils at the end of their course, to say, not ‘I know,’ but ‘I have experienced’” (Dalcroze, 1921, p. 119). Zoltan Kodaly, familiar with the work of Dalcroze, stressed the importance of rhythmic movement.
in musical education (Landis & Carter, 1990). Carl Orff (1977) also advocates rhythmic movement to music, beginning with speech, continuing with clapping and tapping activities, and culminating in the playing of instruments. In addition, there has been a tradition of using movement with music in child education. It is supported in the work of Rousseau (1911), Reggio Emilia (Bartel, 2007), Montessori (2015), Steiner (Steiner and Bamford, 2001) Froebel (1907) and Pestalozzi (1951). What is important in all these approaches is that far from being an indulgent activity to experience some kind of sensual pleasure, dance or musical movement allow for insight, improvements to the human condition and even transcendence. Mathieu (2013) argues that through embodied expressions of music we “become music”. As Blacking (1977) says, “Human attitudes and specifically human ways of thinking about the world are the results of dance and song” (p.60). He explains that musicking (including dance) can move us into thinking. Rather than thought preceding musicking, musicking creates thought.

Just as the ultimate aim of dancing is to be able to move without thinking, to be danced, so the ultimate achievement in thinking is to be moved to think, to be thought... essentially it is a form of unconscious cerebration, a movement of the body. We are moved into thinking. Body and mind are one. (Blacking, 1977, pp.22-23).

Here we can draw parallels with Turner's (2012) assertion, as highlighted above, that a different kind of consciousness applies to musical activity. If the body and mind are to become one and we are to become the music, then this suggests that we must have control or agency over our music making. The idea of agency has its roots in sociological theory and as we have discussed above, DeNora (2017) argues it may have significance when applied to how one experiences music. Agency is of particular relevance to this study because the children were given control over their musicking. They were given the freedom to create and perform their musical ceremonies in the way that they wanted. They had ownership over their music, they were not guided by teachers, it was to come from them. Therefore, we shall now explore how concepts of agency and music-making potentially impact on the power of the music and the experience of the musickers.

2.26. Agency

There have been a number of voices praising the worth of the learner having autonomy or agency over their music making (Allsup, 2016; Blair, 2009; Finney, 2003; Green, 2005; Laurence, 2010; Wright, 2010). It is argued that progress cannot be achieved without giving the learner agency as
otherwise educators will merely reinforce existing relationships of power (Allsup, 2016; Blair, 2009; Laurence, 2010; Wright, 2010). Laurence, (2010) highlights Small’s (1998) emphasis on relationships in his theory of musicking and argues that the relationships being explored, affirmed and celebrated in music classrooms are “those deemed desirable by the state, an inherently hierarchical set of relationships... set out in a framework where the power to act which constitutes agency is robustly restricted” (p.249). The idea of agency is not straightforward, however, as it involves multi-layers of complexity. Emirbayer and Mische (1998, p.962) noted how the concept of agency has become “a source of increasing strain and confusion in social thought”. Campbell (2009) highlighted two different concepts of agency, naming them type 1 and type 2. “Type 1 refers to the ability of actors to act while type 2 refers to the character and effect of their actions; a difference that one could perhaps describe as that between the power of agency and agentic power.” (p.8). These two different perspectives are reflected in different dictionary definitions of agency. In the Collins Dictionary of Sociology, a sense of agency “is intended to convey the volitional, purposive nature of human activity” (Jary and Jary 1991, p.10). The Collins Dictionary of Sociology also defines agency as “the power of actors to operate independently of the determining constraints of social structure” (Jary and Jary 1991, p.10). The second definition highlights the issue concerning how society impacts on individual agency. Are individuals free to achieve agency if existing power structures remain in place? As Karsel and Westerlund (2010) explain:

The notion of agency is one deeply intrinsic to sociological theory and concerns the relation between the macro-level of societal structures and the micro-level of individual agents, and in particular what may be understood as the direction of causality between these two layers (p.225).

Tomlinson (2013) states that if children are given agency over their music making then they will feel freer to use their imagination and will the develop the confidence to express themselves through their music making. Laurence (2010) questions whether curricular restraints in England and Wales allow for pupil agency in music education as the content, manner and assessment of their musical learning is already predetermined. She states:

children are thus compelled to dance to a pipe wielded by people they will never meet, who do not know them, and, for many children, by people who arguably could scarcely imagine, let alone empathize with, the circumstances of their lives, their feelings and what might be meaningful to them. (Laurence, 2010, p.246).

She presents a case study where children were given agency over their musicking, being free to compose their own songs and perform them in their own way for an end of term concert. She argues that the children’s sense of agency, their ability to act, to take control, to have their voices heard (metaphorically and literally) “drove their growing sense of the cognitive and affective dimensions
of their musicking.” (Laurence, 2010, p.255). In his book “Remixing the Classroom” Allsup (2016) warns against classrooms where “children don’t follow their own thoughts so much as they follow ours.” (p.67). In contrast he argues that “we have to learn to give up control” (Allsup, 2016, p.92). Allsup (2016) also suggests “the best kind of teaching is a muddle of mutual interest” (p.89). He draws on Barthes’ (1987) definition of a seminar where “no knowledge is transmitted (but a knowledge can be created), no discourse is sustained (but a text is sought): teaching is disappointed.” (Barthes, 1987, p.337). The teaching that is disappointed in this line of thinking is the didactic model of teaching whereby the teacher deposits contents into passive student’s heads as in Freire’s (1997) banking concept of teaching. In contrast, Dewey (2013) describes the welcome disorder of a busy workshop where “there is the confusion, the bustle, the results from activity. But out of occupation...there is born a discipline of its own kind.” (2013, p.12). The importance of agency in children’s music making chimes with theories in education and literacy education that extol the significance of agency for the learner. In the early part of the twentieth century, Dewey called for less didactic teaching and more freedom for the learner calling on the teacher to not adopt the hierarchical position, but rather become the “leader of group activities.” (Dewey, 1938, p.66). Dewey here is clearly warning against a didactic method of teaching where the teacher makes all the decisions. Freire’s criticisms of didactic pedagogies have already been highlighted in our discussion of his “banking concept” in education. When outlining his view of emancipatory literacy he states that “producing and acting upon their own ideas - not consuming those of others - must constitute that process.” (Freire, 1996, p. 89). Pestalozzi (1819) expressed similar sentiments and stated that education should aim beyond achievements within the school and prepare students for life. Rousseau also highlighted the dangers of didactic teaching warning that “if ever you substitute authority for reason he will cease to reason, he will be a mere plaything of other people’s thoughts.” (Rousseau, 1762, p.126). Thoreau concurs and used a musical analogy in declaring: “If a man does not keep pace with his companions perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer; let him step to the music that he hears, however measured or far away.” (Thoreau, 1983, p.290). These conceptualisations of the role of agency in education are relevant for this study because the children were given agency over their musical ceremonies. They were able to compose and design their ceremonies in their own way.

2.27. Multiple literacies, Art literacy and Music literacy
How do the theories discussed above surrounding agency, altered mind-states, music and music education relate to an idea of music literacies for the purposes of this research? Are we to see music literacy as something singular, that can be measured, that is quantifiable? Is music literacy something that is prescriptive and can be mapped to a consistent description? Or are there a plurality of music literacies aligned with the constructivist literacy philosophy? To explore these ideas further it will be useful to locate them within the constructivist ‘multiliteracies’ (Cope and Kalantzis, 2009) and ‘new literacies’ (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011) paradigms and to compare these philosophies with some of the theories surrounding arts literacies and specifically music literacies.

The idea of music literacy is not new, but there is no general agreement about what music literacy is. The International Kodaly Society (2013) claim that:

“music literacy refers to the ability to read and write musical notation and to read notation at sight without the aid of an instrument. It also refers to a person’s knowledge of and appreciation for a wide range of musical examples and styles. (International Kodaly Society, 2013).”

This perspective would appear to have links with the view held by Kress (2003), as discussed above in this chapter, that sees literacy as being a transcription system. In this view of literacy there is a demand that people are literate in these recording systems. However, Davidson (2014) proposes that music literacy is more than just reading and writing music. He makes the case for developing a plurality of music literacies, “promoting creativity, open-mindedness, collaborative effectiveness, autonomy, and empowerment in realising musical goals.” (Davidson, 2014, p.172). Davidson’s idea of a plurality of music literacies prioritising creativity, autonomy and open-mindedness clearly aligns with the multiliteracies’ (Cope and Kalantzis, 2009) and new literacies’ (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011) paradigms. Lankshear and Knobel claim that new literacies are important “for enabling deep learning, fluent mastery of concepts, tools and skills, and creative and productive applications of knowledge and understanding.” (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, p.253).

Cope and Kalantzis similarly declare that “applying creatively” is one of the four knowledge processes of their ‘multiliteracies’ pedagogy. They describe this as making “an intervention in the world which is truly innovative and creative...making the world anew with fresh and creative forms of action and perception.” (Cope and Kalantzis, 2015, p.21). Lankshear and Knobel also argue that the ‘new literacies’ approach involves allowing the learners to make “meaningful links to practices about which they are passionate.” (2011, p.253). Similarly, Davidson’s call for “collaborative effectiveness” is in harmony with the multiple literacies’ paradigms of Cope and Kalantzis (2009) and Lankshear and Knobel (2011). Cope and Kalantzis state that one of the fundamental aims of multiple literacies pedagogy is to create “a person comfortable with themselves as well as being...
flexible enough to collaborate and negotiate with others” (Cope and Kalantzis, 2009, p.174). This in turn supports Lankshear and Knobel’s statement that contends new literacies “model the ideal of people working together for collective good and benefit.” (2011, p.86). Nevertheless, these philosophical perspectives do not necessarily determine the material of literacy. Is literacy to do with reading and writing or can its meaning systems extend beyond symbols that are read on a page? As discussed earlier in this chapter, the ‘multiple literacies’ theories advocate a broad view that encompasses literacies involving meaning systems that are not confined to symbols that can be read on a page (Barton, 2014; Barton and Hamilton, 2012). Lankshear and Knobel argue that “perhaps what is most important about literacy as a social phenomenon is that it enables people to do what cannot be done by orality alone.” (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, p.40). Gee also emphasises the social nature of literacy and asserts “what is at issue...is different ways of knowing and different ways of making sense of the world of human experience.” (Gee, 2007, p.91). Seeing things from this point of view allows us to see the potential for music literacies existing beyond the written notation of music. Barton (2014, p.3) calls on us to view “literacy as interpretive and expressive fluency through symbolic form”, and that this occurs in different art forms. McArdle and Wright (2014) argue that “the arts are loosely analogous to reading and writing, however the processes are based on different symbol systems” (p.23). Gardner (1973) states that “symbolisation requires appreciation of an object and the capacity to link the object known to a picture, label, or other kind of element that denotes it. (Gardner, 1973, p. 90). Langer (1953;1978), Gardner (1973), Swanwick and Tillman (1983) have recognised music’s ability to communicate symbolically. It is argued that the sounds in music generate meaning for people and this means that it is a mode of symbolic communication. Philpott (2015) uses the term ‘musical literacy’ and proposes a pathway to musical literacy for children that begins with the intuitive and progresses to the analytical. However, even though he proposes that the intuitive aspect of musical literacy “can be free standing” (p.205), he is still concerned with the “intuitive literacy of music as language” (p.204). Drawing on Kress’ (2010) theory of multimodality, Philpott (2006) describes music as a “mode” which involves “social and cultural appropriation of sound and silence” (p.192) in order to make meaning. Kwami defines musical literacy as “the ability to communicate with others through music making in a practical way.” (Kwami, 2001, p. 144). These views clearly chime with Lankshear and Knobel (2011) who describe new literacies as “a set of socially organized practices which make use of a symbol system” (p.236). However, Lankshear and Knobel also elaborate further and highlight the importance of literacy being something that has purpose as “literacy involves bringing technology knowledge and skills together within some context of point and purpose.” (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, p. 36). This idea can be linked with Elliott’s (2015) assertion that music must be
“brought into being” to be truly understood. Elliott argues that musicking is a sonic social event that unfolds in time, explaining that:

until musicers actualize or bring musical products into being through performing, improvising, conducting, listening, or other ways of bringing a piece of music alive, compositions and other musical products cannot convey musical meanings, or create opportunities for people to make musical meanings, or enjoy musical affective experiences. (Elliott and Silverman, 2015, p.286).

2.28. The Literacy is in the Experience

The enjoyment of “musical affective experiences” (Elliott and Silverman, 2015) can perhaps be seen as being at the nexus of what music literacy entails if we consider these experiences as being “the point and purpose” (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011, p.36) of music making. This can be linked to Dewey’s emphasis on the aesthetic experience generated by art. As has been discussed earlier in this chapter, Dewey argues that aesthetics can only exist as an experience. Dewey (1934) stated that: “expression, thinking or communication in the arts has its own aesthetic quality... that of experience.” (p.39). Dewey also argues however, that past experience is necessary for the production of art; the artist works with the medium of their art, the present moment and “what is embedded in the self from the past.” (Dewey, 1934, p.74) He makes the point that even in young children’s musical outpourings “the act is expressive only as there is in it a unison of something stored from past experience.” (Dewey, 134, p.74). Yet Dewey also claims that in artistic expression there “are values and meanings that can be expressed only by immediately visible and audible qualities.” He goes on to explain that art “is not only the outcome of imagination, but operates imaginatively rather than in the realm of physical existence.” (Dewey, 1934, p.285). As Goldblatt (2006, p.17) points out, “Dewey evokes a paradox: the appreciation and need for the “experiential” artifact, but art as catalyst to realms beyond the physical.” However, Dewey appears to resolve this paradox in his description of intuition. He defines intuition as “the meeting of the old and new in which the readjustment involved in every form of consciousness is effected suddenly by means of quick and unexpected harmony which in its bright abruptness is like a flash of revelation.” (Dewey, 1934, p.277). Dewey (2005) argues that artistic experience grants us harmony and the ability to transform our knowledge at that moment, so that we may experience the essence and wonder of the human condition. He claims that during an aesthetic experience we perceive “this quality of being a whole and of belonging to the larger, all-inclusive, whole which is the universe in which we live.” (Dewey, 2005, p.202). This moment, the aesthetic experience, involves expression and intuition,
and involves one’s state of mind. Dewey argues that the artistic experience “is expression as manifestation of a state of mind, and intuition as knowledge of a state of mind.” (Dewey, 1934, p.307). Dewey contends that art. Through the aesthetic experience can express aspects of the human condition that lie beyond the intellect. Barton (2014) similarly states that “the prominent role of aesthetics and its connection with expression as a vehicle for meaning making often heralds aspects of the human condition which cannot be easily captured or conveyed through the written word. (p. 288).”

Here we are reminded of Swanwick’s (1999) assertion that music enlarges our mind and broadens our capacity for knowing and Langer’s (1953) explanation of music as allowing us to feel and experience worlds and feelings we have not felt before. Furthermore, this resonates with Small’s (1996) concept of musicking, which can not only project optimistic visions about ourselves and the world, but can also bring into existence “our most inwardly desired relationships” (Small, 1987, p.70). Moreover, these inwardly desired relationships are the true nature of human beings (Small, 1996). For Langer (1953) also what was special about music was that not only is it a form of symbolic communication, it is also unique because its dynamic and temporal processes reflect and express the same dynamic and temporal natures of the lived experience. This relates to the phenomenological views of music previously discussed in this chapter that declare music as being able to express the dynamic processes and felt experience of the human condition. In turn this musical expression causes a transformative state of being, as Zbikowski (2011) explains:

The kind of consciousness summoned by music, then, is not an epiphenomenon, nor is it a poor substitute for the kind of consciousness summoned by language. It is instead a testament to what it means to be human in the fullest sense of the word.” (Zbikowski 2011, p.191)

We can draw parallels here with Freire’s (1997) view of literacy as being transformative and resulting in man’s ontological vocation to become more fully human. This will be re-visited later in this chapter. First it is useful to make connections with Vygotsky’s view of artistic expression in children and then explore how this can also be connected to Freire’s view of literacy and the views of music and art literacy expressed above. Vygotsky states that “the domain of child art and the response of children to art is completely different to that of adults.” (1971, p. 257). This is because Vygotsky views children’s early artistic endeavours as being acts of creativity rather than works of art and that in these artistic expressions there is a “kinship between art and play.” (Vygotsky, 1971, p.257). For Vygotsky, a child’s artistic creation has its roots in play which “serves as the preparatory stage for his artistic creation.” (Vygotsky, 1971, p.257). Therefore, expressions using artistic media for children represent “first-order” means to communicate through symbolisation (Vygotsky, 1971).
As McArdle and Wright explain (2015), the arts can be seen as children’s “first languages - their primary ways of seeing and knowing the self and the world.” (McArdle and Wright, 2014, p.22). Vygotsky concurs with Dewey (1934) in emphasising the importance of experience in artistic expression, both because of the value of the emotional engagement artistic expression brings (Vygotsky, 1971) and because it relies on past experiences to exist. Vygotsky demonstrates a belief that artistic expression relies less on intellect or analysis and instead fulfils the developing needs of the child. Crucially Vygotsky emphasises the role of the imagination during artistic expression. However, Vygotsky contended that even though a child can construct new realities it is “one that conforms to his own needs.” (Vygotsky, 2004, p.11). This is not to undermine children’s artistic expressions, but Vygotsky (1930) viewed them as being the product of an imagination that was inferior to an adult imagination because of its paucity of experience. McArdle and Wright (2014) however, urge us to consider that “when young children create art, they can be expressing astonishing conceptual understanding and imagination, well-beyond what they can communicate through language.” (p.22). They argue that we should not always use models of understanding that view children as “deficit or not yet, on a continuous path of progress developing as they grow.” (McArdle and Wright, 2014, p.22). Therefore, perhaps we can view children’s musicking as a sophisticated symbol system imbued with meaning for the child that becomes realised via the musical experience. They are enacting music literacies if their music making creates a meaningful experience for them, they are enacting “expressive fluency through symbolic form.” (Barton, 2015, p.289). The symbolic form they are using is music, but as we have seen music is arguably only meaningful if it creates, what Dewey (1934) calls an artistic or aesthetic experience. If the children’s musicking can provide experiences that are transformative (Freire, 1997) it becomes a technology to experience a new state of mind and understanding of the self (DeNora, 2000). It is transformational (DeNora, 1999) because it not only helps to regulate, manage and understand feelings, but also “provides a scaffolding for self-constitution” (p. 31). This is the nature of their music literacy. This concept of music literacy can be connected with what Allsup (2016) calls ‘self-actualization’ and is an ever-moving process towards an improved state of being Allsup says that “literacy in this sense, is an unfinished concept” (Allsup, 2016, p.127). Allsup argues that this unfinished concept can gain some resolution when it is made a public concept because that is where its potential for change is most potent. He argues that “self-actualization is best seen as a moral end of music education when it is experienced as a public phenomenon more than an inner achievement.” (Allsup, 2016, p.127). Allsup’s “public phenomenon” is not to be judged on mastery of scales or ticket sales, but places human need above aesthetic need (Allsup, 2016). It perhaps could be described as not the “inner” satisfaction of the ego, but rather the creation of communitas
It is both an inner and external transformation of reality, achieving equilibrium: a healing that is to be found in the inherently dynamic and liminal qualities of authentic musicking. As Tillman (2000, p.282) states, “it is from the cracks that the healing music comes and to which it goes. Music offers the possibility of transformed and strengthened living.” In this paradigm music can be viewed as a bridge to other modes of being and understanding, and it is in crossing this bridge that children express music literacy. In doing so they arguably strike at the heart of the nature of music and so the value of their experience is no less sophisticated in its depth and authenticity than an adult’s experience of music making. The transformative power of their musicking lies in its ability to change the child’s state and understanding of being. Musicking therefore can create liminal states that pave the way for optimal experiences (Maslow, 1970; Cszickzentmilahyi, 2002) and healing states of communitas (Turner, 1974). Cage (1978) argues that music’s power to heal or illuminate should be the motivation, the purpose for music, for all art. He states that music can help us when we “fumble around in the darkness because that's where our lives…take place… 'the dark night of the soul.'” He continues, “it is these situations that Art must act and then it wont be judged Art but will be useful to our lives.” (Cage, quoted in Ross 1978, p.10). It could be argued that this is the purpose of music, to act in these dark places and create meaningful healing experiences so that it is useful in our lives. This is the nature of musical activity and all artistic activity. As Dewey explains when we are engaged in artistic activity:

We are, as it were, introduced into a world beyond this world which is nevertheless the deeper reality of the world in which we live in our ordinary experiences. We are carried out beyond ourselves to finds ourselves. (2005, p.202).

Jones (2015) explains dance literacy as being about the wellbeing benefits that dance brings in the moment of the dance. She states that this is why people dance, to express themselves and create these feelings. Jones argues that if dancers lose contact with the “why” then “the passion for the dance is often tarnished.” (2015, p.115). She heeds against an imbalance towards analysis and an emphasis on technique that can lead dance activities away from intuition, spirit and joy. She warns of a “dullness of spirit...technical brilliance does not feed the soul.” (Jones, 2015, p.115). She draws on Foster’s (1975) assertion that expressive acts can become mechanical “and no longer stir the response that makes sharing possible.” (p.25) In contrast, Jones (2015) states that “highly literate performers...may become so caught up in the purpose of the dance that they achieve a state of transcendence; they have attained an answer to their why.” (Jones, 2015, p.115). Therefore, music literacies could arguably also not merely involve technical achievements; expressive fluency with sonic symbols. Instead, music literacies perhaps are enacted when musicking is transformative. If they are allowing us to achieve a sense of fullness or a completeness, then this can be seen to be a
type of transformation. They do this by allowing us insight and communitas (Turner, 1974) to enable us to envision a higher state of being (Small, 1998). They satisfy a longing within us, our ontological vocation, to become fully human. (Freire, 1997).

2.29. **Music Literacy as a Technology of the Self, as Play and as Catharsis**

These perspectives seem to align with DeNora’s (1999) view that music is a “technology of the self” as discussed above in this chapter. DeNora (2016) later develops her theory and contends that through musical practices people create “music asylums” (2016). She states that “Music, and more broadly organized sound, is a way of framing, furnishing or removal from the sphere of action and thus a way of creating asylum in or away from a social world.” (p.74). She explains how music is able to create conditions for wellbeing. This is because it is able to create “pathways toward or away from desirable and undesirable environmental matters” (De Nora, 2016, p.74). De Nora (2016) agrees with Small’s (1996) emphasis on the importance of relationships to music and uses the term musicking to describe musical activity because she states that “music consciousness is a medium for social relation, regulation and self-presentation.” (De Nora, 2016, p.98). Her argument is that musicking is able to alter perception and structure consciousness, therefore it can be harnessed to improve wellbeing. (DeNora, 2016). Differentiating between warm-consciousness and cool-consciousness, she defines warm-consciousness as involving non-verbal embodied ways of being and cool-consciousness as incorporating cognitive perception, contemplation and reflection. As has been explored above in this chapter, De Nora (1999; 2000; 2016) argues that musicking manifests as shared embodied experiences and also helps to construct identity and enhance understanding of the self. Musicking therefore has a special relationship with consciousness because it is able not only to affect both types of consciousness, but also to represent both types of consciousness. In short, music can reflect and re-calibrate consciousness (DeNora, 2016).

The idea that musical activity can provide wellbeing or recalibrate consciousness can be linked to its relationship with play. Huizinga (1950) defined humans not as Homo-sapiens (the man who knows), but as Homo-ludens (the man who plays). His argument was that knowing had been preceded by playing as playing was “older and more original than civilization” Huizinga (1950, p. 1). A typology of play was outlined by Hutt, et al., (1979/1989). They differentiated between three different types of play: epistemic, ludic and games with rules. Epistemic play referred to exploratory play with objects and materials. Ludic play referred to the child’s imaginative play,
including role play with others and solitary imaginative play. Games with rules referred to children’s use of structures involving rules and time periods in their games (Hutt, et al., 1979/1989). Musicking in general, and particularly the children’s musicking in outdoor rural locations for this study, could be said to involve all three of those categories of play. It could be argued that the children were involved in ludic play for most of the time during their music making as it involved imaginative and role play. However, it could also be argued that there was exploratory (epistemological) play and that the task or “game” they were involved in for their music making had rules because there were certain rules that may have been inevitably present, for example, due to the fact that it happened as part of school lesson time and because of the instruments that were available for them to use. Turner (1974), however, argues that the essence of liminality is that it is completely free from rules. He claims that “it is the analysis of culture into factors and their free or "ludic" recombination in any and every possible pattern, however weird, that is of the essence of liminality, liminality par excellence.” (p.61).

For Turner (1974), complete freedom in play is where the value of the liminal lies and warns against rules or limits that signify “the intrusion of normative social structure” (Turner, 1974, p.61). This is not to say that these liminal acts are unimportant or lack value. As Dewey (1997, p. 167) says, “a truly educative experience sees no difference between utility and fun, the process and outcome.” Huizing (2016) emphasises that play can “be profoundly serious” (p.21) and yet “frivolity and ecstasy are the twin poles between which play moves.” (Huizinga, 2016, p.21). Derrida (2013) argues that for true play to occur, one must abandon oneself wholeheartedly to the spirit of play. “Once play is no longer simply play in the world, it is also no longer the play of someone who plays.” (p.69). Boyce-Tillman (2009) similarly declares that “when we experience a power beyond our normal consciousness and hand over responsibility to it, human beings become free to play.” (p.194). She emphasises the co-existence of play and joy in what she calls the liminal space as when we are “freed of responsibility in the liminal space we are able to play and take risks without fear of consequence. This can engender real joy.” (Boyce-Tillman, 2009, p.194). As discussed previously in this chapter, abandoning oneself and becoming joyfully immersed in an activity, is part of Maslow’s concept of (1970) peak experience and Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of flow (2002). Gadamer (1986) similarly argues that the freedom and joy of play is integral to art. He states that its value is not in producing some substitute dream world. For Gadamer the aim is not to make one’s dreams come true, but to appreciate that truth itself is implicitly experienced in our playing, our dreaming. The aim is not for dreams to be fulfilled, “their fulfilment occurs in themselves. (Gadamer, 1977, p.59). Huizinga claims that because of its dynamic quality and
because it does not rely on words, “music never leaves the play sphere.” (Huizinga, 2016, p.158). Huizinga (2016) proposes that play is seen in “primitive” tribal rituals and here there are echoes with the liminality described by van Gennep (1960) and Turner (1969). He discusses what happens when people of “primitive” religions adopt the scared identity of an animal in a ritual: “The identity, the essential oneness of the two goes far deeper than the correspondence between a substance and its symbolic image. It is a mystic unity. The one has become the other.” (Huizinga, 2016, p.25).

This new becoming, he likens to what happens when we play. Huizinga (2016) argues that “the distinction between belief and make-believe breaks down” and that the “concept of play merges quite naturally with that of holiness.” (p.25). Here we see Huizinga linking play with religious, spiritual or metaphysical experiences. Huizinga later claims that music making bears close resemblance to play because it “transports audience and performers alike out of ‘ordinary’ life into a sphere of gladness and serenity...it enchants and enraptures them.” (Huizinga, 2016, p.42).

Bowman (2002) claims that children can transform their ordinary ways of knowing through music-making activities and that this can occur during playful states. He argues that children are able to use embodied means to express and transform ideas through improvisation and composition, and that these activities owe their allegiance to the world of play. The idea that play and music may cause metaphysical experiences, that they enchant and enrapture and transport people out of ordinary existence, can clearly be linked to the ideas of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), peak experiences (Maslow, 1968) and liminality (Turner, 1969) as discussed previously in this chapter. Huizinga claims that: “In the enjoyment of music, whether it is meant to express religious ideas or not, the perception of the beautiful and the sensation of holiness merge, and the distinction between play and seriousness is whelmed in that fusion.” (Huizinga, 2016, p.159). As discussed earlier in this chapter, Freire (1998) also stresses the importance of how joy is not the enemy of rigour in his philosophy of literacy. Freire (1998) connects joy to hope and claims that both are natural parts of the human condition unless the human condition has been distorted. We have also analysed how music literacy can arguably involve music’s ability to transform one’s state of mind and reveal insights into the human condition. These ideas seem to have clear links to DeNora’s (1999) theory of music being a ‘technology of the self’ and theories suggesting that play involves us entering a changed state of mind or different consciousness (Bowman, 2002; Huizinga, 2016). This can also be linked to Vygotsky’s theory that the play of art leads to an improved change, something he termed ‘transubstantiation’. (Vygotsky, 1971). Vygotsky (1971) claimed that for the child there is a “psychological kinship between art and play” (p. 257) but art has the potential to inspire people to
achieve a better state of being. Like Freire’s critical literacy (1997), Turner’s liminality (1974) and Dewey’s theory of experiential education, Vygotsky (1971) called for art to be emancipatory. Yet this could only happen if the artistic expression was authentic. Vygotsky argued this authenticity is achieved if there is a genuine engagement with the artistic practice for the purposes of catharsis. This would then lead to enhanced living (Vygotsky, 1971). He argued that artistic experience as a dynamic process and required creativity. It is “not enough to experience sincerely the feeling, or feelings...one must also creatively overcome one’s own feelings and find one’s own catharsis; only then will the effect of art be complete. (Vygotsky, 1971, p.248). Finding authenticity through treating oneself as the object of improvement, yet for the purpose of also improving society, chimes with the optimal experience theories previously discussed in this chapter (Blacking, Boyce-Tillman, 2000; Csickzentmilahyi, 1990; Dewey, 1938; Maslow, 1970; Turner, 1969). Critics, for Vygotsky (1971) this authenticity is seen as leading to a catharsis, a harmony or healing. In addition, it is artistic expression that best allows man to be healed. He claimed: “Art is the supreme center of biological and social individual processes in society, that it is a method for finding equilibrium between man and his world...without new art there can be no new man.” (Vygotsky, 1971, p.259).

Vygotsky described artistic expression as the “social technique of emotion, a tool of society” (1978, p.249). He declared that art releases passions that cannot find expression in normal everyday life and that its cathartic nature is the biological basis of art. (Vygostky, 1978, p. 247). However, he also stated that art “tries to show us more life phenomena than we actually experience.” (Vygotsky, 1978, p.249). For Vygotsky, the purpose of art was to educate humanity, “a long-range program for changing our behaviour and our organism.” (Vygotsky, 1978, p.253). Not only does music allow for catharsis that “clears our psyche”, but it also has “coercive power” (Vygotsky, 1978, p.252). Vygotsky (1930) states that through art man can “imagine what he has not seen, can conceptualize...what he himself has never directly experienced.” (p.17). Moreover, the potential catharsis created by our experience of art is a “powerful means for important and appropriate discharges of nervous energy.” (Vygotsky, 1971, p.214). Vygotsky (1930) declares that “this expansion and deepening of feelings, their creative restructuring constitutes the psychological basis for the art of music.” (Vygotsky, 1930, p.20). We can draw clear parallels here with DeNora’s (1999) view of music, as discussed above in this chapter, that positions music as a technology of the self, able to recalibrate ourselves and reveal an expanded knowing. It also connects with Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990) explanation of how music can induce flow experiences and why this is beneficial. He claims that music “helps organise the mind...and when seriously attended to, it can
induce flow experiences. (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p.109). Music is able to release feelings, but also augment our understanding of them and allow our feelings and musicking to help us to create and achieve new perspectives (Vygotsky, 1971; Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Small, 1998). We have seen how it is argued that of all the arts music is especially well placed to achieve these improved states. This is because music expresses a person’s embodied nature and perhaps reflects back at us the dynamic nature of the human condition (Langer, 1978; Zbikowski, 2011). It is also because of the transcendental feelings and enhanced perceptions that music can reveal (Huizinga, 2016; Turner, 2012). As Langer (1978) said, “music can present emotions and moods we have not felt and passions we did not know before.” (p.222). Vygotsky (1971), similarly, states that music “calls to life tremendous energies which were previously inhibited and restrained.” (p.252).

In clearing our psyche, calling to life tremendous energies and showing a higher state (Vygotsky, 1978), musicking contains liminal qualities that lead to a sense of communitas (Turner, 1974; 1975). These views resonate with Tillman’s (2000) call for liminal music making that may provide insight, inspiration, serenity and healing. It is this liminal quality of musicking that is also seemingly brought to bear in Dewey’s (1934) description of an artistic experience. As has been previously discussed in this chapter, Dewey references this changing in our experience of reality. He calls it a “transaction, a quickening of what is now.” (Dewey,1934, p.17). This also resonates with Vygotsky’s description of artistic experience that “forces us to strive beyond our life toward all that lies beyond it.” (Vygotsky, 1971, p.253). Csikszentmihalyi (1992) also claims that flow experiences in music lead to an improved state as we become “part of a system of action greater than what the individual self had been before.” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1992, p.55). This idea of liminality and flow resulting in an improved state of being also resonates with Freire’s (1996) literacy philosophy as discussed earlier in this chapter. Freire claims that “reality is really a process, undergoing constant transformation...men and women are searchers and their ontological vocation is humanization.” (Freire, 1996, p.56). Therefore, we can view musicking as a technology of the self (DeNora, 2000) that not only heightens or improves our experience by providing cathartic cleansing, but also perhaps reveals the very nature of humanisation. During musicking we leave the ego behind and experience a sense of communitas that allows us to feel a oneness with life and the universe. We are “carried out beyond ourselves to find ourselves” (Dewey, 2005, p.202). As Tolstoya and Tolstoy (2014) argue:
Music makes me oblivious of myself; it makes me forget my true position; it transfers me into another position, not mine, not my own: it seems to me, under the effect of music, that I feel what I don’t feel, that I understand what I don’t actually understand, can’t understand (p. 54).

Arguably, this is where musical literacy resides, in its ability to allow us to feel what we don’t feel and understand what we don’t actually understand. If it enables us to enter liminal spaces (Boyce-Tillman, 2009) that allow us to experience liminality (Turner, 1974), and give us transformative power (DeNora, 2000) through peak experiences and flow (Maslow, 1968; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), then this transformative power is where we find musical literacy.

I have analysed above how music cannot be easily thought of as a language because music cannot translate simplistically to specific words or concepts (Gardner, 1973; Langer, 1953, 1978; Swanwick and Tillman, 1983). Unlike verbal language, music is not translatable, it does not symbolise objects in the same way as the discursive symbolism of words (Langer, 1953). In short, music is not a language (Langer, 1953; Swanwick, 1999). The literacy of music therefore cannot be about mastering some technical language of music. Nevertheless, music can arguably express things and have meaning for people. As has been discussed, Langer described music as “the tonal analogue of emotive life” (Langer, 1953, p.27). DeNora’s “technology of the self” (2000), Vygorsky’s “catharsis (1971) and Dewey’s “esthetic experience” all similarly recognise that music can not only express meaning, it can also “transform experience for ‘us’ here-and-now.” (Westerlund, 2003, p.52). As Westerlund (2003) argues above, music can therefore be both aesthetic and praxial, it fuses our emotional and intellectual lives (Dewey, 1934) and gives us augmented, existential understanding. Therefore, just as Jones (2015), as is highlighted above, contends that dance literacy involves realising the reason to dance, music literacy arguably needs to be about the reason to music. I have analysed theories above that suggest we make music because it can positively change our mind states and simultaneously reveal to us the nature of and reasons for human existence (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; DeNora, 2000; Small, 1999; Turner, 1974) Small (1999) declares that music making is above all about relationships and presents us with enhanced potentials, insights and actualities about our relationships with others, ourselves and the world, at least for the duration of our musicking. Music literacy therefore can be seen to be our experience of communitas (Turner, 1974), accessed via musicking. Music literacy, like Jones’ (2015) dance literacy, is about transcendence and, like Freire’s literacy (Freire, 1996), is also about an experience of transformation, “the pursuit of a fuller humanity” (Freire, 1996, p.29). It is about finding our higher, self-actualised selves (Maslow, 1968, Woodford, 2005, Allsup, 2016), our “ontological vocation” to
be more “fully human” (Freire, 1996, Elliott, 2016). Perhaps therefore music literacy reflects Freire’s assertion about literacy and is nothing less than the quest for human completion (Freire, 1996).

2.30. Outdoor Learning

We can therefore understand the idea of there being a music literacy of transformation that is enacted when people do music. This music literacy, as discussed above, involves links to theories about music, music education and literacy. This study involved developing a framework of music literacy based on children’s music-making in outdoor rural locations. Therefore, we shall now explore theories about outdoor learning to see how they link to the theories discussed above. One of the significant elements of this music literacy reported by the children was that it was an outdoor learning experience. As is discussed in the results chapter, the children felt that the environment was integral to their musical experience. In recent years there has been increasing interest internationally in the potential benefits of the outdoor environment on child development (Gray and Martin, 2015; Norðdahl & Einarsdóttir, 2015; Vanderbeck, 2008). This trend has been mirrored in the United Kingdom (Maynard and Waters, 2007; Rickinson et al., 2004; Waite 2011a; Scrutton, 2015; Dolan, 2016) where the curricula in Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland for young children include a statutory requirement for outdoor learning. Waite (2011a) and Sefton-Green (2006), however, warn that the potential value of outdoor learning is misunderstood. This is because the same pedagogical conventions of the classroom are merely being replicated outside. Waite (2011a, p.5) claims “the value of working outside the classroom is in providing pupils with experiences that are different from those inside it”. The aim is not to transfer the classroom outside, “we want them to learn to behave in ways that are different to classroom behaviour. (Waite, 2011a, p.14). Nevertheless, much of the research appears to show the value of agency for the learner and creative freedom provided by outdoor learning (Gustafson & van der Burgt, 2015; Ouvry, 2003; Maynard and Waters, 2011; Sefton-Green, 2006). Research also highlights the apparent cognitive benefits of the outdoor environment (Ampuero et. al, 2015; Dillon et al., 2005; Zamani, 2017) and the beneficial results to one’s wellbeing when in contact with nature (Wells & Evans, 2003; Berto, 2005; O’Brien, 2009; Pretty, Angus, Bain et. al. 2009; Sandell & Öhman, 2010; Marselle, Irvine, & Warber, 2013; White, Alcock, Wheeler, & Depledge, 2013; Bratman, Hamilton, Daily, & Gross, 2015; Mayer et. al. 2015; Sharma-Brymer & Bland, 2016). Despite this research it has been argued
that children are not being given enough opportunities to learn outdoors (Waite, 2011a). As Humberstone and Stan (2011) highlight, “the outdoors is purported to be significant and beneficial yet [is] an under-utilised context for learning for primary children in the UK.” (p.530). Waite and Pratt (2011) state that pressures of academic demands are limiting children’s access to outdoor experiences in and out of school. Shaw et. al. (2013) report that there was a significant decline in children’s independent mobility in the UK since 1971. In 1971, eighty-six per cent of primary school children were allowed to travel to and from school on their own, compared with only twenty-five per cent in 2011. Research from surveys also show that parents are not allowing their children to play outside (Gill, 2012; Lindon, 2011) as much as previously. Further evidence from a report for the National Trust (Moss, 2012) found that less than one in ten children regularly played in wild spaces.

We shall explore these issues further below when we examine concerns surrounding children’s connectivity to nature. First of all, it is important to analyse how learning outdoors can provide pedagogical approaches that are different from those used in traditional schooling. This thesis explores children’s experiences of making musicking outdoors. It is important that we understand the pedagogical theories associated with learning outdoors if we are to better understand what, in detail, the data tell us in terms of pedagogy.

2.3. Alternative and Improved Pedagogies

Heath (2015) argues that “the idea of the outdoors has always been very much an idea…it is a way of conceptualising and enframing human experience.” (Heath, 2015, p.77). He goes on to explain that “the idea that deeper meaning and a deeper sense of being could be found in nature captured the human imagination as a reaction to the enlightenment and the dehumanising elements of the industrial revolution.” (Heath, 2015, p.77). The view that nature can provide enrichment and deeper meaning is at the heart of the Forest School movement which has become increasingly popular in the UK (Knight, 2009; Maynard, 2007; Waller et. al). Maynard (2007) argues that its focus on play means that it offers a pedagogical alternative to the highly structured and sometimes prescriptive curricula offered in schooling. However, Leather (2016) argues that Forest School has become commodified and marketised, “more standardised, controllable, and efficiently delivered” (p.6). This marketisation of Forest Schools’ pedagogy has meant moving away from its focus on and understanding of “play”. Similarly, Humberstone and Stan (2012) state that neoliberal ideologies of consumption and governance divert informal educational experiences “away from pupil-centred
learning towards production and outcomes, rather than these being in balance” (p. 184). In addition, they argue that there is an emphasis on “controlling the pupils rather than providing for their authentic engagement with nature.” (Humberstone and Stan, 2012, p.191). Moss (2012) also warns against the commodification of nature experiences arguing that “by turning what should be a spontaneous experience into an organised one, there is a real danger that people assume they need special skills and equipment to take part.” (p.17).

Warden (2015) presents authentic ‘nature pedagogy’ as understanding our sense of belonging and our sense of working with nature. She argues that there needs to be “a pedagogical shift when you move outside, it is learning with nature not just teaching about it.” (Warden, 2015, p. 4). Waite (2011b) similarly suggests that outdoor learning pedagogy offers an alternative to traditional indoor pedagogies. She highlights personal values associated with outdoor learning. These are: “freedom and fun; ownership and autonomy; authenticity; love of rich sensory environment and physicality for pedagogical practice.” (Waite, 2011b, p.65). Others also recognise the potential for freedom and alternative pedagogies afforded by outdoor learning. Edgington (2002), Nicol (2014) and Doddington (2014) highlight how the increased space of the outdoors can impact on learning. Doddington argues for “learning in the open” because “being outside offers the opportunity to move through space and to move in qualitatively different ways.” (2014, p.51). Drawing on Shusterman’s (2006) theory of somaesthetics, Doddington (2014) highlights the need to be more bodily attentive and aesthetically aware in order to create lasting educational experiences. Doddington (2014) states that stepping outside has an immediate effect on children in particular because they are closely attuned to environmental changes and bodily experiences. It is argued that children are more mindful and aware of the moment, and “disposed to move through space” (p.51). Therefore, the outdoors is open to richer experiences because of its increased space and the augmented aesthetic possibilities it presents. (Doddington, 2014). Others have emphasised the sense of freedom engendered by being outdoors (Broderick and Pearce 2001; Rea 2008; Waite and Davis, 2007; Waite, 2011b). Doddington (2014), Nicol (2014), Waite (2011b) and Quay (2013) argue that outdoor learning environments should allow for freer pedagogical practices and approaches that deliberately unsettle traditional pedagogical paradigms. Drawing on different philosophies ranging from Dewey (1938) to Merleau-Ponty (1962) their theorising converges in proposing that not only can outdoor learning enhance the learning experience, it can also lead to an improved state of being. Doddington (2014) argues that “for this engagement to qualify more surely as education, the experience needs in part to change us and, significantly, to provoke a desire to return to the open, to re-engage, relish openness to feelings and what is around us; to savour and extend that form of
engagement” (p.52). Here we can draw parallels with Elliott’s (1995; 2015) praxial music education philosophy, Freire’s (1996) literacy philosophy and the belief that music education can enable people to become better human beings (Woodford, 2005; Allsup, 2012). As discussed earlier in this chapter all these theories resonate with the same call for freedom, autonomy and authentic learning. In addition, both Waite (2011) and Heath (2015) highlight the significance of the sensory environment and a heightened awareness of one’s surroundings in outdoor learning. It is claimed that outdoor environments allow nature to be experienced more effectively as they are free from excessive human population (Edgington, 2002; Heath, 2015; Palmer, 2015; Waite, 2011a). Waite (2011a) argues that in outdoor environments children are concerned with the minutiae of the micro-image. For example, she suggests they are naturally curious about the source of the sounds they hear and that excessive amounts of sound or noise pollution can block this curiosity. Waite argues that they “need to see, and have a sense of sound in relation to themselves. As they listen and as they see, they are naturally taken by their curiosity to discover more about that which has taken their attention.” (Waite, 2011a, p.120).

The potential threats posed by noise pollution are voiced by Hatch and Fristrup (2009) who claim noise presents at least 4 threats: “diversion of attention and disruption of behavior, habituation or ‘learned deafness’, masking of important signals, and spurious physiological stimulation.” (p.224). These fears are not new, as the inventor of the word ‘soundscape’, Schafer (1977) warned over forty years ago that “noise pollution is now a world problem.” (p.3). He argued that “many experts have predicted universal deafness as the ultimate consequence unless the problem can be brought quickly under control.” (Schafer, 1994, p.3). Stansfeld and Matheson (2015) seem to exacerbate these fears. In their summary of recent research on the effect of noise pollution on children and adults they conclude that noise pollution has a detrimental effect on cognitive performance and is particularly harmful to children. As Schafer (1975) succinctly points out, “there are no ear-lids.” (p.13). Of course, deciding what counts as noise is not a straightforward process. Thompson (2012, p. 13) urges us to “consider noise as affect” as noise can be considered as an “artistic resource”. According to this line of thinking, noise “is to be thought of as a verb rather than a noun; instead of referring to a human judgement of sound, noise is recognised as a process of interruption that induces a change.” (Thompson, 2012, p. 13). This arguably gives all sounds a neutral quality and sounds are only considered noise if they interrupt activity. Despite this view of sounds being neutral, there is research suggesting that natural sounds benefit people’s mental states (Alvarsson, 2010; Annerstedt et.al. 2013; Ratcliffe et. al., 2013), Ratcliffe, Gatersleben & Snowden (2013) researched the restorative benefits of birdsong and found that specific natural sounds may offer
perceived restorative benefits. (Ratcliffe, Gatersleben & Snowden, 2013, p.227). This research seems particularly pertinent when we consider Louv’s (2005) theory that children are increasingly suffering from the undesirable side-effects of modern lifestyles. In particular, he argues that children spend too much time indoors and that this causes “nature deficit disorder”. This view is supported by other studies that appear to show children are spending less time engaging with nature in natural environments (Barton et. al., 2015; Clements 2004; Copeland et al. 2012; Moss, 2012; Nieuwenhuijsen et. al. 2017; Palmer, 2015; Rickinson et al. 2004; UNICEF, 2012). Research undertaken by Kings College, London, (2011) found that perhaps as many as 3 million children never go to green-spaces. Only 10% make nature visits with their school and 40% spend less time in nature than they used to. In a report for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Bragg (2013) concluded that four out of five children in the UK were not adequately “connected to nature”. Waite et. al. (2016) in a report for Natural England and Natural Resources Wales produced a meta-analysis of research on connection to nature. A connection to nature is defined as “an individual's subjective sense of their relationship with the natural world”. (Waite et. al. 2016, p. 2). Waite et. al. (2016) warn that children and young people in particular are becoming increasingly disconnected from nature. They (Waite, et. al. 2016) conclude that we need to “better understand the impacts of greenspaces around the school.” (p.5).

In an inquiry on “playscapes” (playgrounds specifically designed to connect children with natural environments) Wight et al. (2016, p.518) found that “natural environments promote explorations and inquiry, fostering environmentally responsible behaviours.” This inquiry supports earlier studies that found that engaging children with the natural environment can help cultivate an affinity with nature (Ballantyne and Packer 1996, 2005; Ernst, 2014; Kaplan 2000; Richardson et. al. 2015; Wells and Lekies, 2006). Rosenow (2008) argues that interactions in the outdoors can help children and adults to rediscover their sense of wonder. However, there is some research that shows outdoor learning and the novelties that go with it may hinder learning. Research carried out in Chicago (Simmons, 1994) found that children were worried about possible inconveniences or even dangers that might be prevalent when being amongst nature. Other studies have highlighted similar fears from children (Bixler et al., 1994; Wals, 1994). In Scandinavian countries the concept of outdoor learning in early childhood is seemingly embedded in the nations’ cultures and yet it too has seen a renaissance in recent years. (Bentsen, Mygind and Randrup, 2008). In Denmark for example the concept of ‘udeskole’ (outdoor school) has been growing in popularity over the last two decades. It is believed that udeskole “can add value to normal classroom teaching especially with regards to health, social and well-being perspectives” (Bentsen, Mygind and Randrup, 2008, p.29). Jordet
(2008, p.1) argues that udeskole allows pupils to learn in authentic contexts, to “learn about nature in nature, about society in the society and about the local environment in the local environment.” (p.1). The Norwegian philosophy of friluftsliv seems to encapsulate a commitment to the importance of nature to one’s well-being. Gelter (2000) translates friluftsliv as: “free air life” and explains that it describes a “philosophical lifestyle based on experiences of the freedom in nature and the spiritual connectedness with the landscape.” (p.78). Dahl (2007) echoes this description and states that “friluftsliv, first and foremost, is about feeling the joy of being out in nature, alone or with others, experiencing pleasure and harmony with the surroundings being in nature and doing something that is meaningful.” (p.23). Gelter (2007) emphasises that friluftsliv involves dwelling in nature, free from any aims or learning objectives. He emphasises that genuine friluftsliv is about “slow experiences” in stark contrast to our post-modern society that demands constant accumulation of quick experiences. He likens the experience of time during friluftsliv to the Greek concept of kairos (vertical time) being immersed in the experience, where clock time seemingly stands still, as opposed to kronos (horizontal time), our usual experience of linear, chronological time. Gelter (2007). This is supported by Mygind (2015) who states that “a key element of friluftsliv is time-time to experience and time to adapt all the sensory impressions gradually” (p.34). There are calls for friluftsliv to inspire a truly experiential pedagogy (Gelter, 2007; Loynes, 2007; Vikander, 2007; Mygind, 2015; Robertson, Lawrence and Heath, 2015) whereby authentic outdoor experiential moments are facilitated and children can feel immersed in nature. Gelter (2007) likens this outlook to the “back-to-nature movement of the 18th century” (p.38) and emphasizes that it involves human “interconnectedness with nature.” The key point is that it facilitates or allows humans to feel their “interconnectedness” to nature. (Gelter, 2007, p.38). Gelter (2007) argues that “genuine friluftsliv” is therefore not to be likened to a medicinal prescription to improve our wellbeing. It is part of who we are. Friluftsliv is an alternative philosophy to modern life but it also has intrinsic value. He argues it is a way of life “where the interconnectedness and immersion in the natural setting is at the centre of a philosophical experience of nature.” (Gelter, 2007, p.46).

2.32. Biophilia

Friluftsliv has clear links to the theory of biophilia. Fromm (1964) first used the word biophilia to describe a human being’s natural orientation which he called “a love of life” (Fromm, 1964, p.22). Wilson (1984) later developed the biophilia hypothesis as being “the innate tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes.” (Kellert and Wilson, 1995, p.1). Barbiero and Macanarto (2016) in their paper ‘Biophilia as Emotion’ give a critical analysis of biophilia as an emotion that can be nurtured.
into a positive developmental resource for children. Barbiero (2014) argues that biophilia needs cultivating and can only be expressed if the surrounding conditions are permitting. It is explained that biophilia as an emotion is expressed as a reaction to the child’s initial “other than self” perception of nature. Cognitive processes must allow the child to develop “naturalistic intelligence” (Gardner, 1999) in order for the child to fully appreciate being in nature as a “safe place” and “feel at home”. It is therefore “a kind of treasure held within each one of us, inscribed somewhere within our genetic heritage…destined to be expressed.” (Barbiero and Macanarto, 2016, p.49). As highlighted in the introduction chapter, Louv (2008; 2012) argues that feeling disconnected from nature is unnatural for children. This disconnection is described as “nature deficit disorder” (Louv, 2008). He argues that sensitivity to our innate connection with nature and “our humanity within it are essential for our physical and spiritual survival.” (Louv, 2012, p.18). Louv (2012) states that our innate connection with nature is more than an intelligence that can be nurtured. To illustrate the difference, he cites discussions he has had with Jon Young, a long-time wilderness tracking explorer from California. Young describes the nature connection as more nutritive, a “spiritual need” and “a profoundly deep part of who we are as human beings and our potential”. (Louv, 2012, pp. 31-32). It is therefore an innate awareness rather than just an intelligence that needs cultivating.

Wilson (2016) also argues that a child’s connection to nature is spiritual as it is more than just cognitive and biological. She explains that it includes a sense of wonder, awe, connection, joy, insight, a deep sense of reverence and love. Aligning spirituality with “spirit” rather than “belief”, she states that spirit is the “vital principle or animating force within living things” (Wilson, 2016, p.65). When children feel a connection with nature they are put in touch with this force and experience “spirituality”. White and Stoecklin (1998) similarly claim that children’s relationship with the natural world differs from the adult view that sees only utilitarian value in nature. A child’s relationship is one of beauty, awe, wonder and an affinity with nature. They conclude that children have a unique experiential and “direct way of knowing” in the natural environment. This conclusion is supported by others such as Cobb (1959), Waller (2007) and Sobel (2008) who point to a child’s natural empathetic, emotional bond with nature. Sobel (2008) emphasises children’s holistic need for nature and claims that children need unscheduled outdoor time when unexpected aspects of life can unfold. He also warns that children’s computer use is diminishing their kinaesthetic experiences and the narrowing of physical experiences has a negative impact on a child’s neurological development. It is argued that physical experiences in nature are also important because children have bodily ways of knowing that are enacted by being immersed in nature. (Sobel, 2008). Here we can draw parallels with phenomenological theories and the ancient ways of knowing passed down
in indigenous cultures. Philosophies concerned with our relationship with nature and the environment are of course particularly relevant as this thesis is examining children’s experiences of making music in outdoor rural locations. We shall therefore first explore the relationship phenomenology has with outdoor learning before analysing relevant philosophies from indigenous cultures and making links between them.

2.33. Phenomenology and Outdoor Learning

There is a growing body of literature that links phenomenology with the pedagogies of outdoor learning (Brown and Heaton, 2015; Humberstone, 2015; Robertson, Lawrence and Heath, 2015; Sobel, 2008; Waller et. al. 2017). Friesen, Henriksson and Saevi (2012) collate a range of research that synthesises outdoor learning pedagogies with hermeneutic phenomenology. Henriksson and Frieson argue that there is a natural relationship between hermeneutics and phenomenology because of the inevitable loop created by being reflexive about experiential learning. They argue “it is impossible to study experience without simultaneously inquiring into this meaning and it is impossible to study meaning without experiential grounding.” (Henriksson and Frieson, 2012, p.3). These links are perhaps not surprising as Foran and Olson (2012) remind us of “the simple connection that we as humans have to our world which is primordial and existed before social conventions imposed their ways of being on our lives.” (p.193). Gibson (1986) posits that as children we understand this, but as we become adults we forget. When we become civilised adults we are so used “to looking at a page or a picture, or through a window, that we often lose the feeling of being surrounded by the environment” (p.203). In contrast, “children pay attention to their surroundings when allowed to do so.” (Gibson, 1986, p.203). Martinkova & Parry (2011) describe remembering the phenomenological perspective as being when we look at the environment with awe, wonder and enquiry rather than being an environment we usually look through. Morse (2015) outlines this phenomenological perspective of the environmental experience as being “not of the surrounding environment but to emanate from within the surrounding environment” (p.114). Van Manen similarly explains how phenomenology is the study of the world “as we immediately experience it pre-reflectively rather than as we conceptualize, categorize, or reflect on it.” (van Manen, 1997, p.9). As O’Laughlin (2006) states, “the intercourse of a living being with its environment includes cognition, but is by no means exhausted by it.” (p.84).
Here we see highlighted the objection to cognition being the only source of wisdom or understanding. As has been discussed earlier in this chapter, phenomenology claims that our state of being can only be understood fully when we acknowledge it is experienced through the body (Friedman, 2014; Gendlin, 1997; Merleau Ponty, 1962). Schon (1983) similarly criticises experiential learning pedagogies that have emphasised reflection of experiences rather than reflection in experiences (Schon, 1983). Brown and Heaton (2015) also criticise the tendency to separate the experience from reflection. They warn “if we are not careful experiential learning may perpetuate the Cartesian mind (cognitive reflection) - body (experience) dualism that it sought to overcome.” (p.52). The emphasis on experiencing and finding meaning in the moment has links to the changes of consciousness and transcendental states that have already been discussed previously in this chapter (peak experiences, Maslow, 1968; liminality, Turner, 1969; flow, Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Csikszentmihalyi’s (2002) analysis highlights how flow experiences are often embodied, experienced due to a heightened sensual perception. He states that this is often realised through “artistic performance, during which the everyday experience of duality between mind and body is transformed into harmonious one-pointedness of mind.” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p.106).

2.34. Senses in the Outdoors

Humberstone (2015) reminds us that our engagement with the outdoors is felt through our senses and this creates an emotional experience. He argues “there is a powerful emotional experience, processed through our senses that engage us with our surroundings.” (Humberstone, 2015, p.63). He goes on to explain that our senses and emotions connect and “co-construct our perceptions of well-being.” We experience them through the body, a “semi-permeable living organism which is at the nexus of understanding...and acting on these experiences.” (Humberstone, 2015, p.65). Gibson (1966) argues that our senses have an impact on how we perceive things; they help us to construct our own reality. Mace (1977) provides an approving analysis of Gibson’s (1966) call to consider how our senses affect our perception of the environment and declares: “Ask not what is inside your head, but what your head’s inside of” (p.43). This perspective is linked to Merleau Ponty’s (1962) view of seeing “The Body as Expression, and Speech.” Merleau-Ponty argues that our ability to experience through our senses means that our body is a sensuous receptacle for the gesturing landscape and the world. He describes this as a two-way process whereby our body maintains a dialogue with the world. It both speaks and listens to the expressions of the world.
It is the body which points out, and speaks… This disclosure (of the body’s imminent expressiveness) …extends as we shall see to the whole sensible world, and our gaze, prompted by the experience of our own body, will discover in all other objects the miracle of expression (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 197).

These phenomenological theories concerning how we can experience and understand the environment can clearly be linked with the phenomenological theories discussed earlier in this chapter that explain how we can experience and understand music. Bowman’s (2005) argument that we feel music through our body and that music enables us to see the world differently (as discussed earlier in this chapter) is in line with Thorburn and Marshall’s (2014) assessment of how outdoor learning experiences can be guided by phenomenological theory. They state: “Phenomenology is primarily concerned with how the world can be looked at afresh and with how experiences can be sensed and felt, rather than analysing the content of experiences.” (Thorburn and Marshall, p.125).

We can draw links here with theories about music, previously discussed in this chapter, that claim musicking can enable us to have augmented perceptive experiences and transformational understandings of our world, ourselves and others (Elliott, 2009; Small, 1998). The idea that a phenomenological perspective of outdoor learning and musical experiences can allow us new insights and understandings of our world, ourselves and others, also resonates with concepts that have been previously analysed in this chapter, including: Freire’s (1996) literacy philosophy; Dewey’s (1934) theory of an aesthetic experience; Buber’s (1970) ‘I and thou’ dialogic philosophy; and Vygotsky’s (1930; 1971) theories on musical catharsis. All these philosophies involve experiences that are dialogical, transformative and heighten existential understanding.

2.35. Senses leading to a sense of “otherness”

It is argued that experiential learning in nature can become existential when we allow our senses to experience “otherness”. Roberts (2012) argues that at the heart of experiential outdoor learning there is a constant “interplay between experience and otherness” which “necessitates an engagement with something more than mere self.” (p.115). Roberts (2012) explains that if we open up to our senses then they have the potential to cause these experiences of “otherness”. Abram (1997) in his book ‘The Spell of the Sensuous’ concurs and states that human beings are tuned for experiences of otherness. “The eyes, the skin the tongue, ears and nostrils - all are gates where our body receives the nourishment of otherness.” (p.ix). The idea that experiencing “otherness” is a fundamental part of being human chimes with Buber’s ‘I and thou’ dialogic philosophy, which is based on the
understanding that human existence is only truly experienced when one encounters and engages in a dialogic relationship with an “other” (Buber, 1970; 2002) This sense of “otherness” also resonates with liminality as described by Boyce-Tillman (2000) and Turner (1970) as discussed earlier in this chapter. These theories share a sense that these authentic encounters “involve a degree of disturbance of the self” (Bonnett, 2009, p. 28). As has been discussed previously, liminality refers to a time when normative relationships, identities and constructs are challenged. However, these disturbances are necessary to experience a sense of communitas (Turner, 1970). It is during liminality that we experience wide-open wonder, paving the way for the joy of communitas. As Turner (2012) explains: “Communitas is thus a gift from liminality, the state of being betwixt and between…liminality and the state of people in the midst of change gives a framing - that is, some recognizable conditions - for communitas, a kind of flowerbed ready, waiting for it” (Turner, 2012, p.4).

Buber (1970), similarly, states that when we abandon attachments to individual desires and concerns, we are able to experience “communion”. The I-thou philosophy of dialogue is therefore more than mere communication. As Buber (1970) explains: “But I can really show what I have in mind only by events that open into a genuine change from communication to communion, that is, the embodiment of the word dialogue.” (p.21). Turner (2012) acknowledges that liminality and communitas have resonances with Buber’s (1970) I-Thou philosophy and positions such moments as being our true state of being, declaring: “The bonds of communitas that are felt at liminal times are undifferentiated, egalitarian, direct, extant, nonrational, existential, and “I–Thou” (in Martin Buber’s sense).” (Turner, 2012, p.98). That these encounters allow the dialogic relationship to facilitate a feeling of completeness can be compared to Freire’s (1996) literacy philosophy, as analysed previously in this chapter, that necessitates dialogue as part of the quest for human completion. Just as Freire (1996; 2014) declares that his philosophy describes human beings being authentic when engaged in true dialogue, there is a canon of work in outdoor learning that espouses the power nature has to augment our sense of reality through a dialogic experience, our interrelatedness with nature. For example, Naes (1997) states that: “I say that in spontaneous experiences (of nature) we have direct access to what is real.” (p.3). Similarly, in her analysis of the educational benefits of walking in nature, Glades (2014, p.17) asks: “Have you ever experienced walking through a pine forest and having that uncanny experience of being scrutinised amidst the whispering of pine needles?” She argues that when our senses open up to experiencing nature, we become attuned to ourselves and our sense of place. This can lead to an awareness of the “others” present in nature and how we are interrelated to them. (Glades, 2014). Schafer (1994) also espouses
the need to return to a perspective of interrelatedness with the natural world through his examination of the “soundscape”. He argues that “if we believe we participate with the sensory data of the world rather than rule them, we cannot help but regard the environment with greater humility.” (Schafer, 1994, p.97). Csikszentmihalyi (2002), as highlighted previously, emphasises that our senses can open us up to flow experiences and that this begins with us becoming attuned to our bodies. He states that:

If one takes control of what the body can do, and learns to impose order on physical sensations, entropy yields to a sense of enjoyable harmony in consciousness. The human body is capable of hundreds of separate functions - seeing, hearing, touching, running...and to each of these there correspond flow experiences. (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p.95).

If experiential learning in nature can create feelings of communitas (Turner, 1969), phyllic communion (Blacking, 1974), peak experience (Maslow, 1974) and flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), might making music outdoors perhaps allow children a heightened sense of these experiences? This would seem a reasonable hypothesis if we consider the claims made by the theorists (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Blacking, 1974; Turner, 1969), as discussed previously in this chapter, that music is especially able to create the conditions necessary for these experiences.

2.36. Nature and Senses leading to Flow

Heath (2015) argues that: “To be completely human in moral, spiritual, emotional and cognitive dimensions requires at-oneness with the fullness of the environment.” (p.73). He draws on Hediegger’s (1977) “The Question Concerning Technology” that discusses the “authenticity of being”, declaring that to be amongst nature in an environment is the state of true being in the world. Heidegger (1977) argues that technology interferes with our ability to experience the world directly. Using the Greek term “alethia” meaning unconcealment, Heidegger states that technology can conceal our true state of being. Heath (2015, p.74) explains that in contrast to viewing the world through the mediation of technology “the desired state is one of harmonisation of being with nature.” (Heath, 2015, p.74). This can be linked to Foran and Olson’s (2012) call to allow learners to experience their authentic state of being by dwelling in the natural environment. They state: “Dwelling pedagogically is being absorbed and being able to dwell authentically in a learning experience without interruption or distraction” (Foan and Olson, 2012, p.198). Both theories espouse a belief in the power of being immersed in nature as a way of revealing a human being’s
true identity. These ideas are of relevance to this study as the children were engaged with making music in outdoor rural locations free from the usual interruptions and distractions they might normally experience in school. They were surrounded by nature and this meant that potentially it was an immersive experience. There is a wealth of evidence that suggests being immersed in nature makes one susceptible to flow and peak experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Gelter, 2010; Henderson and Vikander, 2007; Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989; MacAlloon & Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; McDonald, Wearing, & Ponting, 2009; Mitchell, 1985; Waller et. al. 2017). Shin, Yeoun, Yoo and Shin (2010) after reviewing the literature on forest therapy argue that becoming absorbed in nature is akin to, or can lead to, flow and peak experiences. They state that “the wholeness of a forest experience is striking in that there is a total focus of attention on the forest, resulting in the individual being completely absorbed and possibly entering a self-forgetful state associated with an unawareness of time and space” (Shin, Yeoun, Yoo and Shin, 2010, p.39).

2.37. Indigenous ways of knowing

Abram (1997) in his exploration of indigenous oral cultures links phenomenological theories to the philosophies of more ancient cultures. He highlights how indigenous cultures view animals, plants and all the “Others” of nature as “purveyors of secrets and carriers of intelligence that we often need.” (p. 14). With this perspective we are more aware, more open to awe, wonder and enquiry. Abram (1997) explains that:

To indigenous, oral cultures, the ceaseless flux that we call “time” is overwhelmingly cyclical in character. The senses of an oral people are still attuned to the land around them, still conversant with the expressive speech of the winds and the forest birds, still participant with the sensuous cosmos. (p.185).

He relates this fact to phenomenological theories such as Husserl’s intersubjective world of life, the “Lebenswelt”, or “life-world”. Abram (1997) describes the life-world as “our immediately lived experience, as we live it, prior to all our thoughts about it.” (p.40). Abram (1997, p.81) uses the onomatopoeic words we use to describe a river, such as “rush, splash, gush, wash,” to highlight how our language and discourse has been influenced by gestures, sounds, rhythms and voices apart from those made by our “single species” (p.82). This is because “at the most primordial level of sensuous, bodily experience, we find ourselves in an expressive, gesturing landscape, in a world that speaks.” (p.81). Researchers highlight that in some indigenous cultures, understanding one’s
affinity with the natural world and duty to honour that relationship is part of a child’s maturation (Abram, 1997; Berkes, 2009; Cajete, 1999; Hart, 2010; Norton-Smith, 2010; Simpson, 2000). However, theorists have also pointed out that combining all thoughts, practices and beliefs of indigenous communities, as if in one homogenous group, is misleading (Lee-Hammond and Jackson-Barrett, 2013). Despite this, there are reports from studies on different indigenous and First Nations communities that are of relevance for this study. This is because some of these cultures have perspectives which they share in common with phenomenological theories that claim embodied sensual understanding is essential for authentic existential experiences. This study is attempting to construct a framework of music literacy based on children’s experiences of making music in outdoor rural locations. It is not unreasonable to conclude that the children’s experiences may be linked to the experiences and beliefs of indigenous peoples whose culture involves living, being and creating in outdoor rural locations. For example, Brown and Heaton (2015) examine Maori philosophy and highlight that “being or knowing is not necessarily a cognitive or ‘thinking’ act - rather it can equally be rooted in feelings, emotions. Wisdom arises not in the head, but in ways of being in the world.” (p.56). Similarly, Hendricks and Hall analyse first-hand knowledge of their Aboriginal spirituality in Australia as involving an embodied knowledge of place declaring: “We are spiritual people who believe we come from the land. In a sense we are the land and the land owns us.” (Hendricks and Hall, 2008, p.11). Tedlock and Tedlock (1992) emphasise that there are commonalities found within many indigenous belief systems. They describe the common belief in the existence of a metaphysical realm and being open to experience this other world. This is “a universe where everything is not only animate, but a person, and not only a person, but a kinsman.” (Tedlock and Tedlock, 1992, p.xx). Tedlock and Tedlock (1992) argue that far from being primitive or simplistic, indigenous peoples have a “double view of the world” being able to see things that we can no longer see as we have “lost sight of one whole dimension.” (p.xx). They explain that the location of this dimension in space, “for the eskimo, Beaver, Sioux, Hopi, Tewa, and many others, is above and below the horizontal plane of our everyday world”. Moreover, it can only be “reached through a vertical axis that passes through the seeker.” (Tedlock and Tedlock, 1992, p.xiv).

These perspectives are supported by Cajete (1999) who argues that when we examine the beliefs and cultures of indigenous people, we realise the word indigenous is not just a descriptive adjective, it is a way of being. Cajete (1999) also supports Tedlock and Tedlock’s (1992) assertion that spirituality is a key aspect of indigenous peoples’ belief systems and cultures. He explains that indigenous refers to the perspective that all people originate from a place that is “natural and soulful” (p.189). Cajete (1999) stresses the importance of artistic expression in indigenous
education as it portrays the relationship and kinship with the natural world. Indigenous elders have the responsibility to reflect this relationship. They embody it and represent the fruition of indigenous education. Therefore indigenous education is about “the development of a whole sense of being human”. (Cajete, 1999, p.194). There are clearly links here with the concept of biophilia due to the view of mankind’s interconnectivity with nature, as discussed above in this chapter (Barbiero, 2014; Barbiero and Macanarto; 2016; Fromm, 1964; Wilson, 1984). There also parallels to be drawn with the theories previously discussed in this chapter that claim humans should strive to achieve a state of completeness, for example, Maslow’s (1969) call for “self-actualisation”, Freire’s (1996) “quest for human completion”, Turner’s (1970) theory of communitas, Elliott’s (2009) praxial philosophy of music education and Small’s (1997) concept of musicking. Just as these theories focus on the idea that the human condition is about striving for authenticity and a state of completeness, Cajete (1999) declares that a “state of completedness is the ultimate goal of indigenous education.” (p.195). Cajete (1999) explains indigenous education as a biophilic approach to education that “focuses on the core aspects of human biophilia.” (p.189). Cajete (1999) argues that this approach aligns with people’s innate tendencies. He argues that “human beings as a biological species derive their meaning from interaction with other forms of life.” (p.191). This means that dwelling in nature is an important part of a child’s education as, when left to themselves, children will “attempt to establish direct relationships with the living things they encounter in their first explorations of the natural world.” (1999, p.191).

We can link these ideas of feeling part of the natural world, belonging to a place and dwelling in nature with the Scandinavian philosophy of friluftsliv as discussed previously in this chapter (Gelter, 2000; Mygind, 2015). These ideas are not simply medicinal practices; they are restorative (Gelter, 2006). They provide healing as they endow those who experience them with a reawakened understanding and perception of their place in the world. As Gelter explains (2010) friluftsliv is a link between natural history and philosophy, linking the knowledge of yourself and your surroundings into an understanding of the world.” (p.5). Friluftsliv involves an understanding that we are part of the natural world and that this relationship can be felt, experienced and truly understood when we are surrounded by nature. This links with Casey’s (2009) exploration of a human being’s relationship to place. He argues that: “Nature is not just around us, there is no getting around Nature”; it is not only always under us, but in us. (p.186). Friluftsliv is also linked to the philosophy of indigenous peoples in relation to its treatment of time. As discussed previously, rather than filling time with accomplished deeds, friluftsliv involves savouring the moment and taking time for the moment to be savoured. “A key element of friluftsliv is time - time to experience
and time to adapt all the sensory impressions gradually” (Mygind, 2015, p.34). Whorf (1950), in his analysis of the Hopi language, explains how the Hopi do not experience time and space as separate entities. He found no terms or expressions that “refer to space in such a way as to exclude that element of extension or existence that we call time.” (p.27). He concludes “In this Hopi view [that which we call] time disappears and [that which we call] space is altered, so that it is no longer the homogenous and instantaneous timeless space of our supposed intuition or of classical Newtonian mechanics.” (Whorf, 1950, p.28). Being fully absorbed in the moment and transcending ordinary consciousness chimes with Gelter’s (2010) description of the friluftsliv concept as discussed above. He claims that: “Friluftsliv is a way of interconnecting with nature where strong emotional and spiritual experiences from the immersion in natural settings result in a personal connectedness to the more-than-human world.” (p.3). This theory of experiencing and valuing time differently finds resonance in the phenomenological theories and theories of embodiment discussed earlier in this chapter (Heidegger, 1927; Merleau Ponty, 1962; Gendlin, 1997; van Manen, 1997; Held, 2003; Friesen, Henriksson and Saevi, 2012; Thorburn and Marshall, 2014; Robertson, Lawrence and Heath, 2015). The idea of being removed from clock time and producing absorption in the moment also has resonances with the transcendental states analysed earlier in this chapter such as Maslow’s (1968) theory of peak experiences, Turner’s (1974) theory of liminality and Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990) theory of flow.

2.38. Outdoor experiences leading to changed mind states

These perspectives on the experience of “time” and savouring the moment also chime with the practice of mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn, 1982). A full examination of mindfulness, its genealogy and academic history is both unnecessary and beyond the scope of this research project. However, a brief overview and analysis are relevant if we consider how aspects of mindfulness may come into play when making music outdoors. When the children made their music, they were mindful of the environment and we shall see in the results chapter how the environment became integral to their musicking. Mindfulness has been given various definitions. The originator of Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (Kabat-Zinn, 1990), Jon Kabat-Zinn, defines mindfulness as “the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience” (Kabat-Zinn, 2005, p. 145). Kabat-Zinn is considered to be the forefather of mindfulness in the West (Knight, 2010). He describes mindfulness as a meditative practice that involves continual attention to the present rather than dwelling on ruminations about the past or future. The need for a linear understanding of time is therefore not important as the present moment...
is the only point of focus (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Kabat-Zinn, 2005). Komogata and Komagata (2010) in their comparison of mindfulness with flow experiences describe mindfulness as providing a realistic view of time. “Mindfulness is said to realize the most realistic sense of time. On the contrary, with a wandering mind, one’s sense of time is actually distorted. Thus, with mindfulness, one would experience transformation of time by gaining a realistic sense of time.” (Komogata and Komogata, 2010, p.3) They state that, with practice, mindfulness meditation can lead to full absorption in the moment where “sensory perception including pain, the normal awareness of one’s body, and even the sense of time disappear” (Komogata and Komogata, 2010, p.1).

Research has also provided evidence that mindfulness can assist individuals’ wellbeing and positive mind states (Hanley et al., 2014; Harrington et al., 2014). Ritchie and Bryant (2012) in their exploration of mindfulness states and their potential for creating better wellbeing suggest there may be different types of mindfulness states. They identify “positive state mindfulness” as mindfulness that involves “savouring the moment” and claim that: “Positive state mindfulness offers new possibilities for understanding the construction and maintenance of wellbeing.” (Ritchie and Bryant, 2012, p.175). Howell et al. (2011, p. 167) advocate mindfulness’ relationship to wellbeing and propose that: “the enhanced sensory impact of experiences in nature fostered by mindfulness may strengthen nature connectedness among mindful individuals”. Various studies suggest that there is the potential for positive relationships between mindfulness and outdoor experiences in terms of the increased wellbeing brought to those that engage with mindfulness when amongst nature (Anh-Huong & Hanh, 2006; Coleman, 2010; Corazon et al. 2010; Howell et al. 2011; Howell and Passmore, 2013; Jordan, 2014; Kabat-Zinn, 2004; Kornfield & Feldman, 1997). Various studies have also suggested that there are mutually beneficial relationships between mindfulness and flow (Jackson and Eklund, 2002; Kaufman, Glass and Arnkoff, 2009; Aherne et al., 2011; Diaz, 2013; Thienot et al., 2014; Steinfeld and Brewer, 2015). Diaz (2013) reported enhanced music listening experiences among individuals who engaged in a brief mindfulness induction. Steinfeld and Brewer (2015) propose reconceptualizing music making as a mindfulness practice: “music making can be meaningfully thought of as a specialized manifestation of mindfulness practice unfolding within the medium of sound, embodied action, and rhythm” (Steinfeld and Brewer, 2015, p.86). Despite this, Komagata and Komagata (2010) differentiate between mindfulness and flow. They conclude that: “mindfulness cannot be sustained beyond access concentration, and flow involves both mindfulness and the level of concentration beyond that of access concentration.” (Komagata and Komagata, 2010, p.5).
Similarly, Sheldon, Prentice and Halusic (2015) differentiate between mindfulness and flow, stating that: “flow involves losing self-awareness within an activity, and mindfulness involves maintaining self-awareness throughout or even despite an activity” (p.276). They conducted a study of 101 psychology students playing a potentially flow-inducing computer game and completing questionnaires in order to compare mindfulness and flow. The students were divided into two groups: one group completed a mindfulness induction before playing the game whereas the other group did not. The results showed that “boosting a person’s ability to remain mindful during an activity might actually undermine their ability to get mindful.” (Sheldon, Prentice and Halusic, 2015, p.281). However, they noted that the evidence for a negative relationship between flow and mindfulness was found only for the absorption facet of flow. In addition, they suggest that:

engaging regularly in mindfulness practice might ultimately increase flow ability, by helping to ‘sweep out the mental cobwebs’ that prevent people from entering flow states, and/or by teaching people to concentrate in single-minded ways that contribute to flow states (Sheldon, Prentice and Halusic, 2015, p.281).

Newton (2015) highlights connections between flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) when making music and mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn, 1996). He states that flow when making music “is directly related to mindfulness because one of the defining characteristics of the practice is non-judgemental awareness.” (Newton, 2015, p.175). Newton (2015) draws on his own mindfulness experiences when composing music and argues that mindfulness allows him to become absorbed in his music making and more easily tap into his intuitive creative processes. He states: “Once I reach a state of deep inner stillness and achieve a level of nonjudgmental awareness through mindfulness practice, I find it easier to enter divergent thinking and explore and utilize inspiration and imagination” (Newton, 2015, p.173). Csikszentmihalyi (2002) also stresses how mindfully listening can allow someone to enter into flow states. As has been discussed previously in the chapter, he states that music has a potent ability to create flow experiences. In addition, he emphasises that “listening to music when seriously attended to can induce flow experiences” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p.109). In keeping with the claims made above that focussed or mindful listening can bring positive benefits (Diaz, 2013; Howell et. al., 2011; Ritchie and Bryant, 2012; Newton, 2015; Steinfeld and Brewer, 2015), Csikszentmihalyi (2002) argues that attentive listening can lead to flow states. He uses Muzak to demonstrate this point and asserts: “It is not the hearing that improves life, it is the listening. We hear muzak, but we rarely listen to it, and few could have ever been in flow as a result
of it. As with anything else, to enjoy music one must pay attention to it.” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p.109).

Nevertheless, as has been highlighted above, there are disagreements about how flow and mindfulness states relate to each other. Despite these contradictory views, there seems to be agreement that both mindfulness and flow involve states of mind that differ from normal everyday consciousness (Komagata and Komagata, 2010; Sheldon, Prentice and Halusic, 2015; Steinfeldt and Brewer, 2015). There is also research that emphasises the potential for positive relationships between music, flow and mindfulness (Diaz, 2013; Newton, 2015; Steinfeldt and Brewer, 2015). In addition, there are studies that report a positive relationship between mindfulness and being surrounded by nature (Kornfield & Feldman, 1997; Kabat-Zinn, 2004; Anh-Huong & Hanh, 2006; Coleman, 2010; Corazon et. al. 2010; Howell et. al. 2011; Howell and Passmore, 2013; Wolsko and Lindberg, 2013; Jordan, 2014). Therefore, it seems reasonable to hypothesise that making music outdoors in rural environments (surrounded by nature) may augment, or at least facilitate more easily, experiences of changed mind states.

Many of the themes discussed in this review of literature link directly to the themes analysed in the results and analysis chapter. In some cases, the themes were added to this review of literature after most of the data analysis had taken place. This was because the analysis of the responses from the children and their teachers produced themes that demanded new, corresponding perspectives not already present in the literature review. Or it was because the concepts were already presented in the literature review, but they needed to be supported, explained and developed with further relevant literature. Therefore, the choice of literature related to and influenced the coding framework that was used in analysis of the data. For example, the themes of “liminality” and “communitas” were added to the literature review in response to the initial data analysis and became codes for the subsequent data analyses.

I did consider organising the literature review chapter in a different way and presenting it after the methodology chapter as it was ongoing and some of it happened after the methodology chapter had been completed. However, the iterative nature of the analysis, moving between literature and data, meant that it was often more of a complex or spiral process rather than a linear process that allowed for easy step-by-step, chronological demarcation of events. Moreover, some of the literature review contains themes that were not directly followed through in the data analysis. This is because these themes involved analysis of literature that underpinned the research. For example, the analyses of
musicking, music as a language, music education as praxis, the definition of literacy and outdoor learning provide the pedagogical positions within which this research study operated. Even though this research was not focused on curriculum development, the nature of the activity (a child-led musical ceremony outdoors) meant that it involved pedagogical choices linked to the theory discussed under the heading of these themes. This could perhaps be described as setting the scene before the theories relating to the children’s responses were analysed.
3. Methodology

This chapter analyses the paradigm that was used for this research in terms of its ontological, epistemological and methodological positions. Before these positions are discussed and outlined the background to the research design is summarised and the theoretical approach outlined for the purposes of coherence and clarity.

3.1. Background to the research design

This research project pursued a grounded theory approach as the initial data collection and analysis preceded any in depth literature review. The data collection was not guided by an effort to prove any preconceived theory or hypothesis derived from a literature review. Instead the data collection was to provide the theory. As Glaser and Strauss (1967) state “grounded theory is a way of arriving at theory” rather than being “theory generated by logical deduction from a prori assumptions.” (p.3). As described in the opening introduction, the research design evolved from preliminary research undertaken that focussed initially on gaining data from children’s music-making at prehistoric sites. My original aim for the PhD was to explore children’s music-making at these sites. To keep the exploration open-ended, I began by merely wondering what was going on in terms of the children’s experiences of their music-making at these prehistoric sites. This approach chimes with the grounded theory approach as described by Bryant (2017, p.) who suggests that grounded theory begins with a questioning of the world in an open-minded way, free from any pre-determined hypotheses. I began with a wide literature review that explored broad areas such as music education and child-centered research. The literature review then became more in depth and refined in response to the findings that came from the data. Bryant (2017) asserts that a grounded theory approach does allow for a literature review before the data collection as long as it does not interfere with the open-coding. Uquhart (2012) concurs stating that “this preliminary literature review is conducted on the understanding it is the generated theory that will determine the relevance of the literature.” After the theory has been “generated from the data”, the literature is “revisited and extended” (p.30).

The initial data collection seemed to show that the children felt that their music making could express things. This led me to thinking whether it would be possible to devise a model of the
children’s music literacies based on their experiences. After researching theories around literacy it became clear that developing a theoretical model based on the children’s experiences aligned with the theory of a plurality of literacies, as outlined by Barton and Hamilton (1998) and others, as discussed in the literature review (Cope and Katrantzis, 2009, Lankshear and Knobel, 2011). It is claimed that there could be a plurality of literacies because literacy practices are about what people do and experience in various contexts. Therefore, it seemed that music literacy practices could be about the doing of music or musicking (Small, 1998, Elliott, 2015) in various contexts. The context initially was children making music at prehistoric sites. This resulted in the aim to construct a framework of music literacies based on children’s experiences of music-making at these prehistoric sites. This was in keeping with the Grounded Theory Method as described by Bryant (2017) whereby “grounded theory starts with a bounded context, where we are looking at a few seed concepts. Seed concepts can be seen as hunches and sources of ideas that do not come from the data.” (p.131). The seed concept therefore was to construct a framework of music literacies and to focus the data collection on children’s music making at prehistoric sites. However, after initially collecting and analysing some data it became clear that the outdoor rural environment seemed to be having a significant effect on the children’s music making. The children’s responses seemed to indicate that being outdoors, surrounded by nature and importantly being away from the classroom was impacting on their music-making in a significant way. The focus of the research then evolved to constructing a framework of music literacies based on children’s experiences of making music at outdoor rural locations. During the initial data analysis, I used what has been termed “open-coding” (Galser and Strauss, 1967, Charmaz, 2006, Urquhart, 2012, Bryant, 2017). This is a process that was an innovation when introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1965) as they state that the codes must not be prepared beforehand, but should emerge from the data. As described later in this chapter, the open-coding involved analysing the initial data to see if there were patterns emerging in the children’s and teachers’ responses. Once patterns had been identified themes were coded and further analysis provided a preliminary conceptual model of themes. This model was published (Adams and Beauchamp, 2018) and then provided the basis for further investigation so that more refined concepts could be formulated as theoretical statements to provide a framework of music literacies. Continued analysis of the data and examination of literature provided the direction for future sampling and led to development of the theory that was generated. The theory was generated inductively by collecting and simultaneously analysing the data rather than deductively testing a previously conceived theory. Nevertheless, as Bryant and Charmaz (2007) explain “the developing theory is continuously refined and checked by data.” (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007, p.154). Similarly, as is discussed in the section on “sampling” below, the sampling techniques developed in response
to the data. This research study therefore followed a grounded theory approach because analysis of the data led to the future focus of the research and to the emerging theory. The focus was on “emerging theory and theory driven data collection” (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007, p.155).

3.2. Grounded approach

Strauss and Corbin (1998) explain that in Grounded Theory “a researcher does not begin a project with a preconceived theory in mind...Rather the researcher begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data.” (p.12). Glaser and Strauss (1965) devised grounded theory as a methodology that would offer an alternative to the prevailing methodologies of the time that advocated proving pre-conceived theories. They wanted to provide a methodology that “abandons a priori theorising (which erects predetermined restrictions on the unearthing and expansion of theory)” Instead they devised an approach that “is typified as a systematic process that is aligned with the area being investigated.” (Howard-Payne, 2016, p.52). Their aim was to counter “monopolistic implications of logico-deductive theories, whose formulators claim there is only one theory for an area” (Glaser & Strauss, 1965, p. 35). The prevailing methodologies at the time adhered to a positivist methodological paradigm whereby the aim was to find evidence to prove a theory. Instead they contended that theory building could begin after the data had begun to be collected. In other words, the theories come from the ground up (Bryant, 2017). As theories emerge these concepts impact on the future data collection. As explained by Bryant and Charmaz (2007, p.4) “grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves”. The term ‘Grounded Theory’ has had many definitions having evolved from the original stance proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1965). Glaser and Strauss have also provided competing accounts of Grounded Theory Method (GTM) since their original proposal. The original method stressed the importance of prioritising induction and examination of the data rather than theorising too early. They stated that “generation of theory through comparative analysis both subsumes and assumes verification and accurate description, but only to the extent that the latter are in the services of generation.” (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p. 28).

Glaser maintained this commitment to a belief in the data’s ability to reveal a theory. Howard-Payne (2016) has claimed that this is within the realms of critical realism as it holds firm to the belief “that reality can be seized to develop a grounded theory that truly resides in the data” (Howard-Payne, 2016, p.52). However, Strauss and Corbin (1994) claimed that there was an over-
emphasis on induction and that the researcher could formulate theories at any stage and begin to see if subsequent data collection verified them. Strauss and Corbin (1994) developed what has been termed a constructivist approach to grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006). They believed that people construct knowledge and suggested that “historical epochs, eras and moments are to be taken into account in the creation, judgment, revision and reformulation of theories” (p. 280). These differences between Glaser and Strauss also manifested in their respective views about the role of the literature review. Glaser (1998) warned against being overly influenced by reading of literature and that this could contaminate the purity of the induction from data process. Whereas Strauss (1987) contends that prior influences are inevitable and that “both specific understandings from past experience and literature may be used to stimulate theoretical sensitivity and generate hypotheses” (Heath and Cowley, 2004, p.143). In this Straussian view there follows a constant to and fro between the data and theorising with both influencing each other. There is an “iterative process of moving back and forth between empirical data and emerging analysis” the collected data progressively more focused and the analysis successively more theoretical. (2007, p.1).

This Straussian model can be seen in this research project as the data helped to shape the theory and then the theory helped to shape the data collection. I had begun being interested in researching children’s music making at prehistoric sites because earlier research had seemed to indicate that these sites had provided the children with rich music making opportunities (Reynolds and Adams, 2014). After collecting further data from children making music in various locations and analysing it, it became clear that the children and teachers felt that it was the outdoor environment that was at least as significant as the fact that the music making was happening at prehistoric sites (Adams and Beauchamp, 2018). Further data analysis and collection seemed to confirm these claims and so the planned locations were then changed to include woodland, beach and field settings that did not contain prehistoric monuments as is shown in table 1 below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Number of pupils interviewed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of teachers/practitioners interviewed</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9-10 years old</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>Field containing Neolithic chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9-10 years old</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7-9 years old</td>
<td>2 teachers</td>
<td>Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7-8 years old</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>Woodland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8-9 years old</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>Woodland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 5 (follow-up interviews)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9-10 years old</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>Field containing Neolithic chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 6 (follow-up interviews)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8-9 years old</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>Woodland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3. Hermeneutics

This organic approach to the research that relies on the participants’ experiences to give perspective of what is really going on can be synthesised with Gadamer’s hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1989) and the hermeneutic circle outlined by Hediegger (1927). Schleiermacher (1829) first proposed that understanding of a text involved interpreting the significance of the reader and context as well as the text itself to gain meaning. He explained this as an ongoing cyclic interplay between reader, text and
context. He argued that the individual parts can only be understood in their relation to the whole. This gave birth to the idea of a hermeneutic circle (Heidegger, 1927) that could be applied to understanding beyond the interpretation of texts. Although there have been differing definitions of the hermeneutic circle, Bryant (2017) links this theory to the grounded theory approach of “iteration between data-gathering and analysis” (p.327). This means “our understanding of certain detailed aspects is dependent on our understanding of the whole, which is itself dependent on understanding the details (Bryant, 2017, p.327). Gadamer (1989) stated that the soul of his hermeneutics was that the “other might be right” (p.305) and that through analysis of others’ experiences one could gain better perspective or “horizon”. He suggested that:

To acquire horizon means that one learns to look beyond what is close at hand-not in order to look away from it, but to see it better, within a larger whole and in truer proportion (Gadamer, 1989, p.305).

In line with Strauss (1987) this is not to deny one’s prior experiences or knowledge, but instead describes understanding “as the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter” (Gadamer, 1989, p.304). We must be aware of our preconceptions, to be more aware of potential biases and if appropriate use our experiences to gain a better understanding of the experiences of others (Gadamer, 1989, Heidegger, 1927). Gadamer therefore defines the act of interpretation as the bringing of “one’s own preconceptions into play so that the text’s meaning can really be made to speak for us” (Gadamer, 1989, p.415). Wiercinsky (2012) states that one of the most important features of hermeneutic education “is understanding the student not as an observer, but as an active and critical participant in the educational process” (p.115). An important aspect of this research was the agency of the children. The focus of the research was their experiences and the aim was that the research was led by their ideas. At the same time my interpretation of their ideas was informed by my previous experiences, previous knowledge and the knowledge developed through the ongoing literature review. In this sense it could be argued that the research project bears close allegiance to the hermeneutic philosophy. Burton (2007), Charmaz (2008) and Thornberg (2012) argue that using pre-existing theories to inform the induction process, and also help to construct one’s own theories, allows the researcher to see further. Thornberg, (2012) states that “neither data nor theories are discovered, but are constructed...researchers should not dismiss the literature or apply it mechanically to data, but use it as a possible source of inspiration...creative associations, critical reflections and multiple lenses” (p.91). Therefore, one aims for a balance between abduction and induction. Induction involves analysing the data and searching for connections and patterns. Abduction involves creating theories based on ideas gained from the review of relevant literature and
then applying the theories to the data analysis. Both the induction and abduction happen concurrently, each informs or enhances the other. This research was designed in accordance with the view that children should be active agents in their education, that they should have agency. The Oxford Dictionary of sociology outlines agency as; “the capacity for willed (voluntary) action.” Willis (1978, p.14) describes agency as “the ability to act and make decisions autonomously.” Allowing the children to make decisions about their music making and then to describe what they felt was important about their experiences were crucial tenets of the research design. In the words of Tisdall, Davis and Gallagher (2009, p.3) children are “experts in their own lives.” Therefore, they need to be consulted when decisions are made that affect them and what’s more to have the power to make decisions and affect change. Griffiths (1998) claims that for this position to be achieved “there has to be a theoretical possibility of agency”. (p.123) She argues that adults must be willing to relinquish control and give power over to children. When this happens children’s status changes and they become social actors (Griffiths, 1998). It is argued that when children become social actors research should be done with them and not on them (Mayall, 2007; Christensen and James, 2008; Griffiths, 1998; Reynaert et al. 2009). Similarly, Christensen and James (2008, p.1) state that in research involving children, it is crucial that children are “social actors who are subjects rather than objects of enquiry”. The children were the key social actors in this research project. The main focus for the research and source for the data were the children’s experiences. The research was therefore premised on the belief that:

all school pupils have a right to be consulted and to have their voices listened to. … [as] … It cannot tenably be claimed that schooling is primarily intended to benefit pupils if pupils' own views about what is beneficial to them are not actively sought and attended to (McIntyre, Ruddock and Rudduck, 2005, p.150).

This view relates to Qvortup et al. (1994, p.2) who warned against seeing children as ‘beings not becoming’ meaning that they are seen as not yet whole and are only becoming human. Qvortup states that children need to be recognised “as persons in their own right” (2006, p. 435). This view has its roots in the theory of Durkheim (1956) who insisted that childhood deserved to be studied in its own right as part of sociology. Even though Durkheim (2012) expressed differing views in comparison to Rousseau (1911) regarding the innocence and moral development of the child, he did agree with Rousseau’s view that “childhood has its own way of seeing, thinking and feeling” (Rousseau, 1911, p.54) and that adults can learn from these insights (Durkheim, 1956).
3.4. The Rights of the Child

These views are reflected in The United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Article 12 states that children have the right to express themselves freely “in all matters affecting the child” and that their views should be “given due weight’. In addition, the child has the right to be heard in “any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child.” (UNCRC 1989, p.166). These rights have been more recently enshrined in: The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. In May 2017, Sally Holland, the Children’s Commissioner for Wales published, ‘A Children’s Rights Approach for Education in Wales’. Here she outlined that children’s rights on participation are based on “the idea of the child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen in the here and now.” (Holland, 2017, p.6). This aims to ensure that children are empowered and maintain agency over matters that affect them. This aligns with the theory of Beazley, Bessell, Ennew and Waterson (2009, p.69) who declare: “Rights-based research with children acknowledges their agency, not as the outcome of academic theory but rather as recognition that they are subjects of rights”. (p.69). Whilst this research aimed to empower children and align with theories around giving children agency it must be acknowledged that traditional power structures still existed. Whilst critiquing the ‘pupil voice’ movement in education, Noyes (2005) highlights how the terms ‘pupil’ and ‘voice’ perhaps inevitably maintain a hierarchy. Roche (1999, p. 489) states that the idea of allowing children participation can be “cosy” without really changing structurally any of the traditional power dynamics. Lundy (2007) analyses the text of the UNCRC and concludes that some concepts may actually diminish the power of Article 12.

Phrases such as voice’, ‘the voice of the child’, ‘the right to be heard' and the 'right to participate' address specific elements of the provision, and, taken individually, are incapable of conveying the full extent of the right (Lundy, 2007, p.941).

Dalli and Te One (2012) analyse the challenges of child participation in research and als emphasise the importance of understanding the power in research relationships. They claim that research with children in reality is “messy” as “questions about whether children are truly making the decision about their participation are tricky...Are children in educational settings a captive audience? Do they know how to withdraw from research once invited?” (pp.231-232). These are all ethical considerations as they are concerned with behaviour and conduct and how the rights of children should affect the choices researchers make (Groundwater-Smith et. al. 2014). We shall therefore now turn to an analysis of the ethical considerations involved in this research project.
3.5. Ethics

Ethics have been described as “norms of conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.” (Resnik, 2010, p.1). Similarly, Punch and Oancea (2014) explain ethics is about “what are good, right or virtuous courses of action.” (p.58). Hammersly (2017) agrees stating that ethics is about “how we should deal with other people and/or to what is in the general interests” (2017, p.57). The difficulty of course is deciding what is acceptable behaviour and what are right or virtuous courses of action. Louden states “morality ought to be understood primarily as a matter of what one does or does not do to oneself rather what one does or does not do to others” (1992, p.4).

This research study was undertaken in accordance with the ethics for research as outlined in BERA’s (British educational Research Association) Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research issued in 2011. At all times during the study I aimed to operate within an ethic of respect for the persons involved in the research. It was important that “individuals should be treated fairly, sensitively, with dignity, and within an ethic of respect” (BERA, 2011, p.5). However, good intentions do not necessarily ensure good results. Wiles et al. (2007), state that it may be difficult in the social sciences to be sure what causes someone harm or provides a benefit. This is because of all the many variables that are inevitably present when one is working with people. Nevertheless it was my aim that the research would be committed to a number of epistemic and practical ethical values. Coe et. al. (2017, p.58) describe a commitment to epistemic values as being about “discovering the truth and disseminating knowledge...a commitment to honesty in presenting evidence, and in providing information about how the research was carried out.” The aim was to authentically portray the children’s experiences of making music in outside rural locations. This was the “truth” that the research aimed to uncover. The methods’ section outlines how the methods were carefully chosen and employed in such a way with the aim to best represent the children’s experiences. At all stages of the research there was also a level of transparency with the participants so that the research was consensual.

3.6. Procedure of Ethics

Ethical approval was sought from the university ethics committee before beginning research. This involved filling out the university ethics form and submitting relevant supplementary documents. The supplementary documents consisted of: The proposed letter of consent for parents (see appendix);
The proposed letter of assent for children (see appendix); The proposed letter of consent for Headteachers (see appendix); The proposed letter of consent for teachers (see appendix).

Once approval from the ethics committee had been granted the letters were sent out to the Headteachers of the schools. Headteachers can be seen as the “gatekeepers” of access to the school and children (Brooks, 2014, et. al. p.6). After the letters had been sent out, I telephoned each school and spoke to each Headteacher in order to explain the details of the project and answer any queries. Following on from gaining the headteacher’s approval, I then arranged a date to meet with the teachers that were to be involved in the project. On this date I met with the teachers, explained what the project entailed and gave them a letter of consent to read and return to me in their own time. I told them that they did not have to take part and that they could decline the invitation. All of the teachers were positive about being participants in the research project and gave their consent to take part. After the teachers had given their consent, I visited the school to explain to the children what the research project was all about. Each child was given a letter of consent to take home for their parents or guardians. Each child was also given a letter of assent in order to ensure that they could decide whether to take part or not.

3.7. Child assent

Prior to the research taking place a letter was sent home to all of the participants. This included one for the teachers, the children’s parents and the children (see appendices 1, 2 and 3). In addition, I visited each school before the research commenced and before, and after the letters had been given out. During this time, I met with each class and outlined what the research was going to be about and made it clear that anyone could withdraw from the research at any time during the project. It was made clear that the children could do the musical ceremonies, but not take part in the interviews, or abstain from taking part in the musical ceremonies and interviews. The permission letters also contained this information. This was to ensure that the children did not feel pressurised to take part either by their parents, myself or their teachers. Dali and TeOne (2012) highlight that:

From a children’s perspective, the consent/assent process determines their options to choose whether or not they participate in the research...first asking legally responsible adults for consent before approaching the children for their assent means that children only have a say after others have decided to give them this opportunity. (p.228)
The children filled out the letters of assent in school after their parents or guardians had given consent for them to take part. All of the parents, guardians and children were positive about the research project and consented to take part.

3.8. Right to withdraw

It was important that the children were told about the project, given an opportunity to ask questions and that they were able to withdraw from taking part at any time. This is also in line with the guidelines outlined by BERA 2011 with the aim of “securing of participants’ voluntary informed consent” and recognising the “right of any participant to withdraw from the research for any or no reason, and at any time” (BERA, 2011, p.6). As is stated in the BERA guidelines, the research was compliant with Articles 3 and 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. As required by Article 3 the research was conducted under the understanding that the best interests of the child were paramount. As has been outlined above, a discussion was had with the teacher and headteacher before the research was agreed where the design and purpose of the project were outlined. This was so that their agreement was gained with regard to the view that the study would be of benefit to the pupils’ education. SERA’s (2005) guidelines remind us that as educators “we are involved not only in research but in education. It is, therefore, essential that we continually reflect on our research to be sure that it is rigorously conducted, but that it also makes a worthwhile contribution to the quality of education in our society. “(SERA, 2005). Hamilton and Corbeet Whittier (2016) highlight the potential “competing ethical imperatives” that may be present when attempting to straddle the divide between educator and researcher because “the research persona has to work in tandem with the practitioner persona and there can be tension between the two.”(p.65). Therefore, it was continually emphasised to the children throughout the project that they could withdraw at any time. As Groundwater-Smith et. al. (2014) highlight, ethical decisions are continually made throughout the research process. This meant adopting what Guillemin and Gillam (2004) call a reflexive research process that involved “a continuous process of critical scrutiny and interpretation, not just in relation to the research methods and the data, but also to the researcher, participants, and the research context” (p.275).

In two of the schools, children at different stages decided they did not want to take part and they were allowed to abstain from the activities. This happened in school 2 and in school 4. In school 2 one of the children decided they did not want to take part in the interviews and so they were not interviewed. In school 4, one of the children initially decided they did not want to take part in the musical
ceremonies. However, after missing the first session before “break-time” they then decided they did want to take part and were allowed to join in during the session after “break-time”. This adheres to “informed consent” as is outlined by Coe et. al. (2017) who declare that research participants “ought to know they are being researched, be fully informed about what this involves, and be able to withdraw at any time.” (p.62). Therefore, ethics are seen as being fluid and not fixed. Requiring ongoing attention and care. Noddings (1984) argues against ethical guidelines that appears to adhere to Kant’s moral principle ethics. Ethics should not involve a set of fixed principles that can be rigidly applied to any situation (Noddings, 1984). In contrast, Noddings (2010) states that an ethics of care must be authentic. Caring does not happen academically, “we model care by caring.” (Noddings, 2010, p.147).

3.9. Duty of care

Constantly monitoring the children and considering whether the activities are of benefit to them is not only part of my ethical considerations as a researcher, it is also part of my professional conduct and duty of care as a teacher. Being a primary school teacher for over thirteen years taught me to always be aware of my actions in terms of whether they adhere to the professional standards and duty of care as a teacher. This is something that is ongoing and constant in any situation when working with children. It is not done only at specific times. Punch and Oancea (2014) highlight how research ethics “is more than the linear application of specific rules.” (p.75). This is echoed by Groundwater-Smith et. al. (2014) who declare that “ethical decisions will continue to be made well after a proposal has been approved by the relevant institutional ethics committee.” (p.41). It is important to note therefore that ethical considerations involve “reflective deliberations that draw on rich understanding of concrete situations.” (Punch and Oancea, 2014, p.75) I drew on my experience as a teacher, to be aware of the children’s needs and respond accordingly if need be. Grieg et. al. (2007) state that professionals who work with children “learn many skills as part of their initial training, through working alongside more experienced practitioners, by reflecting upon each new situation they encounter and in many other different and diverse ways.” (p.169).

Brooks et. al. (2014, p.18) refer to this as the “situated nature of ethical decision making.” For example, ethical considerations began during the designing of the research project. Giving the children the freedom to choose their own groupings was an important part of maintaining their autonomy. I wanted to ensure the children were able to choose which group they wanted to work in. However, it was also decided group sizes could not consist of more than 8 children. This was to
ensure that each group had access to the limited number of djembe drums, frame drums and wooden flutes that were available. This maintained fairness in terms of access to the musical instruments. I also worked with the class teacher to ensure that no one was left out and that the children were happy with their groupings. This involved consulting with the teacher before the groups were organised to see if there were any combinations of children that were to be avoided, or orchestrated, to help with the children’s wellbeing. Cresswell (2007) states that it is important that we acknowledge who we are in relation to the participants of our study and that we are “sensitive to vulnerable populations, imbalanced power relations, and placing participants at risk” (Cresswell, 2013, p.57).

I constantly monitored the children’s wellbeing throughout the project, making sure that the music-making and interviews were enjoyable activities for the children. Consulting with the teacher was a crucial part of choosing which children to interview. It was important that the children felt comfortable sharing their views and being asked questions in a group interview situation as this was the method being used to obtain their views about their music-making. In one of the schools the teacher confidentially advised me against choosing one of the children to interview. This is because the child was not always productive in group situations and when working with new people. It was felt that the group interview situation may have had an adverse effect on the child’s wellbeing. Therefore, I did not select this child for the group interview. This was the only time throughout all of the schools that a teacher advised against choosing a child. However, I also consulted with all of the teachers to see which children would be best to interview in terms of their ability to speak freely about their experiences. Time constraints meant that I was only able to interview a limited number of children in a limited amount of time. Therefore, it was important that an attempt was made to choose children that would not find it difficult to give answers to questions in a group interview situation. The issues and procedures surrounding the samples are explored in more detail in the sample section below.

During the group interviews I was careful to be aware of the children’s wellbeing and ensure that there was an informal and enjoyable atmosphere. This aimed at making the children feel relaxed and strategies employed included: using language that the children would understand; showing that I valued all of their responses by nodding, smiling, making sure everyone was given an equal chance to answer questions; using a soft tone of voice and generally being encouraging at all times. My professional training and experience as a primary school teacher taught me the skills and strategies needed to ask children questions and to engage them in a group discussion. As Grieg et. al. (2007) explain “the successful researcher undertaking research involving children must not only be aware
that children are different but must also have an underlying knowledge of the child from a number of perspectives” (p.183).

3.10. Group interviews

Before we further examine the ethical concerns raised by group interviews it is worth highlighting there is some uncertainty surrounding the differences between group interviews and focus groups. There are some researchers who use the terms interchangeably and see them as being synonymous. For example, Hughes and DuMont (1993, p.776) state that: “Focus groups are in-depth group interviews employing relatively homogenous groups to provide information around topics specified by the researchers.” The aim of this study was to examine children’s experiences of making music in outdoor rural locations. The principle method used to gain data was an in-depth group interview. Therefore, this is in line with the definition of a focus group from Hughes and DuMont (1993). Similarly, it chimes with the definition from Milena et.al. (2008) who explain that “a focus group implies a group discussion in order to identify perceptions, thoughts and impressions of a selected group of people regarding a specific topic of investigation” (p.1279). Kreuger (1998) defines a focus group as being “a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined environment.” (p.88) Defining a focus group as a group discussion is supported by others such as; Anderson (1990); Beck et. al. (1986) and Nymuba et. al. (2018). The group interview employed during this research was semi-structured and used open-ended questions. This was deliberately designed to enable a discussion to take place. The aim was to find out the children’s perspectives and so I was willing for them to discuss their answers as I felt that this would help reveal their experiences. Gibbs (2017) differentiates group interviews as being didactic in comparison to focus groups. He argues that focus groups, in contrast, are interactive and “the group itself may take on a life of its own not anticipated or initiated by the researcher” (p.190). This definition of a focus group resonates with the method used in my study. The group opinion was as important as the individual opinion and I was willing for ideas to emerge from the group that I had not anticipated. This is also in keeping with the grounded approach that the research undertook, whereby the theory was to emerge from the data rather than being a hypothesis provided by the researcher (Charmaz, 2017). However, there was not complete autonomy given to the interviewees to decide on the focus of the discussion. As is outlined in the introduction chapter above, the research began initially exploring their experiences of making music. The data showed that they felt their music-making had expressive capabilities and this led me to exploring their experiences in order to construct a framework of music literacy. Therefore, I was interested in their views about their music-making and how it made them feel as this was what the
data was showing as being significant to the children. There were times when the children started to talk about topics that were not related to their music-making and I would ask questions to help steer the discussion back towards their experiences of their music-making. It is therefore not straightforward to determine whether the method employed was a group interview or a focus group as it depends very much on the definition of both. The discussions were interactive, and the group opinion was valid, but the questions consistently came from me. In this sense I did dictate the focus of the discussion. This is in contrast to the concept of focus groups that Cohen et. al. (2002) describe as “a form of group interview, though not in the sense of a backwards and forwards between interviewer and group. Rather, the reliance is on the interaction within the group who discuss a topic supplied by the researcher.” (p.436).

The children did not simply discuss the topic (their experiences of making music) after I had started them off with a question. Throughout all the interviews I continually asked questions after answers had been given to draw out more data about their experiences. In addition, I was the only one asking the questions and so in this sense there was a backwards and forwards between interviewer and group (Cohen et al. 2002). Nevertheless, the children also consistently replied to comments from the other children without needing a question from me. Therefore, the group interview did contain elements of a focus group approach as it involved group discussion (Hughes and DuMont, 1993; Kreuger, 1998; Milena, 2008; Nyumba et. al. 2018). Hamilton and Whittier (2013) however, claim that this is good practice in an interview as “the interviewee is the focus and the researcher should be facilitating but not leading the interview” (p.105).

3.11. Privacy and confidentiality

The privacy of the participants was secured by ensuring that anonymity was guaranteed and the research locations were not revealed. As Coe et al. (2017) remind us “there are private places and there is private information” (p.61). The names of the participants and locations have therefore not been used in this thesis as “codes of ethics insist on safeguards to protect people’s identities and those of research locations” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p.218). It is argued that the nature of group interviews can raise inevitable ethical concerns about confidentiality (Kaplowitz and Hoehn, 2001; Smith, 1995; Tolich, 2009). In a group dynamic it may also be harder for respondents to feel that they can be completely honest about their feelings and perspectives, especially if these feelings and perspectives contrast with those held by the majority in the group. In an effort to counteract this, before each interview I reminded the children that their answers would be confidential and that there
were no correct or incorrect answers possible. It was emphasised that the only aim was to gather the children’s honest perspectives about their experiences during their music-making.

3.12. Educational value

Another ethical consideration is the educational value of the research. Hammersly (2017) suggests that research ethics concerns “all of the values that ought to inform the work of researchers” (p.58). He argues that these values are concerned with the practical and the epistemic. The epistemic values are those concerned with knowledge. If research should be to do with discovering knowledge, for the research to be ethically sound there must be a “commitment to honesty in presenting evidence, and in providing information about how the research was carried out” (Hammersly, 2017, p.58). This research project was committed to discovering knowledge about the children’s experiences of making music. Evidence is provided in this thesis about the results and the evidence used in the research and how the research was carried out. There was also a firm commitment to producing research that is intended to be of value to other educationalists and indeed that the experiences of the participants were educationally valuable to the participants themselves. The research was not simply carried out in an attempt to obtain a PhD qualification. If this was the case it could be argued that easier subject matter could have been the focus of the research. Situating the research in different schools and outside in different rural locations provided various logistical and not least, weather related challenges. However, as is discussed in the literature review chapter, outdoor learning is of particular interest in the UK and internationally at the present time. In addition, music and wellbeing are areas that are demanding attention, not least in Wales where the new curriculum is championing health, wellbeing, the expressive arts and cross-curricular learning (Donaldson, 2015). I wanted to produce research that was of value educationally to the participants, other education professionals and myself as an educator. Evidence that at least aspects of this research is seen as being of value is provided by the fact that some of it has been published (Adams and Beauchamp, 2018). Whilst being a researcher I am also continually aware of being an educator. Both roles demand a high standard of ethical values. This is clearly laid out in the ethical guidelines for educational research of the Scottish Educational Research Association. It is important that research “is not only rigorously conducted, but that it also makes a worthwhile contribution to the quality of education in our society” (SERA, 2005).
3.13. Power and autonomy

Despite our best efforts to ensure that research is done ethically with children and “not something that is done to children” (Grieg et. al. 2007, p.173). There remain inevitable power structures that inevitably affect the level of egalitarianism that can be achieved. This is because “fundamental inequalities exist between the power of the researcher and research participants” (Kutrovátz, 2017, p.72) It is important to acknowledge also that “the relative power of adults to children makes this a double-edged sword when involving children as research participants” (Grieg et. al. 2007, p.173). In an effort to differentiate myself from being seen as a teacher I introduced myself to the children using my first name and they were encouraged to address me using my first name. It was hoped that the children would view me differently to a teacher with the intention of reducing the sense of power imbalance between me and them. This was so that the children would feel more empowered and more likely to reveal their unfiltered responses to my questions. Despite this I was still aware that a power imbalance inevitably remained. When introducing the research project and outlining the information about it, I was stood at the front of the class speaking to the whole class. Even though I was attempting to differentiate myself from a teacher in order to counter-act the teacher-pupil power imbalance, by standing at the front of the class and speaking to the whole class I was replicating the standard didactic teacher-pupil pedagogy. David et. al. (2001) highlight how this can be seen to reinforce the entrenched pupil/child-teacher/adult relationship and power imbalance. Kutrovátz (2017) reminds us that power inequalities mean that “data may be less reliable because children seek to impress the researcher” (p.75).

It is important to note that the design of the musical activity aimed to give the children autonomy over their creative choices. The children were tasked with creating a musical celebration or ceremony in groups. They were able to choose the focus of their ceremony and the nature of their musical composition. Each group had at least four drums and were able to select wooden flutes and didgeridoos if they wanted to include them in their music. They were also told that they were able to use vocal sounds and movement in their musical ceremonies. The children were encouraged to think of themselves as an unknown tribe performing a musical ceremony. This was not an attempt to direct the purpose of their music nor was it aiming to steer the children towards thinking of themselves as a prehistoric tribe. The aim was to give the children the freedom to decide what their celebration or ceremony was about and what sounds and movement were appropriate. They were not aiming to create a pastiche of a particular genre of music and therefore they were not limited by the need to include any particular conventions. The children were free to design their ceremonies in the way that
they wished without any interference from the adults. During the group interviews the children were also encouraged to give their honest opinions about their experiences free from any expectations. These designs and steps were deliberately taken in an attempt to allow the children autonomy in their music-making and in their responses during the group interviews. The aim was to create a setting that would allow the children to freely express themselves both in their music-making and in their descriptions of their experiences. It was the children’s choices and the children’s ideas that were sought after. In this sense the aim was that the children were the custodians of power and knowledge regarding their musical experiences. In addition, their responses would show how their autonomy during their music-making had impacted on their experience. This is in line with Kincheloe’s (2012) assertion that critical teacher researchers should focus “on the relationship between knowledge and power” and conduct research and formulate pedagogy “in ways that open this relationship to the sunlight of analysis” (p.202).

3.14. Accuracy

The commitment to produce accurate data and analysis is “a cardinal principle in social science” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p.219) and was of highest priority in this research study. The findings needed to be internally and externally valid for the research to be ethically sound (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). My aim was to be impartial and not “shape findings in a particular direction.” (Cresswell, 2013, p.66). However, I was also aware of the power imbalance that existed between me and the children (Kincheloe, 2012; Kutrovátz, 2017) and that it was important to attempt to address this in order to avoid what Reinharz (1992) refers to as the “hierarchical pitfall”. I did not believe that it was possible to eliminate the power imbalance. Nevertheless, it was important to be alert to the imbalance and take it into consideration when collecting and analyzing data (Patton, 1980). In addition, I was aware that it was important to acknowledge that “children perceive and understand the world in a different way from adults” (Grieg et. al. 2007, p.183). Therefore, it was important that I was reflexive and continually reflected on my role and preconceptions. (Kutrovátz, 2017, p.84). During the interviews the children each had opportunities to give their opinions on the different themes that arose, they were encouraged to describe their experience in their own words. As can be seen in the results and analysis chapter the children’s words were transcribed and they were not paraphrased nor edited. This was an attempt to reveal the direct accounts of their experiences. At this point it is useful, to situate these issues in relation to Foucault’s theory on discourse and power.
3.15. Foucault

Ball (2013) argues that Foucault saw power as inextricably linked to knowledge and that knowledge is “always an ethical as well as a political practice”. Foucault argued that power was related to people’s knowledge and their discourses. Subsequently power can seem invisible both to those wielding and those oppressed by it. He described discourses as “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. In addition, discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own invention. (Foucault, 1972, p. 49). The term “discourse” has its roots in the Latin “discursus”, meaning “running to and from”. Foucault claimed that people’s use of language establishes accepted “truths” (Foucault, 1972) and that these truths create the presented “reality” (Foucault, 1972). He claimed that power resides in people’s discourses. In other words, it resides in the to and fro of communication that reifies knowledge. As Chambon (1999) explains “Things do not exist outside our naming them. It is the act of naming that creates things.” (p.57). Our use of discourses and acceptance of the “truths” they present mean that there is a cultural hegemony manifested that amounts to a consensual acceptance of inequality due to the resulting established power structures (Foucault, 1977). Therefore, our use of language creates discourses that “control ways of thinking” (Atkins and Wallace, 2012, p. 8) and relationships of power. Foucault however, did not argue that power was inevitably good or bad, but merely that it inevitably exists: “I hardly ever use the word “power,” and if I do sometimes, it is always a short cut to the expression I always use: “the relationships of power.” (Foucault, 1988, p.11). Therefore, Foucault felt that power existed in the relationships between people. Despite my best efforts to create an egalitarian setting during the research, the fact remains that (as is discussed below) I was an adult observing and then interviewing children during school time. The existing normative values and relationships of power ascribed to this relationship are arguably hard to dissolve. As Foucault (1977) states power “coerces by means of observation; an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power.” (pp.170-171). Foucault’s work has been characterised as post-structuralist (Belsey, 2002). Post-structuralists believe that people’s realities are in a constant state of flux because their understandings of the world are due to their ever-changing experiences of the world (Belsey, 2002, Hughes, 2010). This causes a plurality of realities linked to their social and material circumstances including race, gender, age, social class, sexuality etc. Hughes (2010, p. 48) explains that:
like interpretivists, poststructuralists judge the validity of knowledge according to the authenticity of the research participants’ voice. However, poststructuralists’ emphasis on the ‘local’ nature of knowledge means that the limits they place on the validity of knowledge is even stricter than those of interpretivists. (Hughes 2010, p. 48).

This research project was arguably not in line with post-structuralist paradigms, however, because the children’s individual backgrounds were not evaluated and were not taken into account during the analysis. Despite this, the study did aim to give authenticity to the research participants’ voices. This relates to McIntyre, Pedder and Rudduck’s (2005) assertion that “all school pupils have a right to be consulted and to have their voices listened to. … [as] … It cannot tenably be claimed that schooling is primarily intended to benefit pupils if pupils’ own views about what is beneficial to them are not actively sought and attended to”. (p.150). It was their voices that would interpret their experiences. This aligns with an interpretivist epistemology as is discussed below. As has already been discussed above in the introduction it also synthesises with the belief that there are a plurality of literacies and that realities are socially constructed dependent on one’s experiences and the particular contexts in which they occur. These beliefs give rise to the research paradigm as will now be explained.

3.16. The research paradigm

It has been well noted (Arthur et al. 2012; Denzin and Lincon, 2003; Merthens, 2010; Waring, 2017) that research will encompass four interrelated areas: Ontology; Epistemology; Methodology; and Methods. The word ‘ontology’ “is used to refer to “philosophical investigation of existence or being.” (Craig, 2005, p. 756). How do we know if something is real? How do we know if something is true or if something exists? In the context of research ontology is concerned therefore with the researcher’s beliefs about the nature of reality. Epistemology is concerned with “the nature, sources and limits of knowledge.” (Craig, 2005, p. 225). How is knowledge acquired? How do we know what we know? In the context of research epistemology is concerned therefore with what the researcher counts as knowledge.” (Denzin and Lincon, 2003, p.33). Methodology relates to the theoretical and philosophical assumptions linked to a topic and the ways in which any such topic will be investigated (Coe et a. 2017). Methods are the techniques and procedures followed in order to gather data relating to any topic under investigation. These four areas (Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology and Methods) can be viewed as “related assumptions” that are framed around four key questions. (Waring, 2017, p.15). It is argued that there is a natural ordering of these four interrelated areas. Waring (2017, p.16) states that: “The first question a researcher needs to ask relates to ontology.” Grix (2002) comes
to the same conclusion and explains that positions on epistemology and methodology naturally follow from one’s ontological views.

3.17. Ontology

Ontological questions concern themselves with the nature of reality and its characteristics. (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, addressing ontology is the first priority when outlining the research methodology because before one is able to analyse any phenomena or entity then the researcher must first make it clear how he or she views reality. Therefore, my ontological position must first be outlined. The question to be answered is “what is the form and nature of the social world” (Waring, 2017, p.16).

My ontological position is that an “entity may exist independent of our knowledge (objective reality) but our access to it is conceptually mediated.” (Poonamallee, 2009, p.79). In agreement with Etherington (2006, p. 61) “my view of reality (ontology)... or the nature of being...and my understanding of what it means to know (epistemology) are intertwined.” I believe that there is a world that exists apart from my consciousness, but that “it becomes a world of meaning only when meaning-making beings make sense of it” (Crotty, 1998, p.10). Unlike realism that contends there is a “reality that exists independently of individuals’ perceptions of it... [I believe] reality is neither objective nor singular, but multiple realities are constructed by individuals.” (Waring et al., 2012, p.16). In other words, I believe that reality is constructed in the minds of people because “human thought cannot be meaningfully separated from human feeling and action.” (Kincheloe, 2012, p.49). Therefore, my ontological philosophy owes its allegiance to constructivism. Constructivism is the paradigm within which this research study operated as I have a constructivist view of “the form and nature of the social world” (Waring 2017, p.16). As Sparkes (1992, p.12) explains, “different paradigms provide particular sets of lenses for seeing the world and making sense of it in different ways.” The paradigm is the basic set of beliefs that guided the action of this research (Guba, 1990, p.17).

3.18. Epistemology

The second assumption that needs to be addressed is the epistemology that this research operates under. In other words, “how can what is presumed to exist be known” (Waring, 2017, p.16). As discussed above, my ontological position is constructivist as I believe that realities are constructed in the minds of people. This leads on to an interpretivist epistemological position that believes what is
presumed to exist can only be known through interpretations of reality. As an interpretivist researching children I “seek to understand the social world of the child from the point of view of the child living in it.” (Grieg et al. 2007, p.54). The point of view being the child’s interpretation of their reality. At the same time, constructivism acknowledges that I, as the researcher, interpreted the children’s views. The aim was not to reveal objective knowledge or a reality that is “external and unchanging” (Kincheloe, 2012, p.49). Instead knowledge is produced and constrained “by the structure and function of the mind and can thus be known only indirectly” (Kincheloe, 2012, p.49).

As Waring (2012) explains, an interpretivist epistemology “does not see direct knowledge as possible; it is the accounts and observations of the world that provide indirect indications of phenomena, and thus knowledge is developed through a process of interpretation” (Waring, 2012, p. 16). An interpretivist stance therefore aligns with a constructivist paradigm that believes there will be different accounts of reality constructed depending on the person’s perspective (Cresswell, 2013; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Waring, 2012). This can be seen as being in opposition to the positivist position. The positivist attempts to reveal objective truths and believes research can reveal a positive single reality (Kincheloe, 2012). Whereas the interpretivist seeks methods that provide rich descriptions, full of detail which do not necessarily support generalisations but may, through deep understanding of a single or small number of cases, lead to illumination of an issue. They seek to capture individuals' points of view and examine the constraints of everyday life within the research context (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). As Guba (1990) explains: “In the positivist version it is contended that there is a reality out there to be studied, captured, and understood, whereas the post-positivists argue that reality can never be fully apprehended, only approximated.” (p.22).

However, this is not to say that this philosophy is undermined in terms of its validity or rigour as an approach to research (Kincheloe, 2012). Rather it underpins a qualitative approach to research and elevates the studying of people in social situations because only “by examining the lives, actions and statements of people can we understand the world from their perspective” (Newby, 2014, p.662). This philosophical viewpoint focuses on studying people’s perspectives to gain insight into different phenomena and acknowledges the power people have to create, change and construct meaning. As Radnor (2001, p.19) argues this philosophy believes that “the notion of the creative subject at the heart of social life is imperative to an understanding of the forces of development and change” (Radnor, 2001, p.19). My research also aligns with the constructivist paradigm for the following reasons. Firstly, the research is built on the argument for a plurality of literacies. This viewpoint, as is discussed in the review of literature, contends that different cultures and activities created by people produce a plurality of literacies. These literacies can therefore be said to be socially constructed. This
includes music literacies and these literacies may change depending on the ways in which people engage with music. Secondly, most of the data was gathered from the children’s experiences and the children interpreted their experiences and socially constructed ideas through their responses during open-ended interviews. The data from these interviews enabled me to construct an initial theory and this construction created knowledge about how to collect the subsequent data. Thirdly, the children were the principle agents in the music making. They were able to create their music autonomously, their music was constructed socially, and they decided what was appropriate or inappropriate. In addition, I am in agreement with Kincheloe (2012) as I do not believe that one can separate the researcher from what is being researched. Therefore, the methodological philosophy guiding my research is post-positivist. It demands a different paradigm (Kuhn 1996) from positivism because it is not attempting to reveal objective facts that reveal naturalistic laws. I accept that the research will involve an inevitable amount of subjectivity. It is “a portrayal of an instant locked in time and circumstance” (MacDonald and Walker, 1975, p.3).

3.19. Methodology

The question to be asked concerning methodology is, “what procedure or logic should be followed?” (Waring, 2016, p.16). The logic and procedure followed for this research was a qualitative case study using a grounded approach. As stated above, the study adopted an interpretivist paradigm undertaken within a qualitative framework. A qualitative framework is broadly one which uses qualitative approaches for the collection of data (Aubrey et al, 2000; Cohen et. al. 2011; Grieg et. al. 2007; Ma, 2016). Generally qualitative approaches involve descriptions and interpretations, quantitative approaches involve numbers and facts. Qualitative approaches were needed because the interpretivist stance that underpinned this research acknowledges that there is a “need to understand and capture subjective experiences and meanings” (Grieg et al. 2007, p.54) because of a belief in the subjective nature of people (Kincheloe, 2013). A qualitative grounded approach involves theory emerging from the data rather than previously existing theories (Charmaz, 2017; Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Waring, 2017). Within this methodological viewpoint knowledge and meaning are subjective (Aubrey et al, 2000; Cohen et. al. 2011; Grieg et al. 2007; Ma, 2016). They are influenced and shaped by people’s interactions and the context within which these interactions take place (Edwards and Holland, 2013). Qualitative research therefore focusses on the quality of the data it produces rather than the quantity (Blaxter and Hughes, 2010). In contrast a quantitative approach is based on the premise that there is objective knowledge that can be gained via deduction. Quantitative research aims to “measure, quantify or find the extent of the phenomenon.” (Mukherji and Albon, 2010, p.14).
Scientific testing is enacted in order to test existing theory. As Grieg et. al. (2007) explain, the quantitative approach is based on a belief that “the child is objective in nature and that his or her behaviour, understanding, knowledge or meanings are structured, determined and universal. Hence the quantitative framework entails a methodology in which theory exists and is tested empirically to be proven or not proven.” (Grieg et. al. 2007, p.51)

This research was aiming to analyse the children’s experiences of making music in outdoor rural locations. Therefore, qualitative data was gathered in order to “enter the child’s world and meanings to get the child’s perspective from the inside out” (Grieg et al. 2007, p.54). The data gathering and analysis was a “bottom-up” rather than a “top-down” procedure, rather than having a theory to deduce, it instead prioritised gathering data and “examining potential patterns amongst the data produced.” (Grieg et al. 2007, p.50). As has been highlighted above, qualitative research focuses on gathering data of high quality rather than high quantity. It is high quality or “thick description” (Geertz, 1973) that is valued because “what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people’s constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to.” (p.10). As a qualitative researcher I was therefore required to delve deep into the data in order to interpret the children’s experiences. This involved “sorting out the structures of signification...and determining their social ground and import” (Geertz, 1973, p.10). Sifting through the data in order to find relevant patterns and probing at these connections to reveal; what they mean, where they come from, how they relate to each other and how they relate to relevant academic theory (Waring, 2017).

3.20. Case study

The research methodology was therefore within the constructivist paradigm using a qualitative approach. The research aimed to construct a framework of music literacies based on studying children making music in ‘out-of-school’ rural locations. This meant it was a case study as it was “an intensive look at an individual unit” (Gilgun, 2011, p.3) with the unit being “composed of multiple entities”. In essence, the ‘case’ being studied consisted of the multiple entities of the different children’s music making in the various outdoor rural locations. The data collected from this case study was then used to construct a framework of music literacies. According to Bromley (1990), a case study is a “systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest” (p. 302). Robson has defined case study research as “a strategy for doing research that involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence” (Robson, 2002, p.178). In line with Robson’s
description, my research will be an empirical investigation of the phenomenon of children making music and engaging with sound in out-of-school rural locations.

Arthur et al (2012) state that a case study design is preferable when the researcher wants to “explore a phenomenon about which not much is known” (p.102). As has been highlighted in the previous chapters there has been a lack of research undertaken that has explored children’s music making in outdoor locations. Similarly, there have been relatively few attempts to research the idea of music literacies. Yin (2009, p.2) highlights how case studies are often the chosen research method in situations where “the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context.” The real-life context was the children making music in out of school rural locations. Initial data analysis had meant that the environments to be used had evolved from prehistoric sites to out-of-school rural locations. As already discussed, it was data that had caused this change in focus. However, after this decision had been made it was also acknowledged that analysis about music making at out-of-school rural locations may also be of greater relevance for other educationalists because more schools are able to more easily access rural locations than they are sites containing prehistoric monuments. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007) argue that a case study can be relatable to similar future research, that can be replicable for future studies as “It provides a unique example of real people in real situations” (p.253).

3.21. Outdoor rural environments

Situating the research in outdoor rural environments was not merely moving the scenery of the children’s music-making. It was deliberately exploring the significance of the environment on the children’s music-making, as the data seemed to be show that the location was having an impact on the children’s music-making. It allowed us to explore the idea that music is an “embodied activity-experience and is meaningful in terms of its enmeshed and evolving relationship to the environments in which it functions.” (van der Schyff, 2013, p. 51). The outdoor locations chosen were beaches, woodlands and fields. All of these locations could be described as being rural locations. Rural is defined in the Oxford Dictionary (Oxford Dictionaries, 2019) as “relating to, or characteristic of the countryside rather than the town.” Even though they were sometimes in close proximity to houses and roads, all three locations occupy relatively quiet areas, free from urban noise pollution. In this respect all three locations are rural because their sonic environment was “characteristic of the countryside rather than the town.” This was important because it was the sonic environment caused by the physical location of the music-making that appeared to be impacting on the children’s musical
experience. van Manen (1990) argued that the space in which we find ourselves affects the way we feel and that we become the space that we are in. Therefore, maintaining consistency in terms of the rurality of the place where the children made their music was important in order to explore whether any patterns would emerge in their experiences. This research was investigating the phenomena of children’s music-making in out-of-school rural locations. The initial data analysis seemed to be showing that both the physical location and the physical experience were having an effect on the children’s music making. As has been discussed in the literature review the theory of embodiment suggests that we can gain understand through a bodily awareness of experience. Kirova and Emme (2009, p.145) state “Our bodily relational understandings exceed any precisely formulated languaged, or other patterned ways of describing it.” Gendlin (1997, p.27) similarly declares that “The body knows the situation directly...a living body knows its environment by being in it.”

3.22. Phenomenology

The importance of the physical location and physical bodily experience to the children’s music-making highlight the relevance of phenomenology to this research project. Phenomenology is described by Merleau-Ponty (1996, 2004) as the study of the essence of things as they are in themselves. Langdridge (2007) defines phenomenology as a discipline that "aims to focus on people's perceptions of the world in which they live in and what it means to them; a focus on people's lived experience" (p.4). This resonates with Finlay’s (2009) assertion that phenomenology is concerned with “embodied, experiential meanings...descriptions of a phenomena as it is concretely lived” (p.6). This emphasis on the importance of lived experience is echoed by others such as Laverty (2003) and Langdridge (2007). This research had at its nexus the aim to describe and analyse the children’s experience of making music in out-of-school rural locations. It was attuned with phenomenology because it was investigating how the physical environment impacts on children’s musicking and was therefore “a focus on people’s lived experience.” (Langdridge, 2007, p.4). There have been three main schools of phenomenology outlined by scholars. These are: Transcendental Phenomenology; Existential Phenomenology; and Hermeneutic Phenomenology (Kafle, 2013). Husserl (1929) was the originator of Transcendental Phenomenology, this being the first theory of phenomenology. He called for experience to be transcended through the suspending of previous understandings so that the essence of experience could be realised through a state of pure consciousness (Kafle, 2013). Moustakas (1994), states that transcendental phenomenology requires “allowing things, events, and people to enter anew into consciousness, and to look and see them again, as if for the first time” (p. 85). In contrast, ‘Existential Phenomenology’ disputes the ability to transcend previous
understandings. It instead focusses on one’s subjective experience and values. Existential phenomenology therefore prioritises the primacy of the experience (Wertz, 2005). As Kafle (2013, p.188) explains:

Existential phenomenologists all share the view that philosophy should not be conducted from a detached, objective, disinterested, disengaged standpoint...existential phenomenology stresses on the description of everyday experience as it is perceived by the consciousness of the individuals.

Hermeneutic phenomenology believes that “interpretations are all we have and description itself is an interpretive process.” (Kafle, 2013, p.187) Hermeneutic phenomenology allows researchers to “recollect our own experiences and to empathically enter and reflect on the lived world of other persons.” (Wertz, 2005, p.168). Gadamer (1975) describes this process as retaining an openness to the other whilst also being aware of one’s own bias. He relates this to the hermeneutic circle where there is a constant cyclic interplay between the subject (in this case the data) being studied and one’s previous knowledge and experiences. Gadamer states:

Tradition is not simply a permanent precondition; rather, we produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participate in the evolution of tradition, and hence determine it ourselves. Thus the circle of understanding is not a methodological circle, but describes an element of the ontological structure of understanding. (Gadamer, 1996, p.293)

It has been highlighted above in this chapter how this can be synthesised with the grounded theory approach that was used for this research project. This is because both methods advocate a cyclical interplay involving induction, deduction and analysis. In addition, ‘Hermeneutic phenomenology’ seeks to describe the essence of that which is being studied in order that the interpreter might come to new understanding in relation to the phenomena (Creswell 2013; Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2009, van Manen, 1997). This means that the focus for the understanding is to be found within the subjective experience. The subjective experience is not only the source of the data, but also the source of the meaning. Therefore, the data comes first and it is from the data that the theory emerges. As Moran (2000) explains:

Phenomenology is best understood as a radical, anti-traditional style of philosophizing, which emphasizes the attempt to get to the truth of matters, to describe phenomena...Explanations are not to be imposed before the phenomena have been understood from within (p.4).

The theory is then related to other theories and research, and then the theory is developed further from the primary data. This process is cyclical and, has been described above, is a hermeneutic process,
referred to as the hermeneutic circle. As is highlighted above in this chapter, the hermeneutic circle creates a to and fro that occurs between our previous understandings and the experience of others. Ultimately hermeneutic phenomenology is an interpretation of the experiences of others that aims to improve the researcher’s self-understanding. Thus, hermeneutics is “explicitly or implicitly, self-understanding by means of understanding others” (Ricouer, 1978, p.101). However, the essence of phenomenology is that it concentrates on “re-achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world...It tries to give a direct description of our experience as it is.” (van Manen, 1962, p.vii). Therefore, van Manen (1997) argues “to do hermeneutic phenomenology is to attempt to accomplish the impossible: to construct a full interpretive description of some aspect of the life world, and yet to remain aware that lived life is always more complex than any explication of meaning can reveal.” (p.18). This research project was aiming to gain an understanding of the children’s experiences of their music making. It then aimed to use this understanding to construct a framework of music literacies. The construction of the framework was not only a means to identify the main elements of the children’s experiences, but to also potentially provide a model that could be useful for future educators and research. It aimed to move beyond merely providing an in-depth description of the children’s experiences. Therefore, it does not remain faithful to the phenomenological paradigm of maintaining a pure description of the children’s experiences. Grounded theory involves interpreting data and constructing meaning. In contrast, phenomenology “views experience as always already meaningfully organized and therefore intrinsically intelligible without theory, only in need of descriptive conceptualization.” (Werz, 2011, p.26). Nevertheless, there are clear similarities between the grounded theory approach that this research adopted and the phenomenological approach. This study began by exploring the data which was the children’s first-hand experiences. Ensuring that the research and theorizing was grounded in the data resonates with Husserl’s demand that research should get “back to the things themselves” (Husserl, 1981, p. 196)

The aim of this grounded theory approach, however, was not merely to reproduce this data. In keeping with van Manen’s (2016) description of phenomenology I was not interested in the children’s descriptions merely so that I could present or assess how they describe their experiences. Rather the aim was to collect data from the interviews “in order to reflect on the meanings that may inhere in them.” (van Manen, 2016, p.313). This is because experiential accounts are “never truly identical to the prereflective lived experiences themselves” (van Manen, 2016, p.313). Despite some similarities between the sources of data for phenomenological and grounded theory research there are also often clear differences. Phenomenology aims to stay close to analyzing the descriptions of the experiences of a limited number of participants. Whereas “in grounded theory the researcher develops a theory of
the experience based on the data gathered from a large number of participants.” (Marjan, 2017, p.36). This is reflected in this study as it involves a sample size of over 180 children and interviews with 34 children. In addition, the data collection was not limited to interviewing the children. It involved interviewing their teachers and was also supported by my own observations. As Goulding (1998) explains “with phenomenological studies, the words of the informants are considered the only valid source of data. Grounded theory, on the other hand, allows for multiple data sources.” (1998, pp. 50-51). This included gaining data through theoretical sampling that involved returning to interview some of the children for a second time. Charmaz (2006) explains that engaging in theoretical sampling involves seeking “statements, events, or cases that will illuminate your categories…you may ask earlier participants further questions or inquire about experiences that you had not covered before.” (p.103). In order to develop the emerging theory structured interviews took place with some of the children that had already been interviewed in order to saturate emerging categories. (Wimpenny and Glass, 2000, p.1491). This is explained in more detail in the “sampling” section of this chapter below. It could also be said to be an effort to improve self-understanding because it was hoped that it may help to shine a light on one’s own personal experience of music making.

3.23. Pragmatism

This desire to improve our understanding can be linked to pragmatism. A pragmatist desires to carry out research in order to change and improve. Dewey (1931, pp.24) states that “an empiricism which is content with repeating facts already past has no place for possibility and for liberty”. Pragmatism therefore rejected mere interpretation of phenomena unless it was part of a process that would lead to change and improvement. Goldkuhl (2012) states that pragmatic inquiry “should be seen as rooted in humans’ ordinary initiatives for betterments, not as something distinctly separate.” (p.8). Similarly, Cronen (2001, p.20) states that inquiry in pragmatism is seen “as a natural part of life aimed at improving our condition by adaptation accommodations in the world”. It is this aim at producing knowledge for human betterment that Goldkuhl (2012) argues is a crucial focus in pragmatism. It is argued that human beings have a natural inclination towards change for improvement (Cronene, 2001; Goldkuhl, 2012). Goldkuhl states that “pragmatism should be seen as systematization of human beings’ natural efforts to improve their situation” (2012, p.8). This study was aiming to construct a framework of music literacy based on the children’s experiences of making music in outdoor rural locations. Therefore, it arguably is aiming to improve our situation by constructing a framework of music literacy that would enable us to better understand the children’s experiences and also inform our understanding of future situations. However, this study did not wholly belong to the field of
pragmatism because as Goldkuhl (2012, p.12) highlights, “Methodologically, pragmatism is associated with inquiry as the main type of investigation.” This often involves some kind of intervention such as in action research, in order to generate data to test an hypothesis or construct knowledge.” (Goldkkuhl, 2012). In contrast this study, as has been discussed, was led by the data collection in a case study methodology. In order to do this it needed to be able to understand the children’s experiences, to interpret them. Even though knowledge was constructed it was as a result of an interpretative account of a field study, an attempt to understand the children’s experiences when making music outdoors in rural locations.

3.24. A summary of the methodology

A grounded approach was used with the collection and analysis of the data. This ensured no preconceived categories or codes (Morse et al., 2009). The data was then analysed to construct a framework of music literacies. This involved a qualitative case study approach because it was an attempt to understand a situation and its uniqueness “as part of a particular context and the interactions there.” (Patton, 1985, p.1). It is therefore compatible with Elliott and Luke’s (2008, p.88) description of a case study as “a form of inquiry into a particular instance of a general class of things that can be given sufficiently detailed attention to illuminate its educationally significant features.” It is important to note that this research was a “form of inquiry into a particular instance”. This is an interpretivist philosophy because “it takes the form of particularisations of descriptions of things and events” (Elliott and Luke, 2008, p.92). Thomas (2011, p.31) similarly, highlights that each individual case study is limited to “a particular representation given in context and understood in that context.” The case study research was in line with this interpretivist view and therefore the methodological philosophy that frames my research design was non-positivist interpretivist. It fits in with Cohen and Manion’s (2011) description of the interpretivist paradigm because it “rests, in part, on a subjectivist, interactionist, socially constructed epistemology that recognised multiple realities, agentic behaviours and the importance of understanding a situation through the eyes of the participants.” (Cohen and Manion, 2011, p. 116).

3.25. Ethnography and challenges of the methodology

As a researcher, I was taking an ethnographic approach in that I was to be present as the case was being enacted (Coe et. al. 2017). During this time and after, I generated data through observations,
reflections and later interviews. Analysis of these interviews involved interpretation of what the children said. Whenever possible during the open-ended interviews I asked the children to clarify what they meant by the statements that they made. However, this still involved an inevitable amount of interpretation. As is discussed in the next chapter, some of the experiences and concepts the children were trying to explain are not easily transmitted through verbal language therefore I had to interpret what they were saying. Charmaz (2014) implores researchers using a grounded theory approach to take account of the importance of language. She states:

Language is central. Language shapes meanings, fosters forming different types of meanings, and clarifies or conceals connections between meanings and actions. The characteristics of specific languages matter as do the characteristics of cultural traditions and norms. (p.1078).

This is a feature of ethnographic research as Green, Skukauskaite and Baker (2012) state “cultural knowledge is socially constructed in and through languacultures of particular social groups.” (p.38).

During the children’s music making I was arguably a non-participant observer, however, the children were aware of me as a researcher. I was not an invisible researcher. Therefore the subjective nature of the analysis and the potential influence of the researcher on the children’s actions and interview responses is acknowledged. As Charmaz (2008) asserts that if we take “the assumption that social reality is multiple, processual, and constructed, then we must [also] take the researcher’s position, privileges, perspective, and interactions into account as an inherent part of the research reality.” (p.469).

Silverman (2011) highlights a number of potential issues with observation. These involve “how your own preconceptions may enter into your research; how being observed may affect people’s behaviour (towards you and in relation to their own normally routine activities); and ethical issues in relation to obtaining informed consent and to what you reveal to the people you are studying.” (p.32). I was aiming to get “as “close as possible to the participants being studied.” (Creswell, 2012, p. 20). However, there was both a need to guard against preconceptions that may cloud my interpretations and ward off any potential bias, yet also an acceptance that my views will inevitably have an element of subjectivity. As Merriam (1988, p.96) warns: “The researcher must be sensitive to the effects one might be having on the situation and accounting for these effects.” This is not to say that the researcher affecting the situation is to render the research unreliable. Rather, as Patton points out, the question is “how to monitor those effects and take them into consideration.” (1980, p.189).
Relying on only the children’s responses as data for the research may be flawed because their responses may be biased. I was also bringing my own interpretations to the analysis and as has been discussed earlier in this chapter, my subjectivity was an inevitable part of the analysis. Grieg et. al. (2007) neatly encapsulate the situation by summarising it thus. “The trouble with doing research with human subjects - as opposed to fossils, and feathered animals - is that both the researcher and research participant have a conceptualisation of the research situation and what is expected to happen.” (p.47). In addition, as has been highlighted in the literature review “Listening to and making sense of performances, pieces, and other types of music production are always mediated by cognitive, emotional, social, cultural, and ritual meanings.” (Elliott and Silverman, 2015, p.173). Arguably, therefore the difficulty with this study was twofold. On the one hand my presence during the music making and as questioner during the interviews raises issues surrounding how the children responded to my presence. On the other hand, I was not part of the music making and therefore had to interpret what I saw the children doing and also what they said. Schutz explains the different perspectives of researcher and subject (participant) by stating that the researcher has a cognitive interest in comparison to the practical interest of the participant. He claimed the researcher is merely a “disinterested observer” as the researcher looks with the same “detached equanimity with which the natural scientist looks at the occurrences in his laboratory.” (Schutz, 1970). However, researchers can never assume they have achieved a “value-neutral” position because their “prior assumptions, beliefs, values, and interests always intervene to shape their investigations” (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991, p.15). As Adley (1985) explains, “there is no direct access to reality unmediated by language and preconceptions.” (p.498). This was the view that framed my position and shall now be further discussed below.


The challenge of achieving a value neutral stance is one of the criticisms of the traditional grounded theory approach. As discussed above in this chapter, in the early descriptions of this approach Glaser (1978) argued for a balance between inductive and deductive reasoning. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967, p.33) the researcher should not have “any preconceived theory, that dictates...concepts and hypotheses.” It has been argued that this position appears to have roots in a positivist ontology because it is suggesting that the researcher needs to be free from preconceptions as there is one reality that can be uncovered. It is claimed that grounded theorists operating within this paradigm “make
interpretive assumptions in that not all aspects of the social world can be measured, as well as contradicting this by attempting to maintain an approach which is objective and free from bias.” (Waring, 2012, p.298)

However, Sparkes (1987) suggests that deductive analysis shapes the later analysis and that the research process will inevitably involve induction and deduction. This is not problematic within a constructivist grounded theory approach because this operates within a constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology. As is described earlier in this chapter, this was the position assumed for this research study. Waring (2012) explains that a constructivist grounded theory means that “both data and analyses are seen as social constructions reflecting their process of production, and each analysis is specific to the time, space, culture and situation.” (p.298). Another criticism however, centers on the concept of theoretical sensitivity. Strauss and Corbin (1990) explained ‘theoretical sensitivity’ as “the personal quality of the researcher”. In other words, the researcher should be aware that theorising will inevitable occur during analysis of data due to the knowledge and past experiences of the researcher (Strauss, 1987). Therefore, the researcher must be reflexive and reflect critically on themselves. (Coe et. al., 2017). Charmaz (2017) reminds us that “research acts are not given; they are constructed. Viewing the research as constructed rather than discovered fosters researchers’ reflexivity about their actions and decisions. (p.13). Etherington (2006) states that reflexivity may resolve potential tensions between practical experience, inductive data analysis and theory as it “may represent a means of constructing a bridge between research and practice.” (Etherington, 2006, p.31).

Etherington urges qualitative researchers to acknowledge their inevitable subjectivity and lack of objectivity by being reflexive, that is by reflecting on their subjectivity. This means that qualitative researchers must find a balance between their own interpretations of the qualitative data, the qualitative data itself and relative academic theory. Patton (1980, p.481) declares that “it is the ongoing challenge, paradox and dilemma of qualitative analysis that we must constantly be going back and forth.” Strauss and Corbin (1990) also emphasise the importance of creativity and reflexivity when coding the data. They maintain that coding is a creative exercise, but that theoretical sensitivity should ensure that the theory comes from the data and that there is a balance between induction and deduction. Sanger (1994) however, argues that this view conflates theoretical sensitivity with creativity. Waring (2012) disputes this and counters that without creativity “one might as well adopt a computer program that adopts key words and phrases.” (p.38).

Charmaz (2017) calls for “methodological self-consciousness” when undertaking constructivist grounded theory. She explains methodological self-consciousness as being reflexive and “examining
ourselves in the research process, the meanings we make and the actions we take each step along the way.” (Charmaz, 2017, p.36). This is not to say that our analysis of the qualitative data is any less robust, but that “our way of knowing is always interpretive of a reality, not a reproduction of it.” (Charmaz, 2017, p.41). Again, we can relate this position to Gadamer’s (1975) hermeneutic phenomenology as he contends that an understanding of a phenomenon requires researchers to recognise their own prejudices and notes that “to be situated within a tradition does not limit the freedom of knowledge but makes it possible” (p. 361). In contrast “a person who thinks he [sic] is free of prejudices will be unconsciously dominated by them.” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 361) This is because “retelling the actors' story is never fully possible, as the interpretive schemes of the researcher always intervene, and hence the researcher in part creates the reality she is studying through the constructs used to view the world.” (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991, p.15)

3.27. Methods

I chose to collect data from observations of the children’s performances, interviews with small groups of the children and interviews with their teachers. This was in keeping with the case study approach as I wanted to analyse the case, the children’s experiences of making music outdoors, in depth, collecting multiple data. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) explain that:

Strategies of inquiry connect researchers to specific approaches and methods for collecting and analyzing empirical materials. The case study, for example, relies on interviewing, observation, and document analysis. Research strategies locate researchers and paradigms in specific empirical, material sites and in specific methodological practices - for example, making a case an object of study. (p.370)

It was important that in accordance with Article 12 of the convention, all children involved were accorded the right to express their views freely about their experiences of their music making. This included guaranteeing that all of their views would be valued, respected and that the participants would be guaranteed anonymity. The data was anonymised after the film recordings as all participants were given pseudonyms and during the interview process as I referred to the children as “pupil 1” and “pupil 2” etc. whilst questioning them.
3.28. Procedure

After informed consent was obtained from all the participants the research methods in each school followed the following procedure:

Day 1 - The children created and performed musical ceremonies in the outdoor rural locations.
Day 2 – Some of the children were interviewed about their experiences.

In School 3 inclement weather meant that the children were not able to perform their musical ceremonies in the afternoon. Therefore, we returned to the beach the next morning to perform their ceremonies. All the musical activities were film recorded. This included each musical ceremony and parts of each group’s design process. These films provided stimulus for the discussions that took place during the group-interviews. This Video Stimulated Reflective Dialogue technique is discussed below.

In School 6 and School 5 the dates that were originally planned for the school visits had to be postponed. This was because both classes had to commit to other events going on in school that were happening at the same time. School 5 were involved in a rugby tournament and school 6 had end of year tests. I managed to rearrange the visits to both schools for the same term. The visit to school 5 was delayed by only one week, but the visit to school 6 had to be arranged for after the school’s half-term holiday.

3.29. Group interviews

Most of the data for this research was gained through group interviews. The other source of data was researcher observations of the children making and performing their musical ceremonies. These observations provided some data to triangulate with the children’s and teachers’ responses. This was not an attempt to discover an objective reality however, “but an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question.” (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.2) The observations provided complimentary data that could be compared with and supplement the interview data. I was then able to merge “the two data sets into one overall interpretation.” (Punch and Oancea, 2014, p.345). As this was a qualitative research project, the children’s responses to the group interviews were considered as being of prime importance. This is because qualitative research “focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences.” (Holloway, 1997, p.1). A sample of the
children from each class that participated was chosen to take part in the group interviews. As has been discussed above, the children in the group were each given an opportunity to answer each question I asked. However, I was prepared also for the children to lead the discussion and was willing for them to respond to each other and for the discussion to be interactive, as is normally the case in a focus group (Gibbs, 2007; Punch and Oancea, 2014). The group opinion was seen to be at least as important as the individual opinion and I was prepared for the conversation to “take on a life of its own”. (Gibbs, 2007, p.190).

In order to allow for in-depth discussions there were no more than 6 children in each group (Gibbs, 2007; Grieg et. al. 2007; Hill et. al. 1996). The literature states that for Key Stage 2 children, “the optimal focus group size is five or six” (Grieg, et. al. 2007, p.162) Past research experiences also supported this statement (Adams and Beauchamp, 2018). This is because limiting the numbers allows each child to have the opportunity to contribute and reveal their experiences. Ensuring that there were at least four children allowed for the discussion to flow and for the conversation not to “dry-up” as as there were always children in the group ready to contribute. In addition, I always ensured that there were at least two boys and two girls in the groups chosen. This “quota sampling” (Newby, 2014) was important to ensure that both genders were represented in case there were consistent differences in their responses. Ensuring that there were at least two of each gender would also hopefully mean that no-one would feel uncomfortable or on their own. Getting the sampling right is important to enable children to feel comfortable enough to share their experiences openly (Cohen et. al. 2011).

The interviews were semi-structured as there were some questions prepared beforehand that related to the research focus (Cohen et. al. 2011; Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier 2013; Kvale, 2008). However, there were no more than four questions prepared (see appendix) and these were open-ended to ensure that the children could openly describe their perspectives and experiences without feeling the need to answer specific questions (Cohen et. al. 2011; Edwards and Holland, 2013). The style was deliberately informal so that the children felt comfortable and at ease, taking the form of “structured conversations” (Cannold, 2001, p.179). In later group interviews there were themes that I wanted to cover that had been raised in the previous group interviews, but again the schedule was loosely structured to allow the children freedom to give their perspectives and describe their experiences (Cohen et. al. 2011; Edwards and Holland, 2013; Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier 2013; Kvale, 2008, Newby, 2014). The research was aiming to construct a framework of music literacy based on the children’s experiences of making music in the different outdoor locations. As is discussed in the introduction and literature review chapters, the research was in line with a social-constructivist view
of literacy that believes literacy is about people expressing themselves and making sense of the world through various symbol systems (Barton and Hamilton, 2012; Freire, 1996; Gee, 2014; Lankshear and Knobel, 2011). Literacy is then viewed as being something people do rather than particular skills they use or achieve (Barton and Hamilton, 2012). Therefore, I wanted to discover what their experiences were like, how they felt and their view of reality whilst they were making their music. I was interested in what was the most significant experience they had during their music making. As is outlined in the appendix, I began the first group interviews by asking the children what they felt the most important thing was about their music making outdoors. When the children consistently responded by saying that their music making outdoors made them feel different in comparison to how they normally would feel, I subsequently asked them how they felt whilst they were making their music. This is how I began each group interview (see appendix). As is discussed in the results and analysis chapter, in the theoretical sampling phase, I also asked the children questions that related to the themes that had been raised during the previous group interviews (see appendix). The aim was always to allow the children to describe their experiences and “to enter into the other person’s perspective.” (Patton, 1980, p.196)

3.30. Video Stimulated Reflective Dialogue

Apart from the interviews during the theoretical sampling phase, each group interview began by viewing footage showing the children’s music making in the outdoor locations. These videos were deliberately used to stimulate reflective dialogue. Video stimulated reflective dialogue (VSRD) has a history of being used in educational research with teachers (Hargreaves et al., 2003; Merry, 2004; Powell, 2005; Tanner, Jones and Lewis, 2010) and pupils (Salisbury et al., 2011; Tanner and Jones, 2007). It is argued that VSRD differentiates from video stimulated recall or video stimulated reflection (VSR) because it stimulates dialogue between the researcher and participants. Moyle, Adams and Musgrove (2002, p.465) explain that the dialogue is initiated by a “collective exchange ... intended to result in a synergetic pooling of information which extends the concepts involved” (p.465). At the beginning of the first interviews with each group, the films were shown to the children. The children were encouraged to stop the films when they wanted to point out how they were feeling during their music making. Being able to view the film recordings also enabled me to further analyse the children’s experiences through my observations. As Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013) explain “video recording can be a very helpful record of activities and can be used very successfully in subsequent interviews with the researcher and/or the participant being able to stop the recording to discuss what they consider to be relevant points.” (p.98).
The teachers were non-participant observers of the musical ceremonies and are used to observing children as part of their professional practice. Therefore, it was decided that they would not need film footage in order to recall the reactions of the individual children. Each interview was recorded, transcribed and analysed using an iterative process that involved: coding emerging themes; exploring relevant literature; applying theory from the literature to the analysis of the interviews; refining the initial codes where necessary. There were no preconceived categories or codes applied to the initial analysis of the data as the analysis undertook a grounded approach (Charmaz, 2017; Morse et al., 2009; Waring, 2012).

### 3.31. Coding

Coding has been described as an heuristic (from the Greek, meaning “to discover”) process (Charmaz, 2017). Basit (2003, p.145) states that “Coding and analysis are not synonymous, though coding is a crucial aspect of analysis”. In this research study coding was used to help analyse the children’s experiences of making music outdoors. I undertook coding of the children’s and teachers’ responses during the interviews and coding of the children’s behaviours during their music making. This coding involved both decoding and encoding. Decoding occurred when I reflected on data to decipher its core meaning. Encoding occurred when I labelled evidence from the data with an appropriate code (Saldana, 2015). This involved thinking about the relevance and significance of the responses from the children and teachers in terms of what they revealed about the children’s experiences of making music. The coding process took place during and after the data collection. For example, whilst interviewing the children and teachers I was coding, and this process often influenced subsequent and spontaneous questions in response to themes that were emerging from the children’s and teachers’ descriptions. Feldman and Golden-Biddle (2015) support this method as they point out that coding “is organic in which coding, codes and data shape each other; they are interdependent and inseparable” (p.6). This is supported by Saldana (2015) who describes coding as “an exploratory problem-solving technique without specific formulas or algorithms to follow” (p.9). Coding the data involved assigning codes to the transcripts of the interviews (Saldana, 2015). A code in qualitative research is “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data.” (Saldana, 2015, p.3). I assigned codes to the children’s and teachers’ responses in an effort to represent and capture “their primary content and essence” (Saldana, 2015, p.3). The coding of the children’s and teachers’ responses could therefore be described as a type of pattern hunting. Pattern hunting has been
described as an essential part of the grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2017). Waring (2012) explains that “if we assume that the experiences which construct each person’s reality have patterns, grounded theory makes sense of them.” (p.301).

The coding process, or pattern hunting, began as I was interviewing the children about their experiences. Whilst interviewing, an idea about their responses may have been observed due to its repetitive nature or perhaps because it stood out. This would then be used to create first impression codes. This has been called “initial coding” by Charmaz (2017) “eclectic coding” by Saldana (2015) and “open-coding by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Merriam (2009). This is because these codes are not aligned with specific types of behaviour or words or concepts. Merriam (2009) likens it to “having a conversation with the data, asking questions of it, making comments to it, and so on” (p.178). It is a process whereby one is seeking bits of data that are potentially relevant for answering the research questions. (Merriam, 2009). This initial coding produced points of interest that led to the identification of a pattern that was then labelled. This pattern was then searched for throughout the data and given the appropriate label or code. A pattern can be described as “a multiplicity of elements gathered into the unity of a particular arrangement” (Stenner, 2014, p.136). Saldana (2015) has called the coding process cyclical because rarely is the first cycle of coding data perfectly attempted and this causes the researcher to go back and fore between pattern labelling and pattern hunting in the data. However, it may be more helpful to view the process as spiral. This is because there is overlap between the pattern labelling (encoding) and pattern hunting (decoding) processes. They can not only proceed and precede each other, they can also influence each other and happen at the same time. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) explain this as being a “mixture of data [summation] and data complication … breaking the data apart in analytically relevant ways in order to lead toward further questions about the data” (pp. 29–31).

Coding is therefore not a straightforward linear process. It could be described as messy or complex and an added complexity is the fact that it involves “judgement calls” (Sipe and Ghiso, 2004) and this subjectivity involves “our personalities, our predispositions, our quirks.” (pp.482-483). Others also highlight how coding can involve “fuzzy boundaries” (Tesch, 1990, p.135) or “fuzzy sets” (Bazeley, 2013, p.351) because its interpretive nature means that categories sometimes overlap, and alternative coding could produce alternative boundaries. Saldana (2015, p.7) states that:

“Coding requires that you wear your researcher’s analytic lens. But how you perceive and interpret what is happening in the data depends on what type of filter covers that lens and from which angle you view the phenomenon.”
In other words, coding is an interpretive process. Sipe and Ghiso (2004) concur and describe coding as a “judgement call” because we bring our subjectivities, our personalities, our predispositions, our quirks” to the process (pp.482-483). As has been highlighted above, the coding process began during the observations, the interviews and also during the transcribing of the interviews. Even though these activities were predominantly recording exercises, my mind was beginning to notice patterns, points of interest and formulate ideas. Saldana (2015) pertinently makes the point that qualitative researchers are not “algorithmic automatons” and explains that: “If we are carefully reading and reviewing the data before and as we formally code them, we cannot help but notice a theme or two (or a pattern, trend, or concept) here and there.” (Saldana, 2015, p.16).

Once the codes had been categorised and established as recurring themes or categories, they then needed to be related to relevant academic literature. In the later data collections this meant linking the data with literature that I had already analysed. However, when the categories first emerged from the earlier data collections this often meant researching for appropriate academic theory to match the data. As has been outlined earlier in this chapter, at this stage therefore it was the data that was driving the literature review. In turn, once relevant theory had been found in this new literature review, new categories could be seen in the data informed by these new theories. The process was iterative as the new categories informed the construction of new concepts and these new concepts influenced subsequent data analysis. As Richards and Morse (2013) explain:

Categorising is how we get ‘up’ from the diversity of data to the shapes of the data, the sorts of things represented. Concepts are how we get up to more general, higher-level, and more abstract constructs (p. 173).

Getting up to these more abstract constructs, involved thinking about the relationship between the categories. This is discussed in the results and analysis chapter where it is explained how the categories produced concepts and ultimately constructed a framework of music literacies that in turn led to a framework of music literacy. Urquhart (2012) highlights how this process is described as theoretical coding and “is as much about the relationship between categories as it is about the categories themselves. It is when we theorise about the data.” (Urquhart, 2012, p.116).

As Gilgun (2015) explains, there is not one uniform process that is the only method of analysis in qualitative research. Rather there are multiple processes, each equally valid, as what counts is the
“trustworthiness” and “credibility” of the process employed. The general process that I used was the following:

1. I showed film footage of the children making their music as a stimulus for the children to remember how they felt and what they were experiencing when they made their music.
2. I asked questions in the interviews in response to the answers given by the children.
3. I made notes on my phone immediately after the interviews relating to thoughts I had, and patterns or/and interesting concepts that I believed had emerged during the interviews.
4. The interviews were transcribed and I began to look for patterns of keywords and/or concepts.
5. During the first reading of the transcribed interviews I used an open-coding process whereby I made notes of potential emerging themes.
6. I used Word and set up different headings of these potential themes on a document.
7. I read through the interviews again and cross-referenced with the potential themes, either adding new themes, combining themes, or sticking retaining the original headings.
8. Subsequent re-readings involved highlighting quotes, using a different colour for each theme.
9. These quotes were copied and pasted into the Word document under the relevant headings.
10. I returned to the literature and extended the literature review where necessary, led by the themes produced by the data analysis.
11. The headings were read through again and combined/deleted where appropriate before headings were finalised as the categories.
12. The interview transcripts were read through again and, if available, further quotes relating to the categories were colour-highlighted and copied and pasted under the category headings.

Even though this process has been presented as twelve different points, it is important to note that this was not always a neat, uniform, step-by-step process, repeated for each interview analysis. It was an iterative process that involved going back and forth between the data and analysis of relevant literature. The literature review was also ongoing throughout the analysis of the data and so did not occur only after the re-readings of the interviews. Equally, the re-readings of the interviews did not always happen only twice each time (as is outlined above). The transcripts were returned to often in response to analysis of new literature. It is therefore more accurate to view this procedure as a spiral process rather than one that is neat and linear.
The list of initial keywords included the following: Freedom; Rhythm; Agency; Use of environment; Outside school; Outdoors; Space; Acoustics; Nature; At one with nature; Nature alive and expressive; Birds; Wind; Trees; Peace; Quiet; Time; Dance; Feelings; Sounds; Vibrations; Flow; Joy; Calm; Weird; Different world; Imagination; Empathy; Excitement; Together. As is explained by Adams and Beauchamp (2018), the initial themes that emerged were refined from initial codes to more focussed codes. This included merging themes together under umbrella headings and sometimes adjusting the themes as a result of further analysis of the transcripts. The final categories are outlined, analysed and discussed in the Results and Analysis chapter.

3.32. Sampling

Sample – Schools, year groups and environments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School 1</th>
<th>School 2</th>
<th>School 3</th>
<th>School 4</th>
<th>School 5</th>
<th>School 6 (follow-up interviews)</th>
<th>School 5 (follow-up interviews)</th>
<th>School 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of pupils interviewed</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>9 - 10 years old</td>
<td>9-10 years old</td>
<td>7 - 9 years old</td>
<td>7 - 8 years old</td>
<td>8 - 9 years old</td>
<td>9-10 years old</td>
<td>8-9 years old</td>
<td>9-10 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers/practitioners interviewed</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>2 teachers</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Field containing Neolithic chamber</td>
<td>Beach</td>
<td>Beach</td>
<td>Woodland</td>
<td>Woodland</td>
<td>Field containing Neolithic chamber</td>
<td>Woodland</td>
<td>Field containing Neolithic chamber</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The sampling techniques employed for this research study changed as the research developed. This was because the data collection and analysis informed the development of the study. The research focus was not pre-determined, but evolved guided by each new data analysis. As Bryant and Charmaz (2007) explain: “Theoretical concepts in Grounded Theory Method result from iterative processes of going back and forth between progressively more focussed data and successively more abstract categorizations of them.” (p.25). In the beginning the sampling technique was non-probable, convenient sampling. It was non-probable sampling because each member of the population had an “un-equal chance of being selected” (Grieg et. al., 2007, p.72). In other words, the schools and children that took part in the musical activities were deliberately chosen rather than randomly selected. The schools were chosen for a combination of reasons. These reasons included their accessibility and their willingness to take part. Some of the schools I had worked with previously, and others I negotiated access by outlining the project to the Headteachers and teachers to see if they would like to be involved. As Symmon and Caswell highlight (2012) it may be that an organisation one uses as a case study “is ‘convenient’ because you have been able to negotiate access through existing contacts” (p.43).

There was an element of convenient sampling in the choice of the first school because the participants were chosen partly at least due to ease of accessibility and convenience. I had worked with the school previously providing workshops for the children and so I had already established good working relationships with the staff. However, the school was also chosen because it contained properties that were needed for generating the theory. School 1 had access to a local outdoor site that contained a Neolithic burial chamber. In the initial data collection, I was interested in how prehistoric sites could impact on children’s music-making. However, after the data analysis, as is outlined in the introduction chapter, it became clear that the children felt that it was being surrounded by nature that had the most impact on their music-making. Therefore, the subsequent schools were chosen at least partly, due to their close proximity and accessibility to rural locations surrounded by nature. The need for these properties became clear during the data analysis. It was the analysis of the data that provided the future direction of the next sample. Therefore, the sampling technique was also purposive because the participants were chosen with a purpose in mind. (Bryant, 2017, p.250).
All the schools selected had access to making music in outdoor rural locations. They also provided a range of rural locations and were in catchment areas of differing socioeconomic statuses. These differing contexts and environments became desirable in response to the theory that emerged from each data analysis. The data analysis seemed to show that making music being surrounded by nature that was important to the children’s music-making. However, due to the limited sample at that stage it was felt that other unknown factors may have been having a more significant influence on the children’s musical experience, that were particular to that sample and cohort of children. If the same themes could arise from analysis of the data gathered from a larger sample of other Key Stage Two children, making music in other rural locations, then this would make the theory about the impact of nature more reliable. The sampling technique employed here therefore was purposeful sampling. This follows the process of sampling in grounded theory research as outlined by Bryant and Charmaz (2007): “Once the general trajectory or process is identified, sampling strategies change. In this phase purposeful sampling is used, with participants sought who are in or ‘going through’ the particular stage.” (p.237). The first school was chosen because they had access to making music in a field near a prehistoric site. In addition, they were willing and able to take part, and were within a relatively short driving distance from the university. Therefore, the sample was both purposeful and convenient. After analysing the data from the music-making in the field in the prehistoric site from the first school, the focus of the research developed into exploring rural sites rather than prehistoric sites. Therefore, the next two schools were chosen because they had access to making music on a beach. This was followed by two schools that had access to making music in a woods. Two schools in similar environments were chosen consecutively in order to be able to compare data to see if it revealed consistent themes. Therefore, these environments were the purposes behind the choice of samples. They were helping to develop the theory that had emerged from the analysis of the data. As Bryant and Charmaz, 2007) explain: “Grounded theory is guided by theoretical relevance of each additional slice of data, and new data are selected because of their probable theoretical importance.” (p.155). In addition, children from Key Stage 2 were chosen as this maintained consistency that would allow for the construction of a framework of music literacies based on the experiences of children from Key Stage 2 classes when making music in outdoor rural locations. The data collected then informed where the next sample would be taken from. The data analysis were informing the subsequent choice of sample as well as developing an emerging theory. Glaser and Strauss (1967) use the term “theoretical sampling” to describe this sampling technique and state that it is integral to the Grounded Theory method. They describe it as “the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data.
and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges.” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.45).

3.33. Theoretical sampling

The data were revealing patterns that showed that the rural environments were having a significant impact on the children’s music making. As the theory emerged about the impact of being surrounded by nature, due to the analysis of the data, the next sample chosen was selected in order to further test the theory. At this stage the “sampling [was] for developing…the emerging categories.” (Charmaz, 2014, p.181). I had begun to “construct tentative ideas about the data” and proceeded to examine these ideas “through further empirical enquiry.” (Charmaz, 2014, p.199) As Edwards and Holland (2013) explain: “A more general way of thinking about theoretical sampling in qualitative research is that selection is made on the basis of relevance for your theory, in order to produce a sample that will enable you to develop the theoretical ideas that will be emerging in an iterative process between your theory and your data, and to enable you to test these emerging ideas” (p.6).

I was aiming to “seek further cases in the light of [the] ongoing analysis of data and the theoretical development emerging from the study.” (Edwards and Holland, 2013, p.6). The data were revealing patterns that showed that the rural environments were having a significant impact on the children’s music making. However, the first two schools used were both in areas of socio-economic depravation. Therefore, the next schools were chosen not only because they had access to making music in rural locations, but also because I wanted a cross-section of schools in terms of their catchment area’s socioeconomic status. I had analysed the data and used the “emerging concepts from that analysis to decide where to sample from next.” (Urquhart, 2012, p.8). The sampling technique was both purposeful and theoretical because the schools had access to rural locations for the musical ceremonies and it allowed for “theoretical (cross population) generalizations.” (Maxwell, 2005, p.43). Two of the schools had a catchment area where the number of children who qualified for free school meals was high and could be seen to be in an area of low socioeconomic status. Two of the schools had a relatively small number of children eligible for free school meals and were consequently in an area of high socioeconomic status. One of the schools could be said to be in a mixed catchment area in socioeconomic terms. This decision emerged after initial data analysis as I was interested to see if the patterns that were emerging in the data would continue to emerge in schools of different socioeconomic catchment areas. However, this was not an attempt to be able to deduce any
As has been outlined above, interpretivism was the paradigm within which this research study operated. The analysis aimed to interpret the experiences of those that participated in the research. To do this the study involved interpreting the children’s and teachers’ responses and my own observations of the children’s music making. As has been highlighted above, The analysis, interpretation and findings of the study reflected “the constructs, concepts, language, models, and theories that structured the study in the first place” (Merriam, 1998, p. 48). Nevertheless, as has been discussed above, the different environments, socio-economic backgrounds and age groups of the children were deliberately chosen for theoretical reasons. If similar themes emerged from the analysis of data gathered from children of differing socioeconomic backgrounds, then the theory generated from the analysis could arguably be more relevant to a wider population. Even though I was aware that the research had value dimensions, that it was qualitative, context specific and that the results were not absolute, it was hoped that the findings would potentially be helpful to other educators and future researchers. In other words, as Kincheloe (2012) says, critical qualitative research replaces certainty and prediction “with a notion of anticipation - the imaginative construction of the possible.” (p.151). The aim was therefore to construct a framework of music literacies based on KS2 children’s experiences of making music in outdoor rural locations. In addition, it was hoped that the research might give insight into possible patterns that might apply to a wider population.

3.34. Researcher bias

As has been highlighted above in this chapter, it is accepted that my presence both as an observer and as an interviewer would have potentially affected the data. However, rather than trying to eradicate the effect of my influence, the challenge rather was “how to monitor those effects and take them into consideration when interpreting data” (Patton, 1980, p.189). As has been discussed above, I tried to
take action that would allow the children to feel comfortable to do what they wanted and say what they wanted without feeling that I was looking for specific outcomes from them. This involved separating myself from being a teacher in the eyes of the children, so they would not feel that there were correct or incorrect behaviours and answers desired. In addition, children were also given complete autonomy to make up their own musical ceremonies in the way that they wanted. Furthermore, they were also encouraged to describe their experiences, what was significant and how they felt during their music making in their own words. It was important that the children had these freedoms as “the more controlled the research the farther it departs from natural interaction, the greater the likelihood that one will end up studying the effects of research procedures.” (Taylor et.al. 2015, p.73). The children’s responses, as outlined in the results and analysis, seem to show that they were able to express themselves freely both in the musical performances and in their responses during the interviews. This is also supported in the data from the teachers. Nevertheless, as has been discussed above, I believe my presence will have potentially had an effect on the children’s behaviours and responses. As Newby (2014) states, “if we are not a hidden researcher then we are visible to the group and our researcher status known to the members.” Therefore, the aim was “to be sensitive to the effects one might be having on the situation” (Merriam, 1998, p.96) rather than expecting to eliminate these effects.

3.35. Reliability, Generalisability

As has been discussed above, adopting an interpretivist stance meant that I believed the description of human action was “tied to particular social, historical and cultural contexts” (Ma, 2016, p.26). Therefore, I used qualitative methods to gather data, such as group interviews, and did not use quantitative methods such as measuring or testing. I was interested in “thick description” (Geertz, 1973) provided by the children rather than a longitudinal study that would involve gathering increased amounts of data from lots of different sources over a longer period of time. However, this arguably means that the external validity or generalizability of the data and its analysis are potentially weaker as the sample size was limited. Nevertheless, as has been highlighted above, there was a deliberate attempt to limit the variables involved in order to improve the reliability of the data. The participating children all undertook the same task; to create a musical ceremony in a rural location using the same resources (drums, wooden flutes, didgeridoos, vocal sounds and movement). The rural locations were all either fields, woods or beaches. In addition, all of the participating children were in Key Stage 2 and between the ages of 7 and 10 years old. However, the children interviewed were chosen for the
conceptual and theoretical development of the analysis; “it was not about representing or increasing the statistical generalizability of the results” (Charmaz, 2014, p.198).

Triangulation of the data arguably helped to improve the reliability of the analysis. There were six different groups of children interviewed from five different schools. This meant that the analysis of the different interviews provided data triangulation (Adams et. al. 2015; Patton, 1990; Stake, 1995) as the analysis of the different data could be compared and triangulated. In addition, the teachers were interviewed and their responses were cross-referenced and analysed with the children’s responses and my observations of the children’s musicking outdoors in the rural locations. Triangulation of methods (Adams et. al. 2015; Patton, 1990; Stake, 1995) was therefore employed as data was gathered using interviews with the children, the teachers and from researcher observations.
4. Results and analysis

The main purpose of this chapter is to analyse and evaluate the data gathered from the film recordings and interviews in order to answer the following research questions.

What were the children’s perceptions of their experiences of musicking in outdoor rural locations?

What were the teachers’ perceptions of the children’s musicking in outdoor rural locations?

How do the children’s experiences of musicking in outdoor rural locations fit with and accord with conceptual understandings of how music affects states of mind?

How do the children’s experiences of musicking in outdoor rural locations expand on conceptual understandings of how music affects states of mind?

Answering these research questions will allow us to address the following aim:

Aim: To develop a framework of music literacies, of Key Stage 2 children’s musicking in outdoor rural locations, based on the perceptions of the participating children and their teachers.

4.1. Sample

As discussed in the methodology chapter, five different schools provided 6 different groups of children to be interviewed after they had taken part in their musical ceremonies in different rural locations. School 1 and School 6 are the same school, but took part twice, in June 2016 and June 2017. The group of children from School 6 that took part in 2017 was different to the group of children from School 6 that took part in 2017.

The analysis of the data below involves analysing the children’s and teachers’ descriptions of the children’s experiences and therefore answers the first two research questions:

What were the children’s perceptions of their experiences of musicking in outdoor rural locations?
What were the teachers’ perceptions of the children’s musicking in outdoor rural locations?
The analysis provided a number of common categories that emerged from the children’s responses. These have been triangulated with data from the teachers’ responses and from the film recordings. The data are presented and analysed below. This analysis leads to the construction of a framework of music literacy based on the children’s experiences.

As a result of the analysis of the data, three main categories emerged. These were: senses; the life of feeling; and freedom. Within these main categories there are various sub-categories. These are: embodiment; nature immersion; imagination; emotions; agency and use of environment. All of these categories and sub-categories emerged because of the children’s musicking in the outdoor rural setting. The setting is therefore the first main category. Once in this setting the data shows that most of the children had experienced a sense of connectivity with nature. This was before the children had begun making their music, but also occurred during their music making. Therefore, this is the second category that results from the data. The data shows that the children and their teachers felt that when the children were musicking in the outdoor setting, it had triggered: a sense of freedom; a heightened sensual experience; and had enabled an augmented affective and heightened imaginative experience. These three categories (freedom, senses, life of feeling) are not discrete as the data show that these themes overlapped. Most significantly, the data show that these categories had allowed the children to experience an unusual state of mind or change in consciousness. This change in consciousness in turn had led to a feeling of transcendence, what could be called phyllic communion (Blacking, 1987), peak experience (Maslow, 1970) or communitas (Turner, 1970). This feeling of transcendence is the children’s music literacy as the data show that this is what the children’s musicking led to. This was what the children felt and did with their musicking. Therefore, this model is proposed as a framework of the children’s music literacy (see figure 1). This shall be discussed in detail during the next section.

During the analysis below the children’s and teachers’ experiences are related to conceptual understandings of how music affects states of mind. In addition, the analysis provides new evidence of how musicking in outdoor rural locations affects states of mind. Therefore, this analysis answers the third and fourth research questions:
How do the children’s experiences of musicking in outdoor rural locations fit with and accord with conceptual understandings of how music affects states of mind?
How do the children’s experiences of musicking in outdoor rural locations expand on conceptual understandings of how music affects states of mind?
Furthermore, the analysis expands on conceptual understandings of how music affects states of mind by using the children’s experiences as the basis for a conceptual model of their experiences (Figure 1). This conceptual model forms the basis for the framework of music literacies, of Key Stage 2 children’s musicking in outdoor rural locations, based on the perceptions of the participating children and their teachers.
4.3. The Setting (Outdoors)

Initially, one category that was considered during the coding and analysis was the term ‘out-of-school’, but this was rejected for a number of reasons. Firstly, the activities all took place during the school day. Therefore, chronologically they were within the parameters of the school timetable and were not out of ‘school-time’. Secondly, at one of the schools the musicking happened within the school grounds in a small wood and so did not arguably, occur “outside of school”. Thirdly, the children were given the task of creating a musical ceremony and completed it under supervision from their teachers and therefore it was a school task.

The data show that most of the children felt that being outdoors was significant. The outdoor setting had affected their musicking. It had impacted on their music-making and on their experience of their music-making. For example, the following responses from Pupil 2 and Pupil 1 of School 4 outlines how the children felt that it was a school activity, but at the same time it was outdoors and that this felt different.

Pupil 1: It made me feel like I was outside, in school, so at the beach, making music made me feel like I was joining in with whatever other people were playing, so you have to go along the rules, but on the other hand there are no rules, you can be free to do whatever you want.”

Pupil 2: I felt like it was a Saturday.

The feeling that being outdoors engendered a different mindset can be related to Heath’s (2015) statement, as discussed in the review of literature, that the outdoors can be seen as an idea. Most of the children clearly felt that being outdoors had an impact on their musicking. It is clear that what was significant about the outdoors was the affordances it gave to the children in comparison to being indoors in school. This synthesises with the theorists highlighted in the literature review who state that learning outdoors offers alternative pedagogical approaches (Humberstone and Stan, 2012; Moss, 2012; Waite, 2011; Wallis et. al. 2018; Warden, 2015). Most of the children felt that the outdoor setting, being away from school had impacted positively on their music making. For example, Pupil 1 from School 3 said:

You feel really happy and free. You just feel free when you're at the beach and not when you're in school because you have everything you can use for your advantage for the music. But in school it's
not like you can take something, like maybe that bin over there and just start playing music with it, you've got to have permission here. So when you're at the beach you can use the rocks, they don't belong to anyone, but everything in this school belongs to someone so you can't.

This is also illustrated in this exchange from School 2:

Pupil 1: You feel more fun down the beach like you can do anything down the beach. It doesn't matter what you do, but then in school you're...limited...there's too much work to do, so your mind is going...it's limited.
Pupil 2: Yeah there's too much to think about because say you're thinking about tomorrow morning and you're just going on and on about what is going to happen...and you just forget that down the beach.
Pupil 1: Yeah down the beach your mind just goes...and clears.
Pupil 2: Blank.
Pupil 1: You just think about what you're doing now.
Pupil 1: Yeah not back then, not tomorrow just now.

However, not all of the children felt this way. In two of the schools two of the children felt that being outdoors had no significant impact on their music making. Pupil 3 from School 2 said: “If I played it in a really big hall it might be the same.” Pupil 3 from School 4 also said: “If I did that music in the hall, it could be the same, or in the classroom or something.” Pupil 3 from School 4 explained later that the reason why the experience could arguably be the same indoors was because the physicality of the environment was not the main point of difference, rather it was the freedom that was granted because of the environment that helped to create a different experience.

Pupil 3: I think you could do exactly the same indoors. You could get two twigs or metal things and bang it against the wall. but you wouldn’t.

Question: Why is that?
Pupil 3: You wouldn’t do that indoors…it’s not outdoors. It’s not like you use twigs indoors. When indoors, you don’t, it’s not really...you don’t really do it.

Question: Why?
Pupil 3: You just don’t do it.
Question: Is that what you’re saying? You could do it indoors, but you don’t—

Pupil 3: Yeah, outdoors you feel more free...it’s unusual to bang something against the wall indoors, but outdoors, it’s a bit more usual to do it.

Two of the children also stated that the type of music being played would dictate the suitability of the location. Pupil 3 from School 1 said “If you're doing drums or something then it's better in the field than in the hall, but if you're doing a Christmas concert, it's better in the hall.” Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 6 said: “If you were like doing different music it might be better to do it in the hall because you've got the right sounds for that whereas if you're playing drums and that it's better outside.”

All of the children interviewed felt that the outdoor location had allowed them to be more experimental with their musicking, to behave differently and that this was a favourable outcome. This data supports those who advocate outdoor learning potentially affording the learner alternative ways of learning (Humberstone and Stan, 2012; Moss, 2012; Wallis et. al. 2018; Waite, 2011; Warden, 2015). As Waite (2011) asserts “the value of working outside the classroom is in providing pupils with experiences that are different from those inside it.” (p.14).

4.4. Connectivity with nature

The data show that the outdoor environment also triggered a heightened embodied, immersive experience in most of the children that involved a connectivity with nature. In addition, the data show that this was the first thing that the children found significant after arriving at their setting. This was evident in all of the interviews and none of the children’s responses contradicted this evidence. For example, Pupil 2 from School 5 suggested: “I think that it started with us listening to the nature, the trees were swaying and there were birds chirping, then it kind of makes you relax because you know there are no people shouting...it depends on the surroundings and nature. If you’re in a house, you don’t feel the magic.” Pupil 4 from School 4 supports this stating: “It felt different just because we were outside, and we could use all the space. Listening to the trees and the leaves first of all. Then seeing the sunlight and hearing the birds. We also used the trees and leaves in our music.” Similarly, Pupil 3 from School 2 said:
It began when we were sitting on the drums and watching the sun and having the peace part and just listening and looking… it was so much nicer having the sand and the sea and having the space.

This is reinforced in this exchange from Pupils 1 and 2 from School 2.

Pupil 1: The only thing you can hear is the waves going in and out. The first step on the beach you just feel like…aaahhhh! Like no-one's stopping you from doing what you want.

Pupil 2: Yeah you know it's like you came down the beach and you were all stressed. You stepped onto the sand and you put your feet all into the sand and then you were like aaahhhh.

Interviewer: What about the sounds in school? You said they were important.
Pupil 1: Yeah it sort of disrupts you because you want to concentrate you can't concentrate because you want to know what's going on... it interrupts you …

Pupil 2: You want it to be peaceful in the classroom, so then you can actually feel your emotions. There's loads of noisiness around you and you just can't concentrate... you're more curious in the hall...what's going on around you. But on the beach it just doesn't matter. You can hear the sea and the birds and...it doesn't matter.

However, two of the children felt that being in contact with nature was not necessarily always a positive experience. Pupil 4, School 2 said: “It actually made it harder cos it was on the sand and it was all slippery.” Similarly, Pupil 5 from School 3 said: “It was more difficult to find a comfortable place to sit and play the drums on the beach because of the rocks. It is easier in the hall to sit down properly.”

The vast majority of the children expressed a feeling that being in contact with nature had a positive impact on their sense of well-being as it had made them feel different and that this had in turn affected positively, their musicking. For example, Pupil 2 from School 2 said: “Yeah cos you’re on the beach it’s more magical you see the sun reflecting on the rocks, you’re in a happy place. You don’t feel like how you usually feel.” Pupil 5 from School 6 also explains:

When we heard the birds, it’s the birds. They make you feel calm…Playing our music was calming. It’s almost like the calm and outdoorsy sounds, and the smells, as well, can also change the way that
you feel. Then it changes, before, if you’re doing any dance or singing or anything, you should always listen to natural things. It can also change the way you would do something else. Say, if I didn’t listen to any outdoor things or different sounds I’d never heard of before, it wouldn’t change me in any way to perform or anything, but it did, it changed me and made me feel happy to just go out and do something, just feel free.

Similarly, Pupil 5 from School 5 said:

When I was playing in the woods, as I said before, it felt very different from when I’d be playing here. Here, you’d be talking about probably school and things, whereas, when we were there, it was all about that. Here, when we go into the woods, it hasn’t really got the canopy around you with the trees, and there it would be lighter outside, whereas in the woods, it was quite dark and you had a nice canopy. And you had space.

This is further highlighted in this response from Pupil 2 from School 4: “It felt...it felt freer down the beach and there's the fresh air...just the wind blowing... if it's boiling and the teacher's not letting you get outside...it's a good way to get out ...to get outside and play some music.” However, when asked how he felt whilst making music outdoors Pupil 3 from School 4 said:

I felt normal... I didn’t really feel anything different...but I felt excited.

Interviewer: Was that normal or different?

Pupil 3: Quite normal for me. I always feel excited outdoors.

Interviewer: Normal to feel excited, Is that a good thing?

Pupil 3: Yeah. I like feeling excited.

Therefore Pupil 3 apparently did not feel unusually different outdoors, but he did feel excited. The important point is that he felt this was an enjoyable experience. All of the other children also said that being outdoors was a positive experience, but they felt different making music outdoors. In addition, they felt being surrounded by nature was at least part of the reason for this difference. The claim from the children that being immersed in nature was a positive experience synthesises with the theory from the literature review that states that children enjoy being outdoors and surrounded by nature. It also resonates with the literature that highlights the beliefs of indigenous peoples who advocate children’s natural affinity with nature (Abram, 1997; Berkes, 2009; Cajete, 1999; Hart, 2010; Nelson; Norton-Smith, 2010; Simpson, 2000; Tedlock and Tedlock, 1992). However, it is
also important to note that as discussed in the methodology all of the schools were positioned in close proximity to rural environments. Even though no data was collected to support this idea it would seem reasonable to assume that most, if not all, of the children were used to being surrounded by nature. Therefore, their prior experiences may have impacted on their affective responses. In addition, we cannot assume that other children from more urban backgrounds would have similarly positive experiences. Nevertheless, according to the data from the children’s and teachers’ interviews it is being attentive to nature that seems to have been the catalyst for the children’s connectivity to nature. This shall now be further explored.

4.5. Being attentive to nature

Significantly most of the children’s responses showed that it was important they had been attentive to nature rather than just being in close proximity to it. For example, Pupil 4 from School 6 said: “If you’re just walking around in the woods, it’s quite boring, but if you stop and just listen to the nature for a few minutes, it just feels so nice, the river running, the trees swaying, the birds. The nature helps you with the calm.” This is reinforced by Pupil 5 from School 6 who said:

When we heard the birds, it’s the birds. They make you feel calm…Playing our music was calming. It’s almost like, the calm and outdoorsy sounds, and the smells, as well, can also change the way that you feel. Then it changes, before, if you’re doing any dance or singing or anything, you should always listen to natural things. It can also change the way you would do something else. Say, if I didn’t listen to any outdoor things or different sounds I’d never heard of before, it wouldn’t change me in any way to perform or anything, but it did, it changed me and made me feel happy to just go out and do something, just feel free.

Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 1 said: “When were at school and we got told we’re going to the fields, it sounds like we're just going on a school trip for a walk and then when we stopped and listened to the birds, and all the nature sounds, and then started playing. We realised it wasn't going to be as boring as like we thought it would be.” The importance of the outdoor setting and being attentive to nature was supported in all of the teachers’ responses. For example, Teacher 1 from School 5 said: “Well, the sounds, the sights, just being outside. I don’t know, if it was just the field—I think it was because you could hear the sounds of nature, you could see the sounds of nature. I don’t know, I just felt it made them behave in a different way.”
Teacher 1 from School 4 similarly said:

The natural environment—the trees—sound of an outside environment, sound of the birds—and we’re lucky that where we are is quite quiet and you don’t get too much background noise and interference... I would say you couldn’t get that in a big hall. It is genuinely about the trees; it’s genuinely about the grass; it’s genuinely about the smell of the mud and the birds; it’s genuinely about nature in that context. You can’t get that indoors.

Teacher 1 from School 6 also reinforces these views: “It makes them more creative. It turns the light on in their heads, the outdoors. When they hear the wind in the trees and the birds, it focuses their minds and they get more adventurous as well.” This links again with the theory discussed in the literature review that advocates children being surrounded by nature as it can give them agency and increase their wellbeing. (Doddington, 2014; Nicol, 2014; Quay, 2013; Waite, 2011; Waite et. al. 2016; Waller et. al. 2017; Wilson, 2018). However, it also appears to provide new data that suggests that being surrounded by nature can help children’s creativity. In addition, it seems to provide new evidence that shows that musicking whilst being immersed in nature can augment children’s understanding of their relationship with nature. In other words, that their musicking can engender a biophilic response.

4.6. A biophilic response

The responses also showed that most of the children not only had an increased sense of wellbeing due to being attentive nature, but also that this connection had involved feeling an affinity with nature. These responses coalesce with the theory of biophilia as discussed in the literature review chapter (Barbiero, 2014; Barbiero and Macanarto ; 2016; Fromm, 1964; Wilson, 1984). They can also be synthesised with the values of indigenous peoples (Abram, 1997; Berkes, 2009; Cajete, 1999; Hart, 2010; Nelson; Norton-Smith, 2010; Simpson, 2000; Tedlock and Tedlock, 1992) and of the philosophy of friluftsliv (Gelter, 2000; Mygind, 2015) as analysed in the literature review. However, these data provide new evidence that suggests that musicking outdoors has created a heightened sense of biophilia. Most of the children also claim that this identification with nature had a positive impact on their music making. For example, Pupil 3 from School 5 said.

“It was important hearing. Hearing, just close your eyes and listen to the trees rustling, the birds tweeting, and the river rushing. It just brings peace. It’s as if you’re one with nature.” Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 3 said: “The waves and the birds and the echoes helped the music to flow so
it’s like part of all around us...cos every group like every group stuck with the waves and the echoes and the birds.” These views were also reinforced by the teachers’ responses. For example, Teacher 1 from School 6 said:

When you’re outdoors, you’ve got nature around you, whether it’s the wind or the birds or the sounds they’re making, and you can almost incorporate that into your music routines and get one with nature. You can use the wind or the birds as a background rhythm, whereas in the class, you’ve got nothing.

As is shown above, the data revealed that the teachers and children felt that the children being in nature had a positive effect on their musicking and that their musicking had created a biophilic response. In addition, the responses showed that it seemed significant that the children could experience nature sensually during their musicking and that the subsequent heightened biophilic response caused by their musicking was an integral part of their musicking. This shall be examined in more detail below in this chapter when we explore the theme of the senses and how the themes combined to engender optimal experiences.

The next section of this chapter shall analyse the data that show that there were three main recurring categories from the children’s and teachers’ responses. These are: freedom; senses; and the life of feeling. Each category also has sub-categories that will be analysed using the data from the interviews. Analysis of the data will also show that each theme leads towards a different mind set, or apparent change of consciousness, for the children. It is important to note that these three themes are also experienced by the children before they began musicking. The children had emotional and imaginative experiences, sensual experiences and a sense of freedom when they arrived at the setting. This is evident in some of the data analysed above. A few of the children responses indicate that just listening and being immersed in nature has caused a state of mind that coalesces with the optimal experience theories discussed in the literature review. For example, the quote above from Pupil 3 from School 5 demonstrates this. However, this is not consistently expressed in all of the data. Most of the children’s responses show that it is when they experience the three main themes during their group musicking that this transformative state of mind takes place. This progression from the three themes to the optimal experience is demonstrated in the following discussion below and also in the model displayed below (figure 2).
The first of the main categories that resulted from analysis of the data was ‘freedom’. The vast majority of the children felt that the outdoors allowed them to feel freer. The reasons given included the space and a feeling that being outdoors encouraged them to feel that they had more freedom in comparison to being in school. This is expressed in this response from school 5, pupil 3: “I think it was the setting that made it. When you’re in school, it’s just like in a prison, but when you’re outdoors, you feel, I can do whatever I want.” All of the teachers interviewed reinforced the children’s views that they felt a sense of freedom making music outdoors. For example, Teacher 1 from School 4 states that: “The environment acted as an amazing stimulus allowing creativity and removing the constraints of the classroom. The children had not made music at the beach before so it acted as a real wow factor.” Similarly, Teacher 1 from School 6 analysing the children’s music
making explains: “In the classroom, there are rules, like you can’t be too noisy, no running around. Outside, those rules sort of disappear, and you can be more creative and imaginative.” Once more these perspectives seem to support the views of the theorists highlighted in the review of literature that argue outdoor learning experiences can give children a greater sense of agency (Broderick and Pearce 2001; Rea 2008; Waite and Davis, 2007; Waite, 2011). However, the data also provides new evidence in support of musicking outdoors. There was a sense from all of the groups that the enhanced freedom had allowed for better pedagogical and musical experiences, better musicking. This is exemplified in this extract from School 2:

Pupil 4: So that's what's different because in school we have to be quiet, so we have to do it quietly, but when we're outside we can do it loudly so get to do...we get to do it better.

Interviewer: How does that affect the music?
Pupil 4: It felt fun, so we're trying new sounds and instruments I haven't done before.”
Interviewer: What about when you played instruments you had played before? Was that the same there?

Pupil 4: No because we could do whatever we wanted. At school the teacher tells us what to do and we have to do a certain thing.

Pupil 3: Yeah, we can't just do whatever we want at a certain time. We have to do a certain thing at a certain time.

Interviewer: OK, what if you could do whatever you want at school?
Pupil 2: It wouldn't be the same really. It would be different. More room, more space.
Interviewer: “OK what if you had a massive hall in school to do it in. Would that be the same?

Pupil 3: Not much because the beach is like um...it's got like loads of space and bits to go and hide and play and things. And most of all a place to... have fun and do music and just...have fun.

Pupil 4: It felt like a better place to play...to play the music.

Most of the children felt because the musicking had taken place outdoors, the environment had facilitated an enhanced creative freedom. This data can be linked to the literature discussed in the
review of literature chapter that claims outdoor learning environments can offer alternative pedagogies (Doddington, 2014; Nicol, 2014; Quay, 2013; Waite, 2011) and facilitate a sense of agency and creative freedom (Gustafson & van der Burgt, 2015; Ouvry, 2003; Maynard and Waters, 2011; Sefton-Green, 2006; Waite; 2011). One of the ways this creative freedom apparently manifested itself in the children’s musicking was in the way that the children used the natural surroundings to enhance their music making. In their responses in the interviews the children and their teachers comment on the use of space, the use of natural materials to make sounds, being aware of the natural soundscape and feeling that this soundscape was part of their music. In support of these responses, film footage of all of the children’s groups in all of the schools showed the children making use of the natural environment in their music making. This included:

1. Using the space and different levels afforded by the environment;
2. Thinking about the direction of their sounds (evidenced during group discussions and by the positioning of the performers during the musicking);
3. Using natural materials to make sounds with;
4. Being aware of the natural soundscape and including this as part of their musicking.
These ideas will now be explored through the data from the children’s and teacher’s responses.

4.9. Freedom- Use of the environment (space)

In all of the interviews the theme of freedom due to being away from school and being afforded more space could be seen in the responses by the children and their teachers. An example is given in this extract from the interview in School 4 from Pupil 2:

Pupil 2: You're not confined by rules. You’re not in the classroom. You’re not imprisoned, surrounded by fences.

Interviewer: Okay, Pupil Two, keep going.
Pupil 2: You’ve got room and you just feel so free and natural and it feels amazing. When you’re outside, you can move around, but when you’re in a class or a building, you can only go to certain places or there’s a wall.

These views are mirrored in this response from School 6, Pupil 4: “Indoors it just feels like, you're like being closed in like with outdoor music it's better like in a wider more bigger environment to
like really express yourself.” Similarly, in this response from School 2, Pupil 1: “Yeah, you're in four walls here. Like when you're on a beach there's usually just one wall, like the cliff and the outside wall, but then you can just go anyway and it's open... it's free.”

This is further reinforced by Teacher 1 from School 2:”It just wouldn’t be the same in the classroom. For starters, there’s the space, there’s so much more of it down the beach. You could see that the children felt freer and I’m sure this helped their music making.”

In all of the schools the children emphasised the importance of using the physical space as being one of the reasons why they felt freer. When asked if the activity could have taken place in a huge hall indoors overwhelmingly the common response was that this would not have the same effect as being outside. For example, School 4, Pupil 5 said: “I don’t think it is because you probably can’t put the things in the same place. When you have outdoors, there’s not a line where you can stop; you can go on for miles. But indoors, there’s a wall.” However, one pupil (pupil 3) from School 4 thought that being in a large hall indoors would allow for the same sense of space.

Interviewer: What about if you had a big space in the hall? Would that be the same as having a big space outdoors?

Pupil 3: I think yeah because you could, in that big space, you might have something in the corner. You could still put something in a corner in the hall.

All the other children interviewed felt that being outdoors was more positive than being indoors because of a greater sense of freedom afforded by the physical environment. For example, Pupil 2 from School 6 said: “Inside there’s lots of people telling you what you can't do...it's annoying and they want you to stop, but when you're outside, you're free to do it because there's loads of space and your voice it like echoes and...you can choose where to put the sound.” This was supported by the teachers, for example, Teacher 1 from School 6 stated that: “Outside, you get more ideas for that, and then you can use the space and be more creative. In the hall, there was just one stage and that’s where they were performing.” Similarly, Teacher 1 from School 5 explains:

It wasn’t just the way, the things they used; it was the way they positioned themselves on the trees and things like that. If it had been on the field or playground or in a classroom, they would’ve just
sat in a circle. And they were on different levels and distances between them that created a different atmosphere. Yeah, I reckon that really helped.

The responses from the teachers and children that claimed that the children made use of the space outdoors when musicking were supported by data from the film footage. For example, in this photo (Photo 1) the children positioned themselves opposite each other, so this enhanced the call and response nature of their musicking.

4.10. Photo 1

The idea that learning experiences outdoors engenders a sense of freedom supports theorists such as Edgington (2002), Nicol (2014) and Doddington (2014), as discussed in the literature review, that claim the educational experience will be affected by the increased amount of space available.

4.11. Freedom- Use of the environment- Using natural materials

In each school the children and their teachers also stated that feeling free to use natural materials from the environment was a significant part of their music making. In all of the children’s interviews the children stated that they felt that this was a significant difference in comparison to making music indoors in school. For example, School 3, Pupil 1:

You feel free when you're at the beach and not when you're in school because you have everything you can use for your advantage for the music. But in school it's not like you can take something, like maybe that bin over there and just start playing music with it, you've got to have permission here. So when you're at the beach you can use the rocks, they don't belong to anyone, but everything in this school belongs to someone so you can't.
Not only did the children say that they felt freer to use more materials, they also stated that they felt more creative and able to be more innovative because of the environment. For example, Pupil 2 from School 4 explains:

We had sort of an idea that we could use big twigs, so when we had the big drum, we felt a little of that, but then we thought we needed something to replace the normal drum, so we used massive twigs, and I said to X, “Do you want to do some twig-smacking on the tree?” and he said yeah. We just thought of that. You wouldn’t do that indoors…it’s not outdoors. It’s not like you use twigs indoors. When indoors, you don’t, it’s not really…you don’t really do it.

Pupil 5 from School 6 similarly, said: “I think it makes you more creative so say if you were in school and you were just...and then say if you were outside and you (starts singing) you got more ideas in your head and you keep on writing them down and if you're inside you can't hum because the teacher's like “who's humming?!" and you have no ideas in your brain.” The teachers responses supported the views of the children. For example, Teacher 1 from School 1 said: “The environment made them more creative. They were more excited, more stimulated and this seemed to help their ideas.” Teacher 1 from School 2 also explained: “I think they were far less inhibited than they would be in a classroom situation. There was far more of a sense of unity between the children and their environment. It made them more creative.”

The responses from the teachers and children were supported by data from the film footage. For example, here in the photograph the children are using the trees to help position the direction of their sounds (photo 2). They are also using natural materials as part of their musicking, as is shown in the use of sand (photo 3). In photo 4, the boy is not only drumming on the rocks, he also used water from a small rock pool to amplify his drumming on the drum skin.
This data lends further support again to the literature highlighted in the literature review that states that the outdoor learning environment can promote alternative pedagogies (Doddington, 2014; Nicol, 2014; Quay, 2013; Waite, 2011) and enhance creative freedom (Gustafson & van der Burgt, 2015; Ouvry, 2003; Maynard and Waters, 2011; Sefton-Green, 2006; Waite; 2011).

4.15. Freedom-Agency

One of the main themes that emerged under the category of freedom was “agency”. The children felt they had agency of their musicking and that this affected their musical experience. As with the previous themes this feeling of agency is also connected to the other themes and categories. For example, the children spoke about feeling freer in the outdoor environments and this gave them a sense of agency over their musicking. For example, Pupils 3 and 4 from School 5 explain:

Pupil 3: You’re expressing a lot more. If there’s nobody around you, like in the woods, you feel nobody’s going to be there, so you just express yourself so much. But if you’re in public and you know that you’re being watched, then you feel different. You’re worried about others and you want to make sense, but in the woods, you can say whatever you’d like; it doesn’t even have to make sense. Because there’s nobody there—literally—just feel like…free.

Pupil 4: Yeah, because when the public are watching, you just feel like, “I want to fit in! Everyone’s looking at me. I want to fit in.” Whereas there you can choose what to do. I think there should be another word for this...And when you’re in the woods, you just feel freer. And you can do whatever you feel.
Similarly, this example from Pupil 2, School 1 draws links between being able to have autonomy or agency over the music making and the sensual experience of being outdoors.

Pupil 2: You can just express how you feel and you can just be you, because sometimes indoors you don't have the chance to do something, because you don't get that opportunity, but when you're outdoors you've got the opportunity to do whatever you like; and to interact with all the different animals; and to make different sounds because it's better outside...because it echoes and like so...you can hear it easier...it's a better sound.

A common feeling from all the responses from the children was a belief that having ownership over their musicking was a positive experience and helped their musicking. This is expressed here from the following examples:

Pupil 5, School 6: When I'm playing the music, it makes me feel so happy and I don't want to stop doing the music. Cos I've made the music with my group and I don't want to stop doing it because it sounds amazing and it's special.

Pupil 3, School 3: It felt good to make up our own music. You feel like proud because you've made it up yourself. It might not be good, it might be bad, but if it's bad even if you know it's yours, you can improve it if you want, the way you want.

As highlighted above, one of the reasons that kept being given by the children as to why having agency positively affected their music was because the freedom it gave them meant that they felt relaxed. As Pupil 1 from School 5 explains:

You get to make up your own music. If you said, “Play this,” it might be really boring, but making it up is really fun...If you told us what to do, it might be harder because we’d have to get the right tuning and things, whereas when we were making our own up, it was much more relaxed. When we were trying to decide, we sort of started disagreeing, and then at the end, we all had an idea and we put it together and it worked. It worked so much better than if you maybe told us the music to make.

The teachers’ responses once more support the views of the children. This data supports the claims, analysed in the literature review that argue giving children agency over their musicking potentially leads to improved musical experiences (Green, 2005; Finney Wright, 2010; Laurence, 2010;
The responses showed that the teachers felt that this agency had engendered not only motivation, but also creative freedom. They argued that this freedom and ownership over their creativity combined with the effect of the outdoor environment had caused the children to be able to immerse themselves in their musicking and that this had a calming effect on the children. This response from Teacher, 1 from School 5 highlights these ideas:

I don’t want to act like they’re not able to express themselves or let go in a school environment because they are, but I felt they were able to be much more expressive. Yet they also seemed calm. It was really controlled. It wasn’t like they were just out of control, screaming. They were really letting themselves go and they were really expressive; however, there was definitely an air of calm that I hadn’t seen with that class before. Definitely. I think because they had control—there was focus—they were controlling it—and that led to a calmness. Obviously, the environment really contributed to it as well. The control and the environment worked together.

Being outdoors and having freedom had allowed for creative agency that had enhanced the children’s sense of identity with, and ownership over, their musicking. This provides new data because of the impact of the outdoor rural environment that nevertheless supports the literature that advocates giving children agency over their musicking (Green, 2005; Finney Wright, 2010; Laurence, 2010; Tomlinson, 2013; Allsup, 2016). It is also of note that these changes in consciousness, despite often occurring during excited and loud musicking, had enabled the children to experience a calm focus. This may seem counter-intuitive, but it was a definite pattern displayed in the data. The responses showed that the children’s musicking, no matter what the mood, had had a calming effect. This calming effect is explored in more depth below when the changes in consciousness are analysed in more detail.

4.16. Freedom-Agency- Use of sound

The data also showed that the children felt that they were free to be loud and more experimental because of the agency afforded from being outdoors. For example, Pupil 3 from School 4 states that: “You wouldn’t normally smash your drum that hard indoors because you’d be worried about the other classes.” Similarly, Pupil 6 from School 3 said: “When you're away from school you kind of feel like I'm kind of free I can finally do what I want now. But when you're with your parents and
you're making music at home, they're like "keep the racket down" but like when you're outside you don’t have to. You can be as loud as you like down the beach, you feel super free!"

The responses from the teachers supported the children’s views. For example, Teacher 1, from School 5 said: “When I was watching them, I was thinking, would they have let themselves go this much in a classroom environment or within the school grounds?... No, I think they would’ve felt quite stressed because… I don’t want to act like they’re not able to express themselves or let go in a school environment because they are, but I felt they were able to be much more expressive.”

Similarly, Teacher 1 from School 2 states: “The outdoor environment and being away from school seemed to make them more experimental with their music making, definitely. They were making all sorts of sounds, using trial and error to construct their ceremonies. I don’t think they could have been that loud or experimental in school.”

This data seems to concur with the views explored in the literature review that advocate outdoor learning as potentially being a catalyst for creative freedom (Ouvry, 2003; Sefton-Green, 2006; Maynard and Waters, 2011; Gustafson & van der Burgt, 2015) and that the outdoors can foster alternative pedagogies (Doddington, 2014; Nicol, 2014; Quay, 2013; Waite, 2011). In addition, the teachers consistently remarked about being pleased with the children’s behaviour. A common view was that they were surprised that giving the children autonomy to make their own decisions without any templates had not resulted in more arguments. For example, this response from Teacher 1 from School 3 was typical: “I was very impressed that the children made up their ceremonies with very little input or direction and were very imaginative and creative from the outset.” Again, one of the reasons given for the increased sense of agency was the outdoor environment, as Teacher 1 from School 6 states: “In their groups, they listened to each other. They listened to ideas and were compromising. They’d adopt one or they’d adopt a bit of the others. They didn’t seem to argue as much as when they do it inside. It was like they accepted each other’s ideas more.” Similarly, Teacher 1 from School 4 discussed a child that was normally badly behaved being very well behaved and working well within his group.

The one lad that I mentioned earlier on, he really got into it and was more resilient to other people being involved in things; he had a fixation with another children. Because we were outside, I think the space, he reacted badly to noise, a sensory issue, so loud noises would set him off. In that context, because the loud noise was able to dissipate into the space rather than hammering back at it from walls or ceilings or sound-reflective surfaces, eh was very, very different in that context.
Later the same teacher takes up the same theme:

In that context, because he was that much more relaxed and more receptive to being part of the team—which, again, something that he normally didn’t have; he was working with a group of four other individuals—because he was able to focus in and get things done, working with others collaboratively, the rest of the class could relax and let their energies come out. They intuitively and probably instinctively knew that they could let it go. In the same way that the sounds created in an outdoor environment don’t immediately reverberate back on you, the energy can go out into nature.

The data seemed to show that the children’s musicking in outdoor rural locations had produced improved behaviours. We shall explore the idea that the children’s musicking caused these improved behaviours later in this chapter below. First, it is important to identify the second main theme that is presented as a result of analysis of the data.

4.17. Senses

The second category to be examined that resulted from the data analysis was “senses”. What was raised in all of the interviews was the impact of a heightened sensual awareness gained from musicking outdoors in the rural locations. The category of the senses involved different subcategories that shall be explored below.

4.18. Senses- Hearing and feeling the acoustics

There were continual references from most of the children interviewed about being free from noise pollution and being able to hear the sounds of nature. This is expressed in this response from School 5, Pupil 1: “You don’t hear children screaming. You don’t hear teachers barking at you. You don’t hear anything; you just hear the free... it’s almost like you can hear the freedom. And if you’re at school, you can hear other people talking, but when you’re in nature, you can only hear the birds.” Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 2 said: “I felt like I was in a different world a different place, somewhere where there’s only um... music. In school you can’t hear, whereas there you can hear and so you play the music and you feel like you're in a different place and that's crazy, but it's nice...like relaxing.”
The data from the children support the theories examined in the literature review from Schafer (1975; 1994) and Waite, 2011; 2016) that emphasises the importance of the soundscape (Schafer, 1994) and how this can impact on the children’s musicking. For example, Pupil 4 from School 3 said:

Yeah in school and inside it's not the same because you don't have the echo bouncing off and you don't have the feeling of where you are. It doesn't sound as good as outside because outside you've got a different scenery because the walls don't spread out. And there's no walls down the beach and outside is there? And so it just goes everywhere and you feel like...the world is listening to it.

As is clear here, most of the children talked about how being able to hear and feel their sounds had a positive impact on their musicking. They talk about the lack of noise pollution helping as it helped them to hear their sounds and think more clearly.

This extract from School 6 also highlights the significance of a heightened sensual awareness and hearing the sounds of nature:

Pupil 3: The noise made me feel like it was…it was like, whenever I banged something or played an instrument, I touched stuff, like the tree or floor. All I could hear was the floor vibrating.

Interviewer: So, you enjoyed the sense of touch?
Pupil 3: Yeah, I enjoyed the sense of the touch, how the river was making lots of swerving noises and the leaves rustling in the wind. They were all part of it.”

Interviewer: Okay, good. Pupil 2?
Pupil 2 : Like Pupil 3, it was fun because you could hear the river. It just felt natural and you could hear the river with your music, and it felt like it was part of your music.

What is highlighted in this exchange is that the children felt that they could physically feel the sound of their music and that this was of significance. This was also a common theme in all the interviews. Once more the children expressed how this sensual awareness had emboldened their music making. For example, Pupil 4 from School 5 said: “Well, it made me more comfortable in a place because I could feel what was going on around me and because I was playing the drums as well, I felt my hands vibrating as well because I was holding it and it felt good.”
The data from most of the children’s responses consistently report that the children could sometimes feel their musicking and therefore had a better sense of the physical nature of the sounds. However, a minority of the children felt that there was no difference to the acoustical experience whether being indoors or outdoors. This is exemplified in this response from Pupil 3 from School 4: “I think it’s like the same inside as outside, if they shut all the doors inside, it’s hard to make the echo. But if you had the doors open or a big space like the hall, even if you had walls around, you’d still get a bit as the same as if you were outside.” As is clear from the data, most of the children talk about having a clearer aural and physical perspective on the nature of the sounds they used and that this helped them creatively. The teachers’ responses supported the views of the children. For example, this response from Teacher 1, from School 5 was typical:

I think because they’re a class that get really easily distracted, so because we were completely away from anything, they could just get absorbed in it. They could probably listen to the sounds properly for the first time. Besides things like acoustics and things changing down there, I think because they were completely isolated from school and the distractions of school, whether it be somebody they know walking across the playground or them hearing a teacher’s voice, that’s pulling them out of the magic that they’re in. ..I think it would’ve, just hearing a teacher’s voice or something would’ve just broken the out of the spell and I think because they were able, they could listen to the sounds differently. It didn’t seem to be, “We’re in a music lesson with a musical instrument from the cupboard in the hall,” it was, “We’re actually working together to create something.” They were actually really listening to how the sounds would complement each other and also the impact a certain sound would have. That wouldn’t have happened here, definitely.

School 2, Teacher 1 similarly, states:

Even with the acoustics of the instruments in a confined space sound so much different than in an open environment down the beach. It just gives them that real feel of a sense of place. It’s not just about the sounds, it’s about feeling the air around you. It’s the space that you’re using. The calmness that you feel when you’re outside anyway...it’s hard to put into words, but because your whole body is engulfed in it...when you’re on the beach it’s everything, it’s all encompassing. Your whole body is immersed in it. All of your senses.
The responses from the teachers and children were supported by data from the film footage (see photographs). For example, here the children spontaneously began listening to the vibration of the drumming by lying down sideways on the rocks (photo 5).

![Photo 5](image)

The data can be linked to the benefits of the Scandinavian philosophy of frilutsliv as highlighted in the literature review (Gelter, 2000; Gelter, 2010; Mygind, 2015) and the theories espoused by Doddington (2014), Foran and Olson (2012) and Heath (2015) that call for learning that allows children to dwell in nature. All of the children interviewed felt that being outside and being amongst nature was a positive experience. It also synthesises with the philosophies of the indigenous oral cultures highlighted in the literature review that claim being or knowing can occur when one is attuned to one’s environment (Abram, 1997; Brown and Heaton, 2015; Cajete, 1999; Hendricks and Hall, 2008; Tedlock and Tedlock, 1997).

The data also provide new evidence that shows that musicking in outdoor rural environments can heighten children’s sensual awareness. We shall return to examine how this musical immersion in nature had seemingly caused ways of knowing as an alternative to cognitive reflection when we examine the theme of embodiment below. First of all we shall focus on how the data shows that the children felt that the sounds from nature not only helped their musicking, but became part of their music.
4.20. **Senses - Nature being part of the music**

The data from the children’s and teachers’ responses showed that they felt that the sounds of nature and the environment itself had all become part of their musicking and their musical experience. For example, School 6, Pupil 3 said: “I think it's nice because like all the birds are singing and then you've got like the air flowing you've got the grass and like swaying and stuff and it feels calming... like say if you were like doing like a didgeridoo, the birds are like coming in, they’re singing along and it all comes together...they're all part of it.”

Feeling that the sounds from nature were part of the children’s musicking was a common response in the children’s interviews. This was also supported in the teachers’ responses. For example, this response from Teacher 1, School 5: “I think the environment certainly helped; it helped them to...because they could hear the sounds of nature, it helped them to use nature and making their own sounds. Equally. They used leaves and twigs and things like that to help them be part of the whole piece they created.” This is supported from Teacher 1, School 4: “One of the things that it encouraged was the children making their own music using found things. There was a lad who had a half-curve, a half pipe of bark and then wood chippings in the area where we were doing it, he was sliding them down the bark. It was a very quiet, delicate, subtle sound, really interesting and different.” Later the same teacher explained further:

If you remember, there was one lad by the shed who was playing the tree—and they were really into it. They were stroking the branches down, and it made it real for them. Definitely made it more real. If you get them there quickly and they’ve got a context, then they can fly, they can let their imaginations grow. I would say you couldn’t get that in a big hall. It is genuinely about the trees; it’s genuinely about the grass; it’s genuinely about the smell of the mud and the birds; it’s genuinely about nature in that context. You can’t get that indoors.

This is also supported by the data provided from the film footage. In photo 6 the children are pausing in between playing and listening to the sounds of nature. For example, Pupil 2 from School 1 said:

It feels really special because you're moved by the things you hear and you get to interact with other things outside and you feel kind of special to be in that position.
Interviewer: What do you mean by that?
Pupil 2: We stopped to listen to the birds singing. They were joining in like they were part of our ceremony.

The idea that the natural world was “joining in” with the children’s musicking shall be further explored below in this chapter when we examine theories surrounding optimal experiences and transcendence. The claims that listening to the sounds of the environment became integral to their musicking, however, also reverberate in harmony with the theories in the literature review that espouse the importance of focussed listening. These include Schafer (1975; 1994) and Waite (2011; 2016). They include the theories highlighted in the literature review that draw connections between mindful listening and musicking (Csikszentmihalyi ,2002; Diaz, 2013; Howell et. al., 2011; Netwon, 2015; Steinfeld and Brewer, 2015).

4.21. Senses-Embodiment

Another theme that resulted from the data analysis and is positioned under the umbrella category of the senses was the theme of embodiment. This involved the way that the children’s bodies were a significant part of their musical experience. This is arguably closely linked to the heightened sensual awareness and the impact of being able to feel the vibration of their musicking through their bodies. It also includes a recurring confirmation that dance and movement were part of the musicking from the children’s perspective.

This is exemplified in this extract from School 4:

Interviewer: Looking at this film there's dancing in your ceremonies. Why's that?
Pupil 5: It feels happy and you get into the beat.
Interviewer: So is it part of the music or is it different?
Pupil 4: I was holding maracas and I was dancing so you could hold your maracas and could wave and make sounds...la la la! Like that. ..It was the same.

Interviewer: So is that the same though, is it part of the music?
Pupil 4: Yeah it's the same.
Pupil 3: Yeah they're the same thing because you can sing to the beat and you can dance while you're singing...while you're making noises...loud...put some extra oomph into it...”
Interviewer: “Does anyone else feel that way?

(All nodding)
Pupil: 3 If this was a beach like your group, like that group you were dancing with the drums banging the drums and imagine this was a beach and some half were playing rocks and the other were dancing with maracas, then you add them together they go together it would be dance and music together all as one.
Pupil: 2 Yeah it feels the same.

Similarly, this extract from School 5.

Pupil 1: When we listen to music, it kind of gets you to dance. If you’re just listening to it, then, obviously, you sing along or you just listen very carefully, but then, also, it gets you to dance. If it’s calm, then it gets you to dance slowly and swiftly, but if it’s loud it gets you to do all different kinds of dancing. I think dancing and music are connected because if you didn’t have, if you were just dancing with no music, then it would be a bit odd, but when you have music, it encourages you to be more brave.

Interviewer: Okay, I see. Anyone else? What I’m wondering is: Was the dance the music or was it something separate? What do you think? I’m going to ask Pupil 2.

Pupil 2: Dance and music I feel are quite similar in qualities. They’re the same really. Say you had music without the dance, it feels lonely, and then if you have to dance without music, it also feels like there’s something missing. If you combine the two, they make this wonderful performance in a way. You can really express yourself instead of just having one, where you can only express part of yourself. With both, you can express everything that you want to get out or anything that you want to just be heard or to be seen.

The idea that the children could feel the music through their bodies and that this had enhanced their musicking was also evident throughout the children’s responses. This is shown in this exchange from Pupil 1, School 5:

Interviewer: So, did dance affect your music?
Pupil 1: Definitely because when you’re just playing you can’t almost feel it, but when you use dance as a sense of, I have to move and let it out, it really helps you to express yourself in a way you probably couldn’t do, if you didn’t have that music and doing that dance together. You’re combining them and it’s just like the most magical thing.

Similarly, this response from Pupil 3 from School 2: “The music made me feel free. Say when you’re dancing, if you’re playing fast music you’ll go fast and it will help you play.” And Pupil 6 from School 4: “Yeah, we used um rocks and um we were using like the voices like and your body because it's all part of the music. You can make it like and feel it in your body and that is all part of it.” The teachers’ responses supported these responses from the children. For example, Teacher 1 from School 1 said:

You could see they could feel the sounds in their bodies. And the sights, just being outside. I don’t know, if it was just the field—I think it was because they could feel the sounds and hear the sounds of nature, you could see the sounds of nature. I don’t know, they just felt it, you could see them getting into it. It made them behave in a different way. It all helped them to create their musical ceremonies.

It was clear also from observations and the film footage that the children consistently used movement throughout their musicking. It could be argued that this is because they were tasked with composing musical ceremonies and that the movement was ‘ceremonial’ rather than ‘musical’. Therefore, the movements were as an addition to the music rather than being part of the music. However, the children’s and teachers’ responses during the interviews, as have been discussed above, highlighted that the view was that movements were part of and enhanced their musicking. This steps in time with the literature discussed in the literature review that highlights cultures or proposes theory where there is no significant division between music and dance (Balkwill and Thompson, 1999; Ball, 2010; Blacking, 1977; Bohlman, 2002; Dalcroze, 1921; Small, 1996). In addition, it links with Philpott’s (2001) contention, as analysed in the literature review, that feeling music through the body has a continual role to play in musical literacy. This can also be linked to Vygotsky’s (1971) analysis, as highlighted in the literature review, that children view the arts as being syncretic and are less likely to see divisions between music, dance and drama.

It also provides new evidence that shows that musicking in outdoor rural environments can afford children enhanced bodily and sensual awareness and that this improved awareness can enhance
their musicking. All of the children interviewed spoke of being aware of the physical nature of the sounds and how movement not only helped, but was an integral part of their musicking.

4.22. Senses- leading to ‘flow’

As has been discussed above in this chapter, the responses not only spoke positively about the sensual experience of musicking outside, they also claimed that this had a beneficial impact on their musicking. This was because the sensual experiences engendered by their musicking appeared to have been a conduit for creating optimal mind states. For example, one theme that kept on returning as a reason for why experiencing nature through the senses may have positively impacted on the music making was because it made the children more easily get ideas, it helped their music “flow”. For example, this response from School 3, Pupil 1:

Pupil 1: Down the beach there’s different scenery and like at school it’s like just one sound. It’s like just one sound because you’re in a room. But in the beach it's like lots of different sounds. It's in the air there's loads of sounds and it kind of helps your music go with flow.”

Interviewer: “So how does that help?
Pupil 1: I think it's easier down the beach because there's lots of different sounds. Like... at school it's harder because you can't get the right note. There's lots of sounds in school, but sometimes you can't hear properly and there's not the right one that you need.

Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 2: “I liked playing the music because of the waves and the birds and the echoes helped the music to flow, so it’s like part of all around us.” As has been analysed above, all of the children said that movement was an integral part of their musicking and that it helped their musicking. Most of the responses expressed a view that movement or dance was not only part of their music, but had helped to change their mind state. For example, Pupil 1 from School 6 said: “You just dance to how the music makes you feel. And then nothing matters, nothing except for the music.”

This data can be linked to the literature highlighted in the literature review that suggests that outdoor learning activities make use of a heightened sensual awareness (Doddington, 2014; Edgington, 2002; Gelter 2010; Heath, 2015; Palmer, 2015; Waite, 2011). This data also supports the literature from the beliefs of indigenous peoples as analysed in the literature review.
In addition, it synchronises with the theories analysed in the literature review that claim that attending to music fully through the senses can lead to a change in consciousness (Buber, 1969; Turner, 1969; Maslow, 1970; Vygotsky, 1971; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Boyce-Tillman, 2009; Zbikowski 2011). However, the evidence provided here is different because the changes in consciousness have occurred as a result of children making music in outdoor rural environments. It is as if the natural world speaks to the children through their senses, helping their musicking and causing them to enter an optimal mind state. This is discussed in more detail below when the optimal experiences are analysed. The data from the children’s interviews also connect with Newton’s (2015) assertion, as highlighted in the literature review, that being mindful can help one enter a creative state conducive to music making and those that claim attentive listening can induce flow states (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Gelter, 2010; Henderson and Vikander, 2007; Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989; MacAloon & Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; McDonald, Wearing, & Ponting, 2009; Mitchell, 1985; Waller et. al. 2017). This is illustrated in this extract from Pupil 2 and Pupil 4 from School 6:

Pupil 2: There’s a nature sound and there’s a proper sound and they’re together and making different music to go with the birds and the proper music. It all combines and blurs.

Pupil 4: And it makes you, it just makes you feel like, Whoa, that’s a good sound. you can hear and feel the sound. You feel you need to dance or something. When we were playing the music, you do want to dance, it’s just part of it and then when you listen to the nature, it’s like, “This is a new world for me”. This is where I’m going to a new door. I’m expressing all my feelings… Then when we went through it...It’s like a door of just birds and all creatures and the wind and all the outside.

Similarly, Pupil 4 from School 3 said, “most of us have already explained it, but the waves and the birds they joined in. It just doesn't feel the same in school. It's got to be real to um...to make you feel different.” The responses from the teachers once more supported the views of the children. For example, Teacher 1 from School 5 said:

Because they were listening properly, I felt they started using their voices, and it was a lot more animalistic, sort of, I don’t know, raw. It was really clever and they were being much more creative. Maybe because the acoustics were different and because they were in this sheltered forest place, they could hear it sort of bouncing back and things like that. I think they were experimenting more. It was more enclosed, more immersive. They just seemed taken to another place by their music.
4.23. Senses - Leading to flow - Leading to calm focus

A consistent theme that emerged from analysis of the data was that the sensual experience helped the children’s music flow, helped change their state of mind and that this had resulted in the children feeling calmer, and more focussed. These ideas of how the children’s musicking seemingly changed the children’s consciousness and led to improved states of mind shall be explored in more depth later in this chapter. However, it is useful at this point to highlight how the data showed that a sensual immersion in nature and their musicking seemingly created flow states that in turn had led to a feeling of calm focus, a changed state of mind. This response from Pupil 5, School 5 was typical: “I felt like the music blended in with the forest and like I was in the Amazon rainforest. It felt different...Like I was away from all the talk about school and tests and things; it felt relaxing and I could just focus on playing our music.”

Pupil 1 from School 3 also said: “It felt calm playing the music because you could feel the breeze and you could feel the echoes. And the breeze would really go with the music and it felt calm.” This was reinforced by the teachers’ responses. For example, Teacher 1 from School 2 said:

“There’s a depth to it, it is more tranquil, there is no doubt they can’t focus on all their senses as much in the classroom. It’s not just about the sounds it’s about feeling the air around you, the space that’s around you. It’s hard to put into words because your whole body is engulfed in it. It is all encompassing, sight, hearing, smell and more than that...it focuses them and calms them also.”

4.24. Life of Feeling - Emotions

The third main category presented by the data is “the life of feeling”. This is an umbrella term that includes emotion and imagination, the term being taken from Langer (1978) and Swanwick (1999) that points to the metaphysical world of human existence that is not easily conveyed by words. As has been highlighted above, the children’s musicking apparently affected the children’s feelings. It produced an affective response.

For example, Pupil 1 of School 5 said: “That's what makes our music special is the things it does to you...that's what's important. it's hard to explain. But it makes you feel different.” Teacher 1 from School 1 said: “The children were able to have the freedom to express themselves ...displaying the emotions.” We can link this here with Langer’s (1978) and Swanwick’s (1986) assertions, discussed
in the literature review, that music can express the life of feeling. The children consistently reported that their musicking represented feelings. However, there was also a common theme in the data that the children’s musicking expressed their feelings. This was repeated in the data from the children and the teachers. For example, Pupil 1 from School 6 said: “It helps you express yourself, how you’re feeling.” Pupil 2 from School 1 said: “You can just express how you feel and just be you.” Similarly, Teacher 1 from School 6 said: “You can tell if they’re trying to be sad or happy or angry or shocked or surprised, you can see it. They’re expressing their emotions. The compositions and the routines they put with it you could tell matched what they were imagining and feeling.”

The idea that music can arouse and express emotions supports those theorists discussed in the literature review who claim that music can not only represent feelings, but can also cause an affective response (Budd, 1994; Juslin, 2013; Patel, 2008; Sloboda, 1992). There was also a common theme present in the responses from the children that showed that they felt their musicking had changed and improved their feelings and that it had helped them achieve their natural state. This data supports Vygotsky’s (1971) theory of artistic transubstantiation. It also can be linked to the theories that claim music can have a therapeutic or healing effect (Boyce-Tillman, 2000; Turner, 2012) and DeNora’s analysis of music as a ‘Technology of the Self’ (DeNora, 1999) and people’s use of ‘music asylums’ (DeNora, 2015) as analysed in the literature review. For example, Pupil 3 from School 2 explained: “Playing the music changes your feelings. The music can make you feel happy if you’re feeling sad.” Similarly, Pupil 4 from School 3 stated: “Music makes your heart stronger, it's to do with feelings. That's what I think.”

Here we can draw parallels with Vygotsky’s (1971) theory, as discussed in the literature review, that claims that music enables us to overcome our feelings and is cathartic. There was consistent support for Vygotsky’s (1971) analysis of music, as discussed in the literature review, as being a way of improving a person’s state of being. The children talked about their musicking enabling a release of feelings and that this release made them feel better. This supports Vygotsky’s (1971) argument, as analysed in the literature review, that the biological role of music is to clear our psyche and enable a release of powerful energies. For example, Pupil 2 from School 6 explains:

When the music takes you to another place, it does all the ingredients, emotion is probably one of the biggest ones because it makes you feel different, but to be honest, I don’t think it always makes you calm. When you transform into a different world, I think that it sometimes makes me crazy, but I always feel better afterwards.
Most of the children talked about entering a different state of mind via their musicking and that this was an affective experience. They felt happy experiencing this state of mind and this joyfulness not only accompanied, but facilitated this state of mind. This example from Pupil 2 from School 6 exemplifies this:

You forget everything and you get really into the music. It feels like you've got to stick with it, you've got to have the amazing time. You're not thinking, oh when is this over. You've got to go and you've got to keep playing because it feels great. You’re thinking...oh I don't want this to end. You've got to do the music and it makes me feel happy that you're doing it, and it makes me feel like I don't want to stop doing the music.

The responses from the children consistently expressed how they felt their musicking had helped their feelings and made them feel better. Most of the children talked about feeling happy and joyful playing their music. This response from Pupil 2 from School 3 was typical: “Playing the music made me happy just because the sun was reflecting on me. It makes my heart go stronger because I'm brave enough to sing out.” Similarly, Pupil 4 from School 6 said: “Playing my music changed me and made me feel happy to just go out and do something, just feel free.”

These responses were typical of the ideas expressed by the children and can be synthesised with Vygotsky’s (1971) theory that art allows for transubstantiation. As discussed in the literature review, Vygotsky asserts that music not only enables us to express or overcome our feelings, it also leaves us with something more than we had beforehand, calling us to strive beyond our previous state (Vygotsky, 1971). This data also coalesces with other views discussed in the literature review that claim that music can improve our state of being (Allsup, 2016; Bernard, 2009; Boyce-Tillman, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; DeNora, 1999; 2015; Dewey, 1934; Elliott, 2015; Maslow 1971; Turner, 2012). This theme that music can improve us shall be returned to below when we examine the data in light of the theories of optimal experiences. First of all, it is important to examine how the data showed that the children’s musicking had affected the children’s imaginations and that these experiences were apparently imbued with feeling.
4.26.  The Life of feeling - Imagination

The children consistently reported that during their musicking they had imagined various things and that they had felt what they had imagined. For example, Pupil 4 from School 2 stated that:

I imagined I was in a tribe on an adventure... Every music that you make makes you feel different because you think about something else...the African drums made me feel like I was on an adventure, and the piano you feel like you’re on a lake. Different sounds make you feel different things in your head.

Pupil 2, from School 6 similarly described that: “I wasn’t aware or anything, but I was just in another world. I closed my eyes and I could still see it happening. That we were totally tribal, but we were wearing the same stuff; I could still see it. That’s my imagination.” The responses from the children clearly support the theorists discussed in the literature review who assert that music enables us to enlarge our imaginative experiences (Bernard, 2009; Boyce-Tillman, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Dewey, 1934; Maslow 1971; Newton, 2015; Turner, 2012; Vygotsky, 1971; Zbikowski, 2011). The responses from the children also consistently reported that the music had allowed them to enter into imaginary worlds and that their feelings were an important part of this. For example, Pupil 5 from School 6 said: “Hearing the sounds outdoors, it helped me imagine if you were taken back in time. The playing of the music helped your imagination. You could feel it. You felt like you were there. It helps you express yourself, how you’re feeling.” Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 3 said:

It’s something that you're getting into and you really really like. It kind of takes control of you and then you kind of go to another place... you feel you just want to let it out and you go sometimes a little bit crazy because you just want to express your feelings. It makes you more you.”

Interviewer: OK...so what do you mean by ‘it makes you more you’?
Pupil 2: It makes me feel like really calm.

4.27.  Life of feeling - Imagination- leading to flow

These themes of calmness and that the children’s musicking had somehow helped the children achieve a natural optimal state were consistently expressed in the children’s responses. There was a
common response in the data that their musicking had allowed the children to express their feelings in imaginary worlds, that this had led to a changed state of mind, and that this in turn had resulted in being calming. Pupil 2 from School 5 explains:

I think it’s something with listening to what you’re playing. It gets you into something...It’s hearing the sounds in the wood first. We’ve said before, the birds joined in as well. They were part of our music. The freedom comes next, but then when you start playing your music to express your feelings and you start to imagine and then you go to another world and it feels calming.

The idea that their musicking had made them feel calm shall be returned to in detail below. For the moment it’s important to highlight how the children felt that their musicking had seemingly affected their imaginations and vice versa. It seems that once in these imaginary worlds their imaginations had enabled them to enter a changed state of mind that had in turn driven their musicking. For example, Pupil 2 from School 4 said: “I think music helps you explore different places in your mind, to have fun doing it, and if you're sad and you hit drum, you’ll get into the rhythm of it. If you're mad, keep on playing it. It just takes you to different places where you’ve never been before in your head.” Similarly, Pupil 1 from School 6 said:

When you transform into that world, it can make you do stuff...it feels so amazing. You can do anything. No one can say, no one can stop you when you’re in your world. No one can even touch you. You’re in that world yourself, and no one can get you out until that music stops, until you want to stop the music.

These ideas were also reflected in the data gathered from the teachers’ responses. For example, Teacher 1 from School 5 said:

What was interesting was how it developed. It may have started with that thread or an idea because they needed something to hang on to, and as it developed, you could see their imaginations sort of take over…it was kind of like it just started working... Their imagination was just driving their music. It was like, “You do that, you do that,” and then the sounds took over. It was brilliant.

These ideas also synthesise with Vygotsky’s (1971; 1930) assertion, as analysed in the literature review, that emphasises the close relationship that children’s imaginations, their feelings and music
making have with each other. Just as Vygotsky claims (1971), the children’s musicking seemingly allows them to enter imaginary worlds, creating meaningful emotional experiences.

This is shown in this exchange from Pupil 2 and Pupil 4 from School 6:

Pupil 2: When you’re part of a group, you feel like you’re family. You all go in that magical world together and you do it together, and then when the music stops, you come back to this world and you’re like, “Let’s go back into the world! Let’s go back into the world!

Pupil 4: Yeah, you come into a place and you go in and do everything that you can. You just feel a release, and then you step back out and you feel, I’m an improved person!

Pupil 2: You feel so happy.

Similarly, Pupil 3 from School 6 said:

It helped your imagination, it helped you feel calmer and refreshed. Like you just came out of the shower, an ice-cold shower and you feel like a brand-new person, but you still feel yourself. You just stepped out of this magical world, and you feel like you’ve been in a very cold shower and you’ve just come out and you’re fresh and brand-new and you feel like, Okay, I can start this day happy! Or we can say, I can do the rest of this day or morning the best I could ever do.

The children clearly felt that their musicking had allowed for a “release” and that this had been experienced in a “magical world”. This synthesises with Vygotsky’s (1971) assertion that music’s ability to be cathartic takes place in the realm of the imagination. As has been shown above, the data supports Vygotsky’s (1971; 1930) theories analysed in the literature review that join cognition with affect in the realm of the imagination and maintain that all three are fundamental to the artistic process.

4.28. Paving the way for optimal experiences

The data shows that these three themes; imaginative and affective experiences (the life of feeling), the sense of freedom experienced and the enhanced sensual states, seem to have been the catalysts for the liminality (Turner, 1969) and flow states (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) that led to the peak experiences (Maslow, 1970) and feelings of communitas (Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012) as analysed
in the literature review. Before we explore the data that shows that the children experienced these states of consciousness, we need to examine the evidence that suggests how these states were created. In all of the interviews most of the children outlined that they felt that experiences of the three different themes had led to these changes in consciousness. During the first set of interviews with each school the data seemed to be showing that experiences of the three main themes (senses, life of feeling and freedom) had resulted in the children having these optimal experiences. The analysis of the data at this stage was an inductive process. As explained in the methodology chapter this meant that the theory came from the data, from the “ground up” (Urquhart, 2012, p.8). The semi-structured interviews allowed the children to describe their experiences without feeling the need to answer specific questions. This meant that any questions asked were led by the responses of the children. Everything began with the data and the data seemed to be showing that the children felt that there was a pathway or progression that led to these changes in consciousness. It seemed that the experiences of the three main themes had in turn caused these optimal experiences. This is highlighted in this description from Pupil 4 from School 5:

Music, I felt… I love music and all, but I thought it’s going to be the same thing. We went to the woods and it was different. We felt close to nature. Then we started playing and everything felt free and you could feel the sounds and imagine you were part of a tribe. That’s when you really just go along with it. When you’re inside the music, it feels like it’s changed.

We can see here that the three categories of feeling free (freedom), feeling the sounds (senses) and imagination (life of feeling) have led to this optimal experience, feeling as though “inside the music”. Similarly, this exchange from Pupil 5 from School 3 highlights how a sense of freedom, the sensual experience and the affective nature of the children’s musicking seemingly “transports” them to an optimal mind state where “nothing goes wrong”.

Pupil 5: The environment and the sounds of nature like help you concentrate and it just to takes you to a completely different level... of sound and music...just makes it sound very good... it feels like really expressive like you can really express yourself to your surroundings you can express yourself to nature. It feels really good when you like play together. It takes you to another land because like the people like help you like teleport to a place where nothing goes wrong and like to feels really really nice.
The follow-up data collection in schools 5 and 6 involved interviews with the same pupils. This meant that they could be questioned further about their experiences and the order of the themes in order to test the model that had emerged. Therefore, the sampling was purposeful theoretical sampling as the sample was specifically chosen to advance the emerging theory. These responses from Schools 6 and 5 exemplify how the responses in these follow-up interviews showed that there were common categories to the children’s experiences (freedom, senses, life of feeling) and that there was a pattern of progression through experiencing these categories that led to the children achieving an apparent change in consciousness. For example, Pupil 2, School 6 (follow-up interview) said:

It just makes you feel like, Whoa, that’s a good sound. I need to dance or something. When we were playing the music, you do want to dance, it’s just part of it and then when you listen to the nature, you’re just thinking, This is a new world for me. This is where I’m going to a new world. I’m expressing all my feelings… Then when we went through it...It’s like a door of just birds and all creatures and the wind and all the outside.

Interviewer: Okay...so what order do things happen. Do you go through the door straight away? What happens?

Pupil 2: First of all we got to the field and were looking around at the trees and listening to the birds. It makes you feel free. Then we started making up our music. We just sort of felt it, you know? Then we tried some stuff out and decided what we were playing. We imagined we were part of a tribe like…and then we were the tribe. It all just comes together like…a new thing and that’s when it starts to feel magical. That’s when you like feel like you’ve gone through a door.

Similarly, this exchange from School 5 (follow-up interview):

Pupil 1: If you’re just walking around in the woods, it’s quite boring, but if you stop and just listen to the nature for a few minutes, it just feels so nice, the river running, the trees swaying, the birds. The nature helps you with the calm.

Interviewer: So is that what happened first?

Pupil 1: Yeah, just being quiet, just listening. And freedom is part of it.

Pupil 2: Freedom, yeah.
Interviewer: And then what?
Pupil 1: You feel different being in the woods. Then when you play music it feels different again. It changes your feelings.

Pupil 2: Feelings, yeah.
Pupil 3: When we listen to the birds, we have an idea of a tune. Sometimes they actually talk to you and give you a tune.

Pupil 2: This is a bit of a boring word, but it made me feel happy.
Pupil 1: “It made me feel relaxed. Music, I love it. Nature, I love it. But when we combine them together, I did feel so at home, and I thought I could spend hours and days and years, probably, in this. You feel like you’re in the music. You’re actually part of the music.

As in these two examples, and has been discussed above, the responses from the children consistently provided evidence that they experienced being outdoors and being surrounded by nature first. This is then followed by the children describing experiences that have been categorised under the three themes of: senses; freedom; life of feeling. These experiences were then followed by perceiving an optimal mind state.

The children's responses in all of the interviews consistently report that experiences of the three main categories (freedom, senses, life of feeling) occurred before they had the optimal experiences, and that these categories followed after them experiencing being outdoors surrounded by nature. However, the order of these three themes being experienced was not consistent and did not seem to be important in order for the optimal mind states to be experienced. For example, when asked about the order in the follow-up interviews, Pupil 3 from School 5 said:

It’s the nature and the music and the feelings... And also, the freedom, being able to make up your own. It all comes together and that’s when it happens. That’s when you forget everything and become a tribe just dancing and playing music. You’re in a whole new world. That’s when you really like get into it.

In all of the interviews the responses from the children showed that they felt that experience of the three main categories; freedom, senses; the life of feeling, had led to an apparent change of consciousness, it is as if they paved the way for the optimal experiences. However, it is also
important to note that the data show that it is the children’s musicking that was the vehicle that allowed them to achieve these apparent changes in consciousness. We shall now explore in more depth how the responses from the children show that they appear to have experienced these optimal states, or changes of consciousness.

4.29. Autotelic (Flow and Peak Experiences)

The analysis of the responses showed that the children appear to have experienced characteristics of optimal states as discussed in the literature review (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990; Maslow, 1970; Turner, 1969). Aligning with Csíkszentmihályi’s (1990) flow theory, Maslow’s (1970) theory of peak experience and Turner’s (1969) theory of communitas, the children describe their musicking as involving intrinsic pleasure. The pleasure was not experienced afterwards or as result of some end goal. It was experienced because of the immersion of the musicking and during the musicking. In other words it was autotelic (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990). For example, Pupil 5, School 6 said: “It made me feel like I was going with the flow. So when I was working with my group I wasn’t saying anything so we just made up our own music and we were just going with the flow.” Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 1 said: “It feels like more just enjoyable like if it’s just doing its own thing and you're not making it do everything. The music just takes over and kind of does it.” Pupil 1 from School 6 emphasises the enjoyment and union that’s felt with the music: “When we were playing music...it's just like a dream and everyone is just like happy and you're in like a fairy tale like X said you're just it... just makes you feel really like happy and you don't want it to ever stop.”

4.30. Immersive (Flow and Peak Experiences)

The data from the interviews showed that the children felt that their musicking outdoors was immersive. This is in keeping with Maslow’s (1970) description of peak experiences being immersive as discussed in the literature review. It also synthesises with Csíkszentmihályi’s (1990) description of action and awareness merging in his analysis of flow states as analysed in the literature review. In addition, it links with Gelter’s (2010) claim that dwelling in nature can create “frilutsliv” experiences of immersion that cause peak and flow experiences. The children describe concentrating only on their musicking and that nothing else seemed to matter: School 2, Pupil 4: “It felt like the only thing I needed to concentrate on, when we were there, was just making the song.” Pupil 5 from School 6 similarly explains:
It just felt right to do it. It wasn’t like you’re doing something else, like your school and doing work. That feels right, if you know what I mean. It feels right to be in the woods and you’re making music with nature. It feels...just...just being there. We were playing our music and then everything felt like it had stopped, but we were still playing. It felt good.

These ideas are expressed metaphorically in this example from Pupil 2, School 4: “It feels like you’re jumping off a diving board and then you land on the water and then you just open your eyes and then it’s like, Where is this? It’s like the music, you feel it’s the same. You’re like in the music.” Similarly, Pupil 4 from School 6 likened playing their music outdoors as being: “Like you're in a dream. Like you've fallen into it.” Throughout the children’s responses this sense of being absorbed by their musicking is repeated. It is also consistently supported in the data from the teacher’s interviews. For example, Teacher 1 from School 5 said: “They took it really seriously. But as you say, they weren’t solemn because they were celebratory and cheering and happy. But they took it really seriously. I do think they got completely absorbed in it.”

4.3. Loss of ego (Flow and Peak Experiences)

A recurring explanation for this feeling of absorption that is demonstrated in the data is that the children experienced a loss of self-consciousness. They did not feel concerned about making mistakes. For example, Pupil 2 from School 6 explains:

You’re expressing a lot more. If there’s nobody around you, like in the woods, you feel nobody’s going to be there, so you just express yourself so much. But if you’re in school and you know that you’re being watched, then you feel different. You’re worried about others and you want to make sense, but in the woods, you can say whatever you’d like; it doesn’t even have to make sense. Because there’s nobody there—literally—just feel like...free to get into your music.

Again, this chimes with Csíkszentmihályi’s (1990) Flow state and Maslow’s (1970) Peak experiences as analysed in the literature review. In addition, the data shows that most of the children seemed to have experienced a freedom from losing their sense of self. In other words experiencing freedom from their ego. This is perhaps more aptly described as freedom from the ego self, rather than a loss of the ego self because the data shows that the children felt this was a positive experience. For example, this exchange involving Pupil 5 from School 4:
Pupil 5: I felt like I was someplace else playing a bit of music...I felt a bit different. It didn’t feel like me it felt like someone else.

Interviewer: Can you explain a bit more about that?
Pupil 5: I felt like I was in a different place where nothing else mattered, a whole different world of music, not just normal banging the drum...I felt at the time you’re in the same place, but you just feel, you’re playing it and that’s all...all the sounds take you to a different place.

The idea that the children’s musicking had enabled them to experience a sense of going to a different place is repeated throughout the children’s responses. For example, this exchange from School 4 is indicative of the children’s responses:

Pupil 2: It took you to a different world, and you didn’t know what was going to happen next.

Pupil 3: Yeah, it’s like you’re in a world where everything is going backwards, you feel like your mind’s gone wild; it’s jumbled up and stuff.

These statements of feeling uncertain, not knowing what was going to happen next and feeling as though things are going backwards may be expected to be accompanied by negative feelings, feelings of anxiety and concern. However, none of the children said they were concerned about these feelings. On the contrary, the consensus was that these feelings were very much welcomed. For example, Pupil 3 from School 5 said:

Playing the music took me to a different world....When you transform into that world, it can make you do stuff ... You can do anything. No one can say, no one can stop you when you’re in your world. No one can even touch you. You’re in that world yourself, and no one can get you out until that music stops, until you want to stop the music.

Pupil 3 from School 6 supports this saying:

I was transported to a different place in a different time. We could all be together there. It felt like we were there all the time and it feels like it was natural to do it...going to a different world, like enter different worlds, you just put all your worries aside, and you don’t really care, almost like
what anyone thinks or what everyone does. You’re just yourself and there’s almost nobody there and you’re just there in a happy place and you’re just doing whatever you want to do.

Similarly, Pupil 3 from School 3 said: “I felt like I was transported to another place because I was in the zone of the music. it felt really calming.” The themes of feeling calm and feeling a sense of transcendence or communitas (Turner, 1970; Turner, 2012) shall be explored below. Before that we need to delve deeper into an analysis of these, what might be called, liminal experiences as the data shows that these experiences lead to the feelings of transcendence and communitas.

4.32. Liminality

As is discussed in the literature review, Turner (1970) outlines liminality as “to act and feel in ways opposite to or different from their standardized modes of behaviour.” (p.200) In all of the interviews there is evidence that most of the children experienced states or modes of behaviour, during their music making, that were different to their normal ways of behaving. This included responses that suggested they felt that their sense of identity had been changed, albeit momentarily during their music making. Most of the children said that their musicking had made them feel different and experience a different reality. For example, Pupil 3 from School 4 said:

I felt like I was someplace else playing a bit of music...I felt a bit different. It didn’t feel like me, it felt like someone else.

Interviewer: Can you explain a bit more about that?
Pupil 3: I didn’t feel like me. I felt like a different person, but I didn’t know who. I just felt like a made-up person and not me...I just felt not like myself.

Similarly, Pupil 6 from School 5 said: “I haven’t done anything like that before, so it feels like a new person’s come out of me and just taken over. It feels like another side of me that I hadn’t known.” A common theme repeated in the data is that this new sense of identity experienced during their musicking had been a positive experience for the children. This is despite the fact that these liminal experiences are described as being different, even “wild” ways of feeling. For example Pupil 1 from School 6 said:
I think when the music is playing, I do transform into a different person, to a different world. We see it as different stuff. When you transform into that different world, it is calm, but it doesn’t always have to be calm. You can change it. Sometimes you can feel happy and wild and you can just imagine when you turn and transform into that world...you don’t always have to be calm; you can be wild.

This description resonates with Turner’s description of liminality, as outlined in the review of literature chapter, as being a “fructile chaos, a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities, not by any means a random assemblage but a striving after new forms and structure.” (Turner, 1970, pp. 11-12). As Pupil 4 from School 6 explains:

Yeah, almost like you’re a different person when you hear all these sounds and see all these different moves, and you just go into a different world. You spin around and then you’re a different person all of a sudden. You just go wild and you just feel like you’re completely free to do whatever you would like.

Similarly, Pupil 6 from School 4 said:

I felt free as well because I was able to do whatever I wanted. I was looking at one person and then another person and then I noticed well if they’re doing a tune like that maybe I could like...when they were all bashing the drum all quickly I quickly started playing the drum quickly. I was like a crazy person!

The children’s responses consistently expressed the view that their musicking had allowed them to “go into a different world”, to be “crazy” and that this was a liberating experience. This resonates with the theory of liminality (Turner, 1970; Turner, 2012) as discussed in the literature review, that describes liminal experiences as involving a disruption of normality where structure is removed and is replaced by states of ambiguity. The children’s responses also consistently expressed the view that this ambiguous, unusual state was enjoyable. This idea shall be examined in more detail below. First of all, we shall explore how most of the children felt they experienced a distortion of chronological time during these liminal states.

4.33. Time distortion (Liminality, Flow and Peak Experiences)
The data shows that the children experienced a feeling of a different sense of time during their musicking. This is highlighted in this extract from School 5:

Pupil 4: Two minutes’ normal time felt like 30 seconds. Then in school, two minutes feels like two hours.

Pupil 1: I couldn’t compare it to actual time. For some reason I thought—playing music in the woods, it’s weird because you feel like you have unlimited time and it’s never going to be night and nobody’s around you. You can’t get bossed around… like time stops and you can just do whatever you want. Nobody’s there. Anything you can get done; it’s just your world.

Pupil 3: It feels like the time stopped and it goes really slow. You think you’re practicing it every thirty seconds and you think you’ve not been down there for a long time, but you actually feel a long time.

As can be seen in these two examples, the children did not consistently report that time had either slowed down or sped up. However, the data from the interviews did show that in relation to their normal experiences they had experienced time differently. This again can be synthesised with Maslow’s (1970) Peak Experience, Csickzentmilahyi’s (1990) Flow and Turner’s (1969) liminality. As has been discussed in the literature review, Turner (1967) states that a liminal period is “a moment in and out of time.” (p. 96). For example, Pupil 3, from School 3 explains:

Time feels as though it’s broken into bits of the air.
Interviewer: “What do you mean by that?”
Pupil 3: “It means time has separated. Its hours are long. Its minutes are longer, everything is longer.

There is a clear sense of liminality being expressed here. Time is described as being “broken” and “separated”. It is as if the world of “betwixt and between” (Turner, 1967) is being revealed. When questioned further, the children explained that during these experiences they felt as though they were able to more easily focus and had greater clarity. These responses from pupils from the follow-up interviews in School 5 highlight this:
Pupil 5: If we went there for a half hour, it always feels like two or three hours because you’re in the zone and you’re just, it’s different.

Interviewer: Okay. Can you explain more about that?
Pupil 5: The reason I think why it feels like, it’s longer there is because you’ve got, you know what’s around you and you’re aware of what you’re playing and things like that.

Interviewer: Okay, good. Pupil Six?
Pupil 6: It feels like…Time…has stopped. All you’re doing is playing your music. That’s all there is.

The idea of greater clarity and focus being brought to bear after or during these moments of liminality chime with Turner’s (1970; 2008) theory that liminal beings and liminal moments can lead to communitas. As highlighted in the literature review, Turner (1979) states, “liminal time is not controlled by the clock it is a time of enchantment when anything might, even should, happen.” (1979, p.465). The data also chime with the concepts of friluftsliv and mindfulness, as discussed in the literature review, that describe a removal from chronological time. As has been highlighted above, this removal from clock-time seems to have contributed to the children feeling a sense of freedom and happiness. This supports Louv’s (2008) assertion as discussed in the literature review that being truly immersed in nature requires “loose unstructured dreamtime” (p.117) and that these experiences demand a “slow pedagogy” (Payne and Watchow, 2009). However, the responses from the children show clearly that it is not only the experience of nature, but their musicking in nature that seems to have created these liminal moments where a sense of chronological time was distorted. We shall now explore how the data shows that the children’s experiences of liminality and flow states appear to have led on to a sense of communitas (Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012).

4.34. Liminality leading to Communitas

It is argued, as discussed in the literature review, that liminality and flow can lead to a sense of communitas (Turner, 1970; Turner, 2012). The data from the children seems to support these theories. During the liminal and flow states they experienced an augmented sense of reality where there was a sense of immense possibility and potential. For example, the follow up interviews, Pupil 1 from School 5 said:
For some reason I thought—playing music in the woods, it’s weird because you feel like you have unlimited time and it’s never going to be night and nobody’s around you. You can’t get bossed around... like time stops and you can just do whatever you want. Nobody’s there. Anything you can get done; it’s just your world.

Similarly, Pupil 5 from School 3 said:

It feels like really expressive like you can really express yourself to your surroundings you can express yourself to nature. It feels really good when you like play together. It takes you to another land because like the people like help you like teleport to a place where nothing goes wrong and like it feels really really nice.

The idea of being teleported to a different world where anything could happen chimes with Turner’s liminality (1969). It also resonates with Vygotsky’s description of catharsis, as discussed in the literature review, of music as calling to life “tremendous energies which were previously inhibited and restrained.” (1971, p.252). The responses from the children consistently showed that the feeling of liminality had led to feelings of communitas and calm. For example, Pupil 6 from School 4 said: “When they were all bashing the drum all quickly I quickly started playing the drum quickly. I was like a crazy person! Then we were all together and nothing else mattered. Everything felt happy and smooth.” We can see the progression to calmness here as the pupil goes from feeling like a “crazy person” to feeling “together and nothing else mattered” and then feeling “happy and smooth”. This is also expressed in this exchange from School 3:

Pupil 3: Like that group just then (pointing to film) you were dancing with the drums banging the drums together and...imagine this was a beach and some half were playing rocks and the other were dancing with maracas, then you add them together and they go together...that’s when it all changes... it would be dance and music together all as one.

Interviewer: So how did you feel when you were making the music?
Pupil 1: It makes you feel calm happy and excited.
Interviewer: “All at the same time?
Pupil 1 Yeah (laughing) well you kind of feel happy and excited and then calm for the next part.”
Pupil 2: It makes me feel.. like calm...but happy at the same time because like... like when you're doing the next part there's a whole different thing, you get into it. Then when you're putting it together... you get there and it feels happy like. You've reached a calm place.

This exchange from School 3 clearly states that the children feel their musicking together created a happy excitement and that this was followed by reaching a “calm place”. It may appear counter-intuitive for the children to experience calmness when musicking together excitedly, but analysis of the data repeatedly showed that this was occurring.

This was also confirmed in the follow-up interviews where I questioned the children about what it was like when they experienced the calmness and how this state was achieved. For example, Pupil 4 from School 5 said:

You feel like it doesn’t matter where you are. You’re in your own world. It doesn’t matter what other people think. Then the more you play the music together... when you’re playing the music, I felt a different person, you can get into a different character. You go off into another world; playing the music...all together. Then it’s just so calm. All you can hear are the trees whirring round. It doesn’t matter if... You feel like it doesn’t matter where you are. You’re in your own world. It doesn’t matter what other people think. Then the more you play the music... when you’re playing the music, you can get into a different character; it’s just so good. All you can hear are the trees whirring round.

Similarly, Pupil 1 from School 6 said:

I felt, when we were on the field, there was all the nature also making music, so when it was just us playing our drums first, it was just a little sound, and then the wind started coming in, which made it slightly bigger. And then the birds and the trees swifiting and the grass swifiting, and it all made a bigger sound. That’s when you get more tempted to play more sounds and then when it’s gone up to that very top sound, you’re all playing together, you just want to dance then, so then you’re tempted to dance and you’re like, “Okay,” so you just dance to how the music makes you feel. And when you’re doing that together, playing and dancing together it just feels amazing! Then nothing
matters, nothing except for the music...And that’s when you feel part of everything that’s around you. It all merges together. That’s when you get it, that calm feeling.

Here Pupil 6 narrates a dynamic experience of moving towards an increasingly heightened experience that culminates in feeling “amazing”, where nothing matters “except for the music” and ends with everything merging together. This description has clear links to Maslow’s theory of peak experiences, as analysed in the literature review, where there is an emotional reaction in this optimal state that involves feelings of wonder and joy, experiencing one small part of the world as if it were the whole world. The calmness that is attained synthesises with Maslow’s claim that peak experiences lead to feelings of completeness, resolution and harmony. It is a moment of B-perception that is “all-loving...all-accepting, all-admiring, all-understanding” (Maslow, 1971, p.102). As analysed in the literature review chapter, these ideas synergise with other theories that state that music can achieve a heightened consciousness (Blacking, 1987; Csikszentmihályi, 1990; DeNora, 2015; Newton, 2015; Turner, 1969; Vygotsky, 1971). The data show that the children felt that flow states and liminal experiences had led to feelings of communitas that involved experiences of joy, ecstasy and immense possibility. These feelings in turn led to a sense of calmness. In step with these theories of optimal experience there is a common theme in the children’s and teachers’ responses that the children had experienced a sense of going beyond oneself and sensing oneself as part of something larger. Pupil 2 from School 4 said:

I feel part of the group, not just on my own. I feel like I’m playing with people who might cheer me on to do well. When I’m on my own, I’m the only one who can really do it, but when we were playing music...it feels like there are always people to make me feel better when I’m doing my music.

Similarly, pupil 3 from School 6 said: “It feels like, when you do it as a group, everyone in the world is joining in with you. It feels like everyone just can hear your tune and music and volume, like the whole world can hear you.” This connects with Buber’s (1958; 1986; 2002; 2004) theory of humans existing as part of a dialogic I-Thou relationship, as discussed in the literature review. The responses here clearly contrast feeling on one’s own to the feeling that there are always “people to make me feel better” as experienced during the children’s musicking. There was a sense from the children’s responses that their music making had heightened a sense of existing with “others” and that their group musicking had enacted a shared experience. This relates to the way Buber (2002) claims that a dialogic experience encaptures our instinct for community and can transform into an
experience of communion as highlighted in the literature review. As is analysed in the literature review chapter, Buber (2002) outlines community as being “a dynamic facing of the others, a flowing from I to Thou” (p.37). The data from all the interviews showed that the children seemed to have experienced this sense of existing in relation to others during their musicking and that this led to feeling a sense of “communion”. For example, this extract from Pupil 2, from School 4 is typical of the way that the children explained that they began feeling individual and then their musicking caused them to feel not just with their group, but part of their group. Their consciousness changed because of their musicking and is as if they merged with their fellow players.

Pupil 2: I felt like I was interacting. It wasn’t just me on my own. I was always with others when I was playing. It was like I was part of the whole music, but I was just playing my own instrument. There was always someone playing with me. I just felt like I was joined with everyone, not left out on my own, playing music.

Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 6 said: “When you make your own music it's you and the group making it, cos when you make it you feel it's a special part of you and then as you play, it becomes a special part of everyone, and you never want it to stop... the special part becomes everyone's special part.” This sense of feeling “joined with everyone” and that the musicking is a “special part of everyone” converges with Buber’s (1958) theory of community and the theory of communitas (Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012). This theme of feeling meaningfully connected with the others in the group whilst musicking, is a recurring theme in the data. This was also confirmed in the follow-up interviews. For example, Pupil 3 from School 6 said:

Don’t get me wrong; you can do it on your own and you can feel still amazing, but you feel even more wonderful and stronger together. If you did it together, you feel like you’ve actually made something together and you did this together as a team. When you’re just doing it by yourself, in my opinion, you don’t feel as powerful and strong.

Similarly, Pupil 1 from School 5 said:

I felt like I was just going with the rest of them. They were all doing the same thing. We were communicating but not talking. We were talking to get ideas, but when it was time to perform, we all got our heads in it, and we all thought, yeah...then when we were playing... it was like blowing in the wind, really... Just being together.
These statements were indicative of the children’s responses and can clearly be related to Buber’s (1958) I-Thou philosophy of dialogue and his concept of community (Buber, 2002). They also relate to Maslow’s (1968) peak experience and Turner’s (1969) communitas as discussed in the literature review. The perception of being more powerful, the effortless nature of the experience, “like blowing in the wind” can be related to Turner’s description of communitas being like a “shared flow” (1977, p.50), the intrinsic pleasure gained from feeling and being together. In all of the interviews the children also stated that they had experienced a sense of merging with others and that this was a pleasurable experience. This chimes with the theories of optimal experience that describe these states as involving a joyful loss of self (Csíkszentmihályi’s, 1990; Maslow, 1970) as highlighted in the literature review. This is exemplified in this response from Pupil 6 from School 3: “When I was doing the music it felt like nothing could stop you no matter how hard you tried...It made me feel everybody was a part of somebody.” Similarly, Pupil 3 from School 5 said: “When you go into a group together, like playing music, just like we did you just feel like you’re having fun again. And when you make music together in the woods, you just feel free and happy and the nature is joining in... it makes you... you just feel like one big family.”

This feeling of a loss, or transcendence of ego, as analysed in the literature review, is counter to Buber’s (1958) description of his I-Thou philosophy of dialogue however, and even of his theory of community (Buber, 2002). This is because, as analysed in the literature review, for Buber, loss of the individual self, the “I” of the “I-thou” seems to rest on the extinction of the ability to say thou” (Buber, 2004, p.72). Despite this, the data from the children show that the children felt that their sense of identity had been disrupted or dissolved during their musicking. This shall be discussed in more detail below.

4.35. Transcendence

In all of the interviews the children describe their musicking as being the cause of feeling part of a larger whole, an improved reality in contrast to their normal day to day experience. Pupil 4 from School 6 described it as feeling like jigsaw pieces coming together in harmony:
When I was playing everything went together...like when you're like a didgeridoo and like everything and maybe a drum comes in later. It all like fits in and it's all like one piece...It's like a jigsaw when they all come together and they all fit in and they make this lovely harmony. And the vibrations of all the rocks outdoors, it makes even louder sounds and with all the wildlife; with the trees; and the wind; and the nature. It all joins in as well, so it comes in like a jigsaw.

As has been discussed above when the children describe losing a sense of ego and being free from their normal identity, the children’s responses also showed that during these moments of communitas (Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012) and phyllic communion (Blacking, 1987), they felt they had merged with their surroundings and actions. For example, Pupil 3 from School 2 said:

You've got the sound of the waves; and wind, and the sea, and the echo off the cliffs...and I just thought that... that was part of the music and the echo and like the sea and the birds really helped because we heard what they sounded like, and we put it in our own words, in our own sounds... and it sounded like we're in the music... we're like a bird... but we have different sounds... and the wind like blew us, so we're like in the sky.

As this example highlights, the children describe feeling as though their musicking was all encompassing. As is analysed in the literature review, these experiences point towards a feeling of transcendence. Maslow (1971) describes it as “behaving and relating, as ends rather than as means, to oneself, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos.” (Maslow, 1971, p. 279). For example, Pupil 3 from School 5 said: “We were playing our music and then everything felt like it had stopped, it felt like we were all together like as one with the world, but we were still playing together. It felt good.” Pupil 3 from School 3 also highlights a feeling of transcendence saying: “It felt like I was in a dimension of music instead of stepping on pebbles it felt like I was stepping on a note and instead of rocks being rocks it felt like rocks were a beat. And like the trees felt like guitars playing a really smooth tune. That made you keep on thinking about music the more you heard in...in the realm you were in. The music was even coming out of it!”

The idea that the rocks and the pebbles had somehow merged with the children’s musicking, had become the music, and that the children had been transported to another “realm” seem fantastical. However, these statements are examples of common themes in the children’s responses. In all of the interviews the children expressed a feeling that the natural world around them was very much part
of their music making and that they felt they had transcended normal reality. They are clearly in harmony with the theories discussed in the literature review that claim music can produce transcendental experiences (Boyce-Tillman, 2009; Buber, 1969; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 2002; Maslow, 1970; Newton, 2015; Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012; Vygotsky, 1971; Zbikowski, 2011). We shall now examine these data in more detail as they show that the children seem to have experienced a dialogic encounter with the natural world.

4.36. Dialogic biophilia

The data from the interviews show that the children extend this feeling of common identity with their fellow players to the natural world around them. This can be described as a biophilic response (Wilson, 1984), as previously discussed in this chapter. However, these views also resonate with the theories of transcendence that describe a state of feeling at one and in harmony with one’s surroundings (Boyce-Tillman, 2009; Buber, 1969; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 2002; Maslow, 1970; Newton, 2015; Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012). For example Pupil 2 from School 3 states: “When you... like... you play music together as team at the beach, everything bonds with you. Nature, the sea, the sky, it’s all part of the music.” This clearly chimes with the theory that children have natural biophilic tendencies (Barbiero, 2014; Barbiero and Macanarto, 2016; Cajete, 1999; Fromm, 1964; Wilson, 1984). In addition, most of the children reported feeling that they were not only communing with nature, but also communicating with nature. For example, this is highlighted in this exchange in School 6:

Pupil 2: It almost feels like—we’re including—the nature and the wildlife sounds, it almost feels like they, as we talk now, they can speak in their language, in the animals’ language, just the nature language because they almost combined with us and just combined with each other. They’re like singing.

Pupil 1: I know what you mean. It combined together to produce something new.

Pupil 2: Yeah, almost like they’re talking to each other to say, ‘Let’s do this. That person’s singing, so we should join in.’ It’s a really nice feeling when you can just hear all the animals join in, almost like they’re your best friends.

This idea is also exemplified in this exchange from School 1, Pupil 2:
Pupil 2: It feels really special because you're moved by the things you hear and you get to interact with other things outside and you feel kind of special to be in that position.”
Interviewer: You're moved by other things that you hear. What do you mean by that?

Pupil 2: Like the birds singing and all the animals and the different sounds from nature.
Interviewer: Why is that?
Pupil 2: It touches you because it feels like you're interacting with them with those noises. It feels like you're having a conversation with them, like they're talking back to you and they're listening.

The idea that there is a “nature language” and that nature is “listening and “talking back to you” coalesces with Abram (1997) and Schafer’s (1977; 1994) views, as analysed in the literature review, who state that we exist in a natural world that speaks to those that listen. In addition, it resonates with Buber’s (1958) I-Thou philosophy of dialogue that includes potential dialogic relationships with the natural world. These dialogic understandings also link to the ways of knowing from indigenous peoples as analysed in the literature. However, the data also provide new evidence that shows that children can seemingly experience a heightened dialogical relationship with the natural world when making musical ceremonies in outdoor rural locations.

4.37. Spirituality

Analysis of the data above has shown that the children felt their experiences transformed their state of mind and they seemingly transcended everyday reality during their musicking. As discussed in the literature review, experiences of transcendence can be viewed as part of a child’s spirituality and essential to their spiritual development (DeSouza and Halafoff, 2017; DeSouza, 2016; Hay and Nye, 2006). As analysed above the children repeatedly reported that their music making had allowed them to access an augmented reality where they felt at one with each other and their surroundings. For example, Pupil 3 from School 5 said: “We were playing our music and then everything felt like it had stopped, it felt like were all together like as one with the world” These are akin to spiritual experiences of transcendence as described in the literature review (DeSouza and Halafoff, 2017; DeSouza, 2017; Hay and Nye, 2006; Macquarrie, 1972; Rodger, 1996). We can draw links here also with Schein’s (2018) theory of ‘spiritual moments’ as discussed in the literature review that involve feelings of connectedness, awe, joy and inner peace. The dialogic biophilic responses from the children can also be situated within conceptions of spirituality as discussed in the literature review (Cajete, 1999; DeSouza, 2016; DeSouza and Halafoff, 2017; 217
Hendricks and Hall, 2008; Gelter, 2010; Schein, 2018; Tedlock and Tedlock, 1992; Wilson, 2016). In addition, the feeling of communitas, wellbeing and completeness, seemingly generated by the children’s musicking, also relate to aspects of spirituality as analysed in the literature review (DeSouza and Halafoff, 2017, Schein, 2018, Tedlock and Tedlock, 1992; Wilson, 2016). The children’s musicking in outdoor rural environments seems to have enabled them to have spiritual experiences (Schein, 2018) that involved feelings of transcendence, a sense of connectedness with each other and nature, a dialogic experience of nature and feelings of joy, awe and completeness. The children repeatedly expressed a sense that their musicking had allowed them to experience an augmented reality where they felt communion with the world, feelings of calmness and a sense of completeness. We shall now explore how these feelings of calmness and completeness can be contextualized within a framework of music literacy.

**4.38. A Framework of Music Literacy**

The analysis of the data above has shown that the children’s responses describe a pattern of experiences through various themes or categories that culminate in a peak experience (Maslow, 1971) of transcendence and communitas (Turner, 1969; Turner 2012). This is illustrated in the following diagram (figure 3).
The diagram displays a vortex like effect whereby the experiences of the different categories combine to create the peak experience of communitas that occurs at the centre of the vortex. This communitas state is accompanied by feelings of transcendence and calm. As the analysis has shown the children’s responses consistently verified this model of progression. However, it is not a step by step linear progression. The analysis of the data show that the different categories (freedom, life of feeling, senses) are experienced during the optimal states (liminality, flow, peak experience, communitas), and the connection to nature is also experienced during these states. Therefore, these categories of experience are not perceived as distinctly separate stages that once passed through are not experienced again. Instead they are better understood as categories of experience or phases that help to instigate the proceeding phases and yet continue to be experienced through each of the subsequent phases or categories of experience. For example, the optimal states are charged with the life of feeling involving emotions and the imagination. As we have seen throughout the interviews, a common theme was that the children’s musicking had led to an improved state of being and that these optimal states were joyful, happy experiences. For example, Pupil 5 from School 3 said:
“Playing the music it’s like joyful, joyful that you're doing and happy. Then when you stop you want to go back to playing the music and having that feeling again.” Similarly, Pupil 4 from School 6 said: “When you play the music and you're getting into it; and you're having like a really good time, it feels good. And like once it ends you want to do it again... because you enjoyed it.” These ideas seem to resonate with the optimal experience states described in the literature review (Buber, 1969; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Maslow, 1970; Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012). As discussed in the literature review Maslow (1968) states that peak experiences “may be thought of as pure gratification, pure expression, pure elation or joy.” (p.104). They also chime with the theories surrounding play that were examined in the literature review (Huizinga, 2016; Vygotsky, 1971). As is discussed in the literature review both Huizinga (2016) and Vygotsky (1971) highlight the play element in music as being the source of its power. Huizinga (2016, p.42) states music: “transports audience and performers alike out of ‘ordinary’ life into a sphere of gladness and serenity...it enchants and enraptures them.” Huizinga claims that: “In the enjoyment of music, whether it is meant to express religious ideas or not, the perception of the beautiful and the sensation of holiness merge, and the distinction between play and seriousness is whelmed in that fusion.” (Huizinga, 2016, p.159).

The data consistently show that the children’s musicking allowed them to play, within “life of feeling”, not merely as a distraction from ordinary reality, but to engage with an improved reality. For example, Pupil 4 from School 4 said: “I felt all different kinds of things playing the music. When I put them together, I feel joyful, I feel I can be anything, a better person. It was calm and all of those things just playing the music.” This supports Vygotsky’s (1971) assertion, as discussed in the literature review, that music’s true nature is one of “transubstantiation” because it creates an augmented reality whereby “it takes its material from life, but gives in return something which its material did not contain.” (Vygotsky, 1971, p.243). These joyful feelings also can be related to the theories discussed in the literature review concerning changes in consciousness that involve feelings of joyful serenity (Boyce-Tillman, 2009; Buber, 1969; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Maslow, 1970; Newton, 2015; Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012; Vygotsky, 1971; Zbikowski 2011). The children also spoke of having a sense of freedom during these changes of consciousness or optimal states as they experienced being able to play without fear of failure. For example, Pupil 3 from School 2 said: “Well when we were doing the music...because when we're dancing...you just sort of forget what you're doing. You’re not worried about going wrong. You just play it and get into the rhythm.” Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 3 said: “It feels really good when you like... play together. It takes you to another land because like the people like... help you like teleport to a place where nothing
goes wrong and it all feels really really nice.” This release from being worried about any end result and pleasure taken from enjoying the experience together has clear resonances with the theories of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) peak experience (Maslow, 1970), liminality (Turner, 1969; 1974; Turner, 2012) and communitas (Turner, 1969; 1974; Turner, 2012). As discussed above in this chapter the activity is autotelic, its intrinsic benefits are seen as an end in itself and therefore the freedom seems to provide access to these heightened states of consciousness and is also experienced during these optimal states. This resonates with Turner’s (1969; 1974) assertion, as highlighted in the literature review that liminality and communitas are states of anti-structure or pre-structural. States of being that can only exist in a true egalitarian ethos free from rules, hierarchy, ego, identity, judgement and containment. As highlighted in the literature review Boyce-Tilman (2009, p.194) states: “Freed of responsibility in the liminal space we are able to play and take risks without fear of consequence. This can engender real joy.” (p.194). As we have seen above, the idea that entering liminal spaces or new worlds had led to feelings of joy and the feeling of entering an augmented reality were commonly reflected in the children’s responses. For example Pupil 2, from School 6 states: “It's like the music is making you. It's just like bouncing and like a big carnival. Say if you were having a festival, then everyone gets into the music...That’s what it was like.” Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 1 said:

There was this one person playing and then another person comes in and then another person comes in and then another one comes in and it turns into like a big party and everyone's just dancing and the birds are just flying in the sky and the wind is just flowing and the grass is just moving like it's moving and...the sky is just like blue and everything is happy. The colours are bright and it's not all dull and everything's loud and clear.

Most of the responses describe this state of being existing during the children’s musicking. However, there was also a recurring theme in the data that showed that these improved states of being had given the children a more lasting enhanced perception. For example, Pupil 2 from School 2 said: “I haven’t done anything like that before, so it feels like a new person’s come out of me and just taken over. It feels like another side of me that I hadn’t known.” Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 6 said: “When you do the music you make an improvement to the music and when you make an improvement to the music the music becomes better and then you feel a better person.” Pupil 5 from School 6 also said: “Instead of us just making the music the music makes us. It's like we're created again by the music after you've heard it...just done everything. Just feels like we're reborn like......just feels like I'm ready for whatever gets ahead of me.”
The data show that the children felt that their musicking had changed them by making them feel new, reborn or had given them new insight. These views chime with the theories that claim music can enhance perception as highlighted in the literature review. For example, Csikszentmihalyi (1992, p.55) states that: “When a person invests all her psychic energy into an interaction...a piece of music-she in effect becomes part of a system of action greater than what the individual-self had been before.”

4.40. Improved behaviour

As has been highlighted above, the responses from the teachers consistently praised the children’s behaviour when musicking outdoors. A common theme expressed was that the teachers expected at least some of the children’s behaviour to be more problematic. For example, Teacher 1 from School 5 said:

It was phenomenal because they're known...even though there are some really good collaborators in that group, they are known to be not very good when it comes to group work simply because there are so many dominant pupils. And pupils aren’t prepared to share or delegate or to come to a consensus or anything... I thought, absolutely, no way will that group come up with anything. All they're going to do is argue. And they all have an achievement award because I couldn’t believe how well they all worked together.

Teacher 1 from School 4, when asked whether he felt the musicking had improved the pupils’ behaviour, said:

Yeah. Very, very simply, yes. For everybody, I could make a quantifiable judgment on how it was affecting one child in that he was part of a group, which was not an option in the normal scheme of things. He maintained concentration levels for much further than we would’ve expected; a much longer duration that I would’ve expected. And he dealt with other people having instruments. In the normal scheme of things, he wouldn’t be able to countenance a particular child having something that he wanted, even if he didn’t want it. It changed the way he learned; it changed his learning behaviours.
Teacher 1 from School 6 similarly said: “In their groups, they listened to each other. They listened to ideas and were compromising. They’d adopt one or they’d adopt a bit of the others. They didn’t seem to argue as much as when they do it inside. It was like they accepted each other’s ideas more. They just seemed to get into playing the music and went with it.” This response from Teacher 2 from School 3 states that it was believed that the improved behaviour had continued when they came “back to school”:

There would normally have been lots and lots of, people who would’ve had arguments, and they wouldn’t have achieved anything. But I couldn’t believe it; it was brilliant. I don’t know why that is, but it was brilliant. They worked so well together, and they really united from it. That continued when we came back to school.

This view about improved behaviour was reinforced by most of the responses from the children. For example this extract from the interview with children from School 5:

Pupil 1: When we first started, before we got into the warrior mode, we were arguing, but when played our music we calmed down and went right into warriors.

Pupil 3: Yeah, we all started playing. I started playing, everyone else started playing. You just got into it. You make some music and you just get into it.

Pupil 1: That was the only time we argued in the whole time that we worked together.
Pupil 3: You could just say, “Right, get in your groups,” and no arguments would happen.

As has been investigated in the literature review, there is a repeated claim in many theories about musicking that it can lead to an improved state of being (Allsup, 2016; Boyce-Tillman, 2009; Buber, 1969; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 2002; Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012; Vygotsky, 1971; Woodford, 2005; Zbikowski, 2011). Consistently, the data showed that the teachers and children felt that the children had been able to just concentrate on their musicking and that this immersion in their musicking had resulted in an improved state of being. For example, Teacher 2 from School 3 says:

We were all very impressed by the children’s behavior and involvement in the music making project. Some of the children can be difficult to manage and lack motivation but all of the children
thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience and really gained a lot from it. They worked really well together on their music and seemed to relish having autonomy. They just seemed to really get into playing their music.

The idea that the environment and the music making combined had allowed for this immersion and these improved states of being was repeated in the data throughout the teacher interviews. For example, Teacher 1 from School 5 said: “What I was really impressed with—I was sure it was to do with the setting they were in, as well, with how well they responded to the task and how quickly they got into the mind-set of making music for that occasion. They just seemed to lose themselves and get into it completely.” The data show that the teachers and the children felt that the musicking outdoors had allowed the children to lose themselves in their music-making and that this had produced these improved behaviours. For example, Teacher 1 from School 4 states: “I’ve been doing the job for a long time, and that’s the hardest year because how difficult some of the children are, but when they were playing their music some of them were transformed. Their behaviour was so much better than expected.” In the same interview, I questioned the teacher further about this and asked whether the same results could have been achieved indoors. The teacher explained that one child was particularly challenging because of the child’s emotional and behavioural difficulties and said:

You can be rest assured with the one individual that we were on about, his space would’ve been sacrosanct to him, and yet it wasn’t a problem when he was playing the music. There’s natural delineation between the areas where the different groups were, but there was one tree that was part of both performances. That wouldn’t have happened. In rehearsals and their experimentation and their playing with the sounds that they could make, there was none of that irritation with other people from him....The hall we could’ve performed in, had it been weather or whatever, the school hall is a much larger space than the one they were all in, but I guarantee—I will promise you, hand on heart—we couldn’t have had the same results and the same enjoyment from the session.

The children’s responses reinforced these ideas. In all of the interviews the children talked about feeling and behaving differently than they normally would and that these feelings and behaviours were an improvement. For example, this extract from one of the interviews at School 6 from Pupils 1 and 2 are indicative of these views:
Pupil 1: When you go outside, you’re free, but when you’re playing music and outside and listening to the nature, you’re so, so, so, so free.”

Pupil 2: You may as well be a wild animal.
Pupil 1: You don’t need to be the person that you are inside.
Interviewer: Okay, Tell me more about that.
Pupil 2: I wanted to be a gorilla, and I got to be a gorilla, so it was fine.
Pupil 1: You can be who you really are inside. You feel better, more the real you. You can do whatever you want with music. If you’re feeling sad, playing the drums really loud will make you feel better.

In all the interviews the children emphasised that the music had changed how they felt and that they had enjoyed it, it had made them feel better. This concurs with view such as Tolstoya and Tolstoy’s (2014), as highlighted in the literature review, who claim that music enables a change in consciousness that enhances understanding as it transfers the experiencer “into another position” and “under the effect of music” one is able to “feel what I don’t feel [and] “understand what I don’t actually understand” (Tolstoy, 2014, p. 54).

4.41. Calm, happy focus

As has been analysed above, one of the ways that the children’s musicking seems to have produced beneficial change is the way that it affected their feelings. What needs to be examined in more depth now is that the data showed that the children reported feeling calm and happy during their musicking. For example, Pupil 4 from School 3 said:

It makes me feel.. like calm...but happy at the same time because like... like when you're doing the next part there's a whole different thing, you get into it. Then when you're putting it together... you get there and it feels happy like. You've reached a calm place.

Similarly, Pupil 2 from School 3 said:
Pupil 2: It feels like it's taking you to another country or another year where it's really calm.
Interviewer: And how did you feel in that different place?
Pupil 2: I felt great...it just felt really nice and still...well er not still exactly, but I felt calm.
The data show that this calm, happy state was one that was reached during the musicking. Responses from the interviews showed that the teachers and children felt that the children had been transformed during their musicking and that this transformation had involved feeling calm and happy. The children described this transformation as like being in a different world where nothing else mattered except their musicking. For example, Pupil 6 from School 3 said: “I felt I was in a place where there was nothing in there except for wind and our music. I felt the wind blowing on my face and the vibration of the sound blowing on my face in the wind. I could feel that and our music only. Nothing else. Nothing else mattered.” This is further exemplified by Pupil 3 from School 6 who said: “Playing our music was calming. It’s almost like the calm and outdoorsy sounds, and the smells, as well, can also change the way that you feel... it changed me and made me feel happy to just go out and do something, just feel free.” In the follow-up interviews two of the children questioned whether they always felt calm during their musicking. For example, Pupil 1 from School 6 said:

I think when the music is playing, I transformed into a different person, to a different world. We see it as different stuff. When you transform into that different world, it is calm, but it doesn’t always have to be calm. You can change it. Sometimes you can feel happy and wild and you can just imagine when you turn and transform into that world... you don’t always have to be calm; you can be wild. But it’s good.

However, as in the response above, all of the responses claimed that they had felt improved whilst making their music and the data showed that despite feeling different and feeling as though they had entered a different world, the children still felt good and in control. For example, Pupil 2 from School 6 said:

No. You’re in control. It’s like we were saying. It’s like going to a different world, like entering different worlds, you just put all your worries aside, and you don’t really care, almost like what anyone thinks or what everyone does. You’re just yourself and there’s almost nobody there and you’re just there in a happy place and you’re just doing whatever you want to do.

Similarly, Pupil 4 from School 5 said: “It doesn’t matter if...You feel like it doesn’t matter where you are. You’re in your own world. It doesn’t matter what other people think. Then the more you play the music...when you’re playing the music, you can get into a different character; it’s just so
good. All you can hear are the trees whirring round.” Teacher 1 from School 4 reaffirms this saying:
“You could see they were calmer. When they made their music, they were very energetic, but the
energy was focused. They were in control.”

4.42. Communitas- Calm focus- Feeling complete

It is this calm focus that is repeated throughout the data. This feeling of completeness and having
calm focus appears to have been the result of what might be described as changes in consciousness,
such as liminality (Turner, 1969), flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), peak experience (Maslow, 1970)
and communitas (Turner, 1969; 1974; Turner, 2012). In the follow-up interviews at Schools 5 and 6
I questioned the children further about these states and what emerged was that they had felt more
more real and somehow more authentic during these optimal experiences. For example, Pupil 4
from School 6 said:

Pupil 4: It’s something that you're getting into and you really really like. It kind of takes control of
you and then you kind of go... feel you just want to let it out... It makes you more you.
Interviewer: What do you mean by that?
Pupil 4: Music makes me. Is what makes me, me. My dream fits in with it.

Pupil 2 from School 5 similarly said: “The place that you go to when you play music, that’s
different than a normal place. it...it feels like coming home. ...you can be who you really are inside.”
There was also a common theme in the interview data that the children felt that their musicking had
given them an enhanced sense of existence and made them feel more complete. For example, Pupil
2 from School 6 said:

There should be another word for it. Making music, you feel...This emotion is so different. It’s as if
you need to make up a new word because there’s so much…most people have, but some people
haven’t and then that part of them, for the rest of their lives, they haven’t done that, and it’s like that
person’s not complete because they haven’t experienced it.

Similarly, Pupil 1 from School 6 declared: “I don’t think you could invent music. It’s just natural.
Without music, I don’t think anybody would be the same.” These ideas about their musicking
somehow accessing a more authentic and enhanced existence or identity were also present in the
data from all the schools. For example, Pupil 5 from School 3 said: “Everybody likes music, they
can make up music about what they like. Music is something to do with you...you and someone else, the people you’re playing it with.” Pupil 1 from School 2 also said: “You get that special feeling inside of you. When I was playing my music down the beach, I felt like I was important and meant something to everybody.”

These ideas surrounding authenticity and completeness can be related to Freire’s (1997) philosophy of literacy as discussed in the literature review. Freire (1997) claims that literacy involves the “continuing transformation of reality, on behalf of the continuing humanisation of men” (p. 73). He states that the purpose of education and the nature of literacy is to respond to “the vocation of persons as beings who are authentic only when engaged in creative transformation.” (Freire, 1996, p. 65). This creative transformation allows for “the consciousness of the students themselves” (1997, p. 513) to be revealed, as it is in our true nature to strive for our own and others’ humanisation. Buber’s (2010) I-Thou and Turner’s (1969) communitas theories similarly argued that our true nature is spiritual, and our ontological vocation is to realise this fact. Turner (2012) states that: “We are a spiritual species. A mystical participation exists. We do not form it. It is there all the time, everywhere.” (2012, p.52). Similarly, Wilson (2016) uses evidence from various theorists and other research to argue that a child’s connection to nature is more than just cognitive and biological. She claims it is a spiritual experience. She explains that it includes a sense of wonder, awe, connection, joy, insight, a deep sense of reverence and love. Aligning spirituality with “spirit” rather than “belief”, she states that spirit is the “vital principle or animating force within living things” (p.65). When children are allowed to feel a connection with nature they are put in touch with this force and experience “spirituality”.

4.43. Music literacy

As we have seen, the idea that the children’s musicking was transformative, in the sense that the children and their teachers felt that it produced improved states of being, is a common theme in the data. Pupil 4 from School 6 says the musicking was: “Like you just came out of the shower, an ice-cold shower and you feel like a brand-new person, but you still feel yourself. You just stepped out of this magical world, and you feel like you’ve been in a very cold shower and you’ve just come out and you’re fresh and brand-new.”
As has been discussed these ideas can be connected to theories analysed in the literature review that argue music can produce transformative experiences (Boyce-Tillman, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Dewey, 1934; Maslow 1971; Turner, 1969; Vygotsky, 1978; Zbikowski, 2011). What the data show is that, in the context of the children’s musicking in outdoor rural locations, this is arguably where the heart of the children’s music literacy is to be found. Pupil 1 from School 5 says: “That's what makes our music special is the things it does to you...that's what's important. it's hard to explain. But it makes you feel different.” The data consistently show that what was most significant about the children’s musicking was that it changed the way they felt and that this was transformative because it gave them a heightened existential understanding. They felt different yet complete, improved or more real, more authentic. This experience lasted for at least for the duration of their musicking and was an overwhelmingly positive experience. Pupil 2 from School 6 explains that: “It changes the way you feel inside, as well as on the outside instead of just being my average self. You can actually feel like there’s somewhere else to do go where you can do something else or be somebody you want to be.”

As has been highlighted above and discussed in the literature review, it is claimed that music can offer glimpses of an improved state of being and provide clarity that reveals a more authentic reality (Boyce-Tillman, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Dewey, 1934; Maslow 1971; Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978; Zbikowski, 2011). These ideas are reflected in the children’s responses about their experience of musicking outdoors. Pupil 1 from School 5 declares: “That’s what our music does, it makes you feel like you’re in a different world where everything’s better than before.” This resonates with Boyce-Tillman’s (2000) declaration that “music offers the possibility of transformed and strengthened living” (p.282). This also chimes with the view of literacy as being a means of transformation (Freire, 1996) and allowing for new ways of becoming (Riddle, 2014) as analysed in the literature review. If music is a way that humans come to understand and interpret the world around them then “music literacy is an act of creation” (Shevock, 2018, p.42). It concurs with Small’s (1998) concept of musicking being about relationships. The doing of music and the effect that the musicking has on the musickers and within the musickers (Small, 1998).

As has been discussed above, the data from the interviews also show that musicking allowed the children to express and manage their feelings. For example, Pupil 2 from School 5 said: “It can make you feel kinder, music helps you get your anger out.” Pupil 1 from School 6 similarly said: “It helped your imagination and feelings, it helped you feel calmer and refreshed.” These responses can be linked to DeNora’s (1999) view that musicking is a technology of the self, that it can be used in “the organization of self, the shifting of mood, energy level, conduct style, mode of attention and
engagement with the world.” (p.44) The children’s views also chime with Vygotsky’s theory of the psychology of art as discussed in the literature review. Vygotsky (1971, p.246) declares that: “The possibility of releasing into art powerful passions which cannot find expression in normal, everyday life is the biological basis of art.”

The music literacy was demonstrated in the ability of the children’s musicking to be able to transform their states of mind, to be a ‘technology of the self’ (De Nora, 1999) a cathartic medium (Vygotsky, 1971). This was what the children felt was the most significant outcome of their musicking. As highlighted in the literature review, when discussing dance literacy, Jones (2014) warns against the “spirit, the joy, the reason” to dance being “sacrificed on the mundane altar of technique.” (p.115). The data from this research shows that when musicking together, the children focussed on the spirit, the joy, the reason to music. Its transformative power was their reason to music, their music literacy. The analysis of the data from the children’s and teachers’ responses shows that it is how the musicking affects the children that is perceived as being most significant by both the teachers and the pupils. This is what they talked about in the interviews. Their group musicking allowed them to achieve optimal states that resulted in them entering heightened states of consciousness where they felt authentic, improved, calm and complete. The description of these experiences relate to the optimal states analysed in the literature review. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Maslow 1971; Turner, 1969; Turner, 2012).

These ideas can be fused with Freire’s (1996) view of literacy practice as being about transformation. This is if we accept that literacy can involve “interpretive and expressive fluency through symbolic form (Barton, 2014, p.4), thus including music as well as reading and writing. This view sees literacy as being essentially social “located in the interaction between people” (Barton and Hamilton, 1998, p.3). As music is able to both express ideas and feelings and affect ideas and feelings, then we can view music literacies existing within these affective practices. Therefore, the children’s music literacy can be perceived as being about the way that their musicking affected them. It allowed them to change consciousness and experience an augmented, more authentic reality where they felt more complete. These feelings of completeness or communitas (Turner, 1969) were grown in the flower-bed of liminality (Turner, 2012) that their musicking created. This resonates with Freire’s (1996) proclamation that literacy is the result of our ontological vocation, the quest for human completion. Analysis of the data show that the children’s musicking led to the children having sensual experiences, a sense of freedom, and emotional and imaginative experiences. These three categories of experience led to the liminal and flow states
which in turn led to a peak experience of communitas. During this experience of communitas they felt better, more complete, calm and focussed. This improved state of being is their music literacy.

The themes are what the children did. These are their music literacies. They were inspired by and used the environment to enhance their musicking. They had agency during their musicking. Their musicking involved their emotions and feelings. A sense of freedom was an important part of their musicking. And their musicking was experienced through and affected by their senses. All of these themes combined with each other and interacted to produce the flow and liminal states. These states caused a sense of communitas and completeness. As Pupil 2 from School 5 said, it felt “like coming home”. This feeling is what their musicking created. This is their music literacy because this is what they did with their musicking, this was its transformative power.
5. Conclusions

5.1. A Framework of Music Literacy

The aim of this research was to examine Key Stage 2 children’s experiences of musicking (Small, 1998) in outdoor rural locations in order to construct a framework of music literacy. This research project began however, with the aim of exploring children’s experiences of musicking outdoors at prehistoric sites. As has been discussed in the Methodology chapter, the project undertook a grounded theory approach (Bryant, 2017, Bryant and Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2008; Charmaz, 2017; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Urquhart, 2012). This meant the theory was led by the data and as a result of analysis of the data, the initial aim evolved from exploring children’s experiences of musicking outdoors at prehistoric sites to constructing a framework of music literacy based on children’s experiences of making music in outdoor rural locations. Throughout the study the main data was gathered from the children’s experiences. The teacher’s views and my own observations were used to triangulate with the data from the children. The responses from the children and their teachers, discussed above in the results and analysis chapter, reveal themes that are present in all the interviews. These themes emerged in response to questions about what the children did and how they felt during their music making. These themes are the children’s music literacies when musicking in outdoor rural locations. The music literacies are what they do and what they experience. This is in keeping with the pluralist view of literacy (Barton and Hamilton, 1990) that views literacy as something that people do. In turn it chimes with the view, as discussed in the literature review, that sees music as being a verb, something that people do (Small, 1996). As Sessions (1971, p.9) states “music is an activity; it is something done, an experience lived through.”

The main themes were: freedom; the life of feeling; and senses. These themes combined with the children’s musicking and the outdoor setting to create optimal experiences of flow, liminality and peak experience. Analysis of the data show that the themes interacted and at their nexus they caused the children to experience a different reality, a change of consciousness. This culminated in a sense of communitas and transcendence or ecstatic experiences that resulted in feelings of interconnectedness, harmony and calm. It seems that the children’s musicking changed their perception of reality and identity, during their performances, and involved a feeling of calmness, joy and a sense of improvement. As has been discussed in the preceding chapter, these claims resonate in harmony with the theories of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), ecstasy (Laski, 1961) peak
experience (Maslow, 1970), liminality and communitas (Turner, 1969) as analysed in the literature review. The children speak of their perception of time being distorted, feeling a sense of communion with each other and their surroundings, a loss or an augmented sense of identity, a feeling of calm pleasure and an increased existential understanding. All of these qualities are outlined in the optimal experience theories described by Csikszentmilhalyi (1990), Laski (1961), Maslow (1970) and Turner (1969). It seems as if these experiences caused by their musicking have a therapeutic quality as they cause an increased sense of wellbeing. It is this experience of an enhanced state of being that is repeated by the children and their teachers in the data. It is this heightened or perhaps more authentic reality that seems to be at the heart of their music making. Analysis of the data show that it is in this heightened perception where their music literacy exists as the children and teachers state that these optimal experiences are the most significant aspects of the children’s music making. The data evidences that the children’s musicking, their music literacies, produces this state of being, their music literacy.

This position not only is in keeping with the pluralist view of literacy that view literacies as things that people do. (Barton and Hamilton, 1990) It also adheres to Freire’s (1996) philosophy that places transformation as being at the heart of literacy. In this paradigm musicking can be seen as a bridge to other modes of being and understanding and it is in crossing this bridge that children express music literacy. In doing so they arguably strike at the heart of the nature of music and so the value of their experience is no less sophisticated in its depth and authenticity than an adult’s experience of music making. The transformative power of their musicking lies in its ability to change the child’s state, and understanding of, being. Musicking therefore can create liminal states that pave the way for optimal experiences (Maslow, 1970; Csickzentmilahyi, 2002) and states of communitas (Turner, 1974b; 1974a). It is in these states that the children’s music literacy resides. The data show that this is where the children felt their musicking had displayed its most potency and that this was what they did with their music making. Their music making outdoors enabled them to change their mind states. Therefore, this is the nature of music literacy as experienced by the children making music outdoors in rural locations.

5.2. Limitations of the research

The research study was arguably both strengthened and limited by the sample. On the one hand, the sample enabled the study to focus on and compare the experiences of Key Stage 2 children in outdoor rural environments. On the other hand, it limited the data sources and therefore the scope of
the findings. Drawing data from a broader range of environments could have allowed for a greater comparative element to the research. For example, data from children’s music making in indoor environments could have been compared with the data from the outdoor rural environments. Or the data from outdoor rural environments could be compared with data from outdoor urban environments. The number of children and schools involved could have been increased to arguably give the data greater reliability. In addition, the range of ages chosen could have been increased to allow for more comparative analysis. Despite this the study would arguably have been too unwieldy if the range of environments, the sample sizes and range of ages had increased. The research was also limited by manpower and time. Undertaking the research individually within the scope of a PhD study meant that the time available had an impact on the sample that was chosen. In addition, as is discussed in the methodology, this research was adopting an interpretivist stance (Coe et al. 2017; Goldkuhl, 2012) whereby the subjects were seen as only speaking for themselves rather than being representative of any wider population.

5.3. Future Research

At the time of writing there is a relative lack of research involving children musicking in outdoor locations. The data from this study shows that the children felt that the most significant part of their musicking was the way that it made them feel and how it enabled them to experience augmented perspectives. It could be argued that this is the purpose of music, to create changes in consciousness and create meaningful healing experiences. (Boyce-Tillman, 2000; E. Turner, 2012). The outdoor settings seemingly enhanced, and were integral to, these changes in consciousness. Further research could explore children’s experiences of musicking in a range of environments in order to examine their experiences and search for corresponding patterns in the data. As discussed in the Results and Analysis chapter, this study also provided evidence in favour of the benefits of children being immersed in nature. In addition, it displayed data that arguably shows how mindful and creative practices can lead to spiritual moments. Further research in these areas would provide more data that could potentially be cross-referenced with the evidence from this research project.

5.4. Practical Implications

Throughout this study I was continually reflecting on my judgments, particularly during the research process and when gathering the data. As has been discussed in the methodology chapter, I was aware of the influences that I may have had on the children. I agree with Gilgun (2015) who
states that reflexivity is an ethical issue in regards to the participants as well as an accountability issue in terms of quality. As Gilgun (2015) states, “when researchers are reflexive, they reflect” upon what their research means to them and speculate about what the research means “to informants and others who have a stake in the research” (p.242). When considering my own biases, I was aware that even though I was using a grounded-theory approach, whereby the theorising was led by the data, I still inevitably had preconceptions about what might happen. For example, even though I was open-minded about what responses the children would give, I was of the belief that they would enjoy making music in the outdoor rural locations. This was because of my past experiences working with different groups of children making music at prehistoric sites. My own view of music was also a potential point of influence as I was aware that before I embarked on the research, I felt music had the power to transform mind states. To combat this, I was careful throughout the interviews with the children to continually test their answers by demanding that they consider if what they were saying was accurate. For example, when the children reported that the outdoor environment was having a significantly positive effect on their music making, I asked them to consider if they had an opportunity to make music in a huge hall, if the impact would be similarly positive. Similarly, I asked the children to consider if it was just being outside that was having an effect on their state of mind rather than their music making in that environment. As is highlighted in the results and analysis, most of the children reported that it was the outdoor rural location that was having an impact and that the same effect could not be created in a large hall. Nevertheless, a further concern was that I was both an outsider and an insider during the children’s music making and that my presence may have influenced their reactions. To guard against this I remained a passive observer after setting the task and told the children that they were in charge of their music making. I told them at the beginning that they would be performing their musical ceremonies to each other, but that they had to decide as a group what their musical ceremonies would be about and what sounds they would contain. Moreover, before interviewing the children I told them that I was only interested in their honest answers and not expecting any particular response. In addition, the triangulation with their teachers’ responses and my own observations further supported the children’s responses.

Throughout this PhD journey I have re-evaluated my ideas, often resulting in changed or enhanced perspectives even within areas where I felt that I had previously held a solid footing. Despite previous knowledge of and belief in the value of qualitative research, my understanding has grown and been enriched by my exploration and use of the grounded theory approach. I came to realise that what Kincheloe (2012) calls the “cult of positivity” had previously and unknowingly pervaded
my thinking. I have realised that previously I have believed that I was being objective when I was not and also that I have assumed that objectivity was somehow superior in research to subjectivity. As Charmaz (2014) highlights, “research and writing are inherently ideological activities”, despite the fact that researchers “may don a cloak of objectivity” (p.305). I have come to better understand the constructivist paradigm that contends that social reality is inevitably multiple (Charmaz, 2014). The many variables that surround social actors and the inherent subjective nature of both informants’ views and any subsequent analysis of these views demand an interpretivist epistemology. This epistemological position is not a weakness, but on the contrary this research journey has shown me that it is a point of strength. It rejects the inevitable assumptions demanded by objectivity that may cause us to deny the fluidity and uncertainty of social realities. I have come to cherish the honesty and the value of transparency in interpretivist theorising and the grounded theory approach. I am in agreement with Charmaz (2014) who states that “theorizing is a practice” that involves “constructing abstract understandings” about and within the world (p.394). Grounded theory does not provide “a blueprint for theoretical products”, but instead guides “interpretive theoretical practice” (Charmaz, 2014, p.394).

5.5. Music and the Expressive Arts

This research recognised the primacy of importance of the children’s experiences. In doing so it is in step with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) that states that the views of the child should be heard in matters that affect them. In 2012 the Welsh Government introduced the Children’s Rights Scheme. This was legislation that ensured that any future Welsh Government must: “have due regard” to children’s rights, when “working on or developing proposed new legislation, proposed new policies and any review of, or change to, an existing policy.” (Welsh Government, 2012, p.3). Primary Education in Wales is currently in transition as the present primary curriculum is being phased out and the new curriculum (Donaldson, 2015) is being developed. In September 2017 the Welsh Government stated that: “The first teaching of all year groups from primary school to Year 7 will begin in September 2022 and the new curriculum will roll out year-on-year from this point.” (Welsh Government, 2017). As has been discussed in the introduction, the report for the new curriculum (Donaldson, 2015) does not stipulate that music should be taught as a stand-alone subject. Instead the “expressive arts” are named as one of six areas of learning and experience that need to be covered. In addition, the
recommendations in the report (Donaldson, 2015) state that teachers should have more autonomy over curriculum design using evidenced based practice and research from Wales.

The analysis of the data from this study show that the children were generally very positive about making music in outdoor locations. It is therefore proposed that this study could be useful for teachers as it provides research based on children’s views that could be used to inform planning future music and expressive arts learning experiences in line with Welsh Government (2015) recommendations. The Successful Futures curriculum states that: “The expressive arts provide opportunities to explore thinking, refine, and communicate ideas, engaging thinking, imagination and senses creatively.” (Donaldson, 2015, p. 43). As is evidenced in the data the children were able to communicate ideas, engage thinking, use their imaginations and experience ways of knowing through their senses and their bodies. According to their responses, their musicking appears to have allowed them to transcend everyday reality and access a heightened consciousness. During these experiences the children felt joyful, in harmony with their surroundings and a sense of calmness. This arguably has practical implications for teachers in terms of providing children not only with expanded perspectives, but also with improved well-being. The Successful Futures curriculum for Wales is to prioritise Health and Wellbeing by making it one of the six Areas of Learning (Welsh Government, 2018). The data analyses from this research demonstrate how children’s wellbeing can be enhanced due to their music making. This project therefore provides a model that could be replicated in other schools to potentially improve children’s wellbeing. The data suggest that musicking can have a positive effect on children’s emotional states. Moreover, it indicates that musicking in the outdoor settings can lead to an augmented connectivity to nature and this also provides positive wellbeing outcomes. The framework of music literacy demonstrates how the power of music making lies in its ability to produce an affective, aesthetic response that involves increased existential understanding. Therefore, this study provides evidence that shows how music and the expressive arts can alter and improve understandings of consciousness.

5.6. Outdoor learning, Connectivity with Nature, Health and Well-being

As is highlighted in the literature review chapter, research suggests that children in the UK are increasingly becoming disconnected from nature as fewer children are playing or engaging in activities in nature (Bragg, 2013; Wait et. al. 2016; Waller et. al. 2017). This is despite, as discussed in the literature review chapter, a large body of research that shows that children’s wellbeing can
benefit from being in nature (Doddington, 2014; Nicol, 2014; Quay, 2013; Waite, 2011; Waite et. al. 2016; Waller et. al. 2017; Wilson, 2018). The analysis of the data from this project show that the children not only felt an enhanced sense of wellbeing, but also experienced an interconnectivity with nature. It shows that their immersion in nature affected their musicking and their overall experience. The children’s responses show that rather than seeing nature as medicinal, their musicking allowed them to feel part of nature, in harmony with the trees, the birds, the sea, seemingly as a dialogic relationship (Buber, 1970). The analysis of the children’s responses and the framework of music literacy show that the children felt their music making fused with the “more-than-human world” (Abram, 2010). This research provides original knowledge as it shows that the children’s music literacy in these outdoor rural locations involves an increased understanding of themselves, each other and their interrelatedness with nature. This has potential implications for future work involving children musicking or being creative in settings where they can be immersed in nature. The data from this study show that the immersion in nature positively affects their musicking and their musicking positively affects their experience of nature. In addition, these experiences lead to an enhanced state of wellbeing. Therefore, this suggests that further activities involving children musicking outdoors surrounded by nature could lead to positive outcomes in terms of promoting the benefits of children being in nature and improving participants’ wellbeing.

5.7. Spirituality

As discussed in the results and analysis chapter the data displays evidence of spirituality as the children’s experiences chime with concepts of spirituality (Best, 1996; Buber, 2010; Cajete, 1999; DeSouza and Halafoff, 2017; Hendricks and Hall, 2008; Gelter, 2010; Schein, 2018; Tedlock and Tedlock, 1992; Turner, 2012; Wilson, 2016). Their experiences match aspects of spirituality as outlined by Buber (2010), DeSouza and Halafoff (2017), Hay and Nye, 2006; Schein (2018) and Turner (2012). These include feelings of transcendence, a sense of harmony with their surroundings and each other, and increased feelings of wellbeing. They also resonate with Schein’s (2018) theory of spiritual moments. The children’s responses show that they had enhanced biophilic experiences and apparent augmented perceptions of reality. In addition, they felt that these experiences were more authentic than their everyday reality because they revealed not only who they wanted to be, but their inner selves, how they truly felt inside. In other words, their consciousness, how they perceive the world and themselves, appears to have changed as a result of their musicking. This has
potential implications in terms of how musicking can create changes in consciousness or optimal experiences and how these experiences can engender spiritual moments that can enhance development. The data seem to suggest that optimal experiences can allow children to gain spiritual insight. Children’s musicking in the outdoor rural environments was the conduit for these optimal experiences therefore the data also show how musicking can potentially be beneficial in terms of the children’s spiritual understanding. As is highlighted above in this chapter this study is valuable in terms of how it can show ways in which spiritual insight can be cultivated and the potential links it has with musicking, outdoor learning and nature. This thesis provides new knowledge to the field of children’s spiritual experiences as it evidences how musicking outdoors in rural environments can create spiritual moments. It also provides an original framework of children’s music literacy that has at its nexus the possibility of a heightened existential understanding and spiritual development.

5.8. Pedagogy and Time

The analysis of the data has shown that the children appeared to have experienced time differently because of the combination of making music outdoors in the rural environment and being immersed in nature. This is illustrated in the children’s statements about time feeling as though it felt longer, shorter or behaving differently than they would normally experience in school. The children spoke about feeling as though they could take their time to really focus on the activity of creating a musical ceremony without being disturbed by the normal “clock-time” pressures of being in school. They felt a sense of freedom to be able to be able to be led by the activity and consequently reported feeling happier and more relaxed than they normally would in school. This is highlighted in the response of Pupil 2 from School 4 who said, “I felt like it was a Saturday” as they were removed from the tightly timetabled activities that they normally experience, Monday to Friday, in school. As highlighted in the analysis of the data, this “slow pedagogy” provides a counter-pedagogical approach to the “take-away pedagogies proliferating in education.” (Payne and Watchow, 2009, p.15). If children are to be allowed to experience “the loose unstructured dreamtime – to experience nature in a meaningful way.” (Louv, 2008, p.117), then perhaps teachers need to feel that they are able to abandon the timetable and leave the four walls of the classroom in favour of seeking conditions that allow for these experiences. Moreover, teachers need to feel emboldened to be able to encourage children to undertake activities that are not motivated by specific pre-determined outcomes. This arguably involves a radically different pedagogical approach. One that allows children to more frequently undertake unstructured activities that prioritise the experience rather
than a measurable outcome. This in turn could lead to more frequent experiences of a different perception of time in contrast to the strict adherence to clock-time that currently dominates primary education. Further research exploring the impact of this type of pedagogical approach is needed to evaluate how it could potentially affect children’s education and development. This research provides new evidence that shows that music making in outdoor rural environments can allow children to “dwell pedagogically” (Foran and Olson, 2012, p.198) and have optimal experiences. These activities involve them experiencing with “patient receptivity” the “enveloping earth as expressive and alive” (Abram, 1997, p.30). How they experience time is a vital component of these experiences and integral to the enhanced understanding that apparently results from this augmented state of consciousness. The framework of music literacy that is constructed from the children’s experiences therefore outlines new and original knowledge that demonstrates how their music making endows them with an expanded sense of being and knowing.

Curriculum relevance

This research is of particular relevance to the current educational landscape in Wales for a number of reasons:

1. Health and Wellbeing is one of the six key areas of learning outlined in the new Successful Futures curriculum (Donaldson, 2015). The findings from this study suggest that music making outdoors in rural environments can have a significant positive impact on children’s wellbeing;

2. The new curriculum also outlines the “Expressive Arts” as one of the key areas of learning (Donaldson, 2015). This study demonstrates how the cross-curricular activity of making musical ceremonies in rural locations can have a positive impact on children’s understanding and direct experience of the expressive arts;

3. The findings also show how the expressive arts can be beneficial in terms of children’s emotional literacy, their sense of identity and their sense of place;

4. The analysis of the data shows that music making outdoors in rural environments can engender in the children an elevated understanding of their interrelatedness with nature.

5. Moreover, the positive responses from the children and their teachers to the musical activities outdoors demonstrate the potential value of collaborative music making on children’s holistic development;
6. In addition, the research evidences the value of music making on children’s imaginative and empathetic abilities and how children can use music making to experience augmented mind states;

7. Furthermore, the data show that these augmented mind states enable the children to have an amplified existential understanding. These enhanced understandings implicitly involve the children considering fundamental philosophical questions about the nature of existence and humanity. Therefore, the data display how music making can not only alter consciousness, but also create enhanced understanding of consciousness.
6. References


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Participant Information Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian

I would like to invite your child to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether you would like your child to participate, it is important that you carefully read this information letter to gain a full understanding of the research project and what it entails. If, having read the information, you are happy for your child to participate I would kindly ask you to please return the form attached at the back of this information sheet to either the head teacher or classroom teacher.

Title of Research Project:

An exploration of children’s musical literacies based on their experiences of making music in out of school, rural locations.

What is the research project about?

The aim of the study is to find out what children think about making music in an “out-of-school”, rural location. Mr Downey’s class will be going on educational visits to X and making a musical ceremony to perform there. This will take place over a period of two days. There will be two days of music making followed by half a day of interviews with the children and teachers. The interviews will aim to find out what the children and teachers thought about their experiences during the project. During the visits to X the children will also be filmed making music so that the film footage can be used to provide information about how they make music and engage with sound in a rural location.

For more information about the project please contact me at dadams@cardiffmet.ac.uk

Who is conducting the research?

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My name is Dylan Adams and I am a lecturer and researcher in Primary Education Studies at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

**Why has your child been asked?**

I have worked with the school and Mr X on previous music making projects. Your child’s class was recommended as being a good class to be involved in this project.

**What is involved?**

The children who are given permission to take part in the project will visit X over a period of three days to design and perform a musical ceremony at the site. During this time they will be filmed and some of the children will be interviewed to see what they thought about the experience.

**Will the information be recorded and what happens to it?**

The interviews will aim to find out what the children and teachers thought about their experiences during the project. The film footage and photographs will also be used as a stimulus for the interviews. In addition, the photographs will provide further visual information and may be used in the final presentation of the thesis.

**What will happen if I or my child changes their mind?**

1. Participation in the research is absolutely voluntary and your child can decide to withdraw from the research at any time.
2. If your child wishes to withdraw we would really appreciate it if you could let me know as soon as possible using the contact details below or the school can also inform me.
3. Participation will be terminated with immediate effect and any data already supplied will be destroyed.
4. There are absolutely no penalties for withdrawing from the research.

**Are there any risks involved in taking part?**

No, there are absolutely no risks at all.

**How will you protect my child's privacy?**

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1. The school name will be anonymised.
2. If your child is selected to take part in the group discussion session, I keep their personal details separate from both the transcripts.
3. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your child’s identity.
4. Any data collected will be kept on a password protected computer.

**Contact Details**

If you have any queries regarding the project or your child’s potential participation please do not hesitate to contact me at Cardiff Metropolitan University using the contact details below:

dadams@cardiffmet.ac.uk

I look forward to hearing your response.

Yours faithfully

Dylan Adams
Consent Form

Name of Participant (Child’s name):

Name of Researcher:

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Please carefully read each statement, tick the boxes if you agree to each statement and sign and date at the bottom of the form. Many Thanks.

a. I confirm that I have read the information letter for the project.

b. I have been given the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

c. I understand that my child’s participation is voluntary and withdrawal is allowed at any time.

d. I am happy for the data collected to be written up for my dissertation.

e. I am happy for photographs of my child to be used in the thesis.

Signature of Parent/Guardian:

________________________________________________________________

Date:___________________________________________________

Signature of Researcher:

_____________________________________________________

Date:________________________________

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Research project title: An exploration of children’s musical literacies based on their experiences of making music in out of school, rural locations.

Investigators: Dylan Adams

What is the project about?

I would like to tell you about a research project I am doing with your school. I am collecting information about children’s views on music making outdoors.

Why am I doing this?

I want to find out what children think about their music making outdoors.

What will happen to you?

If you want to be in the study you will take part in a group discussion with me (Dylan) and the other children after making music outdoors.

Will you be able to change your mind?

You can change your mind and decide not to be involved at any time.

What if you have any questions?

You can ask questions at any time. These can be to me or to your teacher who will pass them on to me to answer.
Who will know what I did in the project?

Hopefully the study will be published in an academic journal. Your name and the school name will be anonymised (kept secret) as this helps to protect people’s privacy.

Do you have to be in the research project?

You do not have to be in the project. No one will be mad at you if you don’t want to do this. You do not have to sign this form. If you don’t want to be in this project, just say so.

We will also ask your parents if they would like you to be in the project. Even if your parents want you to be in the study you can still say no.

Even if you say yes now you can change your mind later. It’s up to you.

Do you have any questions?

What questions do you have?

Assent

I want to take part in this study. I know I can change my mind at any time.

Yes ☑

_________________________  ___________  ______________

Signature of Child  Age  Date
Dear Sir/Madam X

I would like to invite X Primary School to take part in a research project.

**Project Title:** An exploration of children’s music literacies based on their experiences of making music in out of school, rural locations.

Principal Investigator: Dylan Adams

**What is the project about?**

The aim of the study is to find out what children think about making music in outdoor rural environments.

For more information about the project please contact me at dadams@cardiffmet.ac.uk

**Your school’s involvement in the project**

I would like your consent to conduct research involving members of your staff and children. Staff and children will be asked to take part in informal interviews (staff) and group discussions (children) following the workshops.

**Research Focus: Aims and objectives**

An exploration of children’s music literacies based on their experiences of making music in out of school, rural locations.

**Do I have the right to withdraw from the project when I want?**

Yes, your participation is voluntary and you and your member(s) of staff are free to withdraw from the project at any time without penalty and without giving any reason. If you choose to withdraw after data has been collected, but prior to any possible publication, your data will be destroyed and not included in the study.

**Will anonymity and confidentiality be guaranteed?**

Yes, the results will be studied together and any reference to individual responses that are used in any output resulting from this project (such as research papers) will be made
anonymous, making it impossible to determine the identity of a school or individual. Access to the data will be restricted to the researchers.

Once again, thank you for your participation in this project. I look forward to working with you. Could you please complete and return the consent form?

Informed consent will be sought separately from the member of staff in addition to this request for your permission to conduct the research.

Yours sincerely,

Dylan Adams
I understand that my school’s participation in this study is entirely voluntary.

I understand that the pupils Mr Dylan Adams interviews will also be free to withdraw themselves from this study at any time and without giving a reason.

I understand that I must keep the identity of all pupils who participate confidential.

I understand that the identity of pupils will be treated confidentially by Mr Dylan Adams and that all information will be stored anonymously and securely. All information appearing in the final report will be anonymous. All pupils will have the option of withdrawing their data from the study, up until their transcript has been anonymised.

I understand that I am free to discuss any questions or comments I might have with Mr Dylan Adams.

I understand that I am free to contact the Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Committee to discuss any complaints I might have.

I, ________________________________ (NAME) consent to Mr Dylan Adams proceeding with this study.

Signature of Headteacher: ........................................

Date: ............................................
Article

Portals between worlds: A study of the experiences of children aged 7–11 years from primary schools in Wales making music outdoors

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Abstract

There has been increasing interest in the educational value of outdoor learning around the world and in the United Kingdom. This is reflected in the statutory curricula of each country. At present, however, there has been little research into the potential of music-making in the outdoors. This study investigated how changing the physical location of learners' music-making to outdoor environments impacted on children aged 7–11 years. Seven classes of children and their teachers, from six different primary schools, created music for a ceremonial performance in various outdoor locations in Wales. These activities were video-recorded and after their musical performances, the children were interviewed using video-stimulated reflective dialogue (VSRD) in semi-structured interviews. Their teachers also took part in semi-structured interviews, but without the use of VSRD. The resultant iterative analysis of data revealed four overlapping and interwoven themes: freedom, emotion, senses and agency. In addition, the interviews revealed that the combination of the setting (including the ritual structure of the activity), the move from the school setting and the four themes (emotion, senses, freedom, agency) contribute to create a ‘vortex’ effect, potentially drawing the children into a state of liminality and peak experience, before achieving a state of calm focus. All of these factors are summed up in a tentative model of the impact of music-making outdoors with children aged 7–11 years.

Keywords

Primary education, music, outdoor learning, children’s agency, musical experiences, flow

Introduction

In recent years there has been an increasing interest in the educational value of outdoor learning around the world (for instance, Ampuero, Miranda, Delgado, Goyen, & Weaver, 2015; Dillon et al., 2005; Dolan, 2016; Gray & Martin, 2012; Rickinson et al., 2004; Scrutton, 2015; Vanderbeck, 2008). This is particularly true in the United Kingdom (UK) (Sefton-Green, 2006; Waite, 2011) and is reflected in varying degrees and emphases within the relevant curricula of Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Despite growing differences between different parts of the UK (Beauchamp, Clarke, Hulme, & Murray, 2015), each country has a statutory requirement for children to experience outdoor learning. In Wales, where the study reported below took place, the early years Foundation Phase curriculum (for children up to age seven years) states

Indoor and outdoor environments that are fun, exciting, stimulating and safe promote children’s development and natural curiosity to explore and learn through first-hand experiences. The Foundation Phase environment should promote discovery
and independence and a greater emphasis on using the outdoor environment as a resource for children’s learning. (DCELLS, 2008, p. 4)

In Scotland, Curriculum for excellence through outdoor learning asserts that ‘the journey through education for any child in Scotland must include opportunities for a series of planned, quality outdoor learning experiences’ (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010: 5); whilst in Northern Ireland, Learning outdoors in the early years (Bratton, Crosse, Crosby, & McKeown, 2005) suggests that ‘outdoors is an equal player to indoors and should receive planning, management, evaluation, resourcing, staffing and adult interaction on a par with indoors’ (p. 11).

This move to outdoor learning is, however, not a straightforward process. Although outdoor learning ‘provides a context for learning in many areas: general and subject based knowledge; thinking and problem-solving skills; life skills such as co-operation and interpersonal communication’ (DfES, 2006, p. 2), there is still a need for stronger empirical and conceptual understandings of learning in the outdoor classroom (Dillon et al., 2005; Rickinson et al., 2004). In addition, Sefton-Green (2006) warns that the potential value of outdoor learning is not being realized because the value-judgements and conventions that apply to the classroom are merely being transferred outside. This is important, as Waite (2011) claims that ‘the value of working outside the classroom is in providing pupils with experiences that are different from those inside it. ... We want them to learn to behave in ways that are different to classroom behaviour’ (p. 14).

Overcoming these potential obstacles is important as increased use of outdoor learning has great potential in music education. Not only does it introduce opportunities for new pedagogies, but in musical terms it also introduces new, and sometimes unfamiliar, soundscapes (such as noise from waves, or echoes in a cave), which can provide both emotional stimulus and the material for compositions. One feature of the outdoor soundscape is the presence of new and unfamiliar sounds, but also it can mean the absence of some sounds, particularly those which may be labelled ‘noise’. The ability to potentially avoid extraneous noise, which is present in many school settings, is significant in music-making as ‘noise presents at least 4 threats: diversion of attention and disruption of behavior; habituation or “learned deafness”, masking of important signals, and spurious physiological stimulation’ (Hatch & Fristrup, 2009, p. 224). Waite (2011) also highlights another potential benefit when noting that, when outdoors, children are concerned with the minutiae of things which they may ordinarily have missed. For instance, they are naturally curious about the exact source of every sound they hear, unless an overload of noise or movement inhibits this curiosity. Waite asserts that ‘to listen properly, children need to see, and have a sense of sound in relation to themselves. As they listen and as they see, they are naturally taken by their curiosity to discover more about that which has taken their attention’ (2011, p. 120).

In addition, a move to making music outdoors allows children to explore the significance of the history of the place chosen, as ‘it is essential that ... educators consider carefully the ways in which outdoor experiences introduce participants to particular “stories” of the land, whose land it is or had been, and how it has changed over time’ (Stewart, 2008, p. 82). In the research below, exploring the potential ‘stories’ of the sites chosen for music-making was a key stimulus in musical activities and the participants were encouraged to take inspiration from where they were, and use all the senses to explore their location and to include the environment in their music-making.

Methods and sample

The impetus for this project was the work of one of the research team as a facilitator of musical activities for children aged 7–10 years at historic venues in association with historical national organizations and museums. As well as the inherent value of these activities as music in their own right, the activities also presented a unique opportunity to explore and reflect on the impact of making music outdoors with children this age, particularly from their own perspective and using their own words.

The research was therefore premised on the belief that ‘all school pupils have a right to be consulted and to have their voices listened to... [as] ... It cannot tenably be claimed that school-ing is primarily intended to benefit pupils if pupils’ own views about what is beneficial to them are not actively sought and attended to’ (McIntyre, Pedder, & Rudduck, 2005, p. 150). Nevertheless, it was important that teachers were also given a voice. In this exploratory study, the children (henceforth called pupils to reflect their position as learners) and teachers worked as co-researchers, where the research is done with, rather than to, the pupils. This approach therefore
had potential benefits not only for the pupils, but also allowed teachers to gain a deeper understanding of teaching and learning, which can change the way they think about pupils and their learning (Flutter, 2007).

The music-making was undertaken in rural locations in north and south Wales in the UK, most with strong prehistoric context, but also some with no particular historical significance, such as a beach. The children were taken as a class (around 30 children) to the outdoor setting. The activities reported here built on, and extended, their previous experience of music-making as part of statutory classroom music teaching required by the national curriculum in Wales. The research involved seven groups of children from six different primary schools over a two-year period. Table 1 shows the sample size and location of the musical activities.

Once at the outdoor location, the children were challenged to create music for a ceremonial performance, which they then performed at the setting. These ceremonies were to celebrate aspects of the environment and the pupils were encouraged to imagine that they were, for instance, a Neolithic tribe making music for a performance ritual thousands of years ago. Making the performance a ceremony was a deliberate attempt to give their music-making more authenticity by giving it a purpose. The music was to be integral to the ceremony and was the main focus of the activities, but the children had complete autonomy over their performance. They were therefore given permission to alter or enhance their composition ‘in the moment’ of their performance if they felt the alterations suited the atmosphere of the ritual. The teachers who accompanied the staff were only observers and therefore did not detract from the pupil autonomy.

The overall aim was that the outdoor locations, coupled with the improvisational and autotelic nature of their musical rituals, would inspire the children to feel as though they were experts or artists, even if they had previously not felt as if these roles were accessible to them. They were challenged to imagine what prehistoric music may have sounded like, using the instruments provided: animal skin frame drums, djembes, wooden flutes and bone flutes. Words were not permitted in the music, but vocal sounds were allowed. This was an attempt to make their music free from the cultural constraints of emulating any specific genre of music and attempting to avoid potential pastiche. It should be noted here, however, that the use of the ritual as a stimulus for music-making was mainly an attempt to provide a free structure for children to work in.

Each class of children was led by one of the research team as part of ongoing music-making activities in the project schools. Hence the pupils were familiar with his pedagogic approach in school, so that this would not influence their performance in the outdoor locations. This also meant that the only variable that was changed was the environment (from inside school to outdoors), allowing us to analyse its impact with greater confidence. This led to the potential for researcher bias for this member of the team but, as Drisko (1997) points out, it is possible to limit bias through self-awareness. With this in mind, exchanges between this researcher and the children were kept to a minimum to avoid these interactions affecting the findings. Another member of the research team was not involved in the musical activities and provided an external perspective in the later analysis. The pupils’ normal class teachers were present in accordance with statutory supervision requirements, and they observed (non-participant observers), but did not take any part in, the performances.

**Methods**

Before beginning research, ethical approval was gained though the university ethics process and informed consent was gained from all participants. Each musical activity was filmed to provide the stimulus for subsequent semi-structured group interviews with the children (n=5/6 in each group) using video-stimulated reflective dialogue (VSRD). VSRD is an established research tool which has been used in research with both teachers (for example Hargreaves et al., 2003; Morgan, 2007; Powell, 2005; Pratt, 2006; Tanner, Jones, & Lewis, 2010) and pupils (Salisbury, Ellis, Beauchamp, & Haughton, 2011; Tanner & Jones, 2007) as it is effective in initiating dialogue between participants and interviewers. Indeed, the use of dialogue is central to the process of VSRD, which distinguishes it from video stimulated recall or video stimulated reflection. The dialogue is initiated by a ‘collective exchange... intended to result in a synergetic pooling of information which extends the concepts involved’ (Moyles, Adams, & Musgrove, 2002, p. 465).

After each performance, the group of children were first shown a film of their music-making, followed by semi-structured questions about their experiences. The children’s teachers also took part in individual semi-structured interviews about their views of the children’s experiences. These interviews did not use the videos
as the teachers had been non-participant observers at the actual performances. It was also felt they could recollect events sufficiently well for discussion without the stimulus it provided.

All interviews with both children and teachers were recorded, transcribed and then coded through an iterative process of thematic analysis. A grounded theory approach was taken to the data, with no preconceived categories or codes (Morse et al., 2009). During the analysis, themes emerged and were refined from initial codes to more focused codes, leading to the final themes discussed below. An example of this was an initial finding that ‘rhythm’ seemed to be a key word that was mentioned repeatedly in the responses. However, repeated analysis suggested that the key concepts being expressed were authenticity and autonomy. This was because the responses repeatedly stressed how important it was that the children had composed their own rhythm and that the rhythm was appropriate for the performance or mood of the ceremony.

Results and analysis

Examining the responses of the children making music outdoors suggested they saw a number of positive benefits, which were supported by the views of the teachers of each class. These benefits were grouped in four overlapping themes, which are summarized below.

1. Freedom. The pupils’ responses suggest they felt ‘freer’ and more confident about their music-making when making music outdoors.
2. Emotion. The pupils’ music-making seems to have emotionally engaged them and may have enhanced their empathetic and imaginative abilities.
3. Senses. The pupils appear to be acutely aware of their senses, their surroundings and the impact of the acoustical environment.
4. Agency. The pupils outlined a sense of agency that is felt due to the autonomy and authenticity of the children’s music-making.

Each theme will now be discussed in detail. As no significant differences emerged concerning gender, school or setting, the quotations used to exemplify themes are not individually coded to reflect these variants, but rather are chosen to best reflect a typical response. However, codes have been provided to document the data source and date.

Freedom

A recurring theme from the interview responses from both teachers and pupils was one of freedom. The teachers talked of how they perceived that making music outdoors empowered the pupils with a greater sense of freedom. Examples given included,

The environment was encouraging and gave the children enthusiasm and confidence to participate. (TC1, VSRD, 16 October 2015)

They were far less inhibited than if they were in classroom situation. You could see that in their music-making, in their performance. (TC2, VSRD, 16 October 2015)

They were inspired to be more creative and experimental by the exciting environment. (TC3, VSRD, 11 October 2015)

This is both because of the physical space of the outdoor locations and also because of a perceived freedom that was gained by being released from the constraints of the classroom culture and school environment – such as the school classroom or hall. This was highlighted in the responses from both classes of children who made music in the field when they stated:

It’s outdoors you’ve got the grass and the background, but if you’re doing it on stage it would be on a big big hall there’s seats, but (there) there’s grass – you can stand up ... it’s like outdoors you’ve got the nice wind so you don’t get hot ... it’s outdoors and you’re free ... you’re just free. (PupilSN1, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

Inside you can’t run around as much, you haven’t got the trees inside and the grass. You’ve got more space; you get into it more, you get into the spirit more and that goes really well because you know what you’re doing. You like time travel whereas
in school you’re like work-playtime, playtime work and you don’t get into the spirit of it as much. (PupilSN2, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

The responses from the children who made music on the beach also refer to a sense of freedom due to the greater physical space.

[in school] there’s not much space for people to be walking around at the same time whereas on the beach there’s more space and there’s not many people walking around. (PupilB1, VSRD, 11 October 2015)

Because if you went around here you’d imagine like work and school and all that, but then once you go down the beach you imagine like freedom, happiness. (PupilC2, VSRD, 11 October 2015)

Those children who made music in a more enclosed environment in the cave nonetheless echoed the theme of freedom when they stated.

It was much better in the cave because we were in the wild and in the dark. In the hall is just like singing in assembly. (PupilM4, VSRD, 16 May 2013)

I felt it was really free because no-one else was there so we could do what we wanted with our dance and the music so we could do it quite loud and no-one would be listening to it except people in the cave with us. (PupilM3, VSRD, 16 May 2013)

You wouldn’t be able to do that like run around like animals inside and make any sound and stuff because there’s no certain script you have to follow so you were free to do what you want and your music could sound however you wanted. (PupilM5, VSRD, 16 May 2013)

The children also talked of greater freedom from other less obvious parts of the school environment, such as freedom from their perceived need to be ‘right’, or follow accepted conventions in music-making, in their normal school lessons. They felt more able to make mistakes or take risks in the outdoor environment and stated.

Obviously in school we’re just like playing a beat like that and then there [outdoors] we were actually like feeling it. Cos, like, in school you’re just dah, dah, dah, dah like that and then in that actual thing [outdoors] it was more better because everybody, like, really made an effort in it. (PupilB3, VSRD, 16 May 2015)

When you were making music in school, it felt like you were just having a normal music lesson, but when you [sic] there you felt like you were in it. (PupilB4, VSRD, 16 May 2015)

The pupil’s responses suggest that the outdoor location had emboldened them to be freer with their music-making and take ownership of the music they produced. For instance, they reported that.

We made it [the music], so no-one can tell us how to play it... how it’s done... yeah, it’s ours... it’s only us that can correct it and stuff because we were the makers of the music... (PupilLFP4, VSRD, 21 June 2013)

Adams and Beauchamp 57 Inside you’re like doing what people say, but when you’re outside you can do what YOU want to do because there’s no-one bossing you around. (PupilPSE1, VSRD, 12 June 2014)

The idea that music-making can inspire a sense of freedom is supported by Swanwick (1994), who states that, ‘music does more than remind us of and reinforce our own local cultural values... it takes us outside ourselves and enlarges our range’ (p. 172).

Emotion (the world of feeling and imagination)

The second theme that is present from the data is ‘emotion’. It seems this emotion or world of feeling is linked with the children’s imagination. As is already evident in some of the responses above, the music-making invoked an emotional response. This emotional response enabled the learners to enter a world of imagination. This is exemplified in the following quotes by children from each of the four different sites.
The music – when we were playing like everyone was giving a message to the clouds! (PupilLFP1, VSRD, 24 June 2015)

it felt like you had all these people with white paint on their faces, dancing round the campfire – it felt like you were one of them – if it was at school I wouldn’t have felt like that because of the atmosphere of the place. I felt like I was actually one of the people! (PupilLFP4, VSRD, 24 June 2015)

I could imagine our ancestors dancing to our rhythm! Once we started playing the music I couldn’t like see them when I walked in, but when they all started playing the music and I started playing the music I saw them. It’s something about the music, the rhythm, I think – that makes us feel – we’ve gone back in time – because once I started playing I just didn’t want to stop because I kept on looking at and looking at them and I just didn’t want to say goodbye to them. (PupilLFP2, VSRD, 24 June 2015)

Yeah we made music come to life yeah everything came to life with the rhythm and everything and like I could imagine people dancing around the fire. (PupilLFP3, VSRD, 24 June 2015)

In each of these examples the children talk about imagining that they had gone back in time. The music seems to be immersive and acts as a catalyst to allow the children to enter an imaginary world where they are able to ‘see’ the prehistoric past in their imagination. The responses of the teachers reinforce this idea when they stated

The children were swept along with the feeling generated by making music in a cave that had been inhabited by Palaeolithic peoples thousands of years ago! (TM1, VSRD, 16 May 2013)

When performing, the children were totally focused, you really got the impression they were empathizing with their ancestors 6000 years ago! (TSN1, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

Similarly, other teachers highlighted an emotional response by the children as they talk about what the children ‘felt’ when they made their music.

They felt it and just seemed to get it – it was lovely to see when you’re doing it in the outside in comparison to the classroom; some of the girls who were involved in that were a little bit coy and then you go outside and they really go for it. They really had a good go at it, they really felt it, they felt the power of it. (TC2, VSRD, 16 October 2015)

Other teachers talk about how it was ‘emotionally beneficial’ to the children.

Emotionally it was beneficial also. It helped their emotional well-being. It linked with our physical literacy agenda, but also they learn more when they move, their bodies experience it as well as their minds. (TM2, VSRD, 16 May 2013)

The children were able to have the freedom to express themselves through music, dance and drama, displaying the emotions of our ancestors. (TSN1, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

There also appears to be a belief expressed by many of the children that an improved emotive experience means an improved imaginative experience, and that this in turn will affect their music-making. Representative comments included

My mind helps me to imagine and that helps my music (PupilB5, VSRD, 16 May 2015)

Like what was going on in my mind was like – when you like can do a performance on a stage in school you feel like it’s a massive massive audience, but a tiny space. But when you’re at Tinkinswood if you like did a show you can make it up, run around make any sounds you like, and go mad crazy. (PupilSNS5, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

Senses

Another consistent theme which emerged from the data from all the groups of children was a heightened awareness of their senses. There appears to be a particularly improved experience influenced by the acoustical environment. The following responses come from children who made music in the cave.

... there was like a cave and the noise gets trapped, it was amazing!
When we were sitting down you could actually feel the vibration of the music on the floor of the cave. You could feel the beat of the music! (PupilM1, VSRD, 16 May 2013)

They were good vibrations – because I haven’t ever felt my music before! (PupilM4, VSRD, 16 May 2013)

An increased acoustical awareness inside a cave is perhaps not surprising. However, the responses of the children who did not make music in a cave continue to support this theme.

You could hear it louder because it was bouncing everywhere, all the sound was like everywhere – it was like – like a whole world! (PupilM3, VSRD, 16 May 2013)

... we could just make any sounds we want. And we could hear more sounds like birds tweeting and all that. (PupilSN2, VSRD, 7 September 2013)

It felt like a herd of elephants jumping on the floor! The vibration made you want to move and to dance! (PupilM2, VSRD, 16 May 2013)

It was really like we were sending a message to the gods, because the music was going out everywhere; it echoed. (PupilLFP2, VSRD, 21 June 2013)

Once more, the teachers echoed the views of the children by stating:

Atmosphere and acoustics made the music feel real and the result left the children with a real sense of achievement. (TM1, VSRD, 16 May 2013)

... just being able to see the colours of the environment, the rocks, the sky. When they see those colours in the environment that makes such a difference and seems to have helped their performance. (TC1, VSRD, 16 October 2015)

The teachers suggested that the impact of this increased sense of awareness was a calming influence on the children that allowed them to focus. Two of the teachers describe it as being ‘tranquil’ while others suggested that

Even when they were playing the drums loudly the children seemed to have a calm focus ... they were always totally in tune with the appropriate ceremonial etiquette. (TSN1, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

The sounds of the sea in the background and the natural rhythm of the waves and the sound. It all adds to that sense of place to the overall experience. There’s a more tranquil space. (TB1, VSRD, 11 October 2015)

There’s a depth to it, it is more tranquil, there is no doubt they can’t focus on all their senses as much in the classroom. It’s not just about the sounds it’s about feeling the air around you, the space that’s around you. It’s hard to put into words because your whole body is engulfed in it. It is all encompassing, sight, hearing, smell and more than that ... It focuses them and calms them also. (TC2, VSRD, 16 October 2015)

This observation by these teachers of the psychological effect the experience seems to have provoked in the children appears to be reinforced by the following extract from one of the group interviews.

Child A: only thing you can hear is the waves going in and out. The first step on the beach you just feel like – aaaaahhh! Like no-one’s stopping you from doing what you want. (PupilC2, VSRD, 11 October 2015)

Child B: Yeah you know it’s like you came down the beach and you were all stressed. You stepped onto the sand and you put your feet all into the sand and then you were like aaaaahhh. (PupilC1, VSRD, 11 October 2015)

Interviewer: what about the sounds in school? You said they were important.

Child A: Yeah it sort of disrupts you because you want to concentrate, you can’t concentrate because you want to know what’s going on – it interrupts you ... (PupilC2, VSRD, 11 October 2015)
Child B: You want it to be peaceful in the classroom, so then you can actually feel your emotions. There's loads of noisiness around you and you just can't concentrate ... you're more curious in the hall ... what's going on around you. But on the beach it just doesn't matter. You can hear the sea and the birds and ... it doesn't matter. (PupilC1, VSRD, 11 October 2015)

These responses chime with Blacking's (1987) observations on the significance of the fact that music-making is contained within the body, but also accord with Juntunen and Westerlund's (2001) view that, 'the feeling, sensing and experiencing body is engaged with musical sounds in many ways, whether we are aware of it or not’ (p. 204). The children's and teachers’ responses appear to support this view of the physical and psychological expressive ability that music has, especially when combined with dance.

**Agency (autonomy and authenticity)**

A fourth theme that was present throughout the pupil data was agency, or ownership and autonomy, over the music and that having a purpose for their performance gave it authenticity and was a vital ingredient for its success. The following responses from the children capture this sense of ownership when they stated

I didn't want to go because it felt like I didn't want to go, I felt the rhythm of the place ... of my music ... like I was leaving a memory or something there. I wanted to camp there all night ... you wouldn’t be able to get the rhythm if there was a lot more people ... the music felt like it was magical at that time and was ours. (PupilLFP2, VSRD, 21 June 2013)

It was our rhythm ...we wanted to give it more energy into the music and dance, but when it was going down we wanted to give it less and less energy because there was a special rhythm and it was ours. (PupilLFP3, VSRD, 21 June 2013)

The perceived authenticity of the music, that is it was not performing the music of others, is summed up by the following pupil quotes

Yeah that rhythm was all made up. Like we made that rhythm up at that moment, it wasn’t out of like ... a box ... or a book or any other music or anything; we made that music out of ourselves ... out of everything, we made music come to life! (PupilLFP1, VSRD, 21 June 2013)

We were in the music, ... they were just doing their own rhythm and it was like they had actually gone into their music as if they just got it off by heart from the feelings that they had. (PupilLFP2, VSRD, 21 June 2013)

Because it was our rhythm you try to put more feeling into the songs (music) that you're playing yeah more emotion, feelings or ... energy ... it's like if you made a mistake they would just forgive you and ... time back ... or something, so you could play it better again just let you carry on. (PupilSN2, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

**Discussion**

The four themes outlined above seem to inter-relate and overlap. At the nexus of these four themes there seems to be an immersion in the music-making that allows the children to lose their sense of time and even imagine that they are in a different reality. At this central point pupils suggest that they become calmer and more focused. Their responses strongly suggest that many of them believed that they entered a 'different world’ during their music-making. This is not to suggest that they unknowingly lost touch with reality, but rather that they used the willing suspension of disbelief to travel to a different reality. It is as if their music-making outdoors had opened a door to a new way of experiencing the world and themselves, if only for the time of their performances. We therefore suggest tentatively that making music in an out-door space has special potential to explore a metaphysical space and that their music-making can be the vehicle for this journey.

This seems to resonate with the idea of liminality, that is, experiencing things differently and ‘being' in a different place (Boyce-Tillman, 2009; Turner, 1967, 1969). For instance, pupils suggested:

Yeah we made music come to life, yeah, everything came to life with the rhythm and everything and like I could imagine people dancing around the fire. I forgot everything else and didn’t care, I was just there. (Pupil LFP3, VSRD, 21 June 2013)

The cave is so much better because you just get to be yourself and be really loud ... you feel relaxed and get this really buzzing feeling all the time. (PupilM4, VSRD, 16 May 2013)
When you’re there you get into it more because like the chamber is right in front of you; you get into the spirit more, and then like it goes really well because you know what you’re doing because it is like ... um, you’ve time travelled back to 6000 years ago ... as if you’re actually there. (PupilSN3, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

In the following responses the pupils talk of feeling at one with everyone, which reflects Blacking’s (1987, p. 61) notion of phyllic communion, ‘the sense of being members of the same species’. He continues to suggest that this along with the ‘heightened perception of the world that it provides are major subjects of music and the arts’ (1987, p. 61).

In many of the interviews the pupils described this ‘communion’ with each other, but also with the music, stating

We were the music! (PupilLFP1, VSRD, 21 June 2013)

We made the music and there was a rhythm to it ... Our rhythm ... our music ... we made it so no-one can tell us how to play it how it's done. (PupilSN3, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

Yeah, it's ours ... it's only us that can correct it and stuff because we were the makers of the music ... yeah ... we were all felt like as one together, us and the music; it felt like we were the music! (PupilLFP2, VSRD, 21 June 2013)

Such responses, and others in the data, also seem to suggest that the music-making also resonates with Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990) theory of ‘flow’ and Maslow’s ‘peak experiences’ (Maslow, 1968). Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990) explain that when we are fully engaged in a creative activity and there is real ‘flow’, then the experience has an added significance as we develop ‘sensitivity to the being of other persons, to the excellence of form, to the style of distant historical periods, to the essence of unfamiliar civilizations. In so doing, it changes and expands the being of the viewer’ (p. 183).

Some of the children also talked about how this spiralling liminality and peak flow can induce a calming effect. It is perhaps counter-intuitive to expect children to feel calm when drumming and dancing outdoors, but they stated

I think it’s a lot better outside because I think it does make you feel happy, because all the trees are moving and you can just see nature and things that you wouldn’t really see inside, and it’s just so pretty. And then you can just get all calm when you’re making music or dancing. (PupilSN1, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

It makes me feel good and excited, kind of calm, but good as well. Before I was a bit worried but after I felt great. (Pupil PSE2, VSRD, 12 June 2014)

... it was really enjoyable being there because, like, when you did it there like, you've got a lot more things to do. ... But there you've got a bit more space and everything ... more head space and you feel more calm. (PupilC3, VSRD, 11 October 2015)

This theme is once again reinforced by the teachers’ responses.

There’s a depth to it; it is more tranquil. There is no doubt they can’t focus on all their senses as much in the classroom. It’s not just about the sounds; it’s about feeling the air around you, the space that’s around you. It’s hard to put into words because your whole body is engulfed in it. It is all encompassing, sight, hearing, smell and more than that ... it focuses them and calms them also. (TC2, VSRD, 16 October 2015)

It was very impressive, their reaction; my initial thoughts would be that they would be distracted about being in a different environment like being down the beach, but no, they were more focused. Taking them out of the classroom wasn’t a distraction; in fact, they were more comfortable and more at one with their environment. For our children this is very important because there were children in the class who can get easily distracted. (TC1, VSRD, 16 October 2015)

You naturally expect them to be over-excited and over-stimulated, but it didn’t happen. They were both calm and focused. (TSN1, VSRD, 7 September 2015)

This calm focus appears to be result of the state of liminality and peak experience, but these are intrinsically linked to the impact of the overlapping four themes (freedom, emotions, senses and agency) identified earlier in this article. These themes are in turn the result of the impact of the outdoor setting.
In attempting to model the relationship, we need to note that not all children will achieve the state of calm focus. Nevertheless, we can suggest that the combination of the setting (including the ritual structure of the activity) and the move from the school setting leads to the emergence of the feelings of freedom, emotions, sense and agency. This combination of influences, how-ever, is not linear, but interwoven and overlapping, and should not necessarily be regarded as equal or mutually exclusive. The data suggest that all factors contribute to create a ‘vortex’ effect, potentially drawing the children into a state of liminality and peak experience before achieving a state of calm focus. Figure 1 attempts to summarize the impact of making music outdoors for children aged 7–11 years.

While this model must remain necessarily tentative, as it is based on a small sample size in one country, we hope that it has the potential to stimulate debate about the impact of making music outdoors with young children.

**Implications**

The data produced by this research appear to suggest that there are many positive potential intrinsic and extrinsic benefits in making music outdoors for both practitioners and pupils. Crucially, these benefits seemingly affect the pupils in more powerful ways than would be experienced when making music in school. Both the children’s and teachers’ responses seem to highlight how the musical engagement in different outdoor environments triggered the pupils’ imagination and enabled them to more easily imagine peoples and cultures beyond their everyday experience (Swanwick, 1994). These heightened imaginative abilities seem to have been engendered by the ‘freedom’ felt in the out-of-school environment. This would appear to imply that further music-making experiences taking place in out-of-school locations could similarly magnify the pupils’ imaginative abilities.

![Figure 1. Model of music-making outdoors for pupils aged 7–10 years.](image)

This new freedom and increased imagination were also enhanced by the autonomous nature of the pupils’ music-making. Practitioners should therefore recognize that it is not always what they do, but what they do not
do, that is important. The evidence in this study suggests that providing contexts beyond the classroom, where pupils have greater autonomy in music-making, can be a catalyst for more innovative music-making and use of sound in the future. Given the views the pupils outlined regarding the perceived boundaries (both physical and those imposed by school’s rules and implicit expectations of behaviour) in music-making within schools, teachers may need to adopt a different, less didactic, pedagogy when working outside of the classroom. It may seem counter-intuitive, but in this case the less the teachers ‘teach’, the greater the potential benefits for the pupils.

According to both pupils and teachers, making music in an out-of-school environment had created an elevated sensory experience. The comments claim that this elevated experience had been facilitated, at least in part, because of the rural nature of the environments. For example, the sonic experience was amplified, often literally because of the acoustics, but also meta-pherically because the pupils were able to hear the direction and movement of their sounds and in some cases to actually feel the sound’s vibrations. Being free from excessive noise pollution and sensory overload in addition to the musical engagement itself seemingly raised the pupils’ sensory awareness and this raised awareness was integral to, and complemented by, their music-making. Again, this would imply that further music-making out-of-school may boost the pupils’ sensory capabilities and thus contribute to developing capability in both the formal and the ‘hidden’ curriculum – defined by Kelly (2004) as outcomes which are, ‘not in themselves overtly included in the planning or even the consciousness of those responsible for the school arrangements’ (p. 5).

There is the possibility that entering into the liminal, flow state described in this paper as a result of more frequent music-making in out-of-school locations could facilitate other increased abilities and the pupil’s evaluations provide a deeper understanding of how they can engage with, and are empowered by, music. It is our conclusion that further research is needed to continue to explore this potential and to ensure that the full benefits of music-making outdoors are captured both to develop music curricula and, more importantly, enhance the music-making of young children.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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References


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DECLARATION

This Work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed Dylan Adams (candidate)
Date 19/11/2019

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote(s).

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed Dylan Adams (candidate)
Date 19/11/2019

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