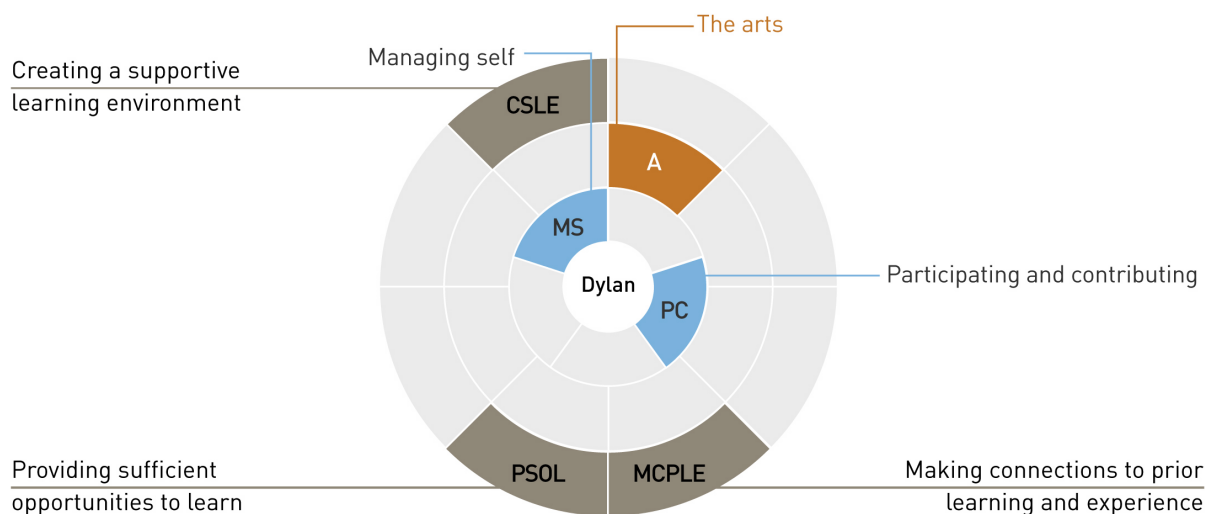


Music helps Dylan learn

Links to the curriculum



Student background

Name	Dylan
Age	9
Year	3/4
School	Primary

Dylan loves school and works very hard. Dylan has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and some developmental delay in gross and fine motor skills, speech language and cognition. He has a short attention span and can become distracted very quickly when he does not have support.

Dylan can be overwhelmed with sights and sounds in a busy classroom as he does not know how to filter out the unwanted ones. Dylan has an ongoing and reviewable resourcing schemes (ORRS) teacher, Mrs King, to assist him.

Four learning stories

- 1. Dylan is a singer** 12 February 2008
- 2. Dylan learns to play an instrument** 19 February 2008
- 3. Dylan is class percussionist** 18 March 2008
- 4. Dylan's favourite song** 1 September 2008

This string of learning stories shows Dylan participating and contributing with increasing confidence and appropriateness that follows from his growing self-management.

Dylan is a singer

Student	Dylan	Date	12 February 2008
Topic	Daily morning singing	Observer	Maureen (teacher)

Intended learning

- To join in with the class as we sing our daily song at the beginning of the day.

Dylan is finding staying in one place and listening difficult during classroom tasks. I had noticed he has a very tuneful voice and he was ready to sing as soon as he heard music begin. Could I use this to help him increase his on-task behaviour?

Today, Dylan waited for the others to start then joined in with the song. Although, generally, words are hard for him to remember, he joined in with gusto when it came to the chorus. He was able to actively participate in singing and stayed in one place until the song finished.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Participating and contributing, Managing self

Dylan loves to sing and feel he is part of the class. We keep the same song for a whole week so he is able to join in more as the week goes by. He stayed in his place through the whole song, which demonstrated his growing ability to manage himself.

Learning areas

Level 1 the arts: Communicating and Interpreting: music – sounds arts

Dylan was able to join in and sing the appropriate tune. He remembers repetitive parts in the songs.

Where to next?

We will encourage Dylan's love of singing further by using nursery rhymes and familiar books, such as "The Bear Hunt" and "I Know an Old Lady" to help with his reading as a precursor to help him join in the weekly song. We will put copies of nursery rhymes and repetitive stories in a browsing box for him to choose to read with his teacher aide and the other children.

Dylan learns to play an instrument

Student	Dylan	Date	19 February 2008
Topic	Learning to play a musical instrument	Observer	Maureen (teacher)

Intended learning

— To join in with the class as we begin to learn how to play music.

As part of our music programme for the year 3 and 4 students, we learn to play the recorder. We felt that this was too difficult for Dylan so we decided that he could play a percussion instrument so he could join in with the others. Mrs King (ORRS teacher) came to help make this a success for him.

Dylan was very excited to be playing music. He was given one chime bar and a beater to play his music on. When the music started, he hit the chime bar with great gusto and with a big smile on his face. He kept playing when the music stopped. Mrs King prompted Dylan to play the beat using hand-over-hand support. She used the "stop" gesture to indicate when to finish. She also prompted him to look at the others to see when they stopped. Mrs King stepped back and Dylan was able to keep to the beat without the hand-over-hand support. Dylan stopped playing when the music stopped.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Managing self

Dylan showed that he was beginning to become independent after some initial support.

Learning areas

Level 1 the arts: Developing Practical Knowledge: music – sounds arts

After initial observation of Dylan's musicianship, his ORRS teacher scaffolded learning strategies so he was able to participate in the music session. Dylan showed that he could keep the beat and stop at the appropriate time.

Where to next?

We will encourage Dylan to play music with the rest of the class with less and less teacher assistance. We will use symbols (start and stop signs), as well as verbal reminders, at the beginning of the session.

Dylan is class percussionist

Student	Dylan	Date	18 March 2008
Topic	Learning to play a musical instrument	Observer	Maureen (teacher)

Intended learning

- To join in with the class as we begin to learn how to play music.

Today, Dylan had no ORRS teacher assistance. However, I decided that I should continue with the normal programme – music. I was a little worried about what would happen. I talked to the class about the fact that we would be using a backing track when we played and that it was important to wait for the man to say, “Ready, one, two, three, play...”

I gave Dylan a wooden block and a piece of dowel. Dylan waited patiently until the man on the backing track said, “Ready, one, two, three, play...” and away Dylan went, keeping beat with his piece of dowel on the wooden block. When the music stopped Dylan stopped. We tried a second tune and the same thing happened.



What fantastic waiting, Dylan!

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Participating and contributing, Managing self

As in learning story two, Dylan continues to demonstrate that he can self-manage, participate, and contribute.

Learning areas

Level 1 the arts: Developing Practical Knowledge, Communicating and Interpreting: music – sounds arts

Even though his ORRS teacher was not present, Dylan was able to use the structure of the backing music (a verbal prompt) to help him join in at the appropriate time. Moreover, he was also able to independently keep a regular beat.

Where to next?

I will continue giving Dylan the opportunity to take part in the class’s music lessons, using a backing tape to provide structure. I will select and use a variety of musical instruments. I will use the “ready, go” prompt to teach Dylan to wait in other activities; for example, waiting to start playing a game, waiting to do his artwork.

Dylan's favourite song

Student	Dylan	Date	1 September 2008
Topic	Joining in classroom singing	Observer	Maureen (teacher)

Intended learning

- To join in with the class as we sing to start the day.

This week, for singing, I decided to sing, "I Know an Old Lady" as Dylan knew this very well by now. It had become his favourite and whenever his teacher aide or one of the children was reading to him, this was the book he chose from his browsing box.

Dylan had been to the office with a buddy to take the roll return. When he walked back into the room we were just about to begin singing.

Dylan heard the music for "I Know an Old Lady" and immediately got the book from the bookshelf. He said, "That's my song!" He proceeded to sing along and turn the pages to the song. He was so excited that when the music stopped he said, "Can we have it again?" So we did.



Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Participating and contributing

The children in the class also enjoy including Dylan in classroom activities, often choosing to read to him.

Learning areas

Level 1 the arts: Understanding the Arts in Context, Communicating and Interpreting: music – sounds arts

Dylan has developed a sense of belonging and wants to join in with the daily song.

Where to next?

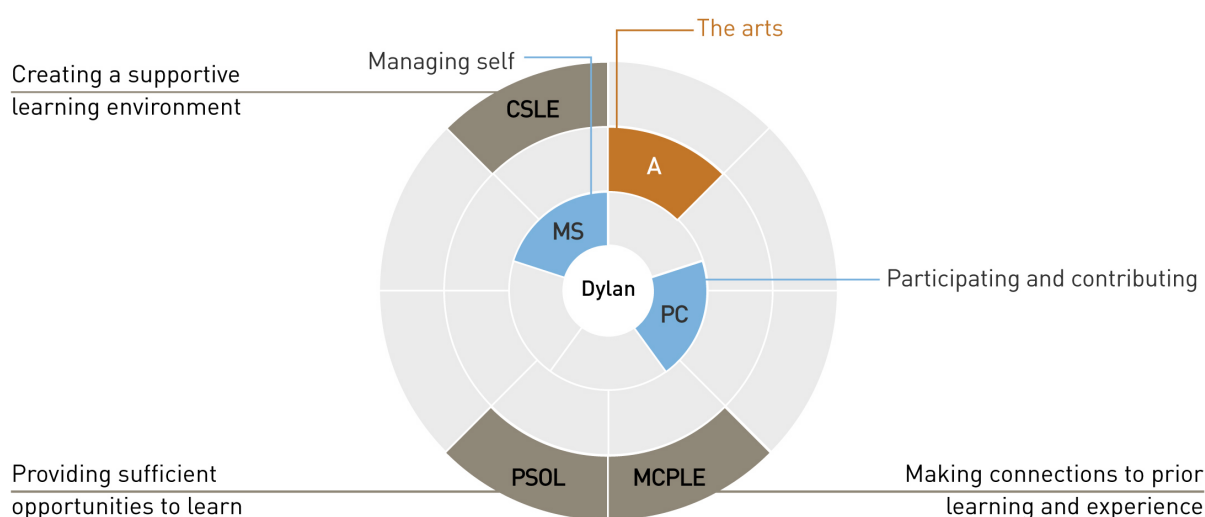


We helped Dylan to make the transition to his new school by buying him the book, "I Know an Old Lady", a pop-up version to share with his new class.

The book turned out to be a hot favourite of another student at the new school, which was a catalyst to a much-needed friendship opportunity.

As well as providing an opportunity for Dylan to participate in a familiar activity in which he had enjoyed success, it also provided an activity he could manage for himself when he had completed his work.

Reflection – what these stories exemplify



Key competencies

In this string of learning stories, we observed Dylan's development as an eager and positive participant and contributor to class music making. He showed he was able to self-manage his involvement and role during both singing and instrumental sessions in an appropriate way that contributed to the class music session as a whole, while developing his musicianship.

How might these stories strengthen Dylan's identity as a learner?

Dylan was eager to participate and contribute in the music sessions by joining in songs and playing instruments. He showed self-efficacy (agency) when he joined in unaided and initiated actions; for example, singing the chorus, playing the woodblock, and getting the book.

This learning took place in various contexts – in community time, during music sessions, and at his new school (breadth). We saw Dylan conversant with new songs and instruments with and without extra assistance (depth).

For more information on the four dimensions of agency, breadth, continuity, and depth (ABCDs), refer to *Narrative assessment: a guide for teachers*.

Learning areas

Level 1 the arts

Dylan enjoys music and shows an interest in it. He was able to wait and join in with songs and instruments. He could sing in tune. He was also able to keep the beat and stop at the appropriate time initially with support, and then unaided. He shared a favourite song with others at his new school.

Effective pedagogy

What does this tell us about teaching and learning in this setting?

Dylan is an active and visible member of a learning community. His teacher enables Dylan to share his interest in music with his peers, thus supporting relationship building and learning (creating a supportive learning environment).

Dylan's learning is deliberately built on what he already knows and has experienced (making connections to prior learning and experience).

Dylan had repeated opportunities to practise and transfer his learning (providing sufficient opportunities to learn).

Reflective question for the reader

"What planning (or reflective) prompts do you use to try and ensure that you build enough variety and number of learning opportunities into what your students do?"

Useful resources

Mitchell, D. (2008). *What really works in special and inclusive education: using evidence-based teaching strategies*. Abingdon [England]: Routledge.

The arts on tki. <http://tki.org.nz/e/community/arts/>