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## The Playlist Project: Exploring the Experience of Pre-Service Elementary Teachers

By

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### Abstract

*In this qualitative case study, I examined the experiences of 29 pre-service elementary teachers who created playlists within a required music methods course at a state university in the western United States. Undergraduate elementary education majors created hand-drawn Venn-type diagrams to document their musical background, assembled playlists of music that represented themselves, created narrative descriptions of their playlists, shared a musical example from their playlist with the class, and answered open-ended questions in a follow-up survey designed to gather their reflections about the process of creating a playlist. I looked at how pre-service elementary teachers portrayed their collections, how they made sense of their past musical choices and experiences, and any possible impact of participation in the project. Pre-service elementary teachers perceived that the process of creating a playlist motivated them to reconnect with past musical experiences, promoted an awareness of the importance of music in their lives, compelled them share unique representations of themselves, and fostered a desire to lead this type of activity in their future classrooms.*

**Keywords:** playlist, pre-service teachers, music education

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### **Background and Previous Research**

Elementary classroom teachers have an immense potential influence on their students because of the amount of time they spend together. Ideally, elementary teachers utilize this influence to promote and integrate music with other areas of the curriculum (Barrett & Rasmussen, 1996; Propst, 2003) in meaningful ways. Della Pietra, Bidner, and Devaney (2010) explored the attitudes of pre-service elementary education majors about teaching music and the importance of music in the elementary curriculum. They found that pre-service teachers acknowledged music's academic and social benefits, supported the inclusion of music in the curriculum, and also expressed confidence about teaching and leading music in specific situations. While it is generally accepted that music is an essential aspect of people's lives (Hargreaves, Marshall, & North, 2003; Lippman & Greenwood, 2012), a majority of researchers have reported results that contradict the findings of Della Pietra, Bidner, and Devaney (2010), instead suggesting that pre-service elementary teachers perceive music instruction to be less important than other subjects, and also indicate low self-confidence related to their musical skills or their ability to teach music effectively. Hennessy (2000) found that all the pre-service elementary teachers in her study labeled music as the subject about which they felt the least confident. Battersby and Cave (2014) noted that many pre-service elementary education majors began their required music methods course with negative perceptions about music education, anxiety about their musical ability, and low confidence about teaching music. Hash (2009) reported that while a majority of pre-service elementary teachers were supportive of music education, most did not feel comfortable teaching music and did not believe that elementary teachers needed music teaching skills. Negative attitudes and low self-confidence may have long-lasting effects, as well, negatively impacting an elementary teacher's future students'

musical opportunities. Barry (1992) noted that an elementary teacher holding “negative attitudes about music or with little confidence in his or her ability to teach music effectively will not provide students with the same number and quality of music experiences as a teacher with positive attitudes and greater self-confidence” (p. 17).

A common requirement for certification to teach at the elementary level is the successful completion of a music methods course (Berke & Colwell, 2004). Propst (2003) encouraged music methods faculty to “determine what music concepts and activities will help pre-service teachers regard music making as something they can do and something they want to do to enrich the lives of children” (p. 325). Berke and Colwell (2004) recommended that those activities include students’ active involvement in practical experiences as a way to develop pre-service teachers’ confidence and attitudes. The creation of playlists (selecting, organizing, and presenting a collection of music) is one activity which may appeal to and engage students. Numerous researchers have explored the creation of playlists or podcasts with a variety of different groups, including high school students (Hagen, 2015), undergraduates (Bensimon & Amir, 2010; Lippman & Greenwood, 2012), and undergraduate music education students (Bolden & Nahachewsky, 2015). The creation of playlists also aligns with a call for music educators to utilize students’ pervasive engagement with and enjoyment of digital music outside the music classroom to inspire and engage learners (Hargreaves et al., 2003) and aligns with the current National Core Arts Standards.

A number of researchers have examined the importance of reflective thought when students create playlists or podcasts. Hagen (2015) observed that curating and sharing playlists can be a means of self-reflection for high school students. Additionally, Hagen reported that the combination of musical selections and narrative descriptions may be beneficial in the self-

reflection process. Bensimon and Amir (2010) asked undergraduates to share personal stories and a musical selection of their choosing. The researchers reported that participants experienced enhanced self-awareness and attributed their growth to the use of both music and words in their presentations. Similarly, Bolden and Nahachewsky (2015) reported on a podcast assignment in which undergraduate music education students reflected on and represented significant experiences with music. The researchers noted the benefits of combining text and music, stating that the students' music "served as a lens to enhance or reframe the learner's examination of experiences represented by narrative text" (p. 30). They also found that students' development of the narrative texts allowed them "to perceive the music in a new light" (p. 30). Lippman and Greenwood (2012) asked undergraduates to select one piece of music and describe why the piece was personally significant. They classified participants' musical selections into three themes: music that helped participants cope with a transition, music that encouraged self-reflection, and music that produced positive memories. Additionally, they found that students chose music associated "with a significant time, experience, or relationship" (p. 752).

While numerous researchers have examined the creation of playlists with a variety of participants, there is a lack of research related to the creation of playlists by pre-service elementary education teachers. Additionally, there is a continued need to identify and define activities that may counteract pre-service elementary teachers' negative perceptions about music education and low confidence about teaching music. If undergraduate coursework is to benefit future teachers, course activities and assignments must be practical and connect to students' future teaching (Saunders & Baker, 1991).

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to explore how my undergraduate elementary education students perceived the experience of creating a playlist, looking at how they portrayed their collections, how they made sense of their past musical choices and experiences, and any possible impact associated with sharing those unique representations of themselves. The central research question guiding this study was: What meaning do pre-service elementary teachers attribute to the experience of creating a playlist (selecting, organizing, and presenting a collection of music) in a required undergraduate music methods course?

### **Method**

Creswell (2014) described qualitative case study as in depth exploration of “an event, activity, or process of one or more individuals” (p. 14). For the current study, I defined the playlist project as the exploratory case, bounded by time and activity. Participants ( $N = 29$ ) in this study were junior and senior-level undergraduate elementary education majors enrolled in my section of a required three-credit music methods course at a state university in the western United States. At the beginning of the term, a colleague invited the students to participate in the study. This prevented me from identifying participants until after semester grades for the course had been posted and reduced the possibility that students would feel pressured to participate. I conducted the playlist project during the first three weeks of the semester. All students enrolled in the class completed the playlist project assignment and follow-up survey; however, for the study, I only utilized the documents associated with the 29 participants. I assigned pseudonyms throughout this article in order to ensure that participants remain anonymous.

To fully address the research question and enhance trustworthiness, I collected multiple sources of evidence. For each participant, I collected hand-drawn graphic organizers, detailed

narrative descriptions, transcriptions of in-class presentations, and written follow-up reflections. First, students reflected on the role of music in their lives and created hand-drawn Venn-type diagrams to show the range of musical styles and types of musical involvement that they had experienced. Next, students compiled playlists containing between 40 and 80 minutes of music. Students then created narrative descriptions of their playlists, providing an explanation and/or rationale for their collections, explaining the particular relationship they felt existed among the selections, and giving their argument for the inclusion of those particular pieces in their playlists. Merriam (2009) endorsed the use of personal documents such as these, calling them “a reliable source of data concerning a person’s attitudes, beliefs, and view of the world” (p. 143). Students submitted their playlists and rationales through an online course management platform then chose one piece from their playlist to present to the class. Finally, to further understand the perceptions of students regarding the meaning they attributed to the experience of creating and presenting a playlist, all students in the course completed a researcher generated follow-up reflection. The reflection allowed me to collect information that was not readily available nor apparent from students’ written playlist narratives, hand-drawn graphic organizers, or class presentations. Merriam (2009) supported the use of researcher generated documents which are completed by participants during a study, stating, “the specific purpose for generating documents is to learn more about the situation, person, or event being investigated” (p. 149).

I uploaded all textual data from students’ hand-drawn graphic organizers, narrative descriptions, verbatim transcripts of students’ in-class presentations, and follow-up reflections to Dedoose, a web-based qualitative data analysis program. After several close readings of the data, I sought patterns of meaning and utilized open coding (Merriam, 2009) to isolate narrative segments into categories, first based on the literature review and purpose statement, then on

emerging patterns. My initial coding process resulted in 27 unique codes. I then explored relationships among the codes in order to identify themes that cut across the data (Merriam, 2009) and helped to portray the meaning my students attributed to the experience of creating a playlist. The resulting themes included 1) the process of creating a playlist; 2) external connections with musical selections; 3) sharing; and 4) intentions to integrate music.

### **Findings**

In this section, I present the results in terms of four overarching themes. First, I describe students' perceptions regarding the process of creating a playlist along with an analysis of the organization and depiction of their collections. Next, I present the external elements that students connected to their musical selections. I report findings for the next theme, sharing, by describing my students' perceptions of the importance of music in their lives and by conveying my perception of students' willingness to reveal information about themselves. Finally, I describe students' self-reported intentions to integrate music in their future classrooms using an assignment like the playlist project. Direct quotations from participants illustrate each of these themes.

#### **Process of Creating a Playlist**

In the current study, most of my students chose a chronological presentation for the music in their playlists. Students often included music from their very early years and organized their musical selections by genres that corresponded to different periods of their lives. One student wrote, "This playlist shows my journey through different types of music." Another student realized during the process of creating his playlist that "the songs I listened to as a kid still have a special place in my heart." A number of students commented that their families were the primary influence in their early listening preferences. Emily noted:



I loved Kenny Rogers' music when I was a kid before I became a tween and discovered that no one else I knew was listening to him. As with all of my early music, I listened to what my parents had available in our house.

An alternative way many of my students organized their chronological playlists was by choosing a series of music that had been special to them at different points in their lives. One student commented, "These songs made me who I am or had an impact on my life." Another wrote, "These are all songs that have some special meaning or memory associated with them."

The vast majority of music on my students' playlists was connected to their past and/or present; however, a handful of students referenced their musical futures, as well. Three students included songs they plan to have at their future weddings, and four students wrote about learning to play instruments in the future. One reflected, "I often wish that I had learned the violin. Maybe someday I will." Three students highlighted their imminent teaching careers. Amanda described how "excited" she was to introduce songs to her future students and Stephanie wrote that she was "looking forward to leading music."

Nearly all participants in this study reported enjoying the process of designing and constructing a playlist. The most common descriptor, used by 23 students, was the word "fun." One student called the process of reflecting about music "surprisingly fun." Stephanie simply wrote, "I love, love, loved this assignment." Many students commented on the power of music to evoke memories. Amanda explained, "I had tons of memories come back that I had forgotten about. This assignment gave me an opportunity to talk and laugh with family members about these memories." Caitlyn mentioned that listening to each piece brought her instantly back to specific times. She wrote, "I remembered faces, moments, and feelings vividly." It also appeared that reconnecting with past musical experiences had a positive effect on students' perceptions of the importance of music in their lives. For example, Courtney wrote, "Listening to these songs,

then thinking about what they mean to me was very powerful and helped me learn a lot about myself.” Similarly, Elizabeth noted, “I had never really reflected on music in my life before, but I realized that it affects my life so much more than I thought.”

The one negative that students brought up regarding the playlist project was the difficulty they experienced when narrowing down their lists and deciding which pieces to leave out. Haley described the playlist assignment as “easy to create, but hard to keep in check.” Matthew gave a detailed account of his process. “First, I went through my library alphabetically and created a playlist in iTunes. When I got to artists beginning with ‘c,’ I checked my progress and realized this method wasn’t going to work. I’d already added 40 tracks.” Besides limiting the total number of musical selections in a playlist, Madison noted that she had to limit her descriptions, as well. “For many of my songs, I could have written entire pages just to tell the story behind what they mean to me, so for this assignment, I definitely condensed.”

### **External Connections with Musical Selections**

Most often, when my students wrote about significant events, their playlist narratives integrated memories from a broad life stage or a specific moment in time with accounts of the significant people who participated in the event with them. The following direct quotations highlight song descriptions that portray significant relationships as well as memories of events. Nicole included the song “Time Marches On” by Tracy Lawrence because it reminded her of her grandpa. “When my family goes camping, my Papa Jack occasionally plays songs by the campfire.” Hannah wrote about her grandpa, as well. “‘Chantilly Lace’ isn’t one of my all-time favorites, but some of my earliest memories are of my grandpa breaking out his guitar and playing this for me while I ‘played’ along with him on my little red guitar.” Madison included “Someone Like You” by Adele on her playlist because she and her roommate love it. “We have

had many deep conversations about the words and the feelings it evokes in us about our pasts, and this is a song I will always connect with her.” Lindsey included the song “Watch Me (Whip/Nae Nae)” for a group of people, an entire class of fourth grade math students she taught one summer at an inner city school in Denver. “It was an experience like none other and the children in this school loved this song. Whenever I hear this song, I am instantly reminded of their bright smiles and the impact that they made on my life.”

In the playlist assignment guidelines, I directed students to collect recordings of music that represented themselves; however, 24 of the 29 participants also discussed music they had performed. Many students simply noted pieces they like to sing. One student wrote, “My brother and I love to belt out this song at the top of our lungs.” Another expressed, “Some of my best memories include listening to this song and singing it with all my best friends.” Some students told of their own more structured, intentional performances. Brittany described singing at a music contest:

My junior year of high school, I performed this song and received a one at the state music festival. I was proud of my accomplishment and still remember the room, the color of my finger nails, and markings I made on the music. It was the first moment of validation for me, the moment when somebody that wasn't from my family or hometown heard talent in my voice.

Five students included recordings of themselves or their family members performing and three students discussed songs they had written. For example, one student wrote, “This is a recording of my mom singing ‘You Are My Sunshine.’” Another noted, “This song is one of three that my band actually recorded. We only had enough money for three and we recorded each song with just one take in some dude’s garage. That is me singing on the recording.” In addition to performing music themselves, just over half the students in the study mentioned live performances they had attended, and many of them highlighted the impact of hearing live music.

Nearly every participant in the current study included accounts of music they intentionally chose to accompany certain activities or to promote a particular emotional response or mood. The activities students described were primarily either calming or energizing. Calming activities included studying, driving, relaxing, falling asleep, concentrating, and fishing. Lindsey wrote, “This song gives me chills every single time I listen to it. Whenever I need something relaxing to listen to, this is my go-to song.” Energizing activities included dancing, running, biking, skiing, hiking, and many depictions of getting “pumped-up.” Megan wrote, “This song always makes me feel excited about life and energized about what the day has ahead for me.” Other students described listening to particular pieces to promote a specific mood or feeling. Many described music that makes them “feel good” or allows them to “escape.” Samantha wrote about the song “How to Train Your Dragon,” noting that, “Listening to this song can help me get most anything done or brighten my mood and motivate me. I am sure that if I could fly, this is how it would feel.” Similarly, Riley explained, “This song was a major escape for me when I was a teenager and had a tough day. I would listen and feel better about my situation.”

Many of my students described songs portraying personally meaningful, empowering, or inspirational messages. Additionally, a few students revealed songs they described as self-defining, or their “personal philosophy.” For example, Hannah wrote, “The song ‘Fire N Gold’ reminds me that even though I’m young, and even though this part of life is hard, I was born to do this. We are all here to accomplish great things, and we just have to remind ourselves about that.” Caitlyn described the song “First Day of My Life” and stated that it makes her “think about fresh starts and how much of an impact individuals have on the lives of others.” Many of my female students wrote about confidence-building songs. Lindsey’s narrative description of the

song “Run the World” by Beyoncé was typical of their responses. “This song is so incredibly empowering and makes girls around the world realize we can do anything men can do.”

### **Sharing**

In the current study, every participant perceived music as a significant aspect of their life, and 24 of the 29 participants used the word “love” to describe their feelings about one or more recordings. One student even typed the word love in all capitals to highlight the strength of her emotion. Two additional terms a majority of students used when describing music were “favorite” and “best.” Others labeled songs as music they adored, thoroughly enjoyed, were ecstatic about, or that made them feel special. One student described herself as a music fanatic, another described herself as “obsessed” with a specific song, “No Place I’d Rather Be.” She stated, “My roommates almost banned this song because I sang it almost 24/7. I fell in love with the rhythm and could not get it out of my head. It became a big part of my life.” Another student noted that she spends a significant amount of money on music. “I even upgraded to an iPhone so I can have my music with me at all times, whether I’m driving, showering, or running.”

Throughout the entire playlist project, my students shared insights that I suspected they would not typically reveal during a single semester methods class. Their candid reflection was a thread woven through all the above categories of narrative descriptions and many of the participants revealed deep, emotional connections with music. I was honored that students felt comfortable enough to share their feelings about sensitive issues such as love, relationships, sadness, faith, life goals, and the loss of friends and family members. In the introductions to their playlists, a few students openly acknowledged their awareness that they were allowing me extraordinary access to their lives. Additionally, three students mentioned that they hoped I would enjoy their playlists. Alex introduced her assignment like this:

The songs on this CD reflect my life through 23 years. The ups, downs, happiness, and sadness are all reflected through each song. So, enjoy as I share all about me. Walt Whitman said, 'This hour, I tell things in confidence; I might not tell everybody, but I will tell you.'

In the written follow-up reflection, a majority of students confirmed their willingness to share stories about themselves and many students reported being “genuine” or “honest” in their writing. Seven participants described conditional restrictions they had placed on themselves. For example, Emma wrote that she felt she needed to “clean up” a couple of her descriptions so they would be “school appropriate,” and Alex explained that there were some things that she didn’t share because she felt like it would betray a friend’s confidence. Twenty-one of the 29 participants reported that they had not censored their narrative descriptions of the music contained in their playlists and many students mentioned how their connections to the songs they chose facilitated their writing. One student wrote, “I felt like it was easier to share a story when a song was attached to it,” and another said, “I have a deep connection to all my selections, so I was definitely very candid in my descriptions.” Additionally, many participants reported that their personal connections to the music they chose compelled them to share information that they typically wouldn’t reveal to professors. Hannah explained, “I disclosed aspects of my life that I haven’t shared with other professors because it was important to the description of my songs.” Similarly, Riley expressed that the structure of the playlist assignment encouraged candid expression. “I started to censor myself, but then I thought about how you said we could put literally anything in there. That made me comfortable and I didn’t feel the need to be guarded in what I wrote.” A number of students discussed the unique opportunity to openly communicate with a professor. Maya wrote, “I have not shared these stories with any other teacher before because I was never asked to share.” Similarly, Nicole explained, “There usually isn’t a chance

to share these things in college classes.” Amanda bluntly wrote, “It is pretty obvious that not every professor cares or has time to get to know their students.”

I was saddened to read how many of my students were struggling with depression and other mental health issues. For example, Stephanie wrote, “Last year was an extremely hard year for me with friendships and school and just life in general.” Brittany shared about the song “For What It’s Worth” by Buffalo Springfield. “This piece reminds me of this past school year. It was a rough one. There was death, divorce, and heartbreak, but for some reason this song made me think of happier times.” Without this assignment, it is likely that I would never have learned that Hannah and Haley struggled with mental illness, that Alex was dealing with an obsession over her appearance, that Elise had been bullied as a child and still felt social anxiety in certain situations, or that Samantha struggled with change and that when she was away at college for the first time, she really missed her pets. Through this assignment, I learned that Nick lived through a terrorist attack in Fort Hood, Texas, where 14 people were killed. Nick shared that he still feels guilty because he “could have done something then as it was happening. Maybe fewer people would have died.”

I was also saddened by the number of students who wrote about their personal experiences dealing with illnesses or deaths of close family members and friends. Many of the accounts of personal hardships were heartbreaking to read. Anna shared:

“Let it Be” is a very important song to me. My father suffers from early onset Alzheimer’s. He was diagnosed with it right when I hit my teen years, so right now he does not know who I am. On my wedding day, I had a father/daughter dance, and this is the song that was playing. I remember we didn’t really dance much, just mostly swayed, but during the song something must have triggered my dad’s memory because he started to whisper in my ear. He talked about how beautiful I looked, how proud he was to have me as a daughter, and how he knows I will do great things. I instantly broke down crying, hugging him as hard as I could. I even looked over at my family and all of my brothers and mother

were in tears. Now, whenever this song comes on, so many emotions overcome me, and instantly tears come rushing to my eyes.

In their playlist descriptions, students also revealed seemingly insignificant details about their lives that gave me insights into their personalities and senses of humor. I truly enjoyed discovering these interesting tidbits about my students' lives. For example, through this assignment, I learned that Emma named her cat Lucky after the Britney Spears song, that Savannah's ringtone was "Counting Stars," that Elise's parents were immigrants from France, and that Casey drove a really old Jeep that he restored. I learned about Jessica's tattoo that reads "This is the strangest life I have ever known," a quote from the song "Waiting for the Sun" by the Doors. She wrote, "I went through a phase where I loved the Doors and I love that I have a tattoo that represents that period of my life." Without the playlist project, I would likely have never found out that Brittany dressed as Shania Twain for Halloween when she was in third grade, that Matthew has a twin sister, or that Alex still uses a Barbie fishing pole.

### **Intentions to Integrate Music**

In the follow-up written reflection, all pre-service elementary education teachers indicated that they planned to integrate music in their future classrooms. The most frequent responses included plans to sing, listen, and move to music. Additionally, all participants responded that they envisioned themselves completing an assignment like the playlist project in their future classrooms. Two participants noted that they would abbreviate the assignment for young students by creating a class playlist, with each student contributing a single song. Participants' descriptions of their plans to have elementary students generate playlists echoed what they had described about their own experiences completing the playlist project. The most common rationales were the opportunity to get to know students, the engaging nature of the



assignment, the chance for students to reflect about music, and the opportunity for students to express emotions. Madison's response incorporated all the above reasons:

I would absolutely do this assignment with my students because it not only will help them to think about music, but will help me to get to know them and begin to build a class community. Allowing students to express their feelings is critical to building personal relationships. If I take the time to learn about a student's feelings, it shows I care about them. I think there is a need for this type of writing in school. Writing about music will be fun, engaging, and personal. It may push my students to think more deeply in order to articulate their feelings.

### **Conclusions and Implications for Teacher Education**

Pre-service elementary teachers perceived that the process of creating a playlist motivated them to reconnect with past musical experiences, promoted an awareness of the importance of music in their lives, compelled them share unique representations of themselves, and fostered a desire to lead this type of activity in their future classrooms.

Brainstorming and reporting about personally meaningful music heightened pre-service teachers' awareness of the role of music in their lives and every participant reported that music was important to them, a finding that supported previous research (Hargreaves et al., 2003; Lippman & Greenwood, 2012). Most pre-service teachers organized their playlists in chronological order, choosing music from a variety of broad life stages for their playlists. It is possible that the process of interpreting musical choices and experiences for the playlist project allowed participants to recognize the extent of their musical involvement. Throughout the playlist project, participants described music as a positive, relevant aspect of their lives. All participants noted connections between specific pieces of music and significant relationships or events, and nearly all pre-service teachers' playlist narratives included accounts of music they utilized to complement other activities, music to promote a particular emotional response or mood, or music that contained a meaningful, inspiring, or self-defining message, further

highlighting the significance of music in participants' lives. Additionally, a majority of participants portrayed themselves as performers and over half recounted live performances they had attended, indicating the importance they placed on active music making. These results suggest that assignments like the playlist project may serve to reinforce positive feelings about music for pre-service elementary teachers. Promoting positive feelings in relation to music becomes especially important in light of research suggesting that pre-service elementary classroom teachers exhibit negative attitudes about music education and low self-confidence about their musical skills (Barry, 1992; Battersby & Cave, 2014; Hash, 2009; Hennessey, 2000). Those responsible for curricular design in teacher education programs should utilize assignments like the playlist project to capitalize on the positive feelings about music that may result and to promote self-awareness regarding the significance of music in pre-service teachers' lives.

Pre-service elementary teachers appreciated the opportunity to share personal stories, with many reporting that their personal connections to the music they chose compelled them to share information they typically would not reveal to professors. These results underscore the value of the playlist project as a vehicle for promoting musical reflection and the expression of feelings and ideas. Additionally, the process of examining and evaluating the playlist projects provided me with a window into key moments in my students' lives. This direct access to pre-service teachers' stories revealed insights about my students' musical preferences, outlook on life, interests, and passions. The speed and depth with which this occurred suggests that I got to know my students on a level that likely would not have been possible without the framework of the playlist project.

All participants communicated a desire to implement playlist-type lessons in their future classrooms. While the playlist project was an engaging assignment for pre-service teachers, I

believe that the playlist project also served as a successful model for participants' future lesson design. Because participants saw the project as valuable, they may have been able to envision it as valuable for their future students. Active participation in engaging activities may develop pre-service elementary teachers' attitudes about music and their confidence to teach music (Berke & Colwell, 2004; Propst, 2003). It is possible that the enthusiasm with which my students approached the playlist project and their perception of the positive relationships that it fostered may positively impact their future integration of music. This is noteworthy, given that elementary teachers who express confidence and positive attitudes about music provide students with higher quality music experiences (Barry, 1992). Participation in assignments like the playlist project at the teacher education level may spur future projects with K-8 students, but might not encourage engagement in activities that promote performing or creating music. There is a need to explore additional model assignments that might serve as exemplars for participants' future lesson design in those areas.

I plan to continue to utilize the playlist project with pre-service elementary teachers. Additionally, I recommend that those responsible for curricular design in teacher education programs utilize these findings to inform the content and structure of music methods assignments for non-music majors. While this case was unique, the results expand awareness regarding the role of playlist assignments as tools that promote connections with past musical experiences, increase awareness of the importance of music, encourage sharing, and instill confidence about integrating music in the future for pre-service elementary teachers.

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