

# Student Ownership of Learning in the Music Classroom

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## Introduction

This session explores how student ownership of learning contributes to achievement in music education. Grounded in John Hattie's extensive research on effect size, it highlights practices that create assessment-capable, visible learners who take responsibility for their growth and progress.

## Understanding John Hattie's Research

John Hattie's meta-analyses compiled data from over 70,000 studies and 300 million students to determine what has the most significant impact on learning. His work identifies the 'Zone of Desired Effects' as interventions with an effect size between 0.40 and 1.20, equating to one to three years of growth in one year.

Key effect sizes:

- Feedback: 0.70
- Self-efficacy: 0.92
- Success Criteria: 1.13
- Assessment-Capable Learners: 1.44
- Collective Teacher Efficacy: 1.57

## Assessment-Capable Visible Learners

Teachers must explicitly teach students how to learn and provide them with the tools to self-monitor. Characteristics of assessment-capable learners include:

- Knowing their goals and purpose
- Having tools and strategies for learning
- Monitoring progress
- Recognizing readiness for the next challenge
- Understanding next steps

A learning climate should celebrate progress, not status.

## Developing Self-Efficacy

Students with strong self-efficacy tend to exhibit intrinsic motivation, persistence, resilience, and confidence. They view mistakes as opportunities to learn.

Four sources of self-efficacy:

1. Mastery Experiences – Success builds confidence.
2. Vicarious Experiences – Observing peers succeed fosters belief in capability.
3. Social/Verbal Persuasion – Feedback motivates continued effort.
4. Positive Emotional State – A safe, supportive environment encourages risk-taking.

## Teacher and Collective Efficacy

Teacher efficacy refers to the belief in one's ability to influence student learning positively. Collective teacher efficacy is a group's shared confidence in achieving student success.

High-efficacy teachers plan thoughtfully, are open to innovation, remain resilient, and avoid harsh criticism. Collective teacher efficacy (effect size 1.57) has the single most significant effect on student learning.

## Clarity in Teaching and Learning

Clarity helps both students and teachers understand the purpose and process of learning. It answers key questions:

- Where am I going? (Learning Intentions)
- Where am I now? (Success Criteria)
- What do I need to learn next? (Learning Progressions)

### Learning Intentions

Learning intentions define what teachers intend students to learn and why. They should be specific, contextual, and framed as: 'Today, we are learning to... so that...'

### Success Criteria

Success criteria specify what mastery looks like, enabling students and teachers to assess progress effectively. They are written as 'I can...' statements and serve as the foundation for feedback and self-assessment.

### Learning Progressions

Learning progressions outline the stages of learning—developing, progressing, proficient, and advanced—and help students understand where they are and what comes next. Each level provides scaffolding to the next and builds vertically across units or courses.

## Feedback: The Engine of Growth

Effective feedback occurs at multiple levels—self, peer, and teacher—and relies on structured tools and protocols.

Four essentials for feedback:

1. Learning Activity – Identify skills to assess.
2. Tool – Use checklists, rubrics, or exemplars.
3. Protocol – Structure conversations with sentence stems.
4. Procedure – Model feedback and provide 'feedback on feedback.'

## Goal Setting and Reflection

Goal setting is cyclical and evidence-based. Students use feedback to reflect, plan, revise, and track their learning progress.

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Steps in the process:

- Reflect on feedback and identify strengths/needs
- Create an action plan to address unmet criteria
- Revise work to meet goals
- Track progress with practice logs or goal sheets

### Summary

Student ownership of learning thrives when teachers foster clarity, feedback, and goal setting within a culture of safety and support. These practices empower students to become confident, self-directed learners.

As John Hattie stated: ‘Standing next to every assessment-capable learner is a teacher who ensures that students know how to learn.’

### Sources

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