Creativity and Change Leadership Graduate Student Master's Projects

Center for Applied Imagination

5-2006

Developing a Draft Book Proposal for the Book Imagination Improvisation: The Creativity-Improvisation Link

Scott L. O'Dell
Buffalo State College

To learn more about the International Center for Studies in Creativity and its educational programs, research, and resources, go to http://creativity.buffalostate.edu/.

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/creativeprojects

Part of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons

Developing a Draft Book Proposal for the Book:

Imagination Improvisation: The Creativity-Improvisation Link.

An Abstract of a Project
in
Creative Studies

by

Scott L. O'Dell

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Science
May, 2006

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

ABSTRACT OF A PROJECT

Developing a Draft Book Proposal for the Book:

Imagination Improvisation: The Creativity-Improvisation Link.

This project contains a description of the process used to develop a draft proposal for a book idea that would be high enough quality for submission to a book publisher. The book is entitled *Imagination Improvisation*, and it is a culmination of my thinking about the link between creativity studies and musical improvisation. The text of the project includes the background research and incubation that I did to produce the draft proposal. It also includes pertinent literature for improvisation and creativity, the process plan that I followed in constructing the draft proposal, the outcomes of the entire project, and key learnings from the entire project. There is also a project bibliography that includes background reading for the project. There are three appendices: the first contains the draft book proposal, the second contains the evolution of the creativity-improvisation link model, and the third contains the original Power Point presentation in which the model was proposed. The final part of the project is the original concept paper for the project.

_____

Scott L. O'Dell

_____

Date

Developing a Draft Book Proposal for the Book

Imagination Improvisation: The Creativity-Improvisation Link

A Project in Creative Studies

By

Scott L. O'Dell

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements
For the Degree of

Master of Science
May, 2006

Dates of Approval:

_____

Scott L. O'Dell (Candidate)

_____

Dr. Mary Murdock (Advisor)
The International Center for
Studies in Creativity

Acknowledgements

This project is dedicated to many people who have helped me along the way in my journey toward my Master's Degree.

First and foremost, a thank you beyond words to my family, who have had to put up with long absences and difficult times in supporting my academic life.

This project owes its existence to one of my former music students at West Seneca East High School, Jennifer Wilcott. Jennifer changed my life and outlook on teaching by one simple statement: "I don't have the creativity to improvise." From then on, I went on a quest to find a way to link the teaching of both creativity and improvisation.

The draft book proposal contained within is the final project toward fulfillment of that quest. I owe much to my wonderful friends and colleagues at the International Center for Studies in Creativity at the State University of New York College at Buffalo. Dr. Roger Firestien, Dr. Mary Murdock, Dr. Susan Keller-Mathers, Dr. Gerard Puccio, and Mr. Michael Fox have all been great encouragements to me as I wrote this project. I would like to especially thank Dr. Firestien for meeting with me regarding the creativity-improvisation link model, and giving me direction on that model. I must also thank my project class for their endless patience and hours of working through e-mails and postings on the Angel network.

This project also owes a lot to those people who got me interested in improvisation in the first place. Certainly, at the top of the list would be my high school band director, Mr. Thomas E. Mann. I have also had many great music teachers since Mr. Mann, including Mr. Joel Smales, Dr. Karolyn Stonefelt, Mr. John Bacon, and Mr.

Table of Contents:

List of Figures

---

[1] Firestien R., Miller B., Vehar J. (2001).*Creativity unbound.* Williamsville, NY: Innovation Resources, Inc. Credit must be given to Murdock and Puccio (1993) for adapting Rhodes' 4 "P's" of creativity into this format.

Background to the project

Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments is standard #3 in the Music Educators National Conference's 1994 National Standards for Arts Education in Music (p. 97-109), so the understanding of how to teach improvisation is documented as important to music educators. In his seminal book *Music matters: A new philosophy of music education*, Dr. David Elliott (1995) described six aspects to music making, or "musicing". The six aspects were listening to music, performing music, improvising music, composing music, arranging music, and finally conducting music. He felt that all the aspects of music were interrelated, but that improvising music was an important aspect of the overarching musical experience. After having read and studied Dr. Elliott's book, I adopted his philosophy toward improvisation as a part of my own philosophy of music education. Therefore it became part of my philosophy of music education that improvisation on a musical instrument is a vital part of learning that instrument.

The genesis of this Master's project began long before I even started taking courses at the International Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State College and came to fruition in an incident that I have related to my fellow students many times. In my first year of teaching at West Seneca East High School in West Seneca, NY, a student named Jennifer came in for a flute lesson with me. That day I had decided that I would help her to do a little improvisation. When I suggested that we work on improvising, she told me that she could not improvise and that she "did not have the creativity to improvise." From that moment, I knew that I needed to search for a way to teach creativity to my students so that they could feel comfortable improvising on their instruments. My search led me to take classes at the Master's level at the ICSC at

Buffalo State College. Part of the philosophy of the ICSC is that creativity is a teachable

skill, and that anyone can learn to be more creative. Since starting upon the creativity

path, I have learned much about teaching students to be creative and how to utilize their

own creativity. But I still had not made the connection between improvisation and

creativity. I knew instinctively that a performer must be creative to improvise. But a

descriptive link between the two proved elusive.

Part of the problem was not having an appropriate definition of creativity because

even as a definition of creativity in general has been difficult to find, a definition of

creativity in music has also proven to be elusive. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) states that

"Creativity is any act, idea or product that changes an existing domain or that transforms

an existing domain into a new one." (p. 28) Oerhrele (1985) makes the case that

> "diverse and conflicting opinions, nevertheless, abound amongst music
> educators about this issue of creativity in music education. Creativity has
> not only been affirmed, it has also been maligned and vigorously attacked
> by music educators. The maligning of the term 'creativity" is partially a
> result of the mystique that surrounds this concept. All too often, creativity
> has been used as a 'catch-all' word to command the attention of those in
> the creative arts. It seems that writers and publishers, during the late
> 1960's and 1970's, minimized the depth of meaning and maximized the
> marketability of materials bearing the term on their book covers. As a
> result, music teachers in England and the United States during those years
> were presented with attractive textbooks that made use of this exciting
> word, creativity, in their titles. Yet often these books contained little more
> than the traditional process of music education, the teaching of music
> literacy." (pg. 29)

Elliott (1995) states "we seem to use the word creating in relation to a tangible product or

achievement of some kind that knowledgeable people value or cherish for one reason or

another" (p. 216). This puts Elliott in agreement with Perkins (1981) and

Csikszentmihalyi (1988) regarding a need for a field of experts to judge whether a

product is creative. Elliott again: "To count as creative, a product or accomplishment must not only exemplify originality, it must make a notable contribution within a domain of effort." (p. 218)

Elliott also discusses spontaneous creativity: "The distinction between creativity and spontaneous originality alerts us to the fact that people who engage in creative efforts are not merely reacting spontaneously to their environment or responding to their emotions like puppets on a string. And they are not playing in the sense of dabbling in undirected activities. Creative efforts are intentional." (p. 221). Azzara (2002) does not disagree with Elliott, but states that spontaneity can happen in improvisation: "In much of the research, the definition of improvisation involves an ability to make music spontaneously within specified music parameters." (p. 171) Elliott again states "Within the domain of MUSIC, then, the words creating and creative apply to achievements of musical composing, improvising, and arranging that are original and significant within the context of a particular music practice, including instances of musicing that depart in highly original and important ways from existing traditions." (p. 219)

Another aspect of the improvisation problem was students' lack of training in musical improvisation from the time they start taking music lessons. The first goal of most music lessons is to teach the child how to read music, that mystifying jumble of lines and dots and stems on a page that somehow musicians manage to turn into the vibrations of air that are generally accepted as sound and music. As the child gets past the beginning stages, the tone of the sounds that the child produces gets better, the pitches get more accurate, the songs get more recognizable. Meanwhile, the child is learning to become dependent on the written music, and the ability to creatively and spontaneously

produce an improvised song lessens. This increased dependence upon written music

seems to put today's music education and educators at odds with Paynter and Aston

(1970):

> "What is creative music? First of all, it is a way of saying things which are personal to the individual. It also implies the freedom to explore chosen materials. As far as possible this work should not be controlled by a teacher. His role is to set off trains of thought and help the pupil develop his own powers and perceptions. The processes of composition in any art are selection and rejection, evaluating and confirming the material at any stage. It is essentially an experimental situation." (p. 7)

By the time the child becomes a high school student, at a time when most high

school students would like to join the school jazz band, students' willingness to

improvise has become severely decreased by their musical education! The student has

now become dependent upon the written music that the music educator keeps putting on

the music stand. This is very unfortunate, according to Hickey (1997): "Improvisation is

not just the province of jazz musicians. It can be used in traditional instrumental music

lessons to free students' reliance upon the notes on a page and strengthen their reliance

on their ears." (p. 21). But for most music teachers concert preparation becomes an

overwhelming goal. There is little, if any, time to do improvisation in state-mandated

music lessons, nor is there time for improvisation in the band setting. The only time that

the student may receive some improvisational instruction is in the jazz band setting, if the

school has one, and if the student plays an instrument that is utilized in that setting.

Therefore, the background of the problem of student creativity in improvisational

music starts with the students not being trained in improvisation from the time they start

playing an instrument. Elliott states that "to develop musical creativity, music educators

must be honest with students about what counts as musical and what counts as musically creative in relation to past and present attainments in musical practices." (p. 223) Azzara also emphasizes the importance of teaching improvisation: "Much of the improvisation literature recommends the importance of creating a culture that embraces and encourages improvisation, creativity and risk-taking." (p. 172) Therefore it is important for music educators to teach improvisational skills from the time the student first learns to play an instrument. In a lecture on improvisation, Dr. Christopher Azzara (2005) went as far as to advocate not using standard method books for the first six months that the student is learning his/her instrument. Azzara stated that the students should learn the notes without written music first and learn several songs by memory without being tied to a method book. In this way, students could develop a good tone and sound on their instruments before music is set in front of them.

This would be a radical departure from the way musical educators have taught instrumental music for many years. In the past, the musical educator would put a method book in front of the student from the beginning and teach the student how to read the written notes as the student plays what is on the page. This was the true impression that Goodlad (1984) perceived in the arts throughout high school; the emphasis on performance over the transcendent goals:

> "Teachers at all levels stated goals intrinsic to the arts but also listed goals that transcend them-power to see beyond the surface of things, a positive attitude towards experimentation, pride in workmanship, appreciation of human dignity and values. However it is my impression of the arts as of other subjects, is that these transcendent goals took secondary position – a remote secondary position – to emphasis on the use of tools and performance. Students in junior and senior high music classes spent an inordinate amount of class time on rehearsals for performance at the upcoming football game or some other event." (pgs. 218-219)

Students need to learn to be creative and improvise from their first music lessons, under the tutelage of a trained music educator. Due to the major emphasis placed upon music educators for performance over intrinsic goals, instruction in creativity and improvisation rarely happens.

Another aspect to the background of this problem is students' fear of improvisation. This fear also comes, in part, from music educators. Music educators have instilled a fear in their students of having a less than perfect sound. Werner (1996) states that the musician's biggest fear is sounding bad: "When you approach your instrument, no matter what lofty goals you say you have, wanting to sound good will predominate and render you impotent." (p. 39). This is not to say that musicians should want to sound bad, but allowing the fear of sounding bad to prevent musicians from accomplishing the goal of improvisation is tantamount to preventing the musicians from achieving the highest levels of musicing.

The third aspect to the background of this problem is that many music teachers are not trained in improvisation. This is a logical conclusion of the entire problem, because the music students of yesterday, who were taught using the problematic methods outlined above, have become the music teachers of today. For example, Oeherle (1985) evaluated twelve selected works on music education to find to what extent those works support the importance of creativity in contemporary elementary music education. The works were graded on twelve questions regarding creativity. The grading scale ranged from a strong support of the importance of creativity (3) to no support of the importance of creativity (0). Of the twelve books, four supported the importance of creativity in

elementary music education to a great extent; one supported the importance of creativity in elementary music education to a limited extent; three supported the importance of creativity in elementary music education to a very limited extent; one supported the concept to an extremely limited extent; and three supported the concept to no extent at all. Thus out of twelve works on music education only four truly supported the importance of creativity in elementary music education. One of the books that did not was entitled, ironically, *A Creative Approach to Music Fundamentals*!

Also, many college music education programs have little or no instruction in improvisation. Without a background in this creative art form, and without any formal instruction, many music teachers feel less than competent teaching improvisation. A colleague lamented that she had gone through her entire elementary and secondary music education, had gone to Ithaca College and received her Music Education Degree and had been teaching music for twenty years; yet she'd never had any training on improvisational skills. Now she is expected to teach a middle school jazz band; and is seeking out instruction from other musicians and teachers on improvisation.

So my thought was to write a book that would help music teachers who had no background in musical improvisation to teach improvisation to their students. As can be seen in O'Dell (2006), my original goal of this project was to write a proposal for such a book, a proposal that would be acceptable and hopefully accepted by a publisher. However, the goal changed as I did incubation on my reason for getting into the Creativity Studies program in the first place, and that was to make the link between creativity and improvisation. As will be seen in the draft book proposal in Appendix A, I

feel that I did make that link and the book proposal draft is now called *Imagination*

improvisation: The Creativity-Improvisation Link.

Pertinent Literature

This section is about the literature that a person interested in the creativity-improvisation link or writing a book proposal may find to be interesting. There are many other books and articles on improvisation and creativity, and there are many places including websites that book proposals may be researched, but I think these are some of the best.

The following are journal articles from which I have taken information.

Rhodes, M. (1987). *An analysis of creativity*. In S.G. Isaksen (Ed.) *Frontiers of creativity research.* (pp. 216-222). Buffalo, NY: Bearly Limited.

Type of article: Chapter within a book

Abstract: A chapter in which multiple definitions of creativity were compared and a consensus found that the definitions contained four commonalities: a concept, a mental activity, a person, and an environment. In order to have an alliterative concept, the article renamed the concept as the product, the mental activity as the process, and the environment as the press. The chapter was the basis for much of the further work done in creativity studies.

Hickey, Maud (1997). Teaching ensembles to compose and improvise. *Music Educators Journal.* 83(6). pp. 17-22.

Type of article: Magazine article

Abstract: This article presents ideas for music teachers to utilize improvisation and composition in instrumental ensemble rehearsals. Composition and improvisation are discussed in relationship to the experiential aspect of music, and how those experiences can include the Music Educators National Conference standards for the teaching of music. Practical application ideas for composition and improvisation are given.

Hickey, M. and Webster, P. (2001). Creative thinking in music. *Music Educators Journal.* 88(1), pp. 19-24.

Type of article: Magazine article.

Abstract: This article presents the idea that music teachers should be teaching students to think creatively in the realm of music. The article presents the Webster model of creative thinking in music, which includes the Wallas four stages of creative thinking. The article presents activities related to divergent thinking in musical problem-solving.

Azzara, C. (2002). Improvisation. In R. Colwell & C. Richardson (Ed.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning* (pp. 171-187). New York: Oxford University Press.

Type of article: Chapter in a book

Abstract: This chapter presents aspects of improvisation and its role in music education. The chapter presents the components of improvisation, including a definition of improvisation, its social aspects, its psychological

aspects, and its historical significance in both western and world music. The chapter then discusses pedagogy research on improvisation and improvisatory practices, including preschool and classroom improvisation, instrumental music improvisation, and jazz improvisation. The author summarizes and gives suggestions for further research into improvisation.

Ekvall, G. (1996). Organizational climate for creativity and innovation. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology.* 5(1), pp. 105-123

Type of article: Article in a journal

Abstract: This article describes the *Creative Climate Questionnaire*, which measures the climate for creativity in an organization. The article also describes the application of the CCQ. Finally, the article makes recommendations for the use of the CCQ to develop and promote organizational creativity and innovation climate.

For further reading on the topics of creativity, improvisation, or the writing of a good book proposal, I recommend the following books:

Nachmanovitch, S. (1990). *Free play: Improvisation in life and art.* New York: Tarchar/Putnam.

Werner, K. (1996). *Effortless mastery: Liberating the master musician within*. New Albany, Indiana: Jamey Aebersold Jazz.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). *Creativity*. New York: Harper Collins.

Spolin, V. (1972). *Improvisation for the theater*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern
University Press.

Maisel, E. (2004). *The art of the book proposal*. New York: Tarchar.

Green, B., & Gallwey, W. T. (1986). *The inner game of music*. Garden City, New York:
Anchor Press/Doubleday.

Process Plan

This section of the project text is about my process plan for completing the project, how the plan changed, and what both the plan and the project eventually became. The project went through many stages before it became the actual finished product. In the original process plan outlined in my concept paper (O'Dell, 2006), I had the following timeline:

ε Week of January 23rd – concept paper draft, research how to write a book proposal

ε Week of January 30th – send e-mails and letters to various participants requesting their assistance; continue to research book proposals; continue testing ideas with West Seneca East Jazz Band; research competing and complimenting materials.

ε Week of February 6th – concept paper final draft; start writing outlines of chapters for proposals; write cover letters, title, subtitle; start developing material for external testing.

ε Week of February 13th – Show week at West Seneca East, not much work gets done on anything else; read competing and complimenting books and materials.

ε Week of February 20th – Deliver developed materials for external testing to various involved people.

ε Week of February 27th – Write overview and organizing scheme, marketing and promotions section, and length and delivery statement.

ε Week of March 6th – Write credentials section, chapter summaries, and sample chapters;

ε   Week of March 13th – Hopefully start to get back results from field testing. Put

results into written form. Write supporting materials section.

ε   Week of March 20th – Compile all materials into draft project. Send out draft

project to mentor Music teachers and English teachers.

ε   Week of March 27th – Look over project to make any additional changes needed.

ε   Week of April 3rd – Get back project from mentor teachers; make changes

according to their feedback.

ε   Week of April 10th – Rewrites of draft project; hand in for critique

ε   Week of April 17th – Rewrites of Draft into final copy

ε   Week of April 24th – Printing and Binding

ε   Week of May 1st – Hand in final copy for grading.

This was the timeline as I envisioned it in January of 2006. However, as the project

evolved and my thinking about the project deepened, I knew that the timeline was going

to change. As can be seen from my actual timeline, some parts of the process plan and

timeline I actually stuck to fairly well, but the content of the book proposal changed so

dramatically over the course of the semester that the original timeline as I wrote it had to

be altered to change with the changing nature of the project itself.

The final concept paper (O'Dell, 2006) that was handed in on February 13, 2006

appears in Appendix D of this project. In that concept paper I outlined my intent to write

a submitable book proposal on the topic of teaching improvisation. I had specific

teaching techniques in mind to utilize within the proposal and thought that the proposal

would be a great end to the beginning of my work in creativity and improvisation.

The project started on time, and I was keeping to a good schedule. Colleen Dillon-Bartz (2004) wrote a book proposal for her Master's Degree project, and I read through her project to get some ideas on writing my own. I also researched the various ways to write a book proposal, depending upon both published books about writing book proposals, and the Internet to do my research. After looking through many book proposal models, the proposal model that I finally decided upon was a combination of the proposal model given by Dr. Eric Maisel in his book *The Art of the Book Proposal*, and a model that was presented online by Haworth Press of Binghamton, NY. Having these models, I started incubating about what I truly wanted to say in the book.

On February 21st I visited Dr. Michael Kinney of Broome Community College in Binghamton, NY. Dr. Kinney is the chair of the Music Department at Broome Community College, and has been a mentor, colleague and friend to me. He is also a published author, composer and music arranger. After outlining my project with Dr. Kinney, he expressed several concerns to me. One of the biggest concerns that he had was the large scope of my project. His concern was that the project would be too much to complete within the short time frame of the semester. He suggested that I take a look at one facet of improvisation, and write on that one facet. In that way, I had a book form started, and could complete the entire book after the required aspects of the project were over. We also discussed the aspect of my project, that of writing a book about improvisation, and he asked me two very pointed questions: "(1) Do you know how many books there are about how to teach improvisation, and (2) What is going to make your book different that people are going to want to purchase and use it?"

I had to admit that I knew there were many books on the market today on how to teach improvisation. Although I thought the idea of utilizing creative problem solving techniques in order to teach improvisation was a good one, translating the CPS tools into a musical framework to use for improvisation would be very time-consuming, and I was not sure that utilizing specific CPS tools and transforming them to use within the musical world for improvisation would work. It is something that I would like to look into later, but not within the limited time frame I had to do this project.

Therefore I had more incubation to do. I took Dr. Kinney's advice, and started incubating on "how to write about a specific topic in a book on improvisation." During this incubation period, I reflected upon what brought me to this point in the first place. I wanted to find the link between creativity and improvisation. I continually returned to Mel Rhodes' (1961) work in defining creativity, where he saw creativity as defined in four strands:

> "One of these strands pertains essentially to the person as a human being. Another strand pertains to the mental processes that are operative in creating ideas. A third strand pertains to the influence of the ecological press on the person and upon his mental processes. And the fourth strand pertains to ideas. Ideas are usually expressed in the form of either language or craft and this is what we call product. Hereafter, I shall refer to these strands as the four P's of creativity, i.e., (1) person, (2) process, (3) press, (4) product." (p. 216)

As can be seen in figure 1, Miller, Vehar and Firestien (2001) expressed Rhodes definition as a creativity model in their book *Creativity Unbound: An Introduction to the Creativity Process.* The diagram is a series of interlocking circles, much like a Venn diagram. I later came to the knowledge that this model was originally proposed by Murdock and Puccio (1993).
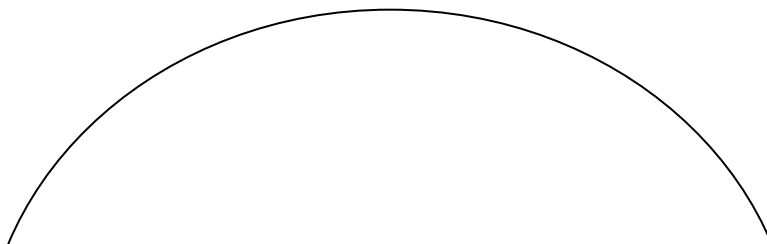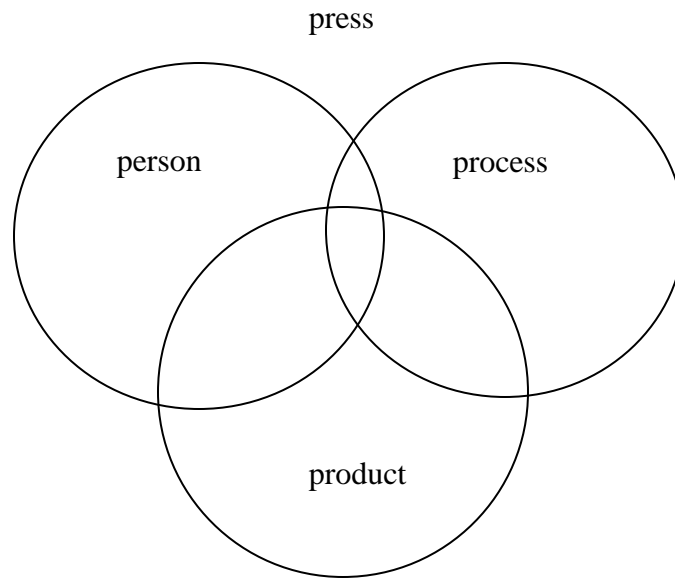
Figure 1: The four "P"'s of creativity model from Mel Rhodes' writing as diagrammed by Firestien, Miller, and Vehar (2001).[2]

Dean Keith Simonton (1988) made the argument that creativity can be viewed as an act of persuasion so that individuals can impress others with their creativity. In Simonton's view this makes creativity a form of leadership. He says that "social psychologists are accustomed to label that group member a 'leader' whose influence over group performance or decision making far exceeds that projected by the average member of the group." (p. 387) Simonton seemingly discounted the "press", but by adding persuasion he added a fifth P to Rhodes' model definition of creativity, that of persuader or role model for creativity.

During this time of incubation about the model that would link creativity and improvisation, I was also doing other work on the project. I got a lot of the smaller

---

[2] Firestien R., Miller B., Vehar J. (2001). *Creativity unbound.* Williamsville, NY: Innovation Resources, Inc. Adapted into this format by Murdock and Puccio (1993).

aspects of the project typed into my computer during this time including the title page, signatory page, abstract title page, and some of the other smaller pages. That got some of the project out of the way, so that I did not have to think about the little things when it came to actually writing the project. This was also a good time to do the smaller work on the book proposal, things like the author's biography and the target audience were fairly easy to write and get into the process before having to do the larger work.

It seemed that the testing of specific tools and techniques would be the biggest problem in getting the overall project completed in the short time span. Making up the tests, sending them out to the testing sites, having the tests done and sent back, and then compiling the result would take an inordinate amount of time. So I decided to revise my plan. The new problem on which I was now incubating was how to write a book proposal on creativity and improvisation that did not require as much testing of specific tools and techniques? I decided that I needed to go back to the roots of what brought me into the Creativity Studies program in the first place: finding a link between creativity and improvisation. I envisioned Rhodes (1961) compilation of creativity definitions, and the Firestien, Miller and Vehar (2001), Murdock and Puccio (1993) version of the interlocking circles of creativity.

In thinking about these models of creativity and their relationship to what musicians do as improvisers, I was troubled by several problems with the models themselves. The first problem I had was Simonton's use of the word persuasion, and by extension the leader becoming a persuader. Persuader seemed to be a very negative term for what I wanted to describe, a mentor that helps a student along. The second problem that I had with Rhodes' model is that his definition of creativity assumes the product as

part of the person and the process, working within the press. While I agreed that the

person and the process need to work together within the press, the product of

improvisation seemed more of an output to me than a part of the whole. A third problem

I encountered was that while the persuader has an influence upon the final product in

improvisation, the actual product is removed from the persuader. The persuader can

provide the process for the person, the persuader can provide the press for the person, the

persuader can provide the encouragement for the person, but the persuader cannot

provide the final product for the person. The product has to come from the process and

the person, working within the press.

So now the problem became how to find a word that better described what I felt

was the mentor role. After looking back at the problem, I realized that the mentor was

doing a lot of providing: the mentor was providing the press, the mentor was providing

the process, and the mentor was providing encouragement to the person. So I decided

that, in keeping with the idea of being alliterative, that I would use the word provider. I

feel that this better describes what the mentor's role is in the improvisation-creativity

model.

Overcoming the second problem was more difficult. In creativity, the product

contains the ideas generated by the person, using the process, within the press. In all

forms of improvisation, the product is the output of the person. The person still has

ideas, but they must come out in some form, whether it is comedic, theatrical, musical, or

even conversational improvisation. So therefore I decided to put the product outside of

the link between the person and the process, but as an output of the combination of both.

My fellow classmate Brian Tabak, who is involved in comedic improvisation, presented

the argument that the product should still be included within the press, even though he agreed that the product was and should be an output of the person using the process. I disagreed, because the press is provided by the provider, and sometimes that provider may not be on hand to see the product. However, in a later meeting with Dr. Roger Firestien, it was established that the provider still creates the climate for improvisation to occur no matter where that climate is, so I decided to keep the provider within the press, just separated from the person and the process.

This led to the third problem, how to understand the role of the provider in the creativity-improvisation model. The provider has a very unique role. The provider needs to create an atmosphere in the teaching realm where the student feels comfortable doing improvisation: that is the link between the provider and the press. The provider also needs to give the student processes to use in order to best do improvisation: that is the link between the provider and the process. The provider needs to encourage the student to do improvisation: that is the link between the provider and the person. However, the link between the provider and the product is less clearly defined. So therefore I felt that the provider should be on one side of the person and the process while the product was on the other side. Arrows could be drawn to show that the provider interacts with the person and the process, but only has an indirect relationship to the product.

During this time I was also incubating about the writing of the book proposal itself. Maisel (2004) suggested that at least one complete chapter of the book be included within a proposal, so I was working on writing the introductory chapter to the book as I was incubating about the creativity-improvisation link.

Figure 2 is the model that I originally developed. My original thought was that the person, process, and press were within each other (the process is internal to the person and the person is operating within the press) so the process circle was within the person and the person circle was within the press.

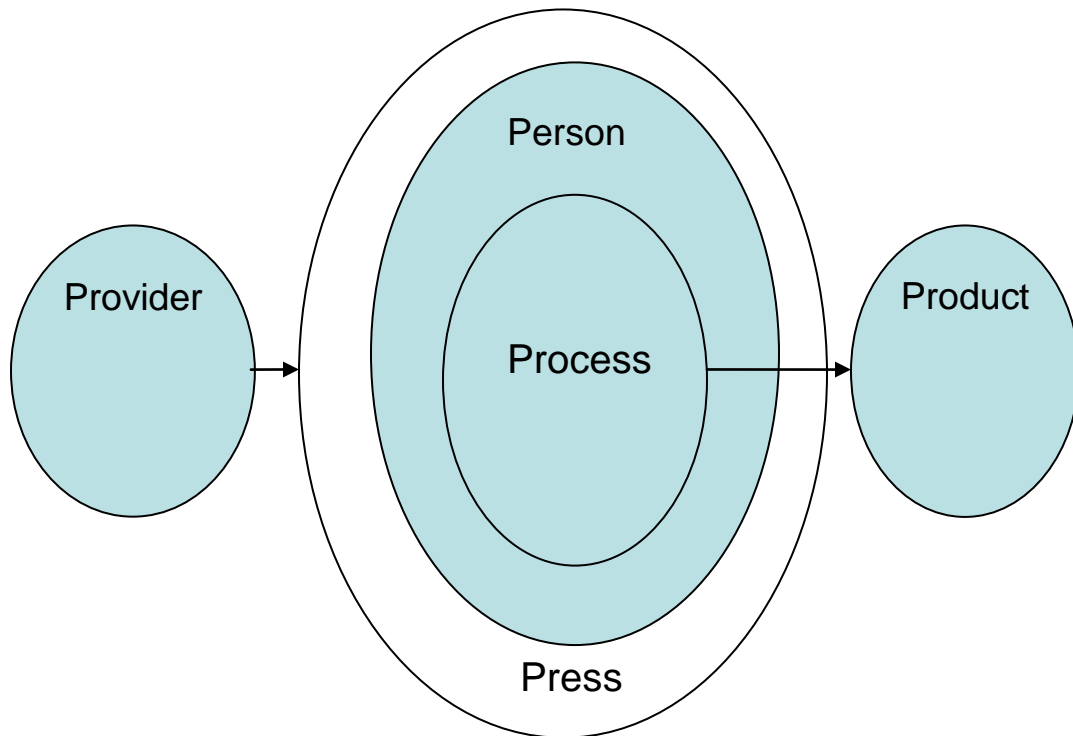**Figure 2:** The first incarnation of the creativity-improvisation link model by O'Dell (2006):

Although the second incarnation as shown in Figure 3 was similar, I thought it to be more aesthetically pleasing. It also indicates what the provider is providing for (person, process, and press). After developing this incarnation, I then wrote up a Power Point presentation on the model which appears in Appendix C.
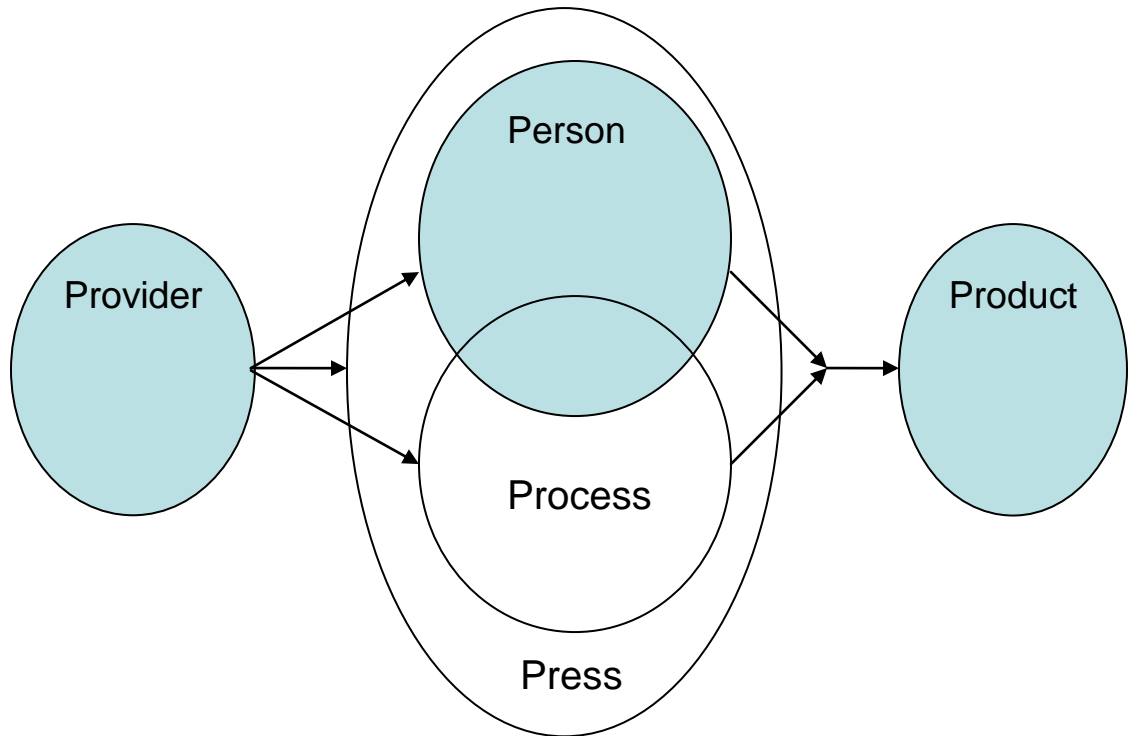
Figure 3: The second incarnation of the creativity-improvisation link model by O'Dell (2006):

I then sent out this presentation by e-mail to my classmates and members of the faculty at the ICSC. In my e-mail, I requested feedback about the model. As I previously stated, Brian Tabak was of the opinion that my model was excellent, but he felt that the product should be included within the press. Dr. Firestien and Mr. Michael Fox both answered my e-mail, and requested to meet with me to talk about the model.

On 31 March Dr. Firestien and I met regarding the model. I explained the thinking behind the model for Dr. Firestien. While he agreed with my thinking behind the model, his comments were direct. He agreed with me that within the context of improvisation, the Simonton's "persuader" should be changed to the term "provider", because it was a better term for what I was describing. He disagreed with the idea that the provider and the product should be outside of the realm of the press. It was his

feeling that the provider, even though he/she needs to provide the press, also needs to work within the press. It was also his feeling that even though the product was an output of the person and the process, that it should still be included within the press, as the climate for improvisation needs to be intact for the product to be output.

After much discussion regarding this, I decided that I would change the model to reflect more of the input of both Tabak and Dr. Firestien. The diagram of the revised model is shown in figure 4.
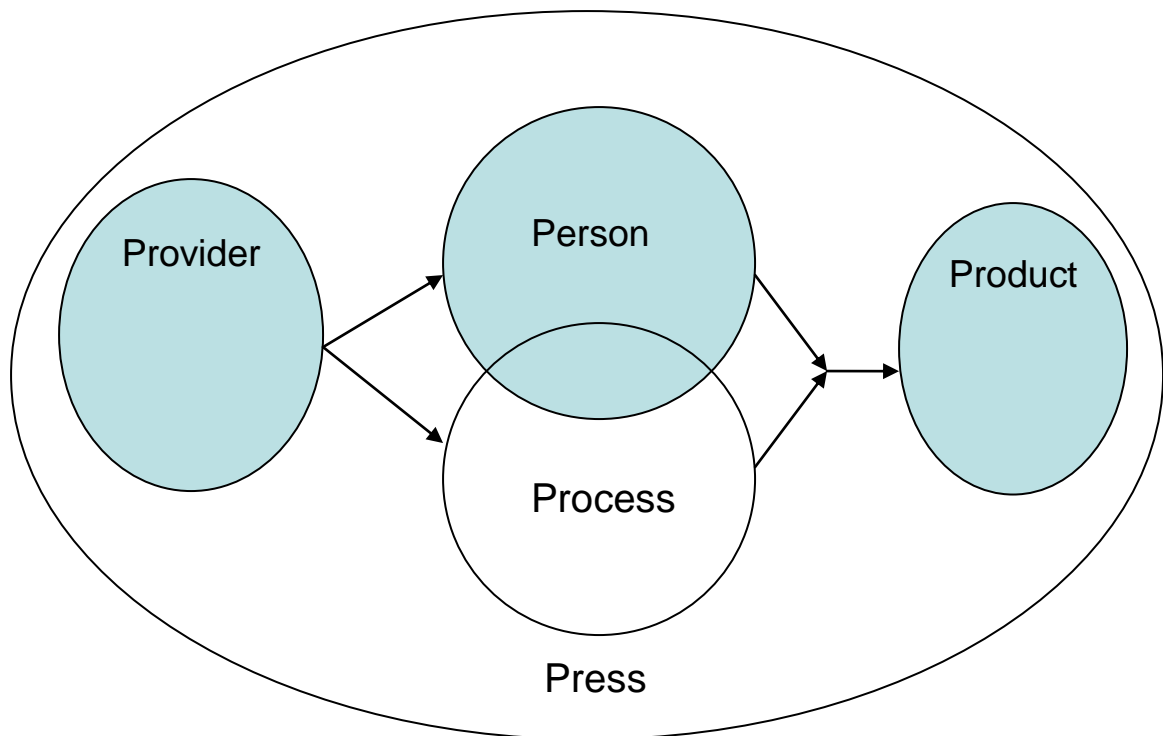
Figure 4: The third incarnation of the creativity-improvisation link model by Firestien, O'Dell, and Tabak (2006). ©2006 Scott L. O'Dell. Used by permission.

The Writing of the Project

From this point the actual writing of both the project and the proposal had to occur. I actually found this to be the most difficult part of the project. My *FourSight* (Puccio, 2002) scores indicated that I have a high preference for ideation, but a very low

preference for development. So therefore, while I could get many ideas for how to do this project, the actual sitting down and writing of the project (the development) was very difficult for me. I procrastinated on a lot of the parts, or would only work for short spurts at a time, then lose interest and start doing something else.

Unfortunately due to the nature of my job as a music educator, time to spend in research was limited. In the last weekend before the rough draft of the project was due, I had enough time to spend in the Creative Studies Library at the E. H. Butler Library at Buffalo State College. There I found several resources that I could include in my project as well, so that was time well spent.

In researching book proposal guideline, I found the Haworth Press, Inc. (Binghamton, NY) Book Proposal Guidelines (n.d.) online. I used these guidelines, along with information from Eric Maisel (2004) to write the book proposal. The Haworth Press guidelines suggested that the following information needed to be included:

1. "working title of the proposal
2. professional vita or resume for all authors
3. Sample chapter(s) (1 to 3 if possible)
4. Description of the work
5. Descriptions of any competing works and how this new work is to differ from the earlier works
6. Information on a target audience
7. Approximate date when the final manuscript is projected to be completed
8. Approximate size of the work in manuscript pages
9. Table of contents with as many subheads as possible
10. Any other information which the proposer feels might be pertinent to making a decision on the work."

The draft book proposal in its entirety may be found in Appendix A.

Outcomes

This section is about the products of the work I did on this project between January and April of 2006. I am very proud of several products that came out of this work, including the draft book proposal for the book *Imagination Improvisation*, and the model of the creativity-improvisation link. I am also very proud of the fact that I feel this work stands alone in the field because many people have written books about specific improvisational techniques or creativity. However, as far as I have researched no books have ever been written linking creativity and general improvisation.

Appendix A contains one of the major outcomes of this project – a draft book proposal for the book *Imagination Improvisation: The Creativity-Improvisation Link*. This book proposal utilizes the guidelines established by Haworth Press, Inc. of Binghamton, NY (2006) as found on the internet. I feel that this proposal will be ready in the near future to be sent to a publisher for evaluation as a potential book.

Another major outcome is the creativity-improvisation link model. As I have said many times, establishing the link between teaching creativity and teaching improvisation was the "holy grail" of my creativity studies. In this model, with the help of Dr. Roger Firestien and Brian Tabak, I feel that I have established that link. I hope that the link holds up under the scrutiny of some of the other professionals in the field for whom I have great respect, such as Dr. Peter Webster, Dr. Chris Azzara, and Maud Hickey.

A third outcome is the project itself. Being a high ideator and a low developer on the *FourSight* (Puccio, 2002) test, I was very worried that a project of this scope and magnitude would be beyond my capabilities to finish. I was continually having new ideas about the project until its end. However, I knew at some point that I would just

have to sit down and write the project, and I actually dreaded doing that. But I feel that I

have put together a very high quality project.

Key Learnings

This section is about the key learnings that I have had through the process of writing this project. It is divided into three parts: a narrative commentary about the specific domain relevant skills that I used called the content section, a narrative commentary about the specific creativity relevant skills that I used called the process section, and a conclusion that tells what I now know about creativity and change leadership that I didn't know when I began the project and also tells my next steps in the process.

Content

I have been improvising musically for many years. This knowledge has served me well, as I feel that improvisation is one of the most important aspects of being musical. But beyond that, I looked at the many forms of improvisation in which people are involved. I looked at theatrical improvisation, comedic improvisation, and everyday improvisation (such as conversational improvisation). I incubated upon what elements are necessary for improvisation to take place, and how is that related to the elements necessary for creativity to take place? From this, I developed the creativity-improvisation link model.

One thing that worked well in content was the idea that while I was incubating on the major aspects of the project, I could still do the minor aspects such as the title pages and several of the other smaller portions. This was something that I had never done before, I had previously always written major papers all at once. This gave me a feeling that the project was still ongoing, even though the major parts seemed stalled.

Another thing that worked well was incorporating papers on creativity that I had written for other classes into the project. Since I began working on Creativity Studies, the focus of most of my papers had been musical improvisation. Taking what I had written in each of those papers and making it part of the narrative of this paper helped me in the development of the paper. It also gave me a special focus, knowing that all along I had been working on making the link between creativity and improvisation.

Finally, the last thing that worked well for me was creating different Word files for each of the parts of the project. In this way, I could work on each separately, and then bring them all together in one huge master file. Were I to do another project of this magnitude or when I work on finishing the book that was started here, I will do the same thing.

There were also drawbacks along the project road, things that I would do differently if I were to do another project like this one.

I think the biggest drawback was that I spent a lot of time working on the first incarnation of the project before I understood that it was too big an undertaking. If I were to do it again, I would take a harder look at the aspects of the project and the time period involved. As it is now, considering the time period, my project timeline as it appears in my concept papers seems almost crazy for a person with a full-time job. But as a person with a preference for ideation, sometimes my ideas are large and the scope of the job too large for the time frame. I think that I could solve this by meeting with a developer or an implementer to have a reality check on some of my more grandiose ideas.

Tied in with that is the idea that I was going to do all that appeared in my concept paper, try to take another course, and work full-time. It can be done, but I believe that it requires a person with a better sense of how much work can get done in a given time period.

Eventually I would like to work on my original premise: that of a book to help teachers whom have never improvised to be able to teach themselves and their students' improvisation. It is still in the back of my mind that there are many teachers in the workforce that have no idea how to teach improvisation, especially musical improvisation, even though it is one of our National and State Standards. Right now, that is a book that needs to remain on the backburner, because I am interested in making the book proposal draft included within this project a reality.

Process

I think that many creativity processes worked for me during the writing of this project. The knowledge of my preferences in creativity styles helped me understand that, as an innovator (*MBTI*) and a high ideator (*FourSight*) and low developer, the hardest part of the project for me was going to be the actual write-up of the narrative. Knowledge of my creative preference strengths and weaknesses helped me to concentrate and devote more time to developing the project itself. I knew that I had to do this when during the meeting with me on March 31st, Dr. Firestien said, "Now stop getting ideas and start writing!"

Divergent thinking worked well for me once I accepted that I had bitten off a bigger project than I could chew. Dr. Kinney's warning assisted me in rethinking what

might be an accomplishable product in the limited time frame that I had. I thought of several key problem statements, including "how to do the project that I have conceived in the time frame given?" However, the more ideas I got, each had a negative side that I had to consider. So finally I realized that I had to change the problem statement to "How to do a project involving a book proposal that I could finish within the given time frame?" I generated many ideas, but the one that appealed to me was the creativity-improvisation link that I had been seeking since starting in the Creativity Studies program. So the idea of making the creativity-improvisation link and turning it into a book proposal became my new project focus.

Incubation time also worked very well, in fact almost too well for me. If I could have, I probably would have spent even more time incubating on my ideas. But I think the creativity-improvisation link model would not have come to fruition if it had not been for the time that I spent looking at the Firestien, Miller, and Vehar model of Rhodes' 4 "P's" and considering how that might work in the context of improvisation.

Conclusion of Key Learnings

This section contains my focus learnings, both about creativity and change leadership, since this project began.

The biggest learning that I have had is that the teaching of both creativity and improvisation can be linked. To the lay person, this may seem obvious and almost trivial, but to the educator it is neither. When Jennifer Wilcott said to me that she could not improvise because she did not have the creativity to do so, what she was telling me was that none of her teachers had ever taught her how to be creative so that she could

improvise. This is a very important distinction to make, because I feel that Jennifer's teachers (including myself, at that time) had missed an opportunity to teach creativity, and the book proposal contained within this project is written with creativity techniques in mind so that students like Jennifer can be taught.

I learned that I can complete a project of this scope and magnitude in a given time frame. Before doing this project, I would have thought this was an impossibility. But now I understand that the problem is not the ideas that I have, it is keeping the ideas that I have related to the time frame in which the assignment is supposed to take place. At some point during the time frame of a project I have to stop ideating and start developing the project, and having a smaller scope to the project makes it a lot easier to accomplish that.

What I see myself doing next is completing the proposal for the book *Imagination Improvisation*, and then writing the actual book. I feel strongly that this book is an important step in the creativity-improvisation link, and I hope those strong feelings about the book's importance will carry me through to its completion. I would like to have the full proposal done by my self-imposed deadline of December 2006, although as a music educator I am so busy that I may have to settle for a later date. I also see myself sending the proposal to publishers such as Haworth Press, Inc. of Binghamton, NY or Kendall-Hunt of Dubuque, IA. I would love to see this book published, and then start working on other books using CPS techniques in relationship to the performing arts.

References Cited:

Firestien R., Miller B., Vehar J. (2001). *Creativity unbound.* Williamsville, NY: Innovation Resources, Inc.

Haworth Press Inc. book proposal guidelines. (n.d.) Retrieved February 23, 2006, from http://0-www.haworthpress.com.innopac.lib.bcit.ca/books/propguide.asp

Maisel, E. (2004). *The art of the book proposal*. New York: Tarchar.

Murdock M. and Puccio, G. (1993). Contextual organizers for creativity research. In S. G. Isaksen, M. C. Murdock, R. L. Firestien, D. J. Treffinger (Eds.), *Understanding and recognizing creativity: The emergence of a discipline.* (pp. 249-280). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Puccio, G. (2002). *Your thinking profile: A tool for innovation.* Evanston, IL: THinc Communications.

Rhodes, M. (1987). An analysis of creativity. In S.G. Isaksen (Ed.) *Frontiers of Creativity Research.* (pp. 216-222). Buffalo, NY: Bearly Limited.

Simonton, D. K. (1988). Creativity, leadership, and chance. In R. Sternberg (Ed.), *The nature of creativity: Contemporary psychological perspectives*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Project Bibliography

Aebersold, J. (1992). *How to play jazz and improvise*. New Albany, Indiana: Jamey Aebersold Jazz.

Armstrong, T. (1998). *Awakening genius in the classroom*. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Aurigema, M. (2001). *Identifying Ekvall's creative climate dimensions in elementary school music classrooms*. Unpublished masters project, Buffalo State College; Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo, NY.

Azzara, C. (2002). Improvisation. In R. Colwell & C. Richardson (Ed.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning* (pp. 171-187). New York: Oxford University Press.

Balkin, A. (1990). What is creativity? What is it not? *Music Educators Journal, 76* (9), pp. 29-32.

Balkin, A. (1985). The creative music classroom: Laboratory for creativity in life. *Music Educators Journal, 71* (5), pp. 43- 46.

Baltzer, S. (1988). A validation study of a measure of musical creativity. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 36(4), 232-249.

Barbero-Switalski, L. (2003). *Evaluating and organizing thinking tools in relationship to the CPS framework.* Unpublished masters project, Buffalo State College; Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo, NY.

Boonshaft, L. P. (2002). *Teaching music with passion*. Galesville, Maryland: Meredith Music Publications.

Burns, M. (1988). Music as a tool for enhancing creativity. *Journal of Creative Behavior, 22* (1), pp. 62-69.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1991) *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: HarperPerennial.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). *Creativity*. New York: Harper Collins.

Davidson, L. (1990). Tools and environments for musical creativity. *Music Educators Journal, 76* (9), pp. 47-51.

Davis, G. (2004). *Creativity is forever.* Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt.

DeLorenzo, L. (1989). A field study of sixth-grade students' creative music problem-solving processes. *Journal of Research in Music Education, 37* (3), pp. 188-200.

Dillon-Bartz, C. (2004). *Developing a book proposal for a memoir of my life*. Unpublished masters project, Buffalo State College; Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo, NY.

Duckworth, W. (1981). *A creative approach to music fundamentals*.   Belmont CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

Ekvall, G. (1996). Organizational climate for creativity and innovation. *European journal of work and organizational psychology.* 5(1), pp. 105-123

Elliott, D. (1995). *Music matters: A new philosophy of music education*. New York: Oxford University Press

Firestien, R. (1996). *Leading on the creative edge*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Pinon Press.

Firestien, R. *Insights from the road.* http://www.rogerfirestien.com

Firestien R., Miller B., Vehar J. (2001).*Creativity unbound.* Williamsville, NY: Innovation Resources, Inc.

Gallwey, W. T. (1997). *The inner game of tennis*. New York: Random House.

Goodlad, J. (1984). *A place called school*. New York: McGraw-Hill

Gorman, K. (2005). *The music mind*. Unpublished masters project, Buffalo State College; Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo, NY.

Green, B., & Gallwey, W. T. (1986). *The inner game of music*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday.

Haworth Press Inc. book proposal guidelines. (n.d.) Retrieved February 23, 2006, from http://0-www.haworthpress.com.innopac.lib.bcit.ca/books/propguide.asp

Hickey, M. (1997). Teaching ensembles to compose and improvise. *Music Educator's Journal.* 83(6), pp. 17-22.

Hitz, R. (1987). Creative problem solving through music activities. *Young Children, 42* (2), pp. 12-17.

Judy, S. (1990). *Making music for the joy of it: Enhancing creativity, skills, and musical confidence* . Los Angeles, CA: J. P. Tarcher

Kraft, U. (2005) Unleashing creativity. *Scientific American Mind.* 16(1), 17-23.

Lautzenheiser, T. (1992). *The art of successful teaching: A blend of content and context.* Chicago, Illinois: GIA Publications.

Lautzenheiser, T. (1993). *The joy of inspired teaching*. Chicago, Illinois: GIA Publications.

Maisel, E. (2004). *The art of the book proposal*. New York: Tarchar.

Muneyoshi, H. (2004). *Identifying how school teachers use creative problem solving*. Unpublished masters project, Buffalo State College; Center for Studies in Creativity; Buffalo, NY.

Murdock M. and Puccio, G. (1993). Contextual organizers for creativity research. In S. G. Isaksen, M. C. Murdock, R. L. Firestien, D. J. Treffinger (Eds.), *Understanding and recognizing creativity: The emergence of a discipline.* (pp. 249-280). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Nachmanovitch, S. (1990). *Free play: Improvisation in life and art.* New York: Tarchar/Putnam.

O'Dell. S. (2006). *Concept paper: a book proposal for the book Imagination Improvisation.*

Oehrele, E. (1985). *A case for creativity in elementary music education.* Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International.

Osborn, A. (1963). *Applied imagination.* New York: Scribner's.

Paynter, J. and Aston, P.(1970). *Sound and silence: Classroom projects in creative music.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Puccio, G. (2002). Your *thinking profile: A tool for innovation.* Evanston, IL: THinc Communications.

Reichling, M. (1990). Images of imagination. *Journal of Research in Music Education, 38* (4), pp. 282-293.

Regan, P., (Ed) (2004). *Teachers: Jokes, quotes, and anecdotes*. New York: Barnes and Noble Books.

Rhodes, M. (1987). An analysis of creativity. In S.G. Isaksen (Ed.) *Frontiers of creativity research.* (pp. 216-222). Buffalo, NY: Bearly Limited.

Ristad, E. (1982). *A soprano on her head*. Moab, Utah: Real People Press

Sawyer, R. (1997). *Creativity in performance* . Greenwich, CT: Ablex.

Shanahan, A. (2004). *A journey into the process of learning a new skill*. Unpublished masters project, Buffalo State College; Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo, NY.

Simonton, D. K. (1988). Creativity, leadership, and chance. In R. Sternberg (Ed.), *The nature of creativity: Contemporary psychological perspectives*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Spolin, V. (1972). *Improvisation for the theater*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.

Stringham, E. J. (1959). *Listening to music creatively*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Webster, P. (1990). Creativity as creative thinking. *Music Educators Journal, 76* (9), pp. 22-28.

Webster, P.(1992). Research on creative thinking in music. In R. Colwell (Ed.), *Handbook of research on music teaching and learning* (pp. 266-280). New York: Schirmer Books.

Werner, K. (1996). *Effortless mastery: Liberating the master musician within*. New Albany, Indiana: Jamey Aebersold Jazz.

Appendix A

A draft book proposal for the book *Imagination Improvisation: The Creativity-*

Improvisation Link by Scott L. O'Dell.

Working title of the book proposal:

Imagination Improvisation: The Creativity-Improvisation Link.

Author: Scott L. O'Dell

Description of the work:

　　　Imagination Improvisation: The Creativity-Improvisation Link is a how-to book about the creativity conditions necessary for a teacher to teach the art of improvisation. Many books have been written about creativity, and many about improvisation, but none of these books specifically link creativity and improvisation. The book includes my own viewpoint of the creativity-improvisation link, and also synthesizes the works from several prominent authors on both creativity and improvisation including Mel Rhodes, Goren Ekvall, Dr. Roger Firestien, Kenny Werner, Viola Sponlin, and Dr. Christopher Azzara.

Information on a target audience:

The target audience of this book includes musicians, music educators, college music majors, theater educators, college theater majors, and creativity professionals who are teaching or training in that discipline.

Approximate date when the final manuscript is projected to be completed:

December 2007

Approximate size of the work in manuscript pages: 200 pages

Descriptions of any competing works and how this new work is to differ from the earlier works:

Azzara, C., Grunow, R., and Gordon, E. E. (1998). *Creativity in improvisation.* Chicago, IL: GIA Publications Inc.

How *Imagination Improvisation* is different:

1. Azzara, Grunow, and Gordon focus primarily on musical improvisation. *Imagination Improvisation* has some emphasis on musical improvisation, but also has overview of all forms of improvisation including theatrical, business, and sports.

2. Azzara, Grunow, and Gordon place much emphasis on auditory aspects of improvisation. *Imagination Improvisation* holds that creativity-improvisation is more of a thinking process.

3. Azzara, Grunow, and Gordon do not link the teaching of creativity to improvisation. *Imagination Improvisation* links specific models of creativity to improvisation through the creativity-improvisation link model.

Author's Biographical Sketch

Scott L. O'Dell

Scott is the Instrumental Music Director at West Seneca East Senior High School in West Seneca, New York, and currently is a graduate student at the International Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State College in Buffalo, New York. He has been a freelance musician for 30 years, as well as being a composer and music arranger.

Scott teaches concert band, marching band, string orchestra, two jazz bands, and Music in Our Lives at West Seneca East. He also teaches private lessons on percussion and musical improvisation and composition. As a graduate student, his special area of interest is creativity and improvisation in the instrumental music student. In November 2005, he developed and presented information on the Brainwriting divergent thinking technique at the National Association for Gifted Children Conference in Louisville, KY.

Scott is responsible for building the instrumental music program at West Seneca East into a locally and nationally respected program. Before coming to West Seneca, he taught marching percussion and two percussion ensembles at the Rod Serling School of Fine Arts at Binghamton High School in Binghamton, NY. Additionally he has taught music in Johnson City, NY, Windsor, NY and Harpursville, NY.

Scott's background is diverse. In addition to being a professional musician, who has played with many professional bands, orchestras and theater groups since the age of 14, he has been a radio disc jockey, an emergency medical technician, a volunteer firefighter, a limousine driver, a health and safety technician, a computer operator and a computer repair technician.

Scott has three Associates Degrees (Liberal Arts - Radio and TV Communications emphasis; Electrical Engineering Technology; and Liberal Arts - Music emphasis) from Broome Community College in Binghamton, NY. He has a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from the State University of New York College at Fredonia, graduating Magna Cum Laude. He is a member of the Music Educator's National Conference, the New York State School Music Association, The May Day Group for the reform of Music Education, and the New York State Band Director's Association.

<u>Contact Information:</u>

Scott L. O'Dell
6305 W. Quaker St.
Orchard Park, NY 14127
Telephone: 716-662-1655
E-mail: drummerscott@hotmail.com

17 April 2006

Table of contents with as many subheads as possible:

Imagination Improvisation: The Creativity-Improvisation Link

Table of Contents

          x. Dynamism and Liveliness in improvisation

IV.   The Improvising Process

    a. Idea Generation

        i. Divergent Thinking

            1. Judgment if ideas deferred

            2. Striving for a large quantity of improvisational ideas

            3. Seeking wild and unusual improvisational ideas

            4. Building upon other people's improvisational ideas

        ii. Convergent Thinking

            1. Keep it positive – it's all good

            2. Deliberate ideas – what works best for you?

            3. Keep your goals in mind – why improvise?

            4. Keep improving improvisational ideas

            5. Courage to try new things – improvise!

V.   The Improvising Person

    a. The Clarifier as an improviser

    b. The Ideator as an improviser

    c. The Developer as an improviser

    d. The Implementer as an improviser

VI.   The Improvised Product

    a. What is the Improvisational Product?

    b. The Product As a Part of the Whole

VII.   Extending the Learning: Beyond Imagination Improvisation…

Sample Chapter: What is Imagination Improvisation?

Chapter One: *What is Imagination Improvisation?*

Why Improvise?

As a music teacher, I am often asked how much my job pays. I have come up with a standard answer for that: in financial terms, not much – but in human terms, I have the highest paying job in the world. I truly believe that. The joy that I feel the first time that one of my students takes wing in a concert and improvises in front of his/her family and friends is one of the greatest feelings in the world. That student has truly become one with his/her instrument, and now takes his/her place with Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Armstrong, Davis, Parker, Coltrane, and Zappa in the long timeline of improvisatory musicians.

Imagination Improvisation is the term that I coined for people using their imaginations to improvise in everyday life. Often we think of improvisation as being limited to jazz or rock musicians, and there are some great improvisers in those areas. But improvisation extends throughout humanity, in every walk of life. In fact, it is more than likely that a person cannot go a day without doing some form of improvisation. People have become so accustomed to doing it that there is not a cognizant realization that improvisation is being done.

Take for example, Lauren driving to work. If suddenly she is faced with construction on the very road that they usually travel, she will have to respond spontaneously to the change. Without improvisation, she would be sitting there in front of the "Road Closed" sign for the rest of the day. But instead, her mind starts to work on the problem: "How might I find an alternative route to get to work?" In seconds, she

develops several alternate routes, rejects others, and settles upon one route to take and then changes direction to take that route. She has improvised a new way to get to her job, and even might stop at the coffee shop along the way to have a cup of coffee.

But how did she do it and why wasn't she sitting at the "Road Closed" sign all day long? This entire sequence occurred because of the dynamism of improvisation. At some point in her life, she was taught by someone how to go through all the alternate routes, reject the ones that would be too long or too inefficient, then select the best route and use it to get to work. In this paradigm we have a teacher, a person, a thinking process, an environment conducive to change, and a final product – an improvised route to work.

Dr. Christopher Azzara of the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester in Rochester, New York has spent many years studying teaching improvisation to music students. Azzara (2002) writes:

> "The research suggests that students should be provided with opportunities to make music spontaneously in a meaningful way through improvisation. Improvisation allows students to express themselves individually, to develop higher order thinking skills, and to develop a more comprehensive intimate relationship with music, performing with and without notation." (p. 182)

I was always aware of the importance of improvisation in musical form because I think that improvisation is very important for self-expression. I became aware of the creativity-improvisation connection during my first year of teaching, while I was teaching a lesson to a student named Jennifer. One day during musical lessons I asked Jennifer to do some improvisation for me.

"I can't, Mr. O'Dell," was her reply.

"Why not?"

"Because I don't have the creativity to improvise."

This sequence lasted about three seconds, if that. But it had a profound effect upon the rest of my life. As a teacher, I realized that I had no idea whether or not I could help Jennifer find the creativity that she needed to have to express herself on her instrument. From that point, I was determined to learn everything that I could learn about creativity and about how to teach my students to be more creative. That searching led me to the International Center for Studies in Creativity at the State University of New York College at Buffalo, where I first learned about what work was being done to study aspects of creativity around the world. In assimilating work by Alex Osborn, Mel Rhodes, Goren Ekvall, Dean Simonton, Mary Murdock and Gerard Puccio, and Roger Firestien, I came upon what I feel is the basis of improvisation and it's link to creativity.

The Creativity-Improvisation Link

The background of the problem of student creativity in improvisational music starts with the students not being trained in improvisation from the time they start playing an instrument. In his book *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education* Dr. David Elliott (1995) stated that "to develop musical creativity, music educators must be honest with students about what counts as musical and what counts as musically creative in relation to past and present attainments in musical practices." (p. 223) Dr. Azzara (2002) also emphasized the importance of teaching improvisation: "Much of the improvisation literature recommends the importance of creating a culture that embraces and encourages improvisation, creativity and risk-taking." (p. 172) Therefore it becomes important for music educators to teach improvisational skills from the time the first learns

to play an instrument. I attended a lecture for music educators on improvisation in which

Dr. Azzara (2004) went as far as to advocate not using standard method books for the

first six months that the student is learning their instrument. He stated that the students

should learn the notes without written music first and also learn several songs by memory

without being tied to a method book. In this way, students could develop a good tone and

sound on their instruments before music is set in front of them.

This is a radical departure from the way music educators have taught instrumental

music for many years. In the past, the music educator would put a method book in front

of the student from the beginning and teach the student how to read the written notes as

the student plays what is on the page. This was the true impression that Goodlad (1984)

perceived in the arts throughout high school; the emphasis on performance over the

transcendent goals:

> "Teachers at all levels stated goals intrinsic to the arts but also
> listed goals that transcend them-power to see beyond the surface of
> things, a positive attitude towards experimentation, pride in
> workmanship, appreciation of human dignity and values. However
> it is my impression of the arts as of other subjects, is that these
> transcendent goals took secondary position – a remote secondary
> position – to emphasis on the use of tools and performance.
> Students in junior and senior high music classes spent an
> inordinate amount of class time on rehearsals for performance at
> the upcoming football game or some other event." (pgs. 218-219)

Students need to learn to be creative and improvise from the beginning of their

music education, under the tutelage of a trained music educator.

The second aspect to the background of this problem is students' fear of

improvisation. This fear also comes, in part, from music educators. Music educators

have instilled a fear in their students of having a less than perfect sound. Jazz pianist and

author Kenny Werner (1996) states that the musician's biggest fear is sounding bad: "when you approach your instrument, no matter what lofty goals you say you have, wanting to sound good will predominate and render you impotent." (p. 39).

In a lecture that I attended on improvisation Werner (1999) told the following story: "An old jazz musician was approached by a younger jazz musician to ask his advice about improvisation. The younger stated that no matter how hard he worked on his improvisation, he never seemed to get any better or any less nervous about improvising. The older musician asked the younger what he had been doing to try to improve. The younger said 'I've been listening to Miles Davis a lot. I think he's the best improviser and I want to be as good as he is. I transcribe all his solos and try to use all of his ideas. Whenever I am playing, I am always asking myself if what I am playing is how Miles would do it." The old musician was quiet for a moment, considering this. Then he looked at the younger musician and said, 'Let me ask you a question. When you masturbate, do you ask yourself if this is how Miles would do it?'"

The story within the lecture makes a valid point. Improvisation needs to come from the heart, not the mind. This is not to minimize the importance of preparation by listening to jazz musicians and working out ideas during individual practice sessions. The ideas need to become a part of the musician so that they can be called upon at any time during a playing session.

However, when a musician is out on a gig, the ideas and the preparations need to be internalized so that he/she is improvising from the heart. Azzara states: "…improvisation means that an individual has internalized a music vocabulary and is able to understand and express musical ideas spontaneously, in the moment of

performance. Improvisation is often compared to speaking and conversation in language." (p.172) Werner (1996) agrees: "The goal of so many players is just to speak the language. Again, let's apply the issue to conversation. If you master the English language, does that make you a poet? Being able to speak in complete sentences is not an art but a technical skill. Being a poet, a playwright, or a lyricist-that is an art." (p. 48)

The third aspect to the background of this problem is a paradox. Many music teachers, even aware of the National Standards, cannot teach improvisation because they are not trained in improvisation. This is a logical conclusion of the entire problem, because the music students of yesterday, who were taught using the problematic methods outlined above, have become the music teachers of today. For example, Oeherle (1985) evaluated twelve selected works on music education to find to what extent those works support the importance of creativity in contemporary elementary music education. The works were graded on twelve questions developed by Oeherle regarding creativity; the grading scale ranged from a strong support of the importance of creativity (3) to no support of the importance of creativity (0). Of the twelve books, four supported the importance of creativity in elementary music education to a great extent; one supported the importance of creativity in elementary music education to a limited extent; three supported the importance of creativity in elementary music education to a very limited extent; one supported the concept to an extremely limited extent; and three supported the concept to no extent at all. Thus out of twelve works on music education only four truly supported the importance of creativity in elementary music education. One of the books that did not was entitled, ironically, *A Creative Approach to Music Fundamentals*!

Also, many college music education programs have little or no instruction in improvisation. Without a background in this creative art form, and without any formal instruction, many music teachers feel less than competent teaching improvisation. A colleague lamented that she had gone through her entire elementary and secondary music education, had gone to Ithaca College and received her Music Education Degree, and had been teaching music for twenty years; yet she'd never had any training on improvisational skills. Now she is expected to teach a middle school jazz band and is seeking out instruction from other musicians and teachers on improvisation.

Since I am a musician and a music teacher, it becomes very tempting in approaching the topic of Imagination Improvisation to focus on musical improvisation only. There are, however, many forms that improvisation can take: musical improvisation is certainly one, and musicians have been improvising since the Renaissance. But there is also theater improvisation, where actors are given a task to perform.

Theater improvisation also helps the onstage actors during a live performance when something goes wrong. For example, I once saw a production of *Once Upon A Mattress* where the wizard had a bubbling cauldron onstage. This particular theater group was using dry ice to make the wisps of smoke coming out of the cauldron. During the end of the scene, the cauldron accidentally was tipped over and spilled by one of the onstage players. The end of the scene was supposed to have the wizard say, "I'd better sweep this place up", but without missing a beat, the wizard improvised the line "I'd better mop this mess up." The improvised line was perfect in the setting, and if I hadn't

known the play, I would not have known the alternative line was not supposed to be there.

Viola Spolin (1972) wrote one of the greatest books ever written on theater improvisation, the aptly titled *Improvisation for the Theater*. In the book, Spolin outlines the theory and foundations of theater improvisation, and then gives many exercises that theatrical people can do to develop their improvisational skills. In one of her subheadings, Spolin identifies problem-solving as a technique that "gives mutual objective focus to teacher and student". (p. 20) She says that:

> "In its simplest terms, it is *giving problems to solve problems*. It does away with the need for the teacher to analyze, intellectualize, and dissect a student's need on a personal basis. This eliminates the necessity of the student having to go through the teacher or the teacher having to go through the student to learn. It gives both of them direct contact with the material, thereby developing relationship rather than dependencies between them. It makes experiencing possible and smoothes the way for people of unequal backgrounds to work together." (p. 20)

Many of the techniques in this book are taken from the creative problem solving techniques, so Spolin's ideas are in perfect harmony with the book's technique of the teaching of improvisation.

There are many other forms of improvisation, too, ranging from improvisation in business to improvisation in sports. I will try to cover many forms of creativity-improvisation and make a link that covers many of the forms. Figure 1 illustrates the creativity-improvisation link model that is the basis of my thoughts for this book.

Figure 3: The creativity-improvisation link model:
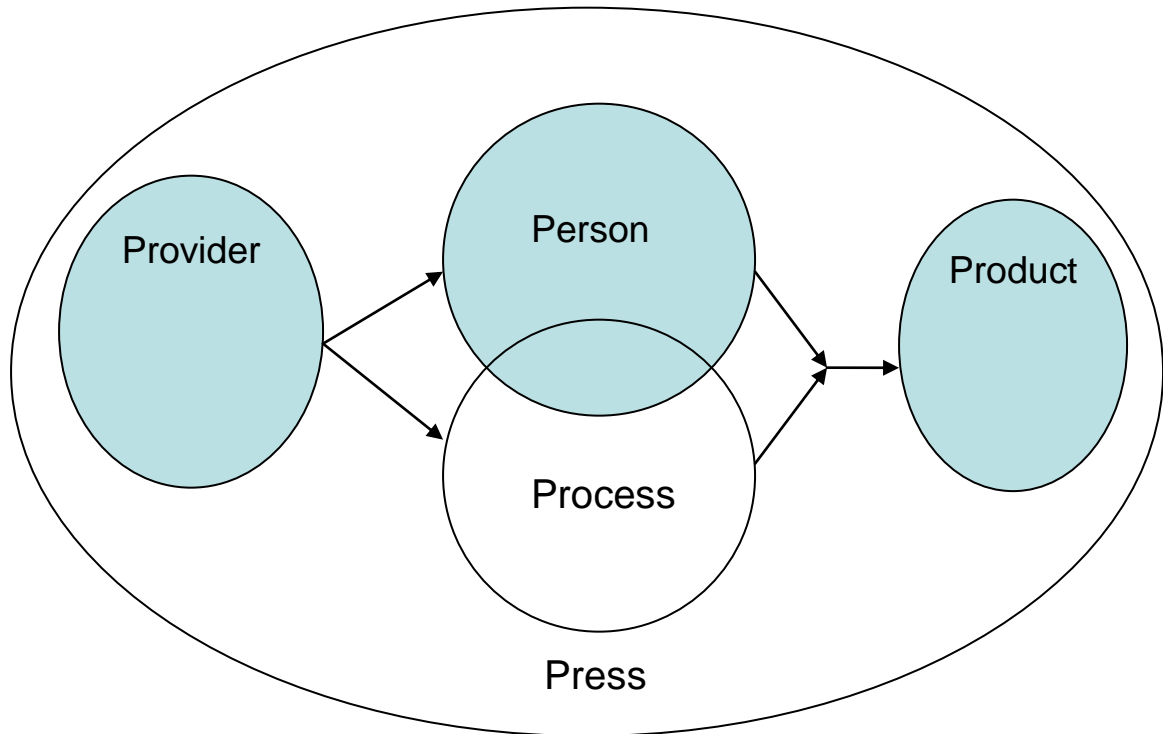
©2006 Scott L. O'Dell (used by permission)

How this book is organized…

This book is divided into five separate parts, each coordinating with the five parts of the creativity-improvisation link model.

The first part is about the provider. The ***provider*** is the teacher of improvisation or the person who provides the climate so that improvisation can take place. This person is some form of mentor such as a fellow musician, a drama-theater coach, or even a coach of sports teams. The provider is anyone who provides the following: encouragement to the improvising person, a positive press in which improvisation can occur, and the processes for the person to use in improvisation. In the creativity-improvisation link

model, the provider is on the opposite side of the product. I did this because even though

the provider influences the product, the provider has no direct relationship to the product.

The second part is about the *press*, or the environment necessary for creativity-

improvisation to occur. Ekvall (1999) has done much research in the climates necessary

for creativity to occur within an organizational structure. In his *Creative Climate*

Questionnaire, he identified 10 factors for creativity in organizations. Nine of the factors

are positive factors and one is a negative factor (conflict). The factors:

> "came from the interplay between theory, field research, and experiences of
> consultancy in organizational psychology. The 10 factors are as follows:
>
> 1. Challenge (the emotional involvement of the members of the organization.)
> 2. Freedom (the independence in behaviour exerted by the people in the
>   organization).
> 3. Idea Support (the ways in which new ideas are treated).
> 4. Trust/Openness (the emotional safety in relationships).
> 5. Dynamism/Liveliness (the eventfulness of life in the organization).
> 6. Playfulness/Humour (the spontaneity and ease that is displayed).
> 7. Debates (the occurrence of encounters and clashes between viewpoints, ideas,
>   and differing experiences and knowledge).
> 8. Conflicts (the presence of personal and emotional tensions (in contrast to
>   conflicts between ideas) in the organization).
> 9. Risk Taking (the tolerance of uncertainty in the organization).
> 10. Idea Time (the amount of time people can use (and do use) for elaborating
>   new ideas)." (p. 107 – 108)

Each of these will be dealt with in the chapter on "press", which is the environment that

the provider sets up for creative improvisation to take place. With the exception of

conflict, each of these factors provided as the climate in the improvising world will assist

in increasing the willingness to improvise. A word should be said here about conflicts,

though.

Conflicts are different from debates. In debates, ideas are set forth and discussed among the members of the organization. Conflict is the only element of Ekvall's factors where more negative is actually good. In high conflict situations, according to Ekvall, the climate could be considered almost war-like. There are plots and traps, gossip and slander, and individuals and groups tend to have a great dislike for each other. On the other hand, in low conflict situations, people are more mature in their behavior, and creativity increases.

Maria Aurigema (2001) made the link between Ekvall's creative climates and their identifying dimensions in elementary school classrooms. Aurigema's work can also hold for any area where improvisation needs to take place.

The third part of the model is about the ***process*** that can be used for creativity-improvisation. The process is based upon models of creativity thinking that date back to Alex Osborn (1963) and his seminal creativity book, *Applied Imagination*. The improvising process is taught to the person by the provider within a press conducive to do improvisation. The improvising process is then used by the person to output some form of improvisation. The process could be in CPS or some other format, but it is important to utilize the CPS rules for divergent and convergent thinking to maximize the creativity of the product.

The CPS rules for divergent and convergent thinking have also evolved over many years. Firestien, Miller, and Vehar (2001) describe them as follows:

"Rules for Divergent Thinking:

1. Defer Judgment (whatever idea comes to mind, go for it)

2. Strive for quantity (the more ideas you have, the better chance you have at getting a good one)
3. Seek wild and unusual ideas (freewheel – the wilder the ideas the better)
4. Build on other ideas (let one idea spur other ideas)

Rules for Convergent Thinking:

1. Be affirmative (behind every creative act lie affirmative judgment)
2. Be deliberate (avoid snap decisions or harsh judgments)
3. Check you objectives (remember your original goal)
4. Improve ideas (even promising ideas must be honed and strengthened)
5. Consider novelty (don't dismiss original thinking out of hand)" (p. 22-23)

Thus, there are two parts to the improvising process. In divergent thinking a person doing the improvisation uses divergent thinking to come up with many ideas for the improvisation. In convergent thinking, a person doing the improvisation uses convergence to form the many ideas into a workable format.

The fourth part is about the person doing the improvisation. The creativity-improvisation link is very dependent upon the person. This section utilizes the terms for creativity preference from Dr. Gerard Puccio (2002) to describe how each person will approach improvisation: the clarifier, the ideator, the developer, and the implementer. The section will discuss each creativity preference as an improviser, and how that preference affects the provider's way of teaching. For example, a developer as an improviser may want to take an existing idea from another performer, and transform that into his/her own improvisation. On the other hand, an ideator as an improviser would only want to know the basic outline of the problem to be improvised, then would come up with his/her own ideas for improvisation. Hopefully knowledge of each person's

preference for creativity will help the provider in assisting the person to better improvisational skills.

The fifth part is about the improvised product. The product is the combined output of the person, using the process, within the press created by the provider. The product is some form of improvisation. The improvised product could be as simple as an improvised conversation, or as complex as a theatrical or musical improvisation. The product is the sole output of the person (The provider is only indirectly related to the product).

As I stated in the beginning of this chapter, *Imagination Improvisation* is the term that I coined for people using their imaginations to improvise in everyday life. I hope to establish in the rest of this book that improvisation is firmly connected to creativity, and that creativity can be taught through the teaching of improvisation. Improvisation is something that we humans do each day of our lives: it is my hope that through this book, each person will receive an insight into their own creative selves through the teaching, learning and doing of improvisation.

Appendix B

Three incarnations of the creativity-improvisation link model, based upon the 4P model of creativity.

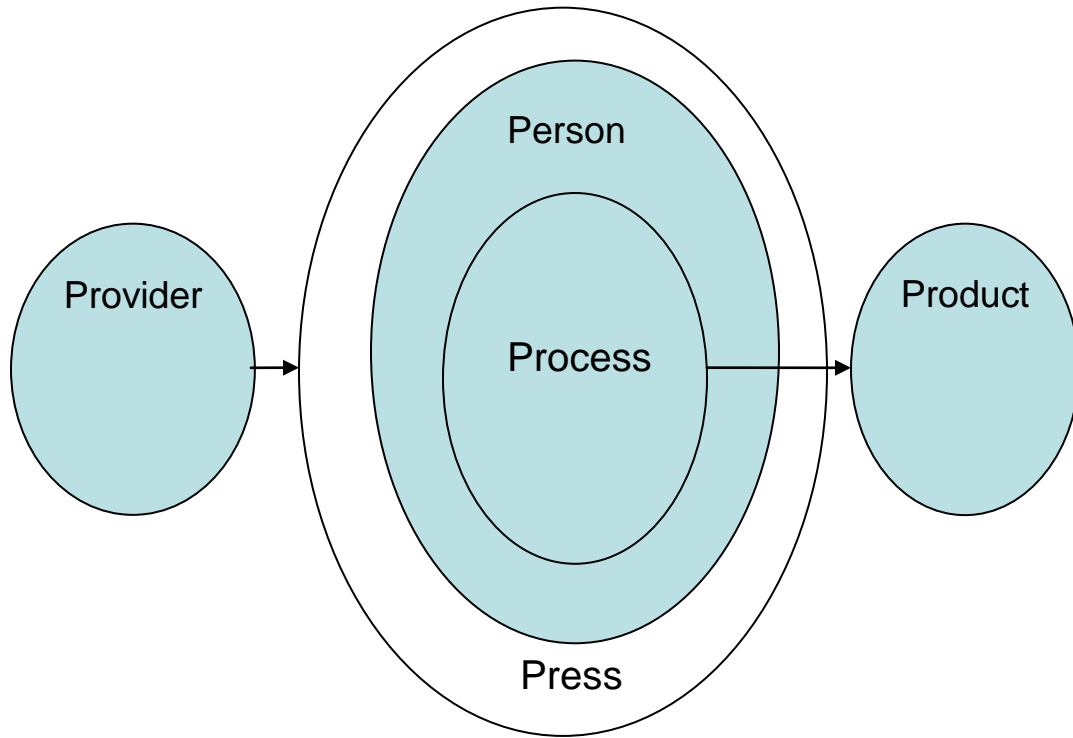**Figure 1:** The first incarnation of the creativity-improvisation link model:

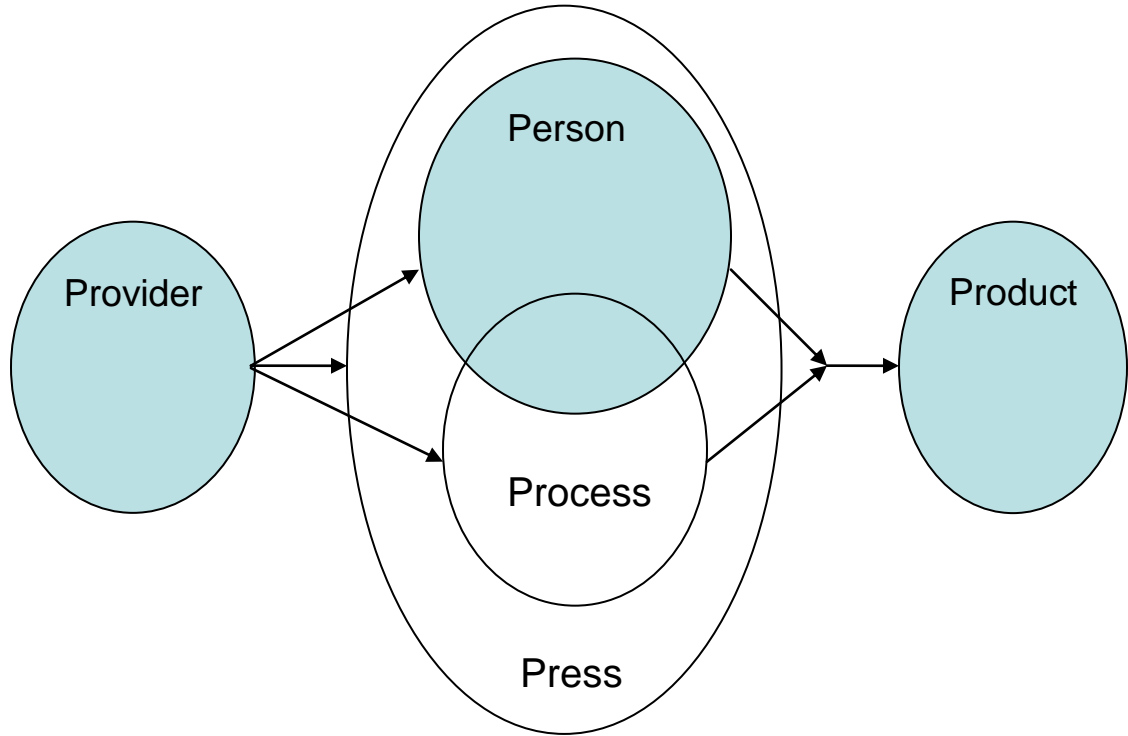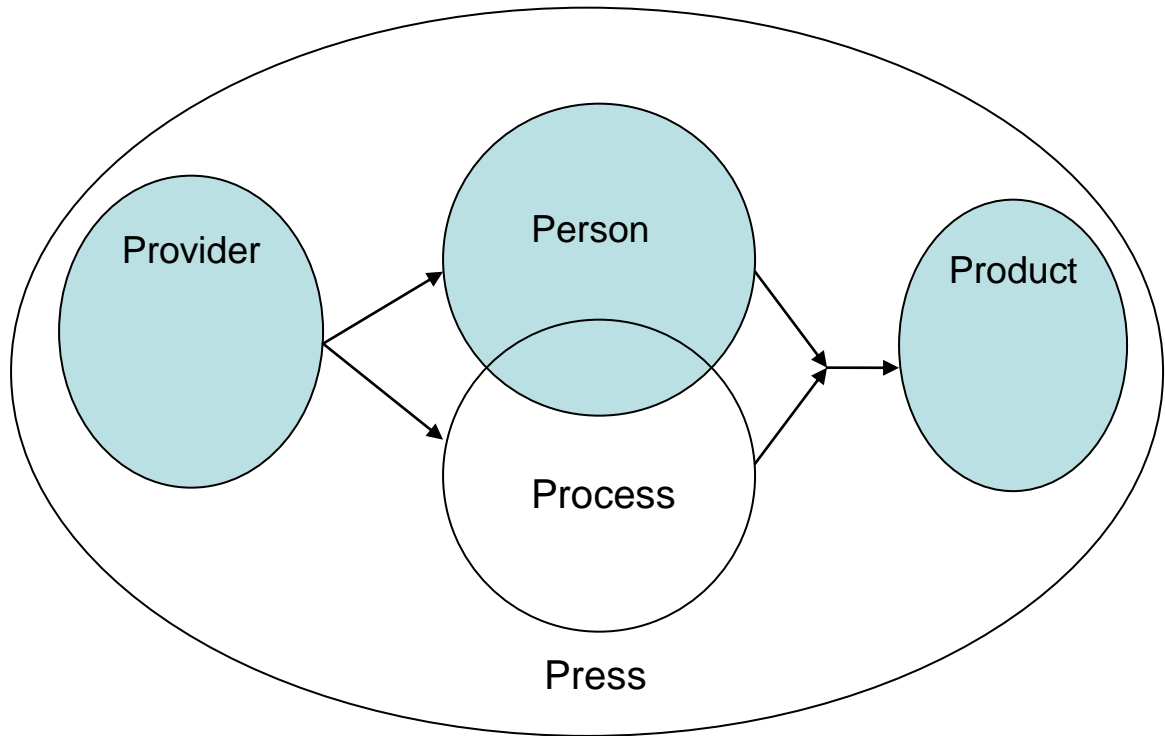**Figure 2:** The second incarnation of the creativity-improvisation link model:

Figure 3: The third incarnation of the creativity-improvisation link model:

Appendix C

The outline of the original Power Point presentation developed to show the creativity-improvisation link.

Imagination Improvisation

•The following is a model for the teaching of improvisation. It is based on the

Firestien-Miller-Vehar model of creativity.

•Instinctively, I knew that creativity and improvisation were linked, but until I

could render a visual model of the improvisational process, I never understood

how. Now I believe that I have made that link.

The creativity-improvisation link model:
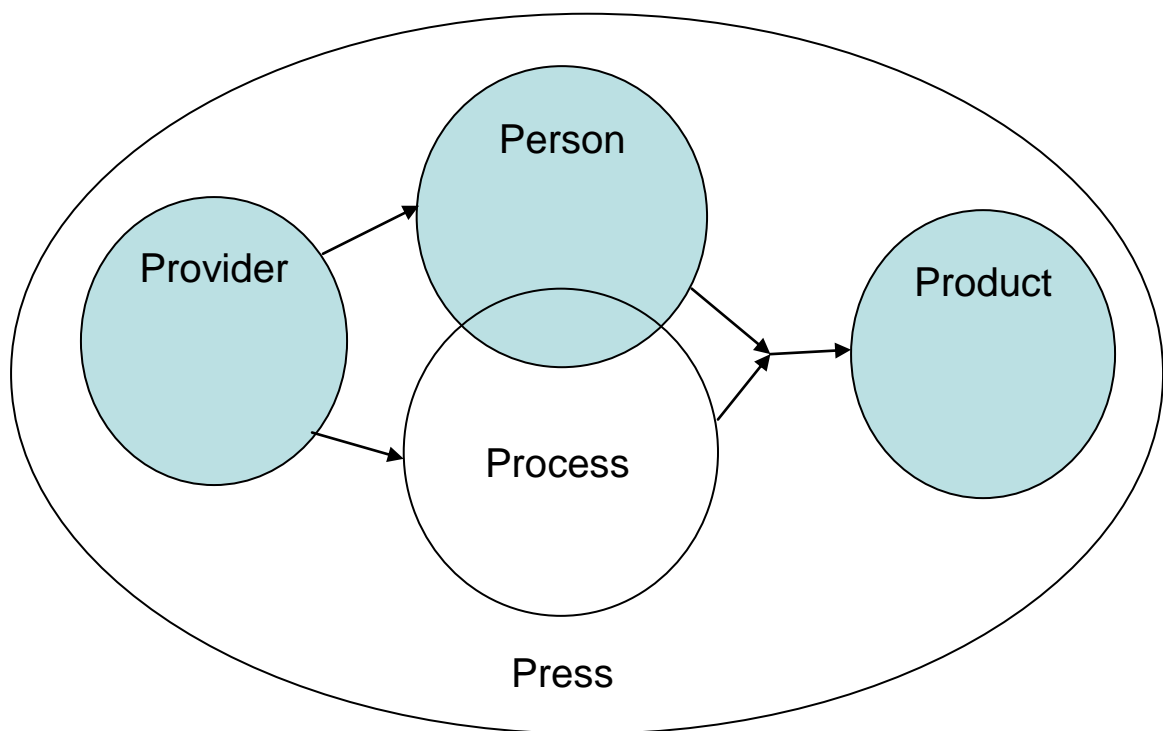
©2006 by Scott L. O'Dell. Used by permission

Improvisation Provider

•The Provider, called by Simonton the persuader, is the teacher of improvisation.

•This person is some form of mentor: could be a fellow musician, a drama-theater coach, or even a coach of sports teams.

•The improvising provider provides the encouragement to the person, the press in which improvisation can occur, and the processes for a person to use to improvise.

•I put the provider on the opposite side of the product, because even though the provider influences the product, the provider has no direct relationship to the product.

Improvising Person

•The improvising person is a person wanting to learn improvisation

•The improvising person is given the proper environment by the provider to do improvisation.

•The improvising person uses the process(es) taught by the provider to do improvisation.

•The improvising person outputs some form of improvisation, which is called in this model the product.

The Improvising Process

•The improvising process is taught to the person by the provider within a press conducive to do improvisation.

•The improvising process is then used by the person to output some form of improvisation.

•The process could be in CPS or some other format, but it is important to utilize the CPS rules for divergent and convergent thinking to maximize the creativity of the product.

The Improvising Press

•The improvising press, or the environment created by the <u>provider</u>, is key to improvisation.

•The improvising person needs to have a specific climate in order for improvisation to occur.

•Ekvall's ten climate dimensions (challenge, freedom, idea support, trust and openness, playfulness and humor, debate, low conflict, openness to risk-taking, idea time, and dynamism and liveliness) are very important to improvisation for the person learning improvisation to feel comfortable enough to improvise.

The Improvising Product

•The product is the combined output of the person, using the process, within the press created by the provider.

•The product is some form of improvisation.

•The improvised product could be as simple as an improvised conversation, or as complex as a theatrical improvisation.

•The product is the sole output of the person. (The provider is only indirectly related to the product).

Appendix D

My original concept paper, entitled *A Book Proposal for the Book Imagination Improvisation*.

A Book Proposal for the book
Imagination Improvisation

Name: Scott O'Dell   **Date Submitted: 13 February 2006**

Project Type: Use a Skill/Talent to Improve the Lives of Others

What Is This Project About?

       This project will be a book proposal for a book intended to help teachers who have had little or no experience with improvisation to teach that skill to themselves and their students. A book proposal is a document that is sent to a publishing company announcing the author's intentions to research and write a book about a specific topic, and requesting that the publisher consider the book for publication. The book proposal includes items such as a synopsis of the book, a sample chapter or two from the book, and the author's qualifications to write such a book.

       To prepare for this project, I had to think about the issue of how creativity would come into play in this book proposal. First of all, I had to make a personal decision about the book's contents. I went through a divergent problem solving process where many ideas were presented; then through convergence the idea of teaching teachers how to teach improvisation was brought forth as one with which to work. Secondly, I researched many creativity techniques and tools; looking at each with the idea of converting them to use in a musical improvisational setting. Thirdly, I knew that these ideas would need testing to see if they are practical for use in musical improvisation. Finally, I also knew that these ideas needed to be written into a form where they would be easy for teachers to use in teaching their own students to improvise.

Rationale for Choice:

       Improvisation is standard #3 in the National Standards for Arts Education in Music (Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments), so the understanding of how to teach improvisation is very important. During the last several years, I have become aware that many of my fellow music teachers have never learned how to teach improvisation and shy away from teaching improvisation due to their own lack of knowledge. Of those that know how to improvise, many have difficulty related the principles of improvisation to their students. There are many books on about how to do improvisation, and there are several books on how to teach improvisation; but none that have been researched are able to teach improvisation using creativity techniques from the CPS realm.

What Will be the Tangible Product or Outcome?

The tangible product will be a book proposal that will be sent to publishers with the goal of eventual publication. Within the book there will be chapters about tapping into one's own creativity to become a better musical improviser, as well as chapter that include lessons for teachers wanting to teach improvisation utilizing the Creative Problem Solving process. Some of the chapters will also include techniques from theatrical and other forms of improvisation. There will also be an extensive bibliography on readings about creative improvisation and musical improvisation.

What Criteria Will You Use to Measure the Effectiveness of Your Achievement?

I will know that I am successful when I have put together a proposal that meets the criteria of several publishers' guidelines for book proposals. I plan to research what several publishers who might be interested in my book require for a proposal; I will know that I am finished when I have met the average of those requirements and that's when I will stop with writing the proposal, and write it into a project form.

The benchmarks that I intend to reach:

- Research and contact publishers to see what they require in a book proposal
- Combine the research and outline the proposal.
- Work with my jazz band and several teachers that I have recruited to help me on the principles that I intend to write into the book.
- Put together the principles and write the proposal into project form.
- Send the project to several mentors (Dr. Firestien, Dr. Peter Boonshaft, and Dr. Michael Kinney) who have published books so they can read the project and give me critiques.
- Edit and revise the project according to mentor feedback.
- Have the project bound.
- Submit the project.

Who Will Be Involved or Influenced? What Will Your Role Be?

- Myself – my role will be to develop the material for testing and writing the proposal.
- Dr. Murdock – my advisor
- Tara – some proposed material test
- Brian – some proposed material test
- The West Seneca East High School Jazz Band – proposed material test

- The Chenango Valley High School Jazz Band under Dan Brisk – some future material test
- The West Seneca West Middle School Jazz Band under John Hasselbeck – some future material test
- The Hamburg High School Jazz Band under Larry Dubill – some future material test.
- Dr. Roger Firestien – for proposal critique
- Dr. Peter Boonshaft – for proposal critique
- Dr. Michael Kinney – for applied theory and proposal critique
- Dr. Leslie Jones – for applied theory critique
- Mrs. Elena Bell – for correcting of grammar and English usage
- Mrs. Dyan Scritchfield – for correcting of grammar and English usage
- Potential publishers

When Will This Project Take Place?

This project will take place over the course of this school semester. The book proposal should be ready to submit to publishers by the end of the semester. The book itself will take a longer amount of time with more material to be developed. One or two chapters of the book will be submitted with the proposal, but the book as envisioned right now will have approximately twelve chapters. I hope to finish the entire book by December of 2007.

Where Will This Project Occur?

- Buffalo State College, Buffalo, NY
- West Seneca East Senior High School, West Seneca, NY
- Chenango Valley High School, Binghamton, NY
- West Seneca West Middle School, West Seneca, NY
- Hamburg High School, Hamburg, NY
- Broome Community College, Binghamton, NY
- Hofstra University, Islip, NY
- Lighthouse International, New York, NY

Why is it Important to Do This?

As was stated before, improvisation is standard #3 of the National Standards for Arts Education in Music. Many books exist on self-taught ways to do improvisation, but few books exist that will help teachers to learn how to teach improvisation to their

students; and I know of no books currently on the market that use CPS techniques to teach improvisation. I feel that I can meet this need with this book. This book will be very useful for those teachers whom have never done improvisation in a musical context, or are afraid of musical improvisation, or are afraid to teach musical improvisation because they do not understand the principles involved.

"Improvisation is just applied music theory." – Dr. Leslie Jones

Personal Learning Goals:

- To write an effective book proposal that will lead to a book being published.
- To get beyond perfectionism so that the project doesn't get mired down in details.
- To be able to manage time with classes and a full-time job so that the project gets done on time.
- To be able to keep the scope of the project within proposed parameters.

How Do you Plan to Achieve your Goals?

I first plan to do research into what constitutes an effective book proposal. For this, I plan to contact some publishing houses that I intend to send the proposal to, and ask if they will send me their guidelines or evaluation criteria for book proposals. I also plan to do research in the libraries to find books written about effective book proposals.

I plan to seek help with my perfectionism. I plan to daily reaffirm the fact that I am only human and allowed (and even expected) to make mistakes. Further, I plan to keep reading *The Artist's Way* and internalize some of the principles within that book as well. I have also purchased and plan to read *Taming Your Gremlin* to assist me with help in getting out of my own way.

I also plan to seek help with better time management. I recognize the need for myself to make a plan for the project and to stick with the deadlines of the plan.

I plan on limiting the scope of the project by sticking to those items that correspond with the effective book proposals as researched.

Evaluation:

The obvious evaluation will come from myself and Dr. Murdock – is this a Masters Project that is worthy of a good grade. Beyond that, there will be many micro-evaluations that will occur during the process. The Music teachers and students involved will evaluate the ease of my ideas for becoming involved with improvisation. The Music teachers that have written books (Dr. Kinney and Dr. Boonshaft) will be asked to evaluate both the potential for publication and the potential for this particular book on the marketplace. The English teachers (Mrs. Bell and Mrs. Scritchfield) will be asked to

evaluate my English constructs in the proposal. The final evaluation will come when I actually send the proposal to the publishers, and hope…

Prepare Project Timeline:

- Week of January 23rd – concept paper draft, research how to write a book proposal
- Week of January 30th – send e-mails and letters to various participants requesting their assistance; continue to research book proposals; continue testing ideas with West Seneca East Jazz Band; research competing and complimenting materials.
- Week of February 6th – concept paper final draft; start writing outlines of chapters for proposals; write cover letters, title, subtitle; start developing material for external testing.
- Week of February 13th – Show week at West Seneca East, not much work gets done on anything else; read competing and complimenting books and materials.
- Week of February 20th – Deliver developed materials for external testing to various involved people.
- Week of February 27th – Write overview and organizing scheme, marketing and promotions section, and length and delivery statement.
- Week of March 6th – Write credentials section, chapter summaries, and sample chapters;
- Week of March 13th – Hopefully start to get back results from field testing. Put results into written form. Write supporting materials section.
- Week of March 20th – Compile all materials into draft project. Send out draft project to mentor Music teachers and English teachers.
- Week of March 27th – Look over project to make any additional changes needed.
- Week of April 3rd – Get back project from mentor teachers; make changes according to their feedback.
- Week of April 10th – Rewrites of draft project; hand in for critique
- Week of April 17th – Rewrites of Draft into final copy
- Week of April 24th – Printing and Binding
- Week of May 1st – Hand in final copy for grading.

Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:

Aebersold, J. (1992). *How to play jazz and improvise*. New Albany, Indiana: Jamey Aebersold Jazz.

Elliott, D. (1995). *Music matters: A new philosophy of music education*. New York: Oxford University Press

Green, B., & Gallwey, W. T. (1986). *The inner game of music*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday.

Nachmanovitch, S. (1990). *Free play: Improvisation in life and art.* New York: Tarchar/Putnam.

Werner, K. (1996). *Effortless mastery: Liberating the master musician within*. New Albany, Indiana: Jamey Aebersold Jazz.