

Peace-Building Project

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## Introduction and Background

When tasked with the admirable and challenging work of peacebuilding through music at East Rochester High School, it is helpful to embrace the thoughts and advice of authors found in Olivier Urbain's book, *Music and Conflict Transformation: Harmonies and Dissonances in Geopolitics* (2015). Felicity Laurence, for instance, provides a close investigation of empathy and the intricacies at work in developing a "feeling of oneness" (p. 18). Some have even suggested that "empathy may be the single most important quality which must be nurtured in order to give peace a fighting chance" (p. 15). At the end of her chapter, Laurence provides a detailed definition of empathy that, I believe, lays an admirable framework and vision of what I look for as evidence of success in peacebuilding efforts: "In empathizing, we, while retaining fully the sense of our own distinct consciousness, enter actively and imaginatively into others' inner states to understand how they experience their world and how they are feeling, reaching out to what we perceive as similar while accepting difference, and experiencing our own resulting feelings, ..., within a context in which we care to respect and acknowledge their human dignity and our shared humanity" (p. 24). My school's motto that is heard and chanted by students, faculty, and staff alike is simply, "We are ER!" The feelings of oneness and unity are implied in this rally cry. However, as with any community, there are differences and conflicts that require empathy in the form of active imagination to resolve ongoing conflict. In my role as the high school chorus teacher, I have a great opportunity and platform to provide peace-building experiences for the diverse students and staff at East Rochester. And, when I become aware of conflicts and dissonances, I must stay in the room with my school community and nurture empathy so that peace "has a fighting chance" (Urbain, 2015, p. 15).

In the section of Urbain's book titled "Politics," authors Anne-Marie Gray and Baruch Whitehead tackle subjects of political and social unrest in the 1990s apartheid in South Africa, and the US Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s (pp. 63-92). Both authors speak of racial conflicts and the importance of empathizing - viewing the conflict from the other person's perspective. Gray points to a time of common protest a century ago when white labor unions were joined by police officers and black South Africans to jointly protest by singing "The Red Flag" and the "Internationale" (p. 73). Whitehead adds that we should be willing to take a close look at the problems that separate us "in order to create peaceful dialogue" (p. 78). The chapter that follows Gray and Whitehead's work, by Karen Abi-Ezzi, takes it one step further. Abi-Ezzi's social-constructionist view of the music and the work of Gilad Atzmon provides a "third way" (p. 99)

of building music that bridges two conflicting groups (even those who would want to go to war with one another).

While I don't believe there are any groups at East Rochester that desire to go to war with each another, I do believe there are divisions and conflicts over race, gender, sexuality, class, and hierarchies of athletics and academics. To provide a peace building experience for the school, I would like to find a third way (and a fourth or a fifth) in order to bridge some of these conflicts so that we can all reach out to what we perceive as similar while still accepting differences (as Laurence so eloquently said [p. 24]). It is my hope that I find a way to utilize June Boyce-Tillman's ideas of building peace "from the bottom up" (Adams, 2015) even as we keep George Kent's thoughts on "unpeaceful" music in mind (pp. 104-111). There must be a balance in our approach. There is a third way. My approach is working through and with the East Rochester High School Chorus.

### **Project Description**

#### **Purpose**

In her efforts to create multicultural performances that involve audience members and performers alike, the Rev. Professor June Boyce-Tillman MBE has become the "weaver" (Urbain, 2015, p. 215) of empathic and connecting musical experiences that value a collaborative approach at the University of Winchester, UK. Boyce-Tillman's model of a director/composer serving as a "weaver" is one that values democratic collaboration, equality, and inclusion (as opposed to the traditional Western classical music model involving a "benevolent dictator" [p.215]). Through her work, I am inspired to do the same in a high school setting in East Rochester, NY. My goal is to leverage my position as a chorus director to create peaceful and empathic connections throughout the entire student community with Felicity Laurence's understanding of peacebuilding in mind: "reaching out to what we perceive as similar while accepting difference" (Urbain, 2015, p. 24).

Boyce-Tillman has created a few of these experiences in Winchester Cathedral in recent years (Adams, 2015). Even this year, during the COVID-19 pandemic, she has collaborated over the waves of the internet to connect people across the globe with a musical peacebuilding event called *Space for Peace* (Music Centre, 2020). Here I attempt a similar kind of event at East Rochester High School – building bridges between the diverse student interest groups present at the school. Some of these groups include, but are not limited to, Roc2Change, LGBTQ+ advocacy club,

athletics, drama, art, music, and science Olympiad. A school motto or chant that is frequently heard at East Rochester High School is “We are ER!” My goal is to use this collective identifier in a musical way to bring together the school and community during a performance using the creative and musical gifts found in my High School chorus class.

**Defining Terms.**

In the following timetables and descriptions I have used the terms *macro* and *micro* to define the large and small groupings and cultures that make up my High School Chorus at East Rochester. Macro group may also refer to the broader culture of the entire student body and/or school community during Phase 4: *Perform/Participate*.

## Timetables – page 1

## Project Overview.

Project Phase	Approx. Time	Description	Why?
Phase 1 <i>Gather/Create</i>	1 month	Project participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn safeguard values from Musicians Without Borders (MWB)</li> <li>Engage with peacebuilding micro group activities</li> <li>Create acrostic poems building macro identity</li> <li>Share micro group distinctives through selected recorded music presented as group playlists</li> <li>See <b>Timetables - page 2</b> for more details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To construct group identities (macro and micro)</li> <li>To engage and welcome everyone</li> <li>To collaborate creatively</li> <li>To bridge subcultural boundaries</li> <li>To build an empathetic school culture and identity</li> <li>To learn about the diversity of musical preferences within our collective culture</li> </ul>
Phase 2 <i>Arrange/Plan</i>	1-3 months	Lead arranger will invite representatives from project participants to arrange and plan a peacebuilding composition in the model of Boyce-Tillman's vision and work as expressed in her <i>Space for Peace</i> events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain a democratic and collaborative team approach to the peacebuilding composition</li> <li>To balance idealistic and realistic details and goals</li> <li>To create rehearsal plan</li> </ul>
Phase 3 <i>Rehearse/Reflect</i>	1-3 months	Project participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rehearse micro group responses as separate groups</li> <li>Rehearse macro group refrain</li> <li>Rehearse entire piece</li> <li>Reflect and adjust as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain a democratic and collaborative team approach as the piece is constructed and edited as needed</li> <li>To prepare for the concert performance</li> </ul>
Phase 4 <i>Perform/Participate</i>	10-20 minutes (within a 90 minute concert)	Project participants will perform the peacebuilding composition for the entire school community which will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An introductory speech</li> <li>An in-concert audience rehearsal</li> <li>The final performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To engage the entire school community</li> <li>To inform the audience of project values and goals</li> <li>To build peace that extends to and through all concert attendees</li> </ul>
Phase 5 <i>Review/Celebrate</i>	60 minutes (or one class period)	Project participants will review and celebrate the peacebuilding project and reflect on the highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive musical outcomes</li> <li>Positive peacebuilding outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To celebrate hard work</li> <li>To solidify important memories</li> <li>To describe and validate evidential outcomes of the project</li> <li>To continue future peacebuilding efforts</li> </ul>

## Timetables – page 2

Phase One Overview - *Gather/Create.*

Phase Section	Time	Description	Why?
Section 1 <i>MWB Values</i>	50 minutes Spread over 10 classes (5 minutes each)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MWB values are posted on the wall at the beginning of the year</li> <li>Participants will spend 5 minutes free writing about each of the five MWB values in a Google Form</li> <li>Participants will spend 5 minutes discussing each of the five MWB values with the macro group</li> <li>See <b>Timetables – page 3</b> for more details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>To build safeguards into the cultural identity of the macro group</i></li> <li><i>To engage and welcome everyone's ideas</i></li> </ul>
Section 2 <i>MWB Activities</i>	60 minute class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three MWB activities are described with video examples</li> <li>Micro groups choose one of three MWB activities to participate in</li> <li>Participants create their own improvised composition</li> <li>Micro groups present compositions to macro group</li> <li>See <b>Timetables – page 4</b> for more details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>To build micro group cohesion and unity</i></li> <li><i>To welcome everyone into creative and improvisatory expression</i></li> <li><i>To foster peacebuilding within the macro group during presentations</i></li> <li><i>To reinforce MWB values</i></li> </ul>
Section 3 <i>Macro Identity Acrostic</i>	60 minute class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acrostic poem activity is described</li> <li>"We Shall Overcome" Loftus story is given as meaningful example</li> <li>Micro groups create acrostic based on macro identity</li> <li>Micro groups present poems to macro group</li> <li>See <b>Timetables – page 5</b> for more details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>To construct a macro identity through democratic and collaborative creativity.</i></li> <li><i>To build an empathetic culture at the macro level</i></li> </ul>
Section 4 <i>Group Playlist</i>	60 minute class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main idea of distinctives expressed through musical choices is described</li> <li>Group Playlist activity is described</li> <li>Micro groups participate by identifying three music clips (10-20 seconds each) that reflect their group identity and cultural distinctives</li> <li>Micro groups present group playlists to macro group</li> <li>See <b>Timetables – page 6</b> for more details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>To welcome and engage everyone</i></li> <li><i>To identify a diversity of musical preferences within the united whole</i></li> <li><i>To reinforce MWB values of Inclusion and Equality</i></li> <li><i>To bridge subcultural boundaries</i></li> </ul>

**Timetables – page 3****Section 1 Overview - MWB Values.**

*A collection of 5-minute activities spread out over 10 classes.*

Section Part	Time	Description	Why?
Part 1 <i>Post MWB Values</i>	None	Post MWB values on the wall of the classroom with descriptions (See <b>Figure One</b> below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To build a classroom culture of peacebuilding</i></li> <li>• <i>To engage everyone in culture building</i></li> <li>• <i>To reinforce a democratic and team building approach to peacebuilding</i></li> </ul>
Part 2 <i>SAFETY – Free Writing</i>	5 minutes	Participants take a few minutes of free writing on the first MWB value, Safety, using a Google Form - Responses are collected for later use	
Part 3 <i>EQUALITY – Free Writing</i>	5 minutes	Same description as above – focusing on Equality	
Part 4 <i>INCLUSION – Free Writing</i>	5 minutes	Same description as above – focusing on Inclusion	
Part 5 <i>CREATIVITY – Free Writing</i>	5 minutes	Same description as above – focusing on Creativity	
Part 6 <i>QUALITY – Free Writing</i>	5 minutes	Same description as above – focusing on Quality	
Part 7 <i>SAFETY – Discussion</i>	5 minutes	Participants discuss Google Form writing responses based on the first MWB value: Safety	
Part 8 <i>EQUALITY – Discussion</i>	5 minutes	Same description as above – focusing on Equality	
Part 9 <i>INCLUSION – Discussion</i>	5 minutes	Same description as above – focusing on Inclusion	
Part 10 <i>CREATIVITY – Discussion</i>	5 minutes	Same description as above – focusing on Creativity	
Part 11 <i>QUALITY – Discussion</i>	5 minutes	Same description as above – focusing on Quality	

**Figure One.**

<b>SAFETY</b>	The group is a safe place for everyone.
<b>EQUALITY</b>	Everyone is welcome, everyone is honored, everyone can make music.
<b>INCLUSION</b>	Music provides a neutral space, where people from different backgrounds can meet through their common love of and engagement in music-making and are not defined by their differences.
<b>CREATIVITY</b>	Using the creativity of individual and as a group we can experience the connecting power of shared ownership in music.
<b>QUALITY</b>	We strive for a high quality of music-making, as this leads to a higher sense of connection and empathy.
<b>Peacebuilding Values (Musicians Without Borders, 2019)</b>	

## Timetables – page 4

**Section 2 Overview - MWB Activities.***(See Instructions for an in-depth description of the activities below)*

Section Part	Time	Description	Why?
Part 1 - Warm-Up: <i>Body Percussion</i>	0:00-0:05	Invite participants into the Body Percussion MWB activity as a warm-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To build collective vulnerability and macro group engagement</i></li> </ul>
Part 2 - Micro Groups: <i>Form and Establish</i>	0:05-0:20	Create micro groups based on top school-related interests.  Each newly formed micro group participates in a brief icebreaker.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To engage everyone</i></li> <li>• <i>To build relationships of empathy and understanding</i></li> <li>• <i>To establish micro group unity</i></li> </ul>
Part 3 - MWB Values: <i>Review</i>	0:20-0:25	Leader briefly reviews MWB values for participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To reestablishing safety, purpose, and classroom culture</i></li> </ul>
Part 4 - MWB Activities: <i>Overview</i>	0:25-0:35	Leader describes three MWB activities by either showing videos or asking brave volunteers to participate in front of the macro group.  The three activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body Percussion (already executed at the macro level!)</li> <li>• The Virtual Machine</li> <li>• The Human Orchestra</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To provide choices to micro groups</i></li> <li>• <i>To explain each activity before inviting people to participate</i></li> <li>• <i>To clear up any confusion</i></li> </ul>
Part 5 - MWB activities: <i>Participate and Create</i>	0:35-0:45	Micro groups participates in one of the three MWB activities while preparing to present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To collaborate creatively</i></li> <li>• <i>To build collective vulnerability</i></li> <li>• <i>To construct micro group identities</i></li> </ul>
Part 6 – MWB activities: <i>Perform/Present</i>	0:45-0:55	Micro groups are invited to present to the macro group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To engage and welcome everyone</i></li> <li>• <i>To build collective vulnerability at the macro level</i></li> </ul>
Part 7 – Closure: <i>Reflect and Build</i>	0:55-1:00	The macro group reflects upon the days' activities.  The leader gives a brief overview of what will occur in the next section while also mentioning the larger goals of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To build an empathetic culture and identity within the classroom</i></li> <li>• <i>To give processing time and meaning</i></li> <li>• <i>To keep larger purpose in mind</i></li> </ul>



## Timetables – page 5

**Section 3 Overview - Macro Identity Acrostic.***(See Instructions for an in-depth description of the activities below)*

Section Part	Time	Description	Why?
Part 1 Warm-up: <i>Body Percussion</i>	0:00-0:05	Invite participants into the Body Percussion MWB activity as a warm-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To build collective vulnerability and macro group engagement</i></li> </ul>
Part 2 Micro Groups: <i>Reassemble and Reflect</i>	0:05-0:10	Each micro group participates in a brief discussion, reflecting upon the MWB activity they chose last time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To engage everyone</i></li> <li>• <i>To reinforce past learning outcomes</i></li> <li>• <i>To establish micro group unity</i></li> </ul>
Part 3 MWB Values: <i>Review</i>	0:10-0:15	Leader briefly reviews MWB values for participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To reestablishing safety, purpose, and classroom culture</i></li> </ul>
Part 4 Macro Identity Acrostic: <i>Overview</i>	0:15-0:25	<p>Leader describes the Acrostic poem activity while showing the “We Shall Overcome” example provided by Alyssa Loftus (used with permission)</p> <p><b>Disclaimer:</b> For East Rochester Schools, the phrase “We Are ER” is used for the acrostic, but other phrases can be used as long as it reflects a collective school identity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To provide meaning and depth to collective identity</i></li> <li>• <i>To clear up any confusion about the activity</i></li> </ul>
Part 5 Macro Identity Acrostic: <i>Participate and Create</i>	0:25-0:45	Micro groups each participate by creatively constructing their own version of an acrostic poem (we’re using “We Are ER”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To creatively collaborate</i></li> <li>• <i>To find collective meaning and purpose</i></li> <li>• <i>To construct a collective macro identity</i></li> </ul>
Part 6 Macro Identity Acrostic: <i>Present</i>	0:45-0:55	Micro groups are invited to read their group created acrostic poems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To bridge subcultural boundaries</i></li> <li>• <i>To build unity and understanding within the micro and macro groups</i></li> <li>• <i>To engage everyone</i></li> </ul>
Part 7 Closure: <i>Reflect and Build</i>	0:55-1:00	<p>The macro group reflects upon the days’ activities.</p> <p>The leader gives a brief overview of what will occur in the next section while also mentioning the larger goals of the project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To build an empathetic culture and identity within the classroom</i></li> <li>• <i>To give processing time and meaning</i></li> <li>• <i>To keep larger purpose in mind</i></li> </ul>

## Timetables – page 6

**Section Four Overview – Group Playlists.***(See Instructions for an in-depth description of the activities below)*

Section Part	Time	Description	Why?
Part 1 Warm-up: <i>Body Percussion</i>	0:00-0:05	Invite participants into the Body Percussion MWB activity as a warm-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To build collective vulnerability and macro group engagement</i></li> </ul>
Part 2 Micro Groups: <i>Reassemble and Reflect</i>	0:05-0:12	Each micro group participates in a brief discussion, reflecting upon the MWB activity they chose last time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To engage everyone</i></li> <li>• <i>To reinforce past learning outcomes</i></li> <li>• <i>To establish micro group unity</i></li> </ul>
Part 3 MWB Values: <i>Review</i>	0:12-0:15	Leader briefly reviews MWB values for participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To reestablishing safety, purpose, and classroom culture</i></li> </ul>
Part 4 Group Playlist <i>Overview</i>	0:15-0:20	<p>Leader describes the main idea of the Group Playlist activity – that each micro group will have its own cultural identity and expression that is distinctive from other micro groups</p> <p>Leader describes the Group Playlist activity and how it connects with the main idea of cultural diversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To describe the main concept of accepting and valuing cultural diversity</i></li> <li>• <i>To clear up any confusion about the activity</i></li> </ul>
Part 5 Group Playlist <i>Participate and Create</i>	0:20-0:40	Micro groups participate by collaboratively and democratically identifying three music clips (10-20 seconds each) that reflect their group identity and cultural distinctives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To maintain a democratic and collaborative team approach</i></li> <li>• <i>To bridge subcultural boundaries for the sake of peace and unity</i></li> <li>• <i>To build an empathetic school culture and identity</i></li> <li>• <i>To celebrate our cultural distinctives at macro and micro levels</i></li> </ul>
Part 6 Group Playlist <i>Present</i>	0:40-0:50	Micro groups present their Group Playlist to the macro group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To bridge subcultural boundaries for the sake of peace and unity</i></li> <li>• <i>To celebrate our cultural distinctives at macro and micro levels</i></li> </ul>
Part 7 Closure: <i>Reflect and Build</i>	0:50-1:00	<p>The macro group reflects upon the days' activities.</p> <p>The leader gives a brief overview of what will occur in the next section while also mentioning the larger goals of the project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>To build an empathetic culture and identity within the classroom</i></li> <li>• <i>To give processing time and meaning</i></li> <li>• <i>To keep larger purpose in mind</i></li> </ul>

**Instructions for Phase 1 Sections****Section 1: *MWB Values***

Section 1: *MWB Values* begins with the suggestion to post the values from an organization called Musicians without Borders that works to build peace between diverse cultures. These values are described in **Figure One on Timetables – page 3**. These values are intended to permeate the developing peacebuilding culture within a classroom through a multi-month peacebuilding project. The ten short activities that follow in this section can be utilized in many different ways. They are intended to be spilt up across ten days of instruction to provide time for participants to ruminate over each value. The first five free writing activities involve creating a Google Form for participants to fill out such as this one: <https://forms.gle/QkoYzmsicvp6Vrrk8>. During the remaining five discussions, the Google Form responses are collected and shared according to each participants comfort level (specified within the Form). The aim here is to keep the discussion flowing with student responses, not leader responses. This will ensure a democratic and collaborative approach from the beginning. Right from the start of the project, Vegar Jordanger’s view of “collective vulnerability” (Urbain, 2015, p. 129) is of utmost importance.

**Section 2: *MWB Activities***

The schedule for Section 2 begins with an MWB activity called Body Percussion: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFRdvxsgJPQ&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFRdvxsgJPQ&feature=emb_logo) (Musicians Without Borders, 2016). This activity is used as a way to begin the next three sections of Phase One: *Gather/Create*. It is an activity that promotes unity and a feeling of oneness as participants follow the leader who continually adds new rhythmic elements to an ever evolving and improvisatory groove. What follows is an in-depth description of a suggested procedure of the activity. There are many variations and options while keeping in mind the main purposes of the activity: to build collective vulnerability and engagement at the macro group level.

**Body Percussion.**

call response

3

5

- Show and play the rhythms, don't speak too much! Make sure everyone can see you. The best way is to stand in a circle.
- Get everyone's attention by clapping a simple rhythmical pattern that everyone can respond to.
- If not everyone is responding, repeat the same pattern until you have everyone's attention.
- Give attention to everyone in the circle. Invite them with your gestures to follow you.
- After using your hands to clap, start using other body parts, such as shoulders, feet, back, etc.
- Use the same rhythmic pattern with different body parts: explore the different sounds. This will be easier because the participants will already know the pattern.
- Now add your voice to the patterns: sing the rhythm with words or syllables. By using your voice, it will be easier for some participants to remember and play the patterns.
- Establish two different patterns, and make sure everyone can follow them. Repeat each pattern a few times in a call-response.
- Split the group into two. First practice one pattern with one group, while the other group just observes. Then do the same with the other group, with the other pattern.
- Now start together.
- Exchange patterns between the groups.
- After they repeat the pattern 4 times, then comes the break: count to 4, and stop the group either with a big clap, or an extra bar of call-response (Collins, 2020a).

***Form and Establish Micro Groups.***

In the next part of Section 2 *micro* groups are formed and establish that remain together in collaborative creation and performance throughout the peacebuilding project. The micro groups are focused around school interests such as athletics, art, band, academics, LGBTQ+ advocacy groups, chess club, religious clubs, and racial conciliatory groups like Roc2Change in Rochester, NY. To form these groups, I suggest either using another google form to privately connect the dots. Optionally, you may choose to have students raise their hands for questions like these: “When do you feel most at home when you’re on school grounds?” or “During the week, when do you feel most energized and alive at school?”

Once groups have been formed, the plan found in Section 2: *MWB activities* provides group members a few minutes to relate to one another by answering ice-breaker questions like “What food do you enjoy the most?” and “Why did you choose this group?” Each person should have an opportunity to speak in their micro groups if they feel comfortable to do so.

***Review of MWB Values.***

This brief part of Sections 2, 3, and 4, should only take a moment or too as the leader reminds everyone of the MWB values posted on the wall. It is a chance to reestablish the boundaries and practices in the classroom as well as the values that permeate the peacebuilding project. These moments need not be drawn out as the participants have engaged with each value in-depth during Section 1: *MWB values*.

***MWB Activities: Overview, Participate, and Create.***

These activities make up the bulk of Section 2. The leader should make sure to provide the full allotment of time for these micro group activities even if it means extending the plan into an additional class on the following day. These activities provide a chance for the micro group members to bond as they construct a sub-cultural group identity. *Body Percussion* is the first of three choices given to the micro groups. See above for a video and full description of this activity. The other two choices are called the Virtual Machine and the Human Orchestra. They are described below.

***The Virtual Machine.***

Choose something for the group “to build” through improvisatory mime. It could be a chocolate bar, a cuckoo clock, a flying bicycle, let your imagination go here. It is usually best to decide this before presenting the activity or most

of your session will be taken up by people arguing about what the machine “will build” and as a result safety, inclusion and equality might be dissolved. Talk through the things that might be required for the machine in order to build the item but try not to let people get too bogged down in the details. There are two ways to present this activity:

1. Seated, leader stands up and starts his/her motion. Going around the circle, each person adds their part of the machine when it comes to their turn, through a brief miming motion connected to the virtual machine. Each person models their movements to include a repetitive sound. (The voice of experience says that as the first person to start is going to be doing this for a quite a while, so they should choose something they can sustain!) Once everyone is involved with their miming motion, play around with sounds only, movements only, getting louder, getting softer, faster, slower etc. This version is safe because everyone has their own personal space.
2. During the activity, anyone can enter “the machine” as they wish and not have to wait until it’s their turn in the circle. Participants add their sound and movement when they feel ready to join. This version is safe because it eliminates potential fears that it’s almost my turn and instead allow participants to start when they feel ready (Collins, 2020b).

### *The Human Orchestra.*

Each person thinks of a vocal sound. The conductor forms two groups: the people with short sounds and the people long sounds together, then gives non-verbal conducting directions such as start, stop, louder, quieter and combines the groups into a improvisatory performance.

The conductor can give a specific rhythm to the short sounds group through visual directions. For example, the conductor could motion by pointing one finger at a flattened hand in the rhythm he/she would like them to play. Divide the groups as you like, you could invite solos or duos, etc. by cuing them in/out of the performance.

Remember to include everyone! If doing this with younger or high energy participants consider getting everyone started before dividing the groups (entrances/exits) so that everyone is occupied right from the start. Have fun! Invite others to be the conductor - this can open a great conversation about what we need from our leaders and what leaders need for the people we are trying to lead (Collins, 2020b).

***Perform/Present.***

During the Perform/Present part of Section 2, micro groups are invited to perform or present their activity to the full classroom (the macro group). It is important for the leader to ensure the MWB values are in place so that participants feel safe. Micro groups are encouraged to perform but they are not forced. This is where collective vulnerability can be quite meaningful especially if bravery and kindness are valued and rewarded.

***Closure.***

The final step in the plans for Sections 2, 3, and 4 includes an opportunity to reflect and process on the day's events. The leader may ask questions like these: "What activity do you wish you could participate in next time?" or "Which micro group practiced the MWB values most effectively or creatively?" After a short period of dialogue, the leader may briefly sketch ideas for the next section or phase of the peacebuilding project. It is helpful here to remind participants of the larger purpose and impact of representing and enacting cultural peacebuilding within a diverse school culture.

***Section 3: Macro Identity Acrostic***

Section 3: *Macro Identity Acrostic* once again begins with the *Body Percussion* warm up. Look for a detailed description of this activity on page 12. Following the warm up activity, micro groups are instructed to reassemble as they did during Section 2 (based upon school interests). If there are new participants, quickly and discretely find them a group they can immediately join keeping in mind MWB Values of Safety and Inclusion. As the groups reassemble, give them a few minutes to reflect upon their chosen activity from Section 2. You may ask them to talk to their group members about what moment felt awkward or weird, or what moments felt exciting, silly, or creative. At about the ten minute mark, the leader will briefly remind and review the MWB values. The length of this reminder is at the discretion of the project leader as they assess the classroom's climate, adjusting as needed. Following this review, the bulk of the day is focused on having each group construct a Macro Identity Acrostic.

***Macro Identity Acrostic.***

At East Rochester High School, we have a popular phrase that we chant at school assemblies or before sports games. It is "We are ER!" For our peacebuilding project, participants create an acrostic poem using that phrase (giving each beginning letter a short sentence). In this case, the letters are: **W-E-A-R-E-E-R**. The created sentences can be

rhythmic, following a rap-like phraseology, or it can be ametric - having no established rhythmic pattern. The purpose of the activity is to construct a macro identity by listening to the micro group responses at the end of class. To set up and explain this activity and its potential for impact, share this video of the song, "We Shall Overcome" from the Michael Brown protest in Washington DC,

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=6&v=Ygae41nQ4w4&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=Ygae41nQ4w4&feature=emb_logo), and use this written post as an example from my colleague, Alyssa Loftus (used with permission):

For this activity, I was able to gather my mom and my two very loyal and supportive friends over Zoom. All 3 of my participants know "We Shall Overcome," but we sang through it a few times to center ourselves into the right headspace to complete this activity. My two friends and I are actively involved in the LGBTQ+ community, and I think it is very important to shed light on this community within our schools, so I decided to focus this activity towards the injustices LGBTQ+ individuals face throughout their daily lives. In light of recent and long-time tragedies and prejudices, the word chosen for this activity is Justice.

My mom's acrostic:

J: We shall join hands together

U: We shall uproot prejudice

S: We shall shine our light

T: We shall take up space

I: We shall inhabit our world without fear

C: We shall not cancel who we are

E: We shall end this fight

My friends' acrostic:

J: We shall journey on towards light

U: We shall help you understand

S: We shall seek what's right

T: We shall tell our stories



I: We shall insist for equal rights

C: We shall correct what has been done

E: We shall embolden each other

Each party had ten minutes to complete their acrostic activity. I gave the opportunity for both my mom and my two friends to sing the lyrics they have come up with, but both parties felt more comfortable speaking the lyrics as they would a poem. So, they did. My mom went first, followed by my friends. After they spoke, we all sang, "Deep in my heart, we do believe, we shall overcome someday". My mom, in particular, was very moved by the lyrics my friends came up with. My mom, a very emotional and empathetic heterosexual woman, started tearing up in response. My friend and my mom then had a discussion about some of the struggles she has faced in coming out to her family and struggling with her identity. Although my mom cannot directly relate as she has not been through that experience, she was able to see the depth of pain my friend had gone through. She said it has strengthened her candor in ally-ship and that she wishes to be more outspoken of an ally in the future. My friend was very touched by this and said that she wishes all people would be as accepting and supportive. Without this activity, my friends and my mom probably wouldn't have had this conversation. I believe it was cathartic for my friend and eye-opening for my mom (Loftus, 2020).

Once everyone is ready with their own acrostic poems, ask a representative from each group to perform or read their acrostic poems. If a group isn't willing to read aloud, see if someone else from another group would read for them.

### ***Closure.***

Closure for this day of activities is at the discretion of the leader but the intent is to find the connecting points between all micro group poems. Ask the macro group, "What are the similarities found in the poems?" and "What are the differences?" The last Section of Phase 1 focuses on communicating micro group distinctives along with learning to live in harmony in a diverse culture.

### ***Section 4: Group Playlist***

The peripheral parts of Section 4 can be found on pages 11-15 of this project. During the distinctive element of the final section of Phase 1: *Gather/Create*, participants focus their time on defining micro group distinctives in the activity *Group Playlist*. In the Group Playlist overview, the leader describes the main concept of the activity which is

accepting and valuing cultural diversity. For a fuller explanation of what this acceptance looks like through the lens of empathy, read or paraphrase the quote by Felicity Laurence to your participants found in the Introduction to this project on page 2. Once the participants understand and grasp this concept, ask them to work together in their micro groups to create a 30-60 second playlist of three songs (10-20 second clips each) on YouTube, Spotify, or some other music streaming platform. The purpose of the playlist should be to identify group distinctives and identifiers found in the people of the micro group, *and any other students who the group can think of that would identify with their group interest*. For instance, if the group is interested in athletics, they look for song clips that they would listen to while working out, or practicing, or getting ready for a game. Once the playlist has been collaboratively created, reassemble the full class in the macro group. Each playlist is shared with everyone and participants are encouraged to ask questions and make comments keeping in mind the MWB values. Optionally, groups could submit their playlists and the leader plays them, having the macro group guess which micro group each playlist came from.

### **Video Links.**

June Boyce-Tillman *Space for Peace* interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P83L3s9gti8>

*Body Percussion* activity: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFRdvsqJPQ&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFRdvsqJPQ&feature=emb_logo)

*We Shall Overcome*: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=6&v=Yqae41nQ4w4&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=Yqae41nQ4w4&feature=emb_logo)

*A Virtual Collection of Space for Peace 2020* (University of Winchester Music Centre, 2020):

<https://www.facebook.com/WinchesterMusicCentre/videos/space-for-peace-virtual-sending-peace-to-the-world/617698865491421/>

### **Helpful Information and Suggestions.**

#### ***The Scope of the Project.***

My peacebuilding project is expansive and meant to be implemented throughout most of a school year from September to April or May. In the project description I have provided details for Phase 1 only. The project is something I am very passionate about and I plan to develop the details of Phases 2-5 as the year unfolds and as COVID-19 allows. With that in mind, I have written this project so that Phase 1 can optionally be a stand-alone unit of peacebuilding that

would work in most high school music classrooms. I have chosen to implement it in my high school chorus but that is solely because I plan to complete Phases 2-5 and develop a performance in the style of a Boyce-Tillman collaborative composition. I am confident that a different variation of Phases 2-5 could be written to suit a different performing ensemble or classroom experience. Furthermore, I believe the groundwork laid in Phase 1 can transfer to other collaborative peacebuilding experiences not yet imagined.

### ***Ensuring Safety.***

During Phase 1, I have laid out numerous (and possibly redundant) opportunities to clarify values especially pertaining to participant safety. When cultivating a mass experience of collective vulnerability, I feel one must continually be aware of participants comfort level. Otherwise, the peacebuilding exercise will have the opposite effect. Continue to invite rather than coerce or push. I say this from my own failed experiences of enthusiastically pushing which greatly affected students' willingness to participate further. With that said, there is no harm in providing gentle encouragement and fun incentives for participants to step out of their comfort zones. Ultimately, though, participants need to make their own decisions for the peacebuilding effect to be lasting and impactful.

### ***Final notes.***

Sections 2-4 of Phase 1 may be stretched out into two 30 minute class periods if needed. Along with those timing modifications, I should mention that in light of COVID-19 quarantine, I was unable to test the exact timing of all MWB activities with a full 40-60 person High School chorus. I am sure that the timetables listed above may be tweaked for greater impact in the future. I invite anyone to take what I have written here and amend or adjust the project as needed to fit your own situation. Finally, I am thankful to Alyssa Loftus for allowing me to utilize her full post that documents the experience with the Acrostic activity.

### ***Conclusion.***

The development of my Peace-Building project is an endeavor I intend to continue in the coming months and years. As I reflect back on my previous career as a church music director, I realize that I was able to implement a few of the ideals that I recently discovered while reading Olivier Urbain's work. Taking the course Peacebuilding through Music at SUNY Potsdam, NY, with Professor Caron Collins has provided the content, framework, depth, and meaning for my peacebuilding efforts as I move forward as a high school chorus teacher. I hope that I continue to become what Boyce-

Tillman calls a “weaver” in all of my teaching, directing, composing, and peacebuilding efforts (Urbain, 2020, p. 215), weaving together the creative ideas, solutions, personalities, and musical expressions of my students. I end this presentation with a quote from Baruch Whitehead in his chapter on the US Civil Rights Movement:

*I believe that peace has to be more than the absence of war or conflict. Peace, to me, has to encompass the totality of human nature, experiences and emotions. Music is one way in which we, as humans, can connect. Music can be a catalyst to peaceful harmony on earth... When used properly music can be a framework for constructive conflict transformation, which will result in a peaceful state (Urbain, 2020, p. 78)*

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