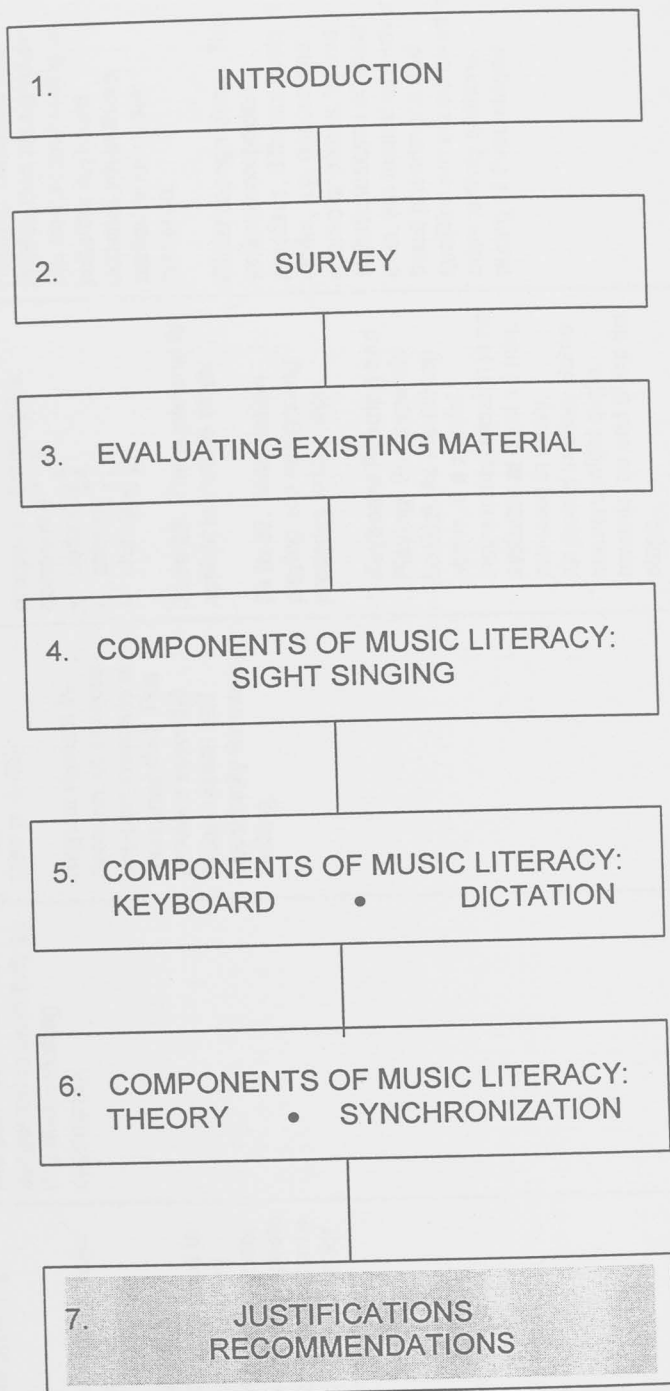


CHAPTER 7

Justifications and Recommendations



CHAPTER 7

Justifications and recommendations

7.1 Measuring the *Music Literacy* programme as proposed

The *Music Literacy* programme originated for meeting, and was shaped according to, the specific needs of various prospective music makers in South Africa. Requirements for an ideal music literacy programme (see 2.3.5) emerged from the personal needs of individuals and the needs of groups in various sub-fields in music education. All basic learning principles and essential qualities for effective learning (see 2.3.2) were constantly borne in mind while constructing the programme and designing the exercises. Additionally, the practicality and other advantages of group work (see 2.3.3.2) were always taken into account. All material was continuously empirically tested by the author with assistance of colleagues in various sub-fields of music education. Adjustments and changes were regularly made accordingly. Eventually the final programme, including all components with learning material, proved to be successful with representative learners/students, of the various sub-fields in music education: the report back from colleagues and adult students all attested to the effectiveness of the entire programme. In the author's own experience, the total outcome and also the results in every component were most satisfactory. Thus, the proposed *Music Literacy* programme has already been shown to be a vital workable supporting system in the various sub-fields, meeting the basic needs of those concerned, and therefore, also the set requirements for an effective programme. At the same time it satisfies the conditions of the current OBE.

7.2 Justification of the proposed *Music Literacy* programme by answering the research questions

The sub-questions, related to the main research question, are the following:

7.2.1

Will music literacy provide for the basic need of the majority of prospective music makers in South Africa?

To many learners and educators, the ability merely to read sheet music might initially seem to be their basic need. However, the ability to read notated music with **understanding** and to have the insight and skills for **utilizing** sheet music, each

for her/his own purpose, describes the actual need. Once prospective music makers experience the practical outcomes which a true music literacy programme should offer, learners/educators admit and give credit to the specifications/qualities of such a programme.

The music reading abilities of some existing music makers in the various **sub-fields** in music education can be described as follows:

- Many a **choir leader or singer** in South Africa might be able to sing from solfa syllables and read rhythms.
- Many an **educator in general music classes** might be able to sing from solfa syllables and read rhythms.
- Usually, those learning to play an **instrument** or everyone receiving **voice training**, can soon play/sing basically from notation.
- **Independent learners** often learn the basics of staff notation in a theoretical way.
- At tertiary level, but even also at primary and secondary levels in school, **instrumental/vocal students** normally read music quite comfortably. This is often the case, whether a full-time or an in-service training student.

However, the ability

- to view music notation in its context,
- to analyze the whole and the particular,
- to adapt or arrange sheet music for practical use in specific sub-fields in music education and
- to do all this independently, remains the actual need.

Where the proposed **Music Literacy** programme was especially drawn up to fulfil this need and where it was personally tried out extensively by the author, this question can be answered positively and without any doubt.

7.2.2

Can a music literacy programme be developed and implemented, meeting the requirements of **Outcomes-based education**?

This question emerged only after all requirements for a music literacy programme were determined by the survey of this thesis and the proposed programme was almost finalized.

All needs of the various parties involved in the survey can be summarized as follows: Learners want to be able to make music directly and independently. To obtain this outcome (long-term goal), an effective music literacy programme was needed as facilitator in the music making process for all the various sub-fields of music. The music literacy programme should, however, in itself allow learners, from the very beginning, to experience music making. Thus, music making should take place in all items of the learning matter, i.e. during the learning process, in one or other way, to satisfy also the short-term needs of learners. This conclusion was the motivation for, and brought about the practical approach which also, eventually, determined the contents.

When studying the current outcomes-based education policy the author found it significant that the various goals, the learning procedures as well as the learning material of the proposed **Music Literacy** programme coincided with what is understood in OBE. The way the programme is designed and even the nature of the various exercises correspond with the principles of OBE. The reason can be found in the approach of the proposed programme, also mentioned above, for satisfying the needs of all involved, i.e.: **to be able to make music directly and independently**. The proposed **Music Literacy** programme serves as the facilitator in the music making process.

Various ways in which the requirements of OBE are met are illustrated below, through comparison and reference to the proposed programme. Reference is mainly to:

- the Preface, p. vi
- Basic learning principles in 2.3.2
- Essential qualities for effective learning in 2.3.2
- Prerequisites for successful group work in 2.3.3.3
- Specific requirements in 2.3.5
- Conventions for the various components with learning material
- Synchronization of the components in 6.2: II.

Together, these sections provide the core of the proposed **Music Literacy** programme, needed for measuring it against OBE. Detailed comparisons and reference are not under discussion here. They are perceivable only when specific lessons are designed and compiled. The various requirements of the OBE policy are taken one by one, as quoted on pp. 1-19 and 1-20. Each is accompanied by a few examples from the proposed **Music Literacy** programme.

- i. '...it encompasses what learners learn and what they are able to do at the end of the learning process.' This is described in detail in the Preface, p. vi.
- ii. '...high expectations of what learners can achieve.' The following examples are found within the requirements:
 - p. 2-28, no. ii. Systematic in all ways
 - no. iii. Sufficient repetition
 - p. 2-32, no. xvi. Differentiation opportunities.
- iii. '...learner-centred educational process.' As the requirements for the programme were compiled specifically for the needs of every learner, this quality is an integral part of the entire programme. It is demonstrated in the remarks, representative of the various learners (see pp. 2-2 to 2-9).
- iv. '...the process of learning is considered as important as what is learnt.' In the conventions of all components in the programme, the learning process is dealt with in particular. Learning material is mainly designed to facilitate the process of effective learning.
- v. '...an activity-based approach... to promote problem-solving and critical thinking.' The material for four of the five components represents physical activities, i.e. singing, playing and recognizing. The rest is demonstrated in the Preface and the following requirements:
 - p. 2-32, no. xv. Holistic approach
 - p. 2-33, no. xvii. Opportunities for creativity
 - no. xix. Immediate usability and
 - p. 2-34, no. xxii. Logic is exploited.

All of these examples from the proposed programme contribute to developing the kind of learner the NCS (see p. 1-19) aims to produce, with qualities such as confidence, independence, literate, multi-skilled, ability to participate in society, etc.

The introduction to the 'Training Manual', released by UNISA (see p. 1-19) is repeated here, i.e. 'OBE is **learner-centred**. Thus the accent falls on what the learner should **know, understand**, be able to **do** and be able to **become**, rather than what the educator strives to attain'. The way in which these four concepts are treated in the proposed programme, is clearly expounded in the Preface, p. vi. It is stated above and repeated here that the requirements for the proposed programme were compiled specifically for the needs of every learner. This quality is an integral part of the entire programme.

The holistic approach is, in this manual by UNISA (see p. 1-19), briefly referred to as head, heart and hands. From the proposed programme, only a few examples are taken from many possibilities:

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 'Head': | p. 2-29, no. v. | Musical sense |
| | p. 2-34, no. xxii. | Logic is exploited |
| 'Heart': | p. 2-29, no. vi. | Agreeableness of exercises |
| | p. 2-30, no. x. | Attractiveness in appearance |
| | no. xii. | Music making association |
| 'Hands': | p. 2-30, no. xi. | Limited writing by learners |
| | p. 2-31, no. xiv. | Maximum use of senses. |

In this manual the principles are described as 'clear focus, multiple opportunities, high expectations and reverse designing'.

Also here, only a few examples are given:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|---|
| 'Clear focus': | p. 2-29, no. vii. | Purposefulness |
| | p. 2-33, no. xix. | Immediate usability |
| 'Multiple opportunities': | p. 2-32, no. xvi. | Differentiation opportunities |
| | p. 5-12, no. 26 | Continual differentiating in group work |
| | p. 2-22, no. vii. | Competition |
| 'High expectations': | p. 5-34, no. 37 | Additional exercises |

p. 2-33, no. xvii. Opportunities for creativity

'Reverse designing': As music making is the ultimate goal of all concerned, this aspect is present throughout the entire programme. It is described as follows:

p. 2-29, no. vi. Agreeableness of exercises

no. vii. Purposefulness

p. 2-30, no. xii. Music making association

p. 2-32, no. xv. Holistic approach.

Bearing these comparisons in mind, the proposed **Music Literacy** programme serves as an ideal foundation in OBE for all prospective music makers in the various sub-fields of music education.

7.23

Can a music literacy programme be developed with which existing music educators can cope?

Existing music educators have diverse backgrounds, qualifications, most likely diverse experiences and are currently in totally different teaching situations/posts. While Curriculum 2005 is in an interim phase, demarcation of content in the various sub-fields of music education is not yet finalized. Thus, educator training courses in these areas are also in an interim phase. Whatever the ultimate particulars in each sub-field, the need for every music educator to be music literate, remains the only unchanging factor. In remote areas, at present, some general educators have the responsibility for arts education, including music. Such educators have few or even no music literacy skills.

The proposed **Music Literacy** programme was developed and is designed for educating the beginner, especially the late beginner, thus also the adult. All the learning matter has been extensively tried out amongst various adult learner groups with success. Although the material is designed for the total music illiterate person, the programme also provides for those with some background. Every component is preceded by its 'conventions' section. This contains all necessary explanations, guidelines for independent learners, hints for educators and information for applying the learning matter in differentiating, thus, providing multiple opportunities. In this way, educators with varying backgrounds and

different needs can select, run through, omit, refresh, recap, etc. Eventually, existing music educators can all cope with and all will benefit from the proposed **Music Literacy** programme.

7.24

Can prospective educators become appropriately qualified and can they develop the necessary skills in reasonable time?

Much depends on the background of the student. Music instrumental tuition and ballet training are known as two disciplines which need to begin at a very young age. Successful learners who started in their middle or late teens are exceptional.

However, the proposed **Music Literacy** programme was developed *inter alia* for late beginners with no background. In all components the prospective educator, who is a total beginner without any foundation, was especially provided for. It was demonstrated that not only can a total beginner become a music educator, but this can even happen in reasonable time. Once such students have become music literate according to the requirements determined through the survey in this thesis, they will have required some autonomy. Their sight singing and keyboard skills, their ability to analyze and arrange plus their knowledge will give them the insight to apply knowledge and skills and also to know how to further their studies for their specific specialized needs.

In a full-time course, students can complete the proposed **Music Literacy** programme in two years or even less, depending on how much time is spent on other non-related subjects. A full-time course with other music subjects such as music history, music education, choir training or wind/string instrument study, will be beneficial to the standard reached in music literacy. Subjects providing additional opportunities for continual application (apart from those in the programme) of knowledge and skills during the course, will naturally contribute to motivation and raising of the standard.

It can therefore confidently be stated that prospective educators can obtain appropriate qualifications and can develop the necessary skills within the normal duration of a tertiary course with the proposed **Music Literacy** programme as foundation.

7.25

Can anything be done to provide for learners/educators/amateurs in particular groups with special needs, and with strong dependence on music literacy, groups such as:

- people living in remote rural areas
- weak-sighted people
- the blind?

People living in remote rural areas in South Africa are often cut off from many educational and entertainment opportunities. For this reason such communities are often greatly dependent on their own music making resources, more so than those in urban areas. Learners, educators and amateurs in remote areas need a programme with specific qualities for studying mainly on their own.

The proposed *Music Literacy* programme was developed and the various components designed especially also to accommodate learners who study independently and educators who need much guidance and basic information while working on their own. As mentioned in 7.2.3, every component is preceded by its 'conventions' section which contains the necessary explanations and information for such learners. For educators with little or no background, there are hints and guidelines for applying the learning matter in differentiation. This also gives educators with varying backgrounds and different needs the opportunity to select so as to suit their specific needs. The learning matter in itself is accessible to both the two main groups, regarding background. A clear example for illustrating this in the *Music Literacy* programme is found in 5.1 **Keyboard Harmony**, the educator's manual. The exercises are notated on the staff for those who read staff notation. All exercises, however, are also described in detail for the learner/educator who is not acquainted with staff notation and who functions on her/his own. In the author's own experience, both these ways of presenting the exercises have been well received by the two main groups of educators.

It needs to be added that even though educators in rural areas are discussed here with other minority groups, they might be in the majority. In the current interim phase in education in South Africa, statistics are not available. However, the author's awareness of the strong needs of these learners/educators/ amateurs is reflected in 2.3.5 'Specific requirements' and eventually in the entire proposed *Music Literacy* programme.

The visually impaired, depending mainly on the sense of hearing, can just benefit from a music literacy programme designed according to the requirements mentioned in 2.3.5. Weak-sighted as well as blind learners and educators were amongst those through which the requirements for a music literacy programme were determined. Some requirements which specifically originated when the material had to be enlarged for the weak-sighted, are: general clarity and simplicity in appearance of learning matter, limited writing and most of all, the entire approach to music as 'the art of the ear' with the emphasis on practical learning, i.e. vocal, auditive and keyboard activities. The needs of the blind, when learning matter is converted to braille music notation, amount to the same requirements. The author was strongly guided by these particular needs when developing the proposed *Music Literacy* programme through personal experience with learners of both groups. The effectiveness of this programme for these visually impaired learners has so far also impressed some of their sighted educators and changed their general approach for the better, as was reported to the author.

7.2.6 The main research question on which this study is based, is the following:

What can be done to meet the needs of the wide spectrum of prospective music makers in South Africa?

Various factors play a part in solving the entire problem, as mentioned before (see 1.3). Solving the problem is not within the power of a single person. Besides, the wide spectrum of prospective music makers in South Africa have different needs which have to be satisfied in different ways and by different bodies and individuals, as discussed before (see 1.3). However, in the various sub-fields in music education specifically within the current OBE policy, as well as with other prospective music makers, there is one common factor: knowingly or unknowingly (see Britz 2002:1-20), the basic need with all concerned, is to become music literate.

In meeting this basic need, much, and for some concerned, most of their problems can be solved. An effective music literacy programme offers learners over and above musical knowledge and skills, also a degree of independence in musical thinking. This, in its turn, develops frankness, confidence, a spirit of enterprize, initiative for planning and eventually for solving some problems themselves. Consequent upon this, such positive actions from music makers can trigger positive reactions from authorities and others

responsible for removing some obstacles and for providing necessities. In this way, by beginning within the human resources, other role players can be persuaded to and even influenced and guided in determining syllabi, providing the necessary infrastructure, and even with financing.

7.3 Justification of furthering research in Music Theory

Before finalizing the **Music Theory** component, further research is necessary within the South African context. The necessity for theory is often questioned by various parties, and quite rightly. See pp. 2-3 to 2-9 for some of the reasons given in the informal survey. Building on this, the question can be asked: could all or most of the resistance to music theory have been prevented if learners experienced it as relevant? Whatever other minor objections there might be, the author is convinced that with actual relevance, such negative reactions could have been and will in future be eliminated. For this reason, it is the author's opinion that music theory which is not **relevant** in all respects may not be compulsory, generally in music education.

Learners studying the **Music Literacy** programme should be in no doubt of the necessity of the **Music Theory** component. Besides, before even commencing with the first phase in theory, they should already experience the need themselves. Once they have started, learners should be **convinced** of and **eager** for the regular activities of the theory section.

Music Theory is pre-eminently the component which lends itself to learners' experiencing of relevance. Thus, the responsibility rests mainly on the author of this component. Even though the **educator** plays an important role, the relevance of the component is determined by its compiler/selector/designer. This involves:

- Division of material and activities in **phases**.
- Compiling the various **exercises** in every phase.
- Providing **explanations** and illustrations for **learners** with the exercises.
- Determining essential **information** and background knowledge.
- Determining the specific **theoretical skills**.
- Offering **guidelines**, hints, suggestions and ideas for **educators** in implementing and synchronizing theory with the other components.

- Collecting and selecting **relevant pieces/extracts** which:
 - are easily playable/singable as far as possible
 - are suitable in/as various kinds of exercises
 - serve as effective illustrations/examples
 - provide material for application, analysis and for arranging in one or other way.

Relevance of **Music Theory** cuts two ways, as discussed above and can be recapped as follows:

- With every exercise and in all learning matter, learners must experience the relevance of those specific items to **practical music**. Thus, what might seem 'dry' written exercises become relevant, purposeful and essential.
- All learners should be able to **relate personally**. Thus, pieces are selected in such a way that:
 - the various age groups can identify with them
 - they are playable, singable or readable for beginners
 - they are accessible to all beginners
 - most important, they represent the various cultures in this country. Even if every short extract with every exercise does not directly offer every learner an identification possibility, like a well known tune, reference material with alternative examples should appear as an addendum, comprising the appropriate music for all educators and all learner groups to choose from.

A truly representative addendum necessitates research in all local ethnic musics. One's face brightens when spoken to in one's own language. The same applies to music. Just as the 'mother tongue' is always regarded as essential for beginners in school, is the 'mother song' essential for beginners in music. Although not spelled out, the common factor in all learning principles (see p. 2-17 basic principles no. i) remains the mother tongue. Thus, in exactly the same way as for becoming generally literate, do all learning principles have the common factor for music which amounts to **music which is inherent in one's culture**.

Only when relevant music is integrated and interwoven through all learning material, can the various parties concerned, be satisfied of the essence of music theory. Theoretical

work, contrary to practical matter, normally involves background **knowledge** and experience with notation **writing**. In the *Music Literacy* programme the **Music Theory** component serves the following purposes:

- i. **Confirmation of basic facts:** Although all basics should preferably be treated orally and in other practical ways (see 2.3.4.4 and 2.3.5), the personal writing aspect is needed for complete mastering of the *Music Literacy* programme. Besides, the answering of questions asked in various ways, eventually, completes and thus confirms the learners' ability in and provides the confidence of being fully music literate.
- ii. **Notation writing skills:** The first four components in the *Music Literacy* programme provide for the ability to **read**, thus, to **sing** and **play** and to **recognize**. The ability to **write**, remains with theory. Similar to language literacy, the music literate person should have the skills to quickly copy, transcribe and to jot down what is seen or heard. In fact, much writing experience in music is needed for being able to transpose, to harmonize a melody, to set words to music, to arrange music in various ways for specific practical uses, etc.
- iii. **Readiness for written examinations:** Although this might be the least important reason to all involved, for formal qualifications, theoretical work with a written test remains a necessity also in other disciplines. Thus, the music literate should be able to write theory examinations as pre-requisite criteria for practical music examinations, preceding the final grade. They should, eventually, be able to complete specimen papers independently, as preparation for such examinations.
- iv. **Theoretical background for prospective educators and music leaders:** The ability to transfer music knowledge in one or other way necessitates knowledge and insight in reference work. Educators and choir/instrumental ensemble leaders need to explain, sketch the background, supply definitions, give examples by way of written illustrations and thus have experienced theoretical work themselves so as to be able to teach, guide and coach.

Music Theory studied in this way, as part of the *Music Literacy* programme, eventually offers the music literate person not only the music accomplishments as discussed in the

Preface, p. vi, but also the acquaintance with music of other cultures in the country. This enrichment contributes largely in communication skills within the South African context.

7.4 Recommendations and conclusion

Resulting from the research, the following is recommended:

7.4.1 Implementing the *Music Literacy* programme

The following steps can be taken with participation of the author:

7.4.1.1 **Printing of the various components:** The various components, comprising the learning material, should be printed in usable book format. These books should be practical in all ways and affordable, to facilitate distribution. The existing size of print and the entire layout is the choice of the author and is regarded as well suited for the various groups.

7.4.1.2 Adaptation for the visually handicapped:

- For the **weak-sighted**, enlarged editions have to be printed.
- For **blind learners**, all learning material has to be converted to braille music notation. The 'conventions' with each component and the entire component 4: **Keyboard Harmony** and **Music Dictation**, also need to be converted to braille for **blind educators**. This can be arranged by Braille Services, telephone (011) 839-1793 or Pioneer Printers, telephone (023) 342-2313.

7.4.1.3 Notification and introduction of the programme to various institutions and educational bodies for reaching the following student/learner groups:

- Music departments at **tertiary institutions** need to be notified of the programme. For music students at tertiary level the programme is needed for:
 - **refreshing** the memory and serving as a review, initially, in the first year
 - ensuring that all first year students are on the **same level**, with some leeway, before commencing with formal advanced studies
 - serving as a **method subject** for music education studies

- particular **reading abilities** for prospective orchestra players
- **late beginners** with music literacy as subject at an opera school or in a BA music specialization course at a university.
- **For in-service training of educators** the programme needs to be brought to the attention of the departments of education.
- For educators at **primary and secondary school level**, the programme needs to be advertised in the 'South African Music Teacher', official magazine of the S.A. Society of Music Teachers (SASMT). It also needs to be brought to their attention through authorities in the departments of education.

7.4.1.4 Introductory workshops/courses for educators at all levels: Once all learning material of the programme is available in book form, introductory workshops/courses/lectures can be presented for educators and independent students by the author. Even though the various components with learning material are each provided with the necessary guidelines, hints, ideas and explanations for the educator, personal contact sessions can ease, support and thus speed-up implementation of the entire programme.

7.4.2 Furthering research in indigenous musics is recommended before finalizing the **Music Theory** component, as discussed above in 7.3.

7.4.3 A follow-up for the component **Sight Singing: Melodies**, should be designed without delay. A part two was requested by choir leaders and opera singers/educators who used and completed this component. They felt a bridge between singing with solfa to singing with easy text was needed to fill the gap before commencing with existing compositions. The suggestion in 'conventions' with **Melodies** for repetition of all solfa syllables and key exercises while replacing solfa with a four-syllable word for every bar, is reported to be successful. This is regarded as, and the author agrees, an effective first step away from solfa.

It is now recommended that melodies should be composed in exactly the same way, in all keys, beginning with somewhat easier material than the very last unit

of **Melodies**. Clauses in languages commonly used in existing vocal music should be applied, e.g. Italian, German, French and English. However, regular inclusion of clauses from indigenous languages is of utmost importance. At one and the same time text in an indigenous language, serves as a vocal and as a cultural bridge. Thus, the necessity of relevance initially applied in the **Music Theory** component, will then be underlined and pursued in **Melodies** part 2.

Conclusion

With this research the author attempted to create a programme in music literacy, feasible in all respects; a programme which will provide the necessary support, urgently needed by all prospective music makers in the various sub-fields in music education as well as others, currently in South Africa.

As no single series has been found which covers all the facets necessary and no component which meets the requirements for this purpose, the proposed programme was especially designed. Original learning material was compiled and composed in all components of the programme, for meeting these specific requirements. All learning material was empirically tested before presenting the entire programme.

The author is convinced that this programme will offer music literacy in a feasible way to all concerned. She hopes that by meeting their common basic need, the proposed **Music Literacy** programme will contribute largely in solving, currently and in the future, the problem of many prospective music makers in South Africa. The need in music literacy, however, exists worldwide, as was determined in the survey. As the author has to date not come across any other programme as effective as the proposed, it is, to her knowledge, also of international value. Furthermore, the author supports the research indicating that the promotion of music literacy advances the promotion of general literacy and thus makes a contribution to societies in general.