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## Harmonic Language Arts: Music Inclusion in the Secondary English Language Arts Classroom

Julieanne Sthay

*Illinois Wesleyan University, jsthay@iwu.edu*

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## PHI BETA KAPPA LIBERAL ARTS SCHOLAR AWARD APPLICATION

Name: Julieanne Sthay Date: April 15, 2014  
Year / Major: Senior; Music, English and Secondary Education  
Research Supervisor(s): Jeanne Koehler  
Title of Research Paper / Project: Harmonic Language Arts: Music Inclusion in the Secondary English Language Arts Classroom Email Address: jsthay@iwu.edu

Below please provide a paragraph overview / abstract of the project you are submitting and a paragraph that explains the interdisciplinary nature of the project and/or how it crosses boundaries. Please type your description and limit it to 1 page. Email the completed application and the final paper to Rebecca Gearhart: [rgearhar@iwu.edu](mailto:rgearhar@iwu.edu) or deliver the project to CLA 226 by Friday, April 4th at 5:00 p.m.

Abstract: Students are required to take four years of high school English, and the mandatory nature of English coupled with a scripted curriculum negatively impacts student interest and motivation. English teachers who incorporate music into their academic teaching are finding music can improve student engagement, motivation, and learning (Goering & Burenheide, 2010). In this qualitative self study of student teaching, I explored questions including whether the addition of music is worthwhile in the English classroom, how it can be done, and what the benefits and drawbacks of doing so are. Based upon field notes, lesson plans, student feedback, and research, I found particular music categories worked best to connect students' lives with their learning and helped motivate them in the classroom.

This project is unique in that I try to incorporate music into the English classroom. While entering college, I conflicted between teaching music or English, but ultimately found that I didn't have to sacrifice either. I knew personally that it was very difficult for me to separate the two, and decided to combine them into my teaching to create a more engaging atmosphere for students while letting my personality show. This project is unique in that there is very little research out there on this topic, despite the deep connection between music and the language arts. I hope that despite the severe budget cuts to the fine arts, the incorporation of music into my core subject will help students learn more about both.