

Arizona Arts Proficiency Seal
Queen Creek Unified School District
Capstone Reflection

Thinking about the process and product of your Capstone, reflect upon what you are most proud of and what you might do differently if you were to complete a similar project in the future.

In my capstone, I am most proud of myself for sticking with orchestra throughout my career as a student. After my sister completed her capstone for orchestra my freshman year, I knew I wanted to follow in her footsteps and do the same. However, this journey was not always easy for me. Even though I love music, there were many times where I thought about quitting. Throughout middle school and high school, I have always been slower to learn the music than my peers, and seated towards the back after chair tests. This can be discouraging and it made me feel like I shouldn't even play the violin. It wasn't until I started playing the guitar that I realized music looks different for everyone. It showed me that we are responsible for bringing the joy of music into our own hands, and not just waiting for it to come to us. Through the guitar I learned that I needed to find music I could love to play on the violin. The music that I found was Disney music, and I am proud of myself for not quitting and being able to learn more about myself through my music.

Something I might have done differently in my Capstone project is share my knowledge for other instruments, not only the violin. I have been playing guitar for almost two years and the piano for 6 months. If I were to do a similar project I think that showing ,y, diversity in musical instruments would help it feel more connected. Other than this, I am proud of myself for completing my capstone project.

Explain how your life experiences are reflected through your project.

For my capstone project, I knew immediately that I wanted to express how much music had helped me find joy in my life. One of the main ways it has done this for me is through films. Growing up, there was always a Disney movie on the television and as I got older, my love for these nostalgic films only grew. When I learned to play the violin in grade 5, I knew I wanted to play some of my favorite songs sung by the princesses I have always looked up to. I have always been inspired by the way music in film is able to touch the hearts of so many people through the power of storytelling. Especially in the Disney classics like *Alice In wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, and *Snow White*, music is the driving force throughout every aspect of the films. All of this in mind, my life experiences are the base of my capstone. If it weren't for my love for Disney movies, I don't think I would have ever felt as connected to music as I do now.

The idea of focusing on the history of the music in Disney movies instead of just their music as a whole, came from my love for *Alice in Wonderland* and pretty much any really old Disney movie. I remember watching these movies with my family thinking that absolutely anything I set my mind to is possible. The power of the music was what flourished my life experiences into moments that I now cherish. Also, being able to see how music, film, and animation has changed through time is really a privilege that so many viewers of Disney films overlook. Not many franchises have been around so long that you can actually see clear shifts

in technology and production levels. I really wanted to use my childhood experiences and love for Disney films to examine the historical greatness of Disney music.

Thinking about the Extra-curricular hours you completed, reflect upon what you learned through the experiences and/or how you have been impacted as an artist?

While in high school, I participated in the arts in many ways that helped me grow my passion for music. One of the ways I did this was through the Pit orchestra of freaky friday my junior year. All through high school I was super involved in sports, until my junior year where I got a stress fracture in my shin and couldn't join track that spring. During that sad time, I looked towards my love of musicals to pick me up. I used my violin to distract myself from the pain of not being able to participate in a sport that I loved. Through this, I became a stronger violinist and I gained experience that Queen Creek High School's pit graciously offered me. I learned that when life is hard, music will always be there to make things seem less challenging and distract you from all the crazy things you have to deal with. I loved being a part of pit so much that my senior year I joined the ensemble for Chicago and my love of music has only gotten stronger.

How is your life positively impacted by the arts?

One of the ways my life had been positively impacted by the arts at Queen Creek high school was through community. It is an amazing thing to be in a room full of people who are just like you, trying their best to learn something that is not easy. In classes, a lot of the time students do the bare minimum or even below that. Being around that kind of work ethic can feel draining, but in orchestra, I was surrounded by people who want to learn for fun. WHO want to learn just to prove to themselves that they can learn, and they can get better. That is a life skill that we need to have in life no matter what occupation may go into. It brought joy to my heart to be in a room with people who are doing hard things and doing them happily for the sole purpose of music itself. The joy of music will always be found in the community. For me, it is a gift that humankind, as one, is able to enjoy music together for free.

Another way I have been positively impacted by the arts is by the power music has to just make you forget about everything. When I was worried or scared about a swim/track meet after school I would go to orchestra and forget about it. When I was fighting with a friend and wasn't sure how to make up with them, music would distract my mind from the heartbreak. When I was worried I had done badly on my test and maybe end the quarter with a B instead of an A, music would remind me that it was still there.

How do you plan to include artistic experiences in your future after high school?

After Highschool I plan to become a pilot, and also get another degree at community college at the same time. I want my other degree to be something I can do on the side of aviation and that I can enjoy when I am not flying. I've given a lot of thought into film or other art related industries and there is no doubt in my mind that music will be in my life after High school. Even if it is not something I do professionally, I will always have it to help manage stress and worry through music. I love how music and film has a way to change people's stubborn hearts and minds and I want to incorporate this passion into my future careers.

What advice would you give an incoming freshmen about studying the arts to help them make the most of their experiences while in high school?

When I was a freshman, orchestra was probably the thing I was least excited for. I felt like I was just there because I needed to be. My curious freshman mind wanted to try every elective possible and branch out. After my freshman year, I was almost sure that I should quit orchestra and try something new. However, I couldn't get myself to not sign up. I remember the day they had us pick our schedules for sophomore year. I had ten minutes left in my last hour class and was trying to decide between sticking with orchestra, or trying ceramics 1 like most of my friends were doing. The bell rang and I finally chose ceramics. As I walked out of the class and down the hall, I did not get very far before I turned around and went back to class to change it to orchestra. Something in my heart told me that a day without music would be a sad one. If I didn't have music throughout my day I knew I would be sad. Even then, when I wanted to fit in and be like all my friends, I couldn't bring myself to quit, because deep down I knew how much I loved orchestra and how much I really needed to stay there for myself. To a freshman I would tell them to trust their gut, not their friends or anyone else who wants to tell them what they should do, the only one who knows is your heart.