

## INFORMATION LETTER

Date

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I have enjoyed working with your child over the past few months and am asking your permission to continue working with them for the second phase of this study.

This second phase involves the use of a short test battery of singing skills that has been developed by Dr. Annabel Cohen, Psychology Professor at the University of Prince Edward Island and Project Director of the Advancing Interdisciplinary Singing in Research (AIRS) program. This set of singing skills was developed to examine universal aspects of singing abilities as well as differences due to age, cultural background, musical training, presence of Alzheimer's, etc. For the current study, we are interested in seeing whether class groups from the first phase (i.e. classes who learned the cultural information and the songs compared to classes who learned only the cultural information) vary in their singing abilities. We are also interested in examining singing abilities across the four countries (Brazil, Canada, China and Kenya) of the children involved in this study.

This second phase of the project would take place between April 1 and May 30 2012 after the first phase has been completed in March. Twenty students (10 from each participating class in the first phase) will be randomly selected and will be asked to participate in an interview consisting of short singing "games" such as repeating a short melody or a pattern of two or three notes. Students are not obligated to participate in this activity if they do not wish to. This "singing interview" will be facilitated and recorded by myself. The test battery involves 11 short tasks, each lasting between 1-3 minutes, and takes no longer than 20 minutes to complete. The tasks involved in the test battery are included below:

1. Introductory Conversation, and asked to repeat "the quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog"
2. Voice Range (sing up to a high note and down to a low note)
3. Warm up – Minor third song – sing back "*Johnny, where are you?*" but on "la"
4. Standard song # 1: *Brother John* – whole melody echo song, echo parts of song
5. Favourite song
6. Musical elements: *do re mi re do* (etc).
7. Make up an ending
8. Make up a song – Picture prompt
9. Standard song # 2: *We Are One* (to be presented in Chinese to half of the participants)
10. Standard song # 1: *Brother John* - Ask to sing from memory, and then sing back after hearing once again
11. Ending Conversation, ask to create a story from a picture prompt and thank participant

We are using video, as opposed to only audio, because singing very much involves motor responses. Video can provide information about the use of various muscles, facial expressions, and basic measures of interest of the participant in the singing activities. Other student data collected will include information such as age, native country, native language, musical training and whether they learned: 1) the cultures and songs of Brazil, Canada, China and Kenya or 2) only the cultural information of these countries. This information will only be used by myself and other AIRS researchers.. Each student will use a private code number for themselves to go with their data analysis. Each student will be given \$5.00 upon completion of the session.

Testing sessions will take place in a quiet room at the school at a time preferred by your child (e.g. before school starts in the morning or afternoon, during lunch or after school). Each student will take about 20-25 minutes to complete the test battery and fill out a brief information sheet. Students will be given \$5.00 for their participation. They will receive their \$5.00 even if they or yourself wish to stop their participation at any point during the study. Each participating student will be asked to complete a test battery session once while they are in Grade 5 and once again while they are in Grade 6.

Participation in the research project poses no harm and is entirely voluntary. You or your child may stop their participation at any time, without any adverse consequence or loss of their gift. All audio and video information collected in the course of this project will remain in a secure, restricted-to-permission-access database with a level of disclosure consented by yourself. The printed data and data analyses will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in Dr. Cohen's laboratory and will be destroyed after five years (or five years after publication of any general findings of the study), in accordance with ethical guidelines. Excerpts of the audio-video or audio data obtained will be kept in a secure, restricted-to-permission-only computer database. Permission to use any audio/visual data as examples in an AIRS conference will be also requested from you and no material will be shown without permission.

After each student has completed their session, I will further explain the purpose of the test battery and answer any questions they may have. I will also give them a letter to take home to their parents/guardians to read. After data analysis have been completed, I will return to the school to discuss the results. We expect to work on the data analysis beginning in May 2012. The results of the study will also be posted on the AIRS website in a formal way and in a way specifically directed to students.

Please indicate on the attached consent form whether you permit your child to take part in this second phase of the study. You may keep a copy of this signed and dated consent form. We are very appreciative of anyone who is willing to participate and feel this is a wonderful addition to the first phase of the study as it will provide a useful measure of singing skills across cultures and class groups. If you have any questions about the project, you may contact me, Kelly Gillis (phone: 892-3657, 218-0244, e-mail: ksgillis@upei.ca), or my supervisor, Dr. Annabel Cohen (phone: 628-4325, e-mail: acohen@upei.ca). This research project has been approved by the UPEI Research Ethics Board and the Eastern School District. You may contact the Lynn MacDonald at the UPEI Research Ethics Board at (902) 620-5104, lynmacdonald@upei.ca, if you have any concerns with the ethical conduct of this study.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kelly Gillis  
Student Research Assistant  
Department of Psychology, UPEI

**PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM**  
AIRS 3.1 Music and Culture

I consent to my son/daughter/charge participating in research on the effects of cultural background and class groups (from the first phase of AIRS 3.1 study on using singing for improving cultural attitudes) on singing abilities.

I understand that his/her participation involves meeting for a singing interview which is about 20 minutes in length. I understand that this interview involves singing back short melody patterns and creating short songs/stories based on picture prompts. I understand that this singing interview will take place at my child's school at a time between April 1-May 30 2012, at a time convenient for my child with another session to be determined in the coming school year.

I have read and understood the explanation about this study in the Information Letter. I have been given the opportunity to discuss it and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that the responses of my child/charge will be kept on a secure restricted to permission-access database to AIRS research team members. I understand that once all data has been submitted and identifiers removed I will no longer have the opportunity to request that my child's/charge's data be removed from the study.

I understand that I can keep a copy of the signed and dated consent form.

I understand that I can contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board at (902) 620-5104, or by e-mail at lynmacdonald@upei.ca. if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this study.

I hereby consent for my child/charge to take part in this study. However, I realize that their participation is voluntary and that they/myself are free to request withdrawal from the study at any time without prejudice or penalty.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I grant permission for my child to take part in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I grant permission for my child to be videotaped.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to be contacted regarding my child's participation in a future study with this research team.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to allow my child's video examples to be shown in a professional meeting in which a report of the study would be presented by Kelly Gillis and her supervisor, Dr. Cohen.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent/guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date