



## Cultural Reflection Tree

*A reflective exercise for music education students participating in a school internship abroad*

**General note:** This exercise invites you to explore your own cultural identity — including your musical background and understanding of music education — through the image of a tree. You should begin working on it in *preparation for departure*, but you may also return to it *during your internship* and *after you return* as well.

What you take for granted in everyday life and communication, as well as in music education — e.g., repertoire, teacher-student relationships, the role of technique or improvisation — is not neutral, but reflects roots, values, and habits that often become more visible when you encounter a different system.

**Draw your tree — and write in your own words what belongs in each part:**

ROOTS	TRUNK	LEAVES
Origin; a sense of belonging to one or more cultural groups. For example: national/regional background(s) • family & community • musical tradition(s) • education system	Values that are important in your cultural context(s). For example: respect, discipline, creativity... • role of teacher & student • product vs. process orientation	Visible cultural expressions or signs: language & communication style • repertoire & instruments • rituals & habits • dress, gesture, symbols

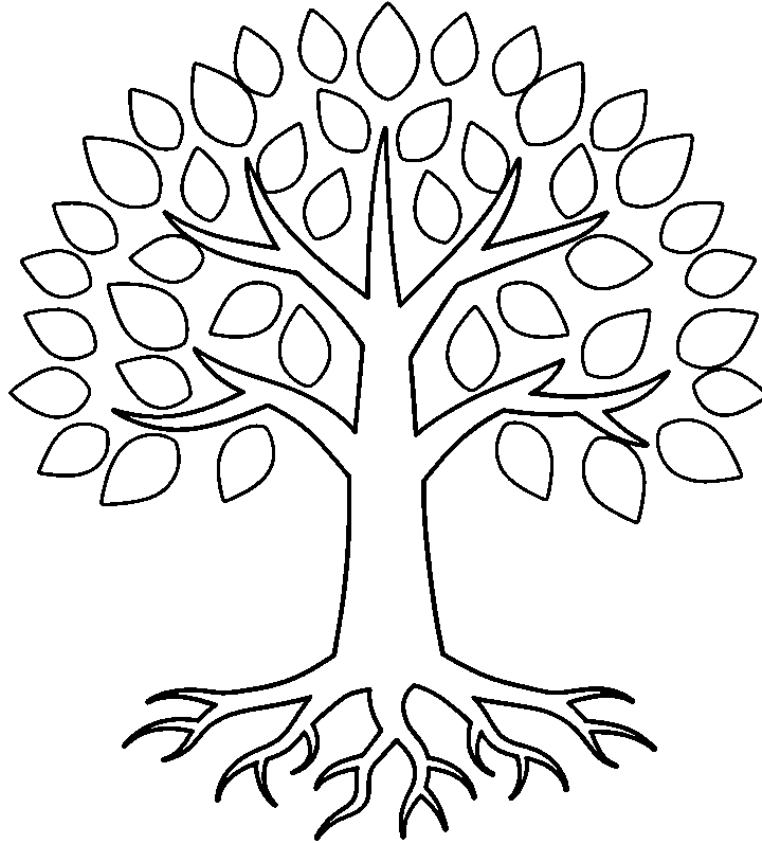
**Using the exercise in three phases of your school internship:**

Phase 1 – Before	Phase 2 – During	Phase 3 – After
<i>Draw your tree</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete individually before departure</li> <li>You are welcome to bring it to introductory meeting with your mentor teacher</li> <li>Keep it — you will return to it</li> </ul>	<i>Update &amp; notice</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe what surprises you</li> <li>Add new leaves, roots, or values as you become aware of them</li> <li>Note tensions or questions</li> </ul>	<i>Compare &amp; reflect</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What changed, if anything?</li> <li>Your tree might assist your debrief reflection or portfolio</li> </ul>

**Possible reflection questions:**

Phase 1 – Before	Phases 2 & 3 – During & After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which cultural group(s) do you belong to? Are your roots multiple?</li> <li>Which values feel most central to your identity as a musician and teacher?</li> <li>What assumptions are you bringing about music education abroad?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What surprised you in the host school — and what does that reveal about your own roots?</li> <li>Were any of your values challenged? How did you respond?</li> <li>What did you learn about your own musical education that you could not have learned without going abroad?</li> </ul>

**Sources:** UNESCO Intercultural Competences Framework (2013); PRACTICE Project, Erasmus+ No. 2018-1-IT02-KA201-048442 ([practice-school.eu](http://practice-school.eu)). Adapted for music education internships abroad.



*Adapted by Work Package 5 of the TEAM project for school internships abroad in music education. This OER has been developed within the project **TEAM - Teacher Education Academy for Music, Future-Making, Mobility and Networking in Europe.** [www.teacher-academy-music.eu](http://www.teacher-academy-music.eu).*

*Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.*