



# KRISSY MURNIEKS

**Undergraduate, Music Education  
Torremaggiore, Italy - January 2018**

## PREPARING

I definitely stressed about being ready for the trip. My peers and I started a group chat so we could help each other through the ups, downs, what-ifs and last-minute preparations. We also worked as a group to formulate research questions and materials for teaching. It was super helpful to stay connected throughout the entire process.

## TEACHING

I taught music to kids who were 3 to 10 years old. They were so responsive! When they remembered a song or participated with ease I felt warm and humbled to discover that music really is a universal language. It's incredible to find ways to communicate with students who don't speak my language.

A teacher used clapping to get her 4-year-old students' attention and have fun. I built off this so they clapped to match the beat of "Let's-Go-Buffa-lo!" It was so fun to share something cherished by Buffalonians with the bambini! It was difficult to plan ahead for each class, but this tested my knowledge and the tools I had prepared. And it was a great way to practice for student teaching!

## TOURING

I loved Torremaggiore! Being in a small town really provided the educational and cultural experience I was craving. We made friends with Italians my age and they showed us around and helped us understand and appreciate their home. I was fully submerged in their culture and learned a lot about the country, town, teaching...and how to take a deep breath and enjoy the moment!



***I learned how to quickly adjust, how to hold a positive attitude, and how to step out of my comfort zone to try new things, even something as simple as eating fish!***

[Click to read Krissy's blog!](#)

## RECOGNIZING

My views on other cultures has changed tremendously. In Italy people constantly apologized for having "bad English" and with every apology my heart sank. Often we demand that everyone living or visiting the U.S. use English but there I was, in Italy, not knowing a lick of Italian, with Italian people translating everything to English for me AND apologizing for not having perfect grammar! It made me realize that we should always be patient and respectful, and put in as much effort to understand other people and their languages and customs as they do ours.

### Favorite Memories

- Teaching music to 5th graders...in a castle!
- Taking the Metro in Rome. I'm from NYC but have never been in such a crowded train! We had many laughable moments and a great way to experience public transportation.
- Boating around the Isle of Capri. The ride was rocky and literally knocked me out of my seat, but I loved every second.