Educational Arts Team, Inc.

Transforming Children's Hearts & Mind through the Arts

Theater Infusion Extension Project Preliminary Report December 31, 2008

A Follow-Up Initiative to the Three Year US Department of Education Arts-in-Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant (USDOE AEMDD)

Developed and Implemented by the Jersey City Educational Arts Team in partnership with the Jersey City Public Schools Department of Visual and Performing Arts

As of December 31, 2008 the **Educational Arts Team** has conducted 39 hours of professional development workshops for 164 fourth and fifth grade teachers and 299 demonstration workshops in 132 fourth and fifth grade classrooms.

The purpose of the Theater Infusion Extension Project is as follows:

♦ Advance students' academic performance in language arts and social studies, including their skills in creating, performing, and responding to the arts;

♦ Improve teachers' knowledge and comfort with integrating drama strategies into the teaching of language arts and social studies;

♦ Increase teachers' practice of arts infusion methods in their methodology.

Previous Educational Arts Team Project Evaluation Highlights

Pop up Puppet Theater (1999 to 2002): Over the first two-year period of this project standardized language arts test scores for 3rd grade participants improved by 36.6%.

Theater Infusion Student Results (2005 to 2008): Evaluators discovered that during the first two years 90% of over 550 treatment students passed the New Jersey language arts standardized tests as opposed to 70% of the over 550 control group students; additionally 17% of the treatment group scored advanced proficient to only 2% of the control group.

Action Research Teacher Practice Results (2007 to 2008): On standardized language arts state tests, students in the classes taught by 6 Action Research teachers outperformed students of control group teachers by 29%.

Preliminary Results of Theater Infusion Extension Project

At the completion of the three-hour training in October, fourth and fifth-grade teachers were asked to complete a survey on their attitudes towards the usefulness of the arts in the classroom and their own willingness to implement these strategies. We wanted to know if teachers who attended the training have favorable attitudes towards the use of drama in the language arts curriculum. Teachers responded to the following. On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being most favorable, responses are as follows:

	Favorability Rating
Drama can be an effective way of motivating students to become better readers.	**90.7%**
By using drama students better understand what characters are experiencing in stories.	**93.8%**
Workshops like the one today can help me become more effective teaching language arts.	**90.2%**

To learn how this project will inform future implementation We looked at the correlation between how many EAT training sessions and classroom demonstrations teachers received with their own use of drama in the classroom. In response to the question: **Have you used drama strategies in your classroom?**

	Percentage of teachers using drama
Teachers with no previous training and no classroom visits	**30.7%**
Teachers with no previous training and student classroom demonstrations	**53%**
Teachers with three hours of training and student classroom demonstrations	**69.5%**
Teachers with six hours of training and student classroom demonstrations	**87.3%**

Teacher Comment Highlights from October 2008 Training:

(The) workshop was very helpful. Last year, (Theater Infusion workshops) helped my class to enjoy writing and be more creative. Also, they feel and act more responsible and are better listeners.

I really felt that this workshop was one of the most informative and interesting workshops that I have attended. Thank you!!

This workshop was very helpful. I am trying to increase my students' reading comprehension. This gave me ideas for reading centers that will enable my students to connect with the character and use inference on their feelings and actions.