



Spring 2008 ▪ Year 2

**Solis-Cohen Elementary School
&
Philadelphia Theatre Company**

Teaching artists

Maureen Sweeney, theater artist, 4th grade
Jessica Waber, theater artist, 4th grade
Bobbi Renzi, theater artist, 5th grade
Bill Koutsouros, music artist

Participating teachers

Lisa Bellman, 4th grade
Bob Lewis, 4th grade
Sandra Yeck, 4th grade
Andrea Green, 4th grade
Rochelle New, 4th grade
Aimee Lombardo, 5th grade
Joanne Zastowney, 5th grade
Abbie Stein, 5th grade
Cassandra Ward, 5th grade
Elizabeth Wetzler, art specialist
Laverne Wood, music specialist

I. Project

Project Description

The theme for the 4th grade Arts Bridges Residency is *Making It Work*. When students hit the brick wall of not understanding, too many of them simply give up. Through music, playwriting and visual art activities, students will discover strategies to apply to new situations and content they do not understand so they can keep trying until they find a way to “make it work” for them. *Say What You Mean, Mean What You Say* will engage 5th grade students in multiple reading, writing, and art making experiences that use creative drama and music activities to initiate and deepen students’ understanding of writing projects.

Project Goals

The project goals for 4th grade for academic year 2007-08 are to focus the teaching and learning of 3 key literacy skills across the content areas of literacy, creative writing, music, and visual arts. Classroom teachers, teaching artists and resident arts specialists will create activities in each discipline to help teach the following targeted skills:

- Identify the basic ideas and facts in text using strategies
- Describe how the author uses literary devices to convey meaning
- Evaluate text organization and content to determine author’s purpose and effectiveness

The project goals for 5th grade for academic year 2007-08 are to focus the teaching and learning of 4 key literacy skills across the content areas of literacy, creative writing, music, and visual arts. Classroom teachers, teaching artists, and resident arts specialists will create activities in each discipline to help teach the following targeted skills:

- Write using well developed content appropriate for the topic
- Write persuasive pieces with a clearly stated position or opinion
- Differentiate fact from opinion across texts
- Write multi-paragraph informational pieces

Project Theme

In the 4th grade residency students will learn to identify details and put them together to decode meaning and see the bigger picture, especially when they are not sure what the big picture is. Students will study how musicians, playwrights, and visual artists “make it work” by exploring the creative elements of each art form, and using those elements to create their own pieces in those disciplines. Classroom teachers and teaching artists will guide students in applying this same creative process to understand how authors use literary devices to convey meaning. As playwrights and composers, students will directly engage with the concept of author’s purpose and effectiveness. The ultimate goal of this residency is to ensure that students understand the transfer of skills learned in art making to literacy concepts.

In the 5th grade residency Teaching Artist Bobbie Renzi will lead students through a writing process that uses creative drama activities to initiate and deepen students’ understanding of writing projects. Playwriting elements including scenes, monologues, and character profiles will be developed. Music activities with Teaching Artist Bill Koutsouros will include exploring the making of sound and different styles of music, discovering how sound can paint mental images, and creating musical compositions that express specific emotions.

Content and Activities

Making It Work will engage 4th grade students in multiple reading, writing, and art making experiences. Literary Teaching Artists Maureen Sweeney and Jessica Waber will lead students through a creative writing process that uses creative drama activities to initiate and deepen students’ understanding of writing projects. Playwriting elements including scenes, monologues and character profiles will be developed. Music Teaching Artist Bill Koutsouros will incorporate activities that include exploring the making of sound, music and mental images created by sound, and creating musical compositions that define specific characters, their personalities, and emotions. All arts activities will reinforce literacy terms and strategies identified by the 4th grade teachers. This practice will also serve as a model for the transferring of literacy concepts to art making that is a desired outcome for students.

All arts activities will reinforce literacy terms and strategies identified by the 5th grade teachers. This practice will also serve as a model for the transferring of literacy concepts to art making. Fifth grade students will also have the opportunity to experience a working application of literacy skills incorporated in theater when they go to see Pennbrooke Middle School’s spring musical, a show co-written and directed by Ms. Renzi.

Student Work Created

Fourth grade students will keep process portfolios as a repository for the work they create, throughout the residency. Toward the end of the residency, classroom teachers and the teaching artists will facilitate a reflection process in which students select pieces of their work to have bound into a keepsake book using the school’s binding machine. Students will generate several writing pieces in the playwrighting sessions. The character profiles, scenes, and object monologues will be included in their keepsake book. Students will also perform their object monologues for their class. In music sessions pieces conveying specific moods and soundtracks to accompany the object monologues will be created. Under the guidance of the art

specialist, students will make paintings or drawings of people and places in the stories they are reading and to complement written scenes and character profiles. Also with the art specialist, students will make decisions about what materials are best to use to create a sculpture or three dimensional representation of the object they personify in their object monologue.

Standards Addressed

1. Literacy Standard 1.1D

Content descriptors: Identify the basic ideas and facts in text using strategies.

Skill: To recognize the main idea of a selection and details that supports a main idea.

To understand that creating mental image while reading increases comprehension and enjoyment.

Arts Standard 9.1B

Content descriptors: Recognize, know, use, and demonstrate a variety of appropriate arts elements and principals to produce, review, and revise original works in the arts.

2. Literacy Standard 1.2 A

Evaluate text organization and content to determine author's purpose and effectiveness.