



Educational Arts Team

Transforming Children's Hearts & Minds through the Arts



Integrated Arts and Literacy Projects

1999-2011

Overview of Results
on NJ Standardized
Language Arts Test Scores

Our Mission

The Educational Arts Team is dedicated to bettering the educational and social lives of children through creative writing, dance, drama, storytelling, music and visual art. The agency aims to foster the creative spirit of children out of a belief that imagination is a positive force, which can change a child's world. Through the arts, the Educational Arts Team helps children increase their self-worth, discover their individuality, gain pride in their heritage and community, heighten their academic achievement, and create a vision of a larger world where they can achieve their goals.

Over the past 35 years the Educational Arts Team has developed and implemented strategies that integrate the arts into the language arts and social studies curriculum. During the past 10 years we have been able to measure their effectiveness through a series of independently evaluated projects that have shown significant results for students on NJ Standardized Language Arts assessments, as well as on pro-cognitive and pro-social tests.

This report includes the details and results of the following literacy projects: Pop-Up Puppet Theater, Theater Infusion, the Action Research Teacher Project, and Theater Strategies, currently in progress.

There are also reports available on a number of other programs including Bringing Literature to Life 8th Grade Literacy, Drug & Violence Prevention, as well as a series of Teacher Professional Development studies and status reports.

To view these reports, please visit our website at www.educationalartsteam.org or call 201-432-1912 for a copy.



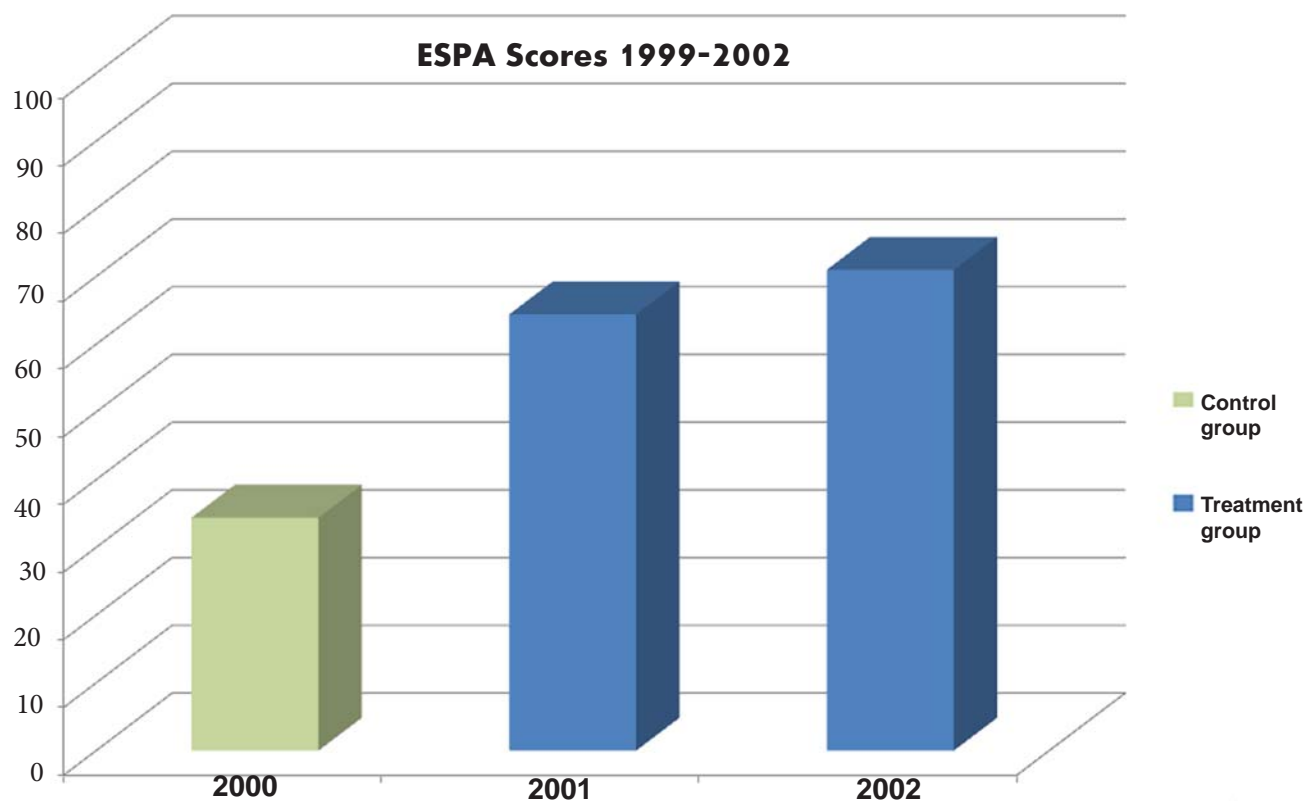
Pop-up Puppet Theater - Grade 3 1999-2002

In 1997 Robert DiTursi, principal at the time of Public School #16 in downtown Jersey City, asked the Educational Arts Team to develop a program that could help his fourth grade students with a new oral presentation component on the New Jersey Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA). In response, the Educational Arts Team developed and conducted a workshop series called Pop-up Puppet Theater (PPT). The workshops were so well received that the district superintendent contracted the Team to work with over 100 third-grade classes, including special education and bilingual classes for three years (1999\2000; 2000\2001; 2001\2002) with the expressed goal of improving 4th grade ESPA scores. As a result of this work EAT was able to improve students' oral presentation skills, attitudes towards writing and ultimately increase scores on the ESPA tests in language arts.

ESPA SCORES RISE DRAMATICALLY

At the point that the Educational Arts Team began the Pop-up Puppet Theater project with the 3rd graders, the percentage of 4th graders receiving a passing score on the language arts ESPA tests was 34.4% (Liberty Lines 2). This was a key reason why the district had contracted us to work with all the third grade classes. When the classes we had worked with in the third grade took those same tests in the fourth grade, district-wide percentages improved to 64.4% in 2001 and to 71% the following year.

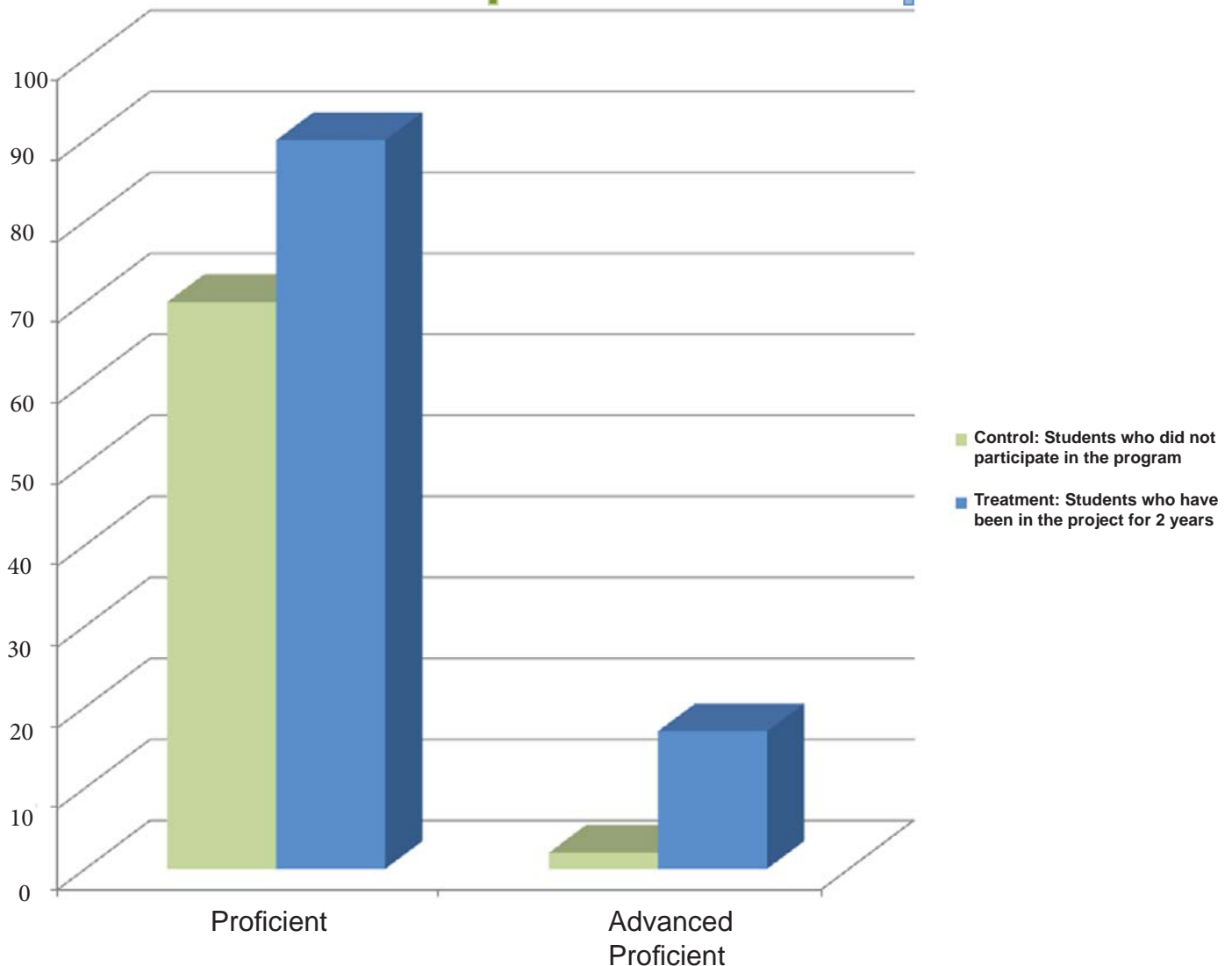
Control Group vs. Treatment Group



From 2005 to 2008 EAT partnered with the JCPS Department of Visual and Performing Arts on a US Department of Education Arts-in-Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant (USDOE AEMDD) to improve the language arts skills of 28 4th and 5th grade students and train their teachers to incorporate the arts into the curriculum.

Independent evaluators found that the project made a difference in how well students developed in the academic, pro-cognitive and pro-social domains (Finkelstein, M. & Walker, E., 2008). Evaluators noted that 90% of treatment students participating for two years passed the New Jersey language arts standardized tests as opposed to 70% of the control group. Additionally 17% of the treatment group scored advanced proficient to only 2% of the control group.

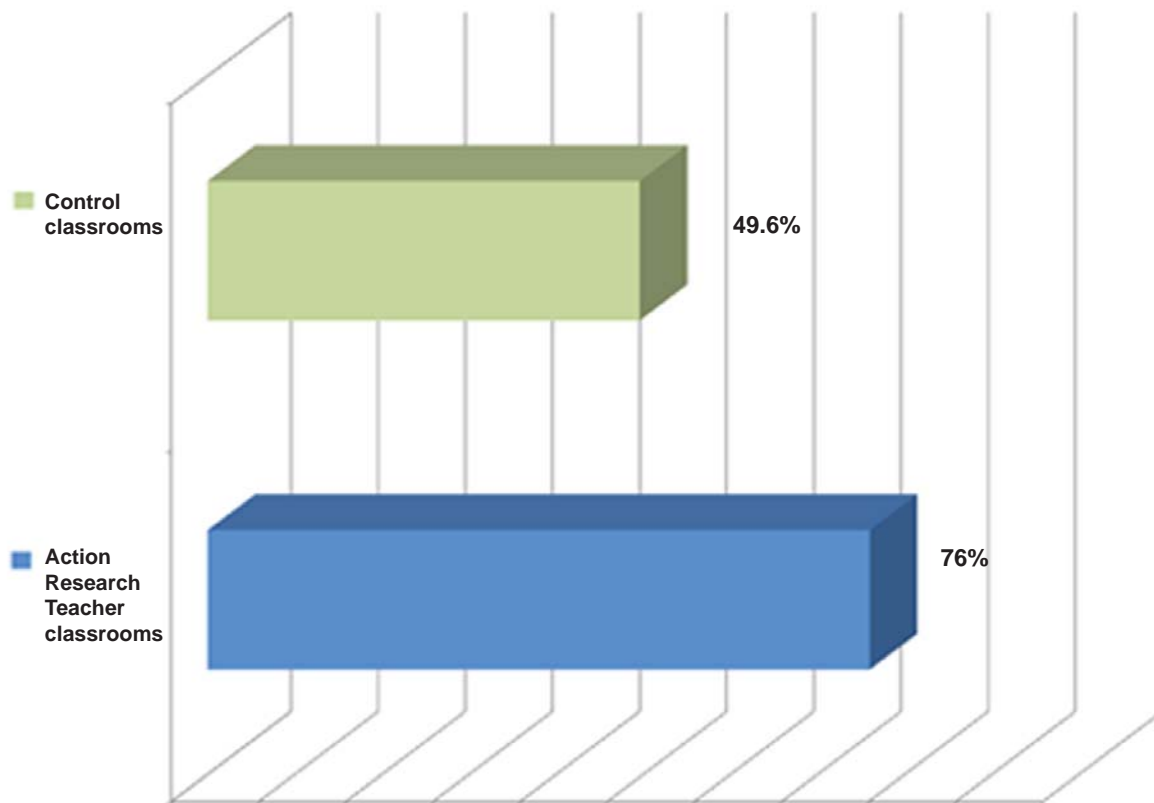
Proficiency on NJASK 4th & 5th Grade Language Arts Test
Control Group vs. Treatment Group



In the third year of the Theater Infusion project, a group of 6 treatment teachers, called Action Research teachers, met four times during the school year to reflect upon their own implementation of the drama strategies.

On standardized language arts state tests, students in the classes taught by these teachers outperformed students of the control group teachers by 26%. In Action Research classrooms 76% of the students were proficient in language arts, in contrast to 49.6% in control classrooms.

Student Proficiency on 4th & 5th Grade NJASK Language Arts Test
Control Group vs. Action Research Teacher Group



Theater Strategies - Grades 6 & 7 2008-2011

In 2008, EAT in partnership with the JCPS Department of Visual and Performing Arts received a second three-year US Department of Education Arts-in-Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant (USDOE AEMDD) to work with middle school students at four schools to improve literacy and teacher practice.

During Year One and Two of the three-year project 28 sixth and seventh grade classes from 4 schools (MS#7, PS#11, PS#12, and PS #23) received 24 lessons focused on three core novels. Their 16 teachers received 12 hours of Professional Development training each year which consisted of theater and arts strategies designed to improve learning in language arts. Four other schools (MS#4, PS #24, PS#28, and PS #34) acted as control schools (their 28 sixth and seventh grade classes of students and teachers are receiving workshops in Year Three of the project).

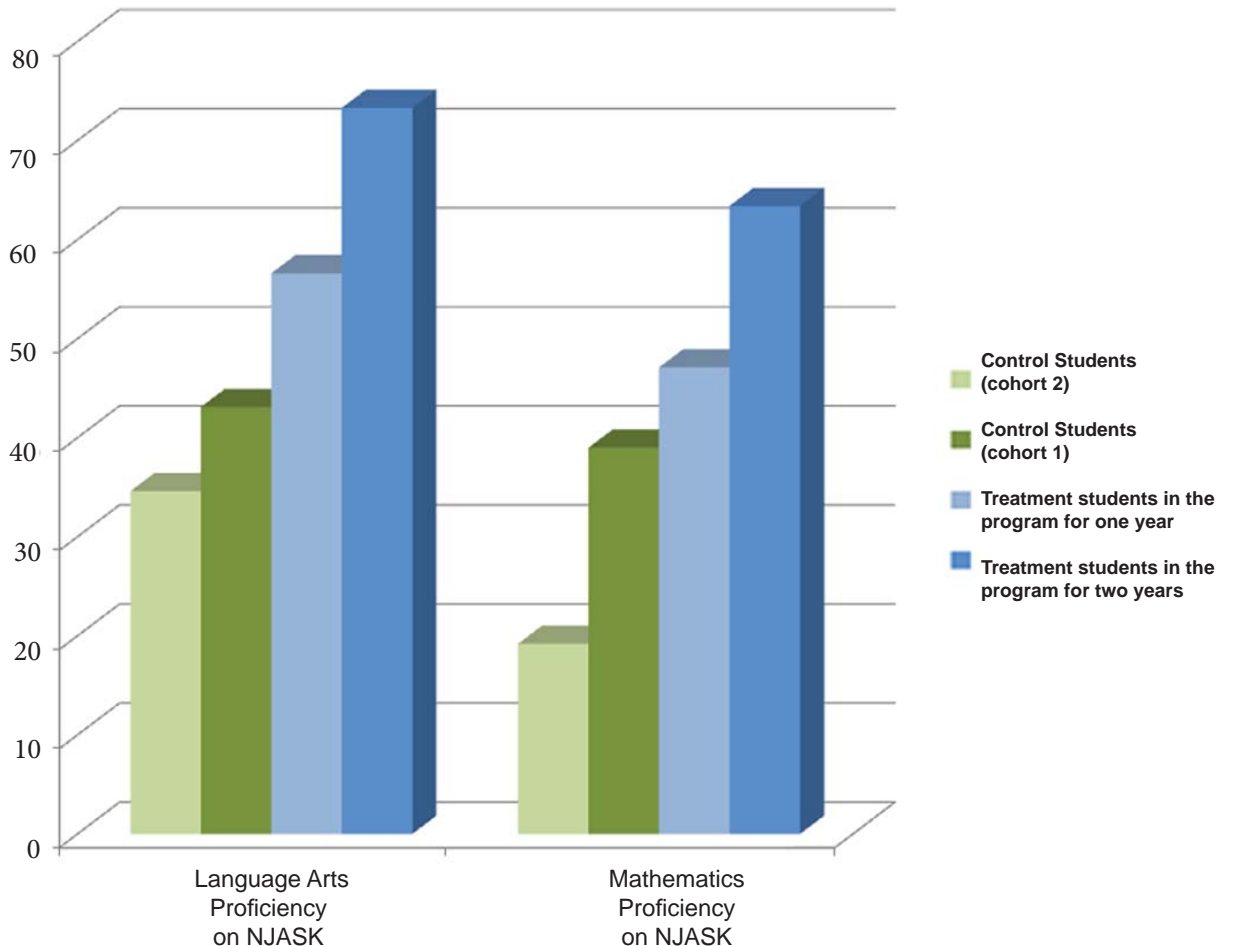


Student Achievement on Standardized Tests FOR STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM FOR 2 YEARS

Results on NJ ASK language arts tests for students in the program for two consecutive years show a significant difference between Treatment and Control Students. Among the Treatment students a total of 73.3% passed the NJ ASK language arts tests relative to 34.6% of control.

While the focus of the workshops was on literacy, many of the strategies required students to use higher order thinking skills, such as analysis and inference which may explain the difference in math scores between treatment and control students. The percentage of Treatment students receiving passing Math scores was significantly higher than the control group: a total of 63.4% Treatment students passed, while only 19.2% of control students were proficient.

Proficiency on NJASK Language Arts and Mathematics Tests Control Group vs. Treatment Group



We would like to thank the following partners for their support with the Theater Infusion and Theater Strategies projects:

**United States Department of Education
Office of Innovation and Improvement
400 Maryland Ave, Southwest
Washington, DC 20202**

**The Jersey City Public Schools
Dr. Charles T. Epps, Superintendent**

**Nancy Healy, Supervisor, Division of Visual and Performing Arts
346 Claremont Ave.
Jersey City, New Jersey 07305**

Special thanks to all of the participating teachers from Jersey City Public Schools and their principals.

For a full report on any of these projects please visit our website at www.educationalartsteam.org. There are also reports available on a number of other projects including Bringing Literature to Life 8th Grade Literacy, Drug & Violence Prevention, as well as a series of Teacher Professional Development studies and status reports.

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