



Educational Arts Team, Inc.

Transforming Children's Hearts & Minds through the Arts

Scaling Up Teacher Professional Development Theater Arts Integration



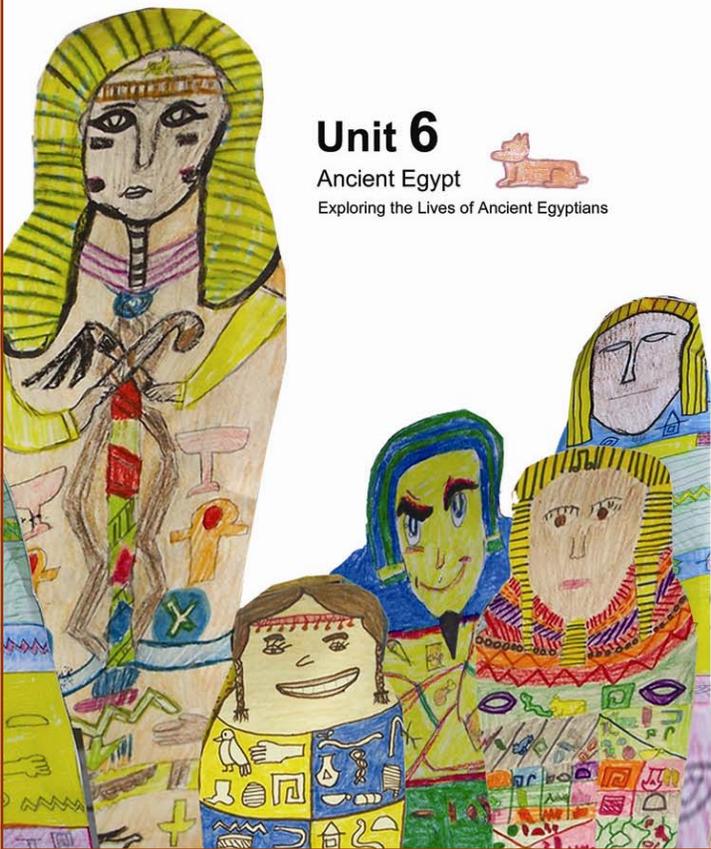
The Educational Arts Team
Theater Infusion Project

INTRODUCTION

In 2004, The Education Arts Team (EAT) a non-profit organization in New Jersey received a Department of Education Arts in Education Model Research and Dissemination Grant to infuse theatre arts strategies into the language arts and social studies curriculum in grades 4 and 5 in the Jersey City Public Schools. Seven schools in the District were involved in the project. Twenty-eight randomly selected fourth and fifth grade teachers were assigned to the project. Another twenty-eight teachers served as controls.

During the first two years of the grant, EAT visiting artists worked with 28 treatment teachers and their students. Each class received 20 lessons that were documented in a handbook containing forty lesson plans addressing the New Jersey language arts, social studies and performing arts standards. The lessons in the handbook consist of theater games, mime and movement, puppetry and process drama activities as strategies for learning.





Unit 6
Ancient Egypt
Exploring the Lives of Ancient Egyptians

Analyzing poetry and art found in Ancient Egyptian tombs, students will recognize how Egypt's geographic location impacted the lives of people living along the Nile River. They will also understand how it effected the everyday life of different groups in ancient Egyptian society.

Students will then be able to write in role and create a drama based on the first strike in History - The Tomb Worker's Strike.

New Jersey Curriculum Standards Addressed in This Unit

- **Language Arts 3.2A** - Writing as a process, informational compositions
- **Language Arts 3.3** - Oral Presentation (speaking)
- **Language Arts 3.3B** - Inquiry and Contributing;
- **Language Arts 3.3D** - Oral Presentation (speaking)
- **Social Studies 6.2A** - Historical Understanding - Use critical thinking skills to interpret historical events, Analyze data in order to see persons and events in a historical context.
- **Social Studies 6.2B** - Use critical thinking skills to interpret historical events; Analyze data in order to see persons and events in their historical context; 3. Apply critical thinking skills to assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources, Formulate historical questions based on information needs
- **Visual and Performing Arts 1.2B** - Theatre: Explain the aesthetic qualities of specified art works in oral and written responses; Communicate ideas about the social and personal value of art
- **Visual and Performing Arts 1.2C** - Creation and performance
- **Visual and Performing Arts 1.5A** - History and Culture

Introduction to Unit 6: Magic Circle of Drama Handbook

TEACHER WORKSHOPS

Teachers who were involved in treatment classes met for 12 hours of orientation, training and collaboration on lesson plans during the first year. During year 2 these teachers met for 12 hours of training in the use of the drama strategies in the handbook.



Year 3 of the grant is devoted to providing district-wide professional development training in various drama strategies to all 255 fourth and fifth grade teachers in the Jersey City schools. Additionally, during year three of the grant visiting artists will be doing demonstration workshops in process drama in the classrooms of the 255 teachers.



In May 2008 those teachers will be attending an additional three-hour session to review the work done in their classrooms and reflect upon their own use of drama strategies with their class.

This report describes the effects of the first round of district-wide workshops consisting of a three-hour training session in drama strategies held in September 2007 with 205 teachers attended.

OVERVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Educational Arts Team workshops were offered as half day training to groups of 20 to 25 fourth and fifth grade teachers respectively. Along with EAT's Director, all teaching artists were present during the training sessions. The sessions began with an overview of the Arts Integration project in the district. Teachers were told about the purpose of the grant, given an update on the grant's related activities during the project's first two years, and provided with information on the handbook of lesson plans that was developed as part of the project. This was followed by a demonstration by EAT staff of selected arts strategies from the handbook.



The workshops concluded with teachers working in small groups on developing a lesson plan that incorporated at least one of the strategies. The small teacher work groups were facilitated by a teaching artists from EAT. The teachers were told that they would be expected to implement at least one of these lessons in their classroom sometime during the school year and that during the May training they would reflect on that experience in a small group, as well as learn new drama infusion strategies.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PHILOSOPHY

The Educational Arts Team believes that

- For teachers to eventually incorporate drama strategies into their practice they must experience the joy of drama as a teaching tool first hand.
- The training must be relevant to teachers needs and research-based.
- Teachers must not feel overexposed or pressured into participating until they're ready.
- Training is not a one time experience, but an ongoing process over a number of years.
- Students and teachers can and will become more creative and collaborative as they use this methodology.

PLAN OF ACTION FOR 2007/2008 SCHOOL YEAR: YEAR THREE OF THE GRANT

During year three of the grant the Educational Arts Team plans to help teachers

- Build knowledge about drama in education through 6 hours of introductory training that includes arts integrated strategies.
- Develop an awareness of the effectiveness of the strategies with their students through classroom demonstrations (two 45 minute lessons by visiting artists.)
- Translate the knowledge from the introductory training into classroom practice by developing and implementing at least one lesson plan with their students during the school year.
- Reflect on their drama lesson in May 2008 and be motivated to find opportunities for further study in future years.



In order to accomplish this plan of action the Educational Arts Team will do the following:

- Use teacher and evaluation feedback to redesign training.
- Scale up and reflect upon training with small groups of teachers throughout the year.
- Create small workgroups to develop and refine integrated lesson plans.
- Provide in-class support to teachers as they take the lead in implementing integrated lessons through meetings, e-mail and phone consultations.
- Establish a small cadre of teachers who serve as researchers of the impact of arts integration on their practice and student learning

The following activities were demonstrated in the September 2007 training:

MANDALA PROJECT

Theme of the project: “What are the qualities of an effective educator?”

Begin by placing a large piece of craft paper with four concentric circles in front of the group on the wall.

Facilitator: Now we are going to create an art project that will make us more aware about the qualities which we believe are needed to be a good educator. This project will enable us to think about our highest aspirations as teachers.

To do this we are going to create a mandala. In ancient Sanskrit this word means circle. Psychologist Carl Jung called the mandala the magic circle. As we create mandalas today we will be making what is unconscious conscious through art, writing and discussion.



Young people working on a group cooperation Mandala.

Mandalas are artistic arrangements of symbols and designs in a circular pattern. Some examples of mandalas are the colorful iris of your eye or a round stained-glass window. Let's get started. What is one quality that you believe is crucial for you to have in the classroom to be an effective educator?

Go from person to person soliciting one example from each person in the group. Some of the responses will be such things as organization, compassion, patience, creativity, etc.

Facilitator: What four qualities have we heard the most from this group?

Through discussion you might agree upon such qualities as patience, flexibility, energy and a sense of humor. Write these four qualities on the mandala sheet: one in each of the four corners of the paper.

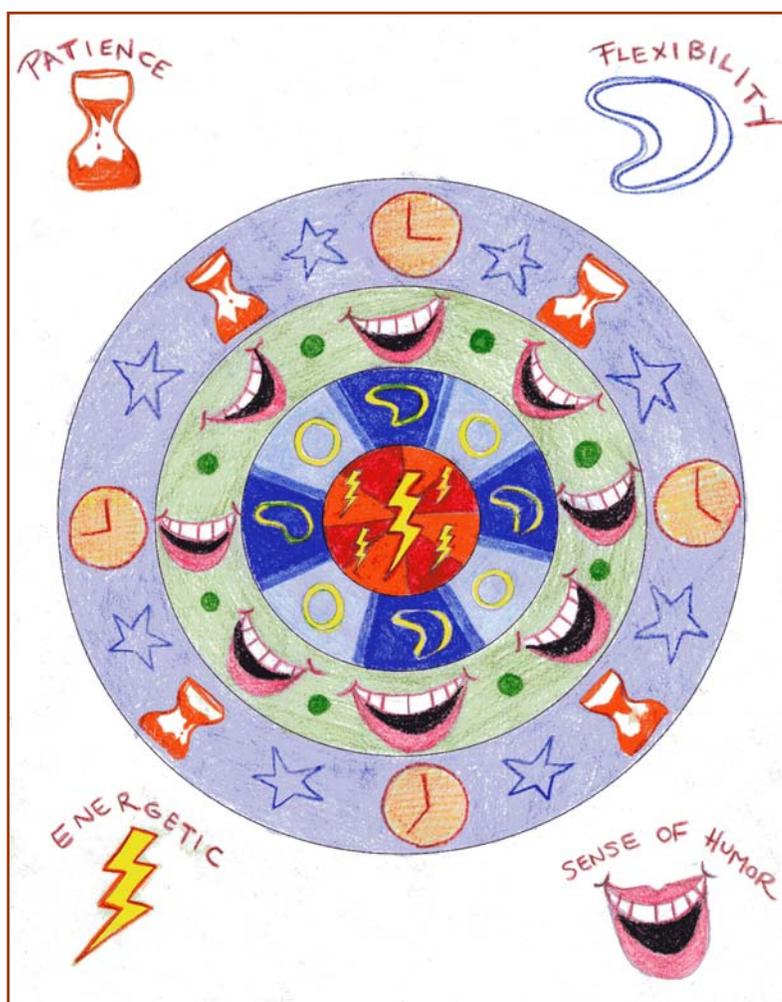
Now we need to create a symbol for each of these qualities.

Solicit ideas from the group of symbols that could represent each of the four qualities. Place the corresponding symbol next to the word in each corner. (For example: Patience could look like an hour glass)

Next create a design or pattern in each of the circles using the four symbols; do not use words. When you're finished it will look something like the picture to the right.

Give each teacher their own personal sheet of paper with four concentric circles.

Facilitator: Now you will have the opportunity to create your own mandala based on the four qualities you feel most important for you to have in the classroom. You can choose from those that were shared in the group and write them in the four corners of your piece of paper or select some other qualities we haven't heard yet today.

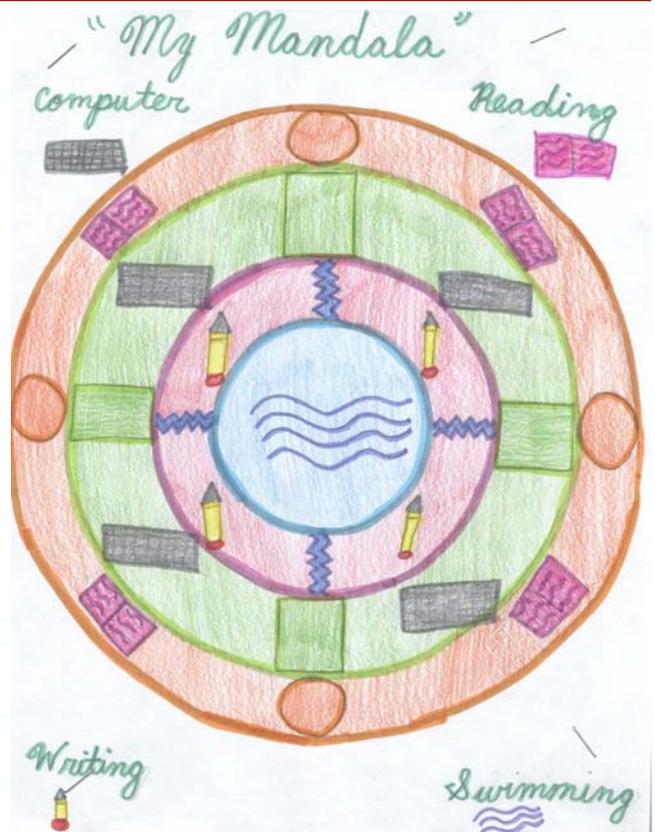


Allow the teachers some time to draw their symbols and create their own mandalas. Hand out markers, crayons and/or colored pencils. Encourage the teachers to use different colors to create the various qualities.

When everyone is finished, ask the teachers to stand in a circle. After everyone has said their name, ask the teachers to find someone in the group they do not know, form a pair), and explain their mandala to their partner.

Facilitator: Explain to your partner why you have chosen the symbols you have. Include any stories that you may have which are related to these qualities and symbols.

When everyone has had sufficient time to explain their mandala, you can move on to the next phase.



Sample of a student's Mandala on the theme of things I'm good at

Please go back to your seats, turn over your mandalas and on the back of them write a title for your mandala. Next, please write about the qualities you chose. Why did you select the qualities you did? What do those qualities mean to you? Why did you select the colors you did? Are there any stories about any of these qualities that you might have from your teaching career? Which quality is the most important? Why?

When everyone has had sufficient time to write about their mandalas, ask the teachers to share what they have written with a partner.

Facilitator: Please read what you have written about your mandala to your new partner.

When the pairs have had sufficient time to read what they've written to each other, move on to the next question.

How could this activity be used in the classroom?

The mandala project is a good example of what I call the *Orality to Literacy* principle: how doing oral language activities preceding writing activities enables the writer to have something immediate and concrete to write about and also to write about something of importance to the writer.

POP-UP PUPPET THEATER



Facilitator: Over the course of a series of Pop-Up Puppet workshops, students learn a number of stories, make puppets and scenery for those stories, and write a play script in response to stories they have worked on. Finally students present their plays to younger children.

Tell the participants two simple stories, such as two Aesop's fables of not more than two characters. Review the story line with the group. Divide the group into partners. Ask the participants to tell one of their stories to their partner; then ask the other person to tell the other story to their partner.

Each person then does a simple drawing of the characters from their story. They retell their stories to their partner using the drawings. They do scenery for their stories and turn the drawings of the characters into simple paper puppets. They write a script of the story they have told. They read their script to their partner and have the opportunity to edit the script. They decorate their own small stage. Now using the scenery, the puppets and their script, they perform their story.



TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE GAME

Telling One Truth:

The group is divided into pairs. Partners tell each other one true thing about themselves. Each person then shares with the group what their partner has told them.

Telling One Lie:

In this round the partners tell each other one lie about themselves. Each person then shares with the group the lie they heard from their partner. Then each person is given a sheet of 8.5 x 11" paper that needs to be folded into 3 horizontal columns. (The participants will be writing on the paper landscape style.)

Facilitator: In the first space please write something that is true about you. For example, I could write that I have tropical fish. In the second column write something else that is true about you. For example, I could write that I have a dog. In the third column write something that is not true about you. Please don't tell us something that's very obviously not true. For example, I could write that I have three sons. Now I could have three sons. But actually I only have one son and one daughter. When you're finished, please turn your paper over so no one can see it.

Work with the participants to set up the space as if it were a "game show" television studio. You will need to set up three chairs in the front of the space for three contestants. Ask the group how they could rearrange the room to make it feel more like a television game show set. You can conduct the game show as the host. This does not require any acting. Just be yourself and enjoy the fun.

Ask for three volunteers and tell them to sit in the three chairs facing the rest of the class. Collect their three sheets. Cut one of the sheets into three pieces, so you can hand each student one of the columns from one of the three contestants' "Two Truths and a Lie" sheet. Don't let the rest of the group know whose sheet you are using.

Facilitator (as host): Contestant number one please read what's on your piece of paper. Contestant number two now you can do the same. Contestant number three please read what's on your piece of paper. Studio audience, if you think these two truths and a lie belong to contestant number one please raise your hands? Contestant number two? Contestant number three?

When you have established whose "Two Truths and a Lie" sheet you were using, you can vote again on which one of the three things we learned were not true.

Facilitator: Studio audience, please raise your hand if you think that contestant number one told us a lie? Contestant number two? Contestant number three?

When you have established which one of the three things you learned was the lie, you can repeat this activity with three other participants.

CHANGE THREE

This activity helps develop observation skills, but is also a good way to get people comfortable being looked at by others.

Ask participants to stand in two lines of equal number.

Demonstrate this activity with a volunteer in front of the group. The facilitator and the volunteer look at each other. They must try to remember how the other person is dressed.

Ask the volunteer to turn away from you and explain to the group that you will be changing three things about how you look. For example you might turn up a sleeve. You might open your tie or you might open a button. You could take off a shoe.

When both people have had a chance to make three changes, ask them to turn around, face one another and guess what three changes their partner made.

Play the game with the entire group.



One participant is guessing what three changes their partner has made. One is quite obvious.

STATUE MAKING

Facilitator: The name of this game is “statues.”

Ask for a volunteer and then shape or “mold” that person into a statue by either touching them physically or giving them verbal and gestural directions.

Can anyone guess what statue this could be?

I often create the Statue of Liberty, because it’s one everyone knows.

Why do we make statues?

Responses can be categorized as the following: people make statues for aesthetic, historical and civic purposes.

Next, ask participants to stand in two lines of equal number. Explain that one group will be the sculptors, while the other group will be the clay. The sculptors need to ask their partner if it’s okay if they touch them. If not, they can give verbal directions and shape their partner (the clay) into a statue. The partner (the clay) does not need to know what statue they are becoming. The sculptors can create a statue that exists (such as, The Thinker or Abraham Lincoln) or one that’s being created for the first time. When the sculptors are finished, they need to think of a name for their sculpture.



Ask the line of people who are the sculptors to stand back and view all the sculptures at the same time. Walk down the line of sculptures and ask the sculptors for the name of their sculpture. Repeat this process giving the other line a turn.

Facilitator: How can be this used in the classroom and what kind of statues could be made based on classroom topics?

Repeat the process instructing the sculptors that now they must create a sculpture that has a literary or social studies theme.

WORD LINE

This activity is a very good way to get people to become comfortable speaking in front of groups and thinking on their feet.

Ask for five volunteers to stand in front of and facing the group. Ask the first participant to say the number one, "One." Then ask the next participant to say the number two, "Two." The next participant should say, "Three," and so on down the line.

Repeat the activity asking each participant to speak a little louder than the previous person.

Ask the group what each person must do in order to be understood by their audience. People will say things such as: "speak louder," "speak more clearly," etc.

Repeat the activity with five more volunteers. For the next round, use fruits, letters, colors, animals or vegetables for the game.

Repeat the activity until everyone has had a turn.

The activity can also be done with puppets. The volunteers are given a puppet with which to respond in the game.



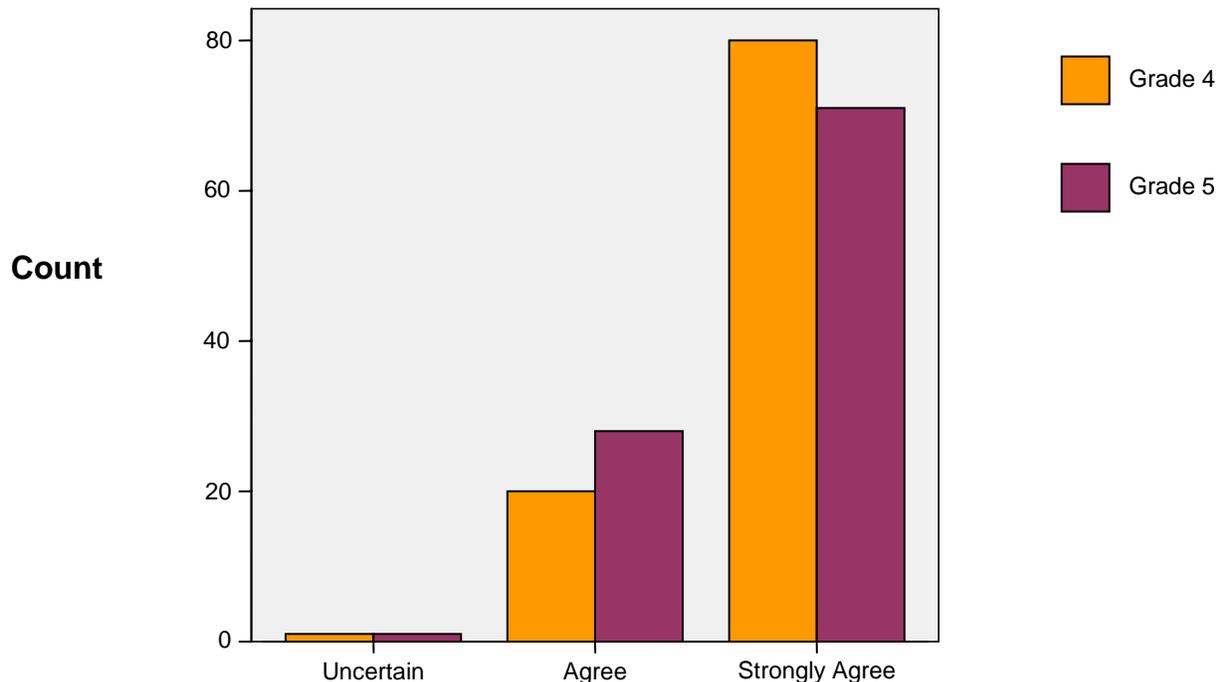
TEACHERS' FEEDBACK ON SEPTEMBER 2007 WORKSHOPS

Teachers provided feedback on the activities that occurred during EAT's training workshops. An evaluation instrument was completed by each teacher at the end of each workshop session. Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which the workshops helped them to understand creative drama, theater games, puppetry and process drama strategies; the potential pedagogical usage to which each of the drama strategies could be put in their classrooms; whether or not they would be comfortable using the strategies with their students; what further in-class technical assistance they would need, and whether the workshops helped to inform the way they viewed the arts. In addition, teachers were asked to comment on the overall effectiveness of each of the demonstrated strategies; which of the strategies they would most likely be using in their classrooms and at what point during the school year.

UNDERSTANDING ART STRATEGIES

More than 99% of the fourth and fifth grade teachers, who attended the district-wide workshops, stated that the workshops helped them to understand drama-in-education strategies.

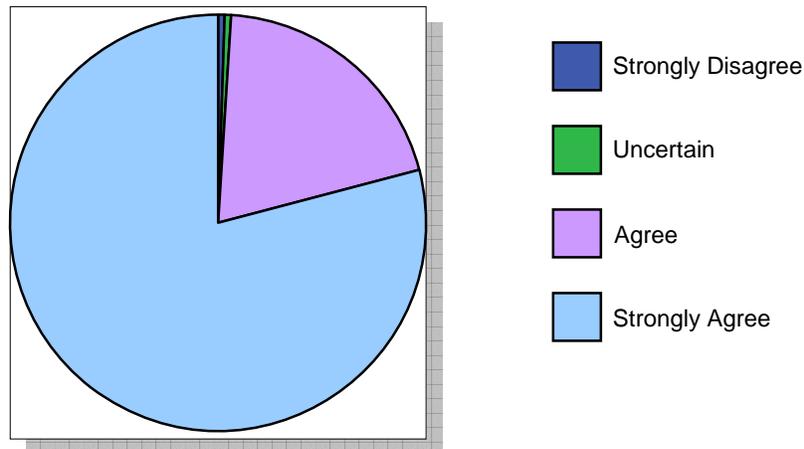
In fact, approximately 79% of the fourth grade teachers and 71% of the fifth grade teachers felt very strongly that the workshops were instrumental in enhancing their knowledge of theatre arts strategies (See figure below).



The workshop has helped me to better understand the use of drama-in-education strategies.

UNDERSTANDING HOW TO INCORPORATE ART STRATEGIES IN TEACHING

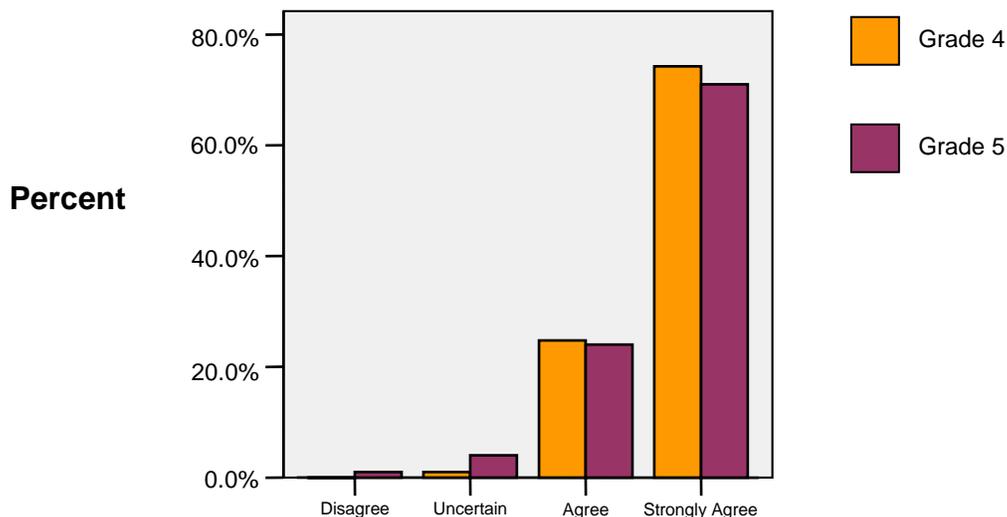
Almost all of the 205 teachers felt that the training provided by EAT allowed them to understand how art strategies could be pedagogically useful with their students. Indeed, 99% of the teachers stated that attending the workshops provided them with insights into how they as classroom teachers, could use the arts to benefit the students that they teach.



The workshops have helped me understand how to incorporate arts strategies in my teaching.

VALUE OF STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATION INTO THE CLASSROOM

Overall, there was unanimity among the teachers that the strategies shared by EAT in the workshops, if they were to be integrated into the subjects that they taught, would be very beneficial for their students. Indeed, more than 75% of the teachers strongly held to this viewpoint as can be seen from the figure below.

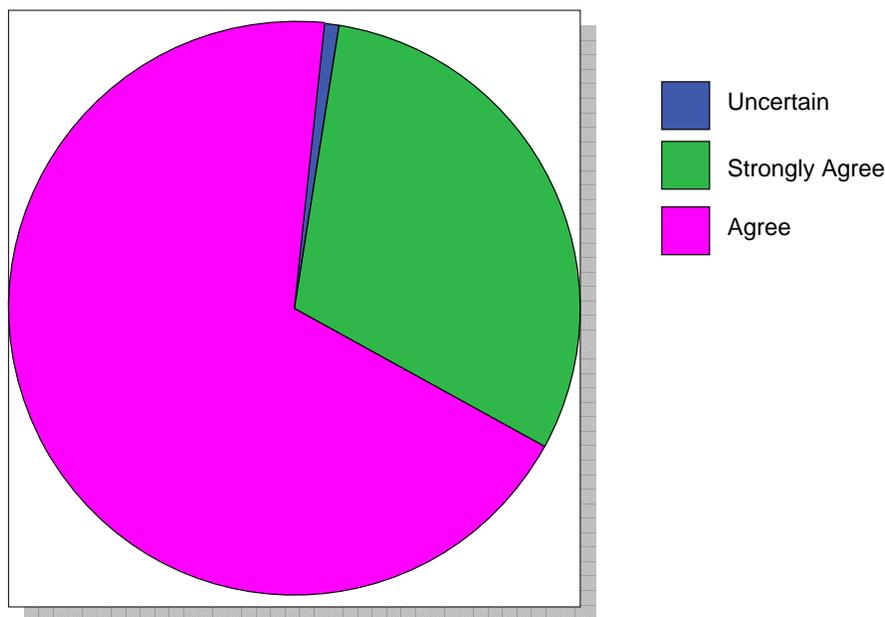


I can see how integrating the arts into classroom subjects can benefit my students .

TRANSFERRING WORKSHOP KNOWLEDGE INTO THE CLASSROOM SETTING

More than 97% of the teachers indicated that they would be comfortable using the demonstrated drama strategies in their classrooms as can be seen in the pie graph below. Almost all of the teachers expressed comfort with at least two of the arts strategies; and a sizeable number of teachers with all of the strategies. Approximately 58% of the teachers felt that they would however, need some in-class support from EAT staff; with proportionately more of the fourth grade as opposed to the fifth grade teachers stating the need for further assistance. In anticipation of this need, EAT as part of its training plan, had made provision for the teaching artists to provide technical assistance to the classroom teacher during the implementation of an arts integrated lesson.

Only about a third of the teachers felt that incorporating the art strategies into their teaching would detract from their other instructional responsibilities. There were no detectable differences in the viewpoints of fourth and fifth grade teachers on this issue. Many of the teachers stated that they intended to implement the techniques immediately after the workshop's conclusion. However, most teachers planned on implementing a lesson during the first and second marking periods.



Teacher comfort in using art strategies after attending EAT workshop.

HOW THE DRAMA STRATEGIES CAN IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

The following comments provide insights into the various ways in which teachers viewed the drama strategies as contributing to their students' learning and achievement. The most common themes expressed by most of the teachers who attended the workshops are presented and discussed. We have abbreviated the teachers' responses.

PERSONAL MANDALAS

There was concurrence among most of the teachers that the use of this technique in classroom instruction would be instrumental in promoting writing. Specifically, teachers noted that Personal Mandalas could be used in the pre-writing phase; to assist students who some times are unable to think of a topic on which to write; and to help students develop skills in particular writing genres, for example personal narrative.

The teachers also noted that Mandalas could be useful in addressing prosocial skills such as those related to character development. For example, teachers could ask students to examine the qualities of a good friend.

Teacher comments on how mandalas could be used

Visualize past; personal narratives; class rules; first day of school activities; mini-lessons for writing; introductory activity for a "get to know me"; character building for novels; organizing thoughts and ideas; development of ideas for writing tasks; personalize/create relationships among students; good idea generator for 'stuck' students who can't think of what to write; math ; graphic organizer for story making; brainstorming for writing; character education; visual aid for writing for special education students; higher order thinking; connecting visual and auditory information; introducing topics or keeping students on track throughout the unit.

STATUE MAKING

Statue making was seen as potentially useful for social studies instruction, and in helping students to develop critical thinking skills. With respect to social studies, teachers believed that this drama strategy could be used instructionally in the study of historical figures, in teachings on ancient civilization and in aiding students to recall important historical facts. In addition to these competencies, teachers identified a number of more general cognitive skills that this particular drama technique could be used to address. These include students' abilities to identify main ideas, to interpret and analyze information, and to respond in written form to a visual prompt. More broadly, Statue Making was viewed by teachers as a technique that could also be used to foster cooperative learning; to accommodate differentiated instruction and to provide students with an opportunity to be creative.

Teacher comments on how statue making could be used

Student expression; creativity; character guessing in social studies (i.e. Alexander the Great); making meaning, ancient; civilizations; literature and Think Block; Following directions; reviewing people in history; writing in response to a picture prompt; use after an essay is published and shared with class; memorization; explaining step-by-step processes or sequences; main ideas; critical thinking and analyzing; kinesthetic learner, interpretation; synthesize concepts; recall content; co-operative learning; lesson review in science, social studies, and vocabulary; higher order thinking; historic figure statues; history and team building activities; shy students; differentiated instructions; reading comprehension strategy; visualization; muscular and skeletal systems in science.

WORD LINES AND PLAYING WITH PUPPETS

The teachers provided specific insights into how each of the drama strategies could be used instructionally in several content areas to improve student learning. The teachers felt, for example, that the art strategies of Word Lines and Playing with Puppets can be used to build vocabulary skills, encourage verbal expression, in whole and small group activities, for test reviews and in developing recall skills. The teachers also noted that these techniques would be particularly helpful for students who may be shy or have special needs.

Teacher comments on how word lines could be used

Memorization skills; retelling a story/facts in sequential order; vocabulary meaning; expression of feelings; used as warm ups; story telling, adjectives/adverbs; helpful for the students who are shy; content knowledge recall; synthesizing information; public speaking; listening skills and paying attention; test reviews; for students with auditory impairments; verbal expression; engaging students in role playing; integrating learning through role-playing; beneficial for low functioning students; center and small group activity; introduction activity for students; give kids opportunity to be less fearful of performing Playing w/ Puppets; conflict resolution; math and class/team building skills; oral assessments; descriptive writing; enforce different learning styles.

TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

This theatre game was deemed by teachers as being particularly beneficial in helping students distinguish between facts and opinions in social studies and in science. In addition, teachers noted that Two Truths and a Lie could be used for classroom assessments (either teacher or peer directed) and test preparation activities. Teachers also noted that as a strategy, it could be applied in the teaching of mathematics operations.

Teacher comments on how two truths and a lie could be used

Enhancing listening skills and memory; presentation skills; comprehension; content knowledge recall; explaining cause and effect; compare and contrast; for visual and auditory learners; synthesizing information; applying story elements; reinforce setting, plot, characters; recall social studies facts; writing activities; putting events in sequential order; formulation of math word problems; personal narratives and help in writing picture prompts; identifying genre; helpful for special education students to clarify parts of a story; modeling how a good story is written and told; giving students another voice; extension activities; useful for comprehending story/story structure and how to develop and create a story.

TELLING TWO STORIES AND POP-UP DEMONSTRATION

Teachers identified a number of instructional skills which can be addressed by the strategies Telling Two Stories and Pop-Up Demonstration. For instance, listening, reading comprehension, and literary genres. Fictional writing, understanding story structure, plots, setting and character development were identified by several teachers as skills that could be taught and reinforced through Telling Two Stories and Pop-Up Demonstration. In addition to language arts and social studies, both sets of techniques were identified as having potential value in addressing word problems in mathematics; and also helpful for visual and auditory learners.

Teacher comments on how telling two stories and pop-up could be used

Oral review of lessons; memorization; remembering facts or events; vocabulary; distinguishing fact and opinions; biographical review; assessments; fact discrimination in social studies; test preparation; team building; Think block; Science and Social Studies concepts; implement true/false activities for science and social studies; great strategy for multiple choice when practicing for a test; follow up activity; mental math and order of operation; peer assessment; culminating activity n social studies; short personal narratives.

SUMMARY

EAT workshops have been successful in improving classroom teachers' understanding of how the arts can be used as effective instructional tools to promote student learning. The approach EAT adopted to scaling up professional development district-wide has proven to be effective based upon teacher feedback. This approach required a strong partnership between EAT, the Jersey City Board of Education and building principals. The overwhelmingly positive responses from the 205 classroom teachers who participated in the workshops reinforce EAT's belief that the perceived relevancy of drama in the classroom is enhanced when professional development sessions create a creative and safe environment that engages teachers in meaningful activities and provides some reflection and follow-up.

**Scaling up Teacher Professional Development
Theater Arts Integration Projects
Theater Infusion Project**

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