



READING RESIDENCY

Final Report FY 2018

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Developed eight years ago, the Reading Residency program uses theater to teach literacy skills by engaging students in classroom activities developed around a specific production from our season. Approaching a text the way a theater artist might, students learn key concepts through various methods, including class discussions, dramaturgical research, acting out scenes, and written assignments - connecting to visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners.

Reading Residencies include a Rep Immersion Day and an in-class discussion with an actor from the production. Rep Immersion Day is a full-day program that includes demonstrations and discussions, lunch, a student matinee performance, and a TalkBack.

The assessment of this program was completed in partnership with University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee's Center of Research and Evaluation.



Middle School Track

The Middle School track is twenty sessions long, focusing explicitly on developing text evidence skills through the text of one of our productions. This year's curriculum was developed around *Animal Farm* and *Our Town*.

In the 2017/18 Season, we implemented a Reading Residency in 40 classrooms at 16 schools - an increase from 32 classrooms in the 2016/17 Season.

"One thing that I gained from this residency is I know how plays impact the world and communities."

- Middle School Student

High School Track

The High School Reading Residency program is a ten week arts integration program, that gives young adults a project-based approach to reading comprehension and social emotional skills.

In the 2016/17 Season, we worked with 18 classrooms in 7 high schools, studying *Guys and Dolls*, *Animal Farm*, and *Our Town*.

"This was a lot of fun, and it was fun to break the show down into sections and analyze them."

- High School Student

School Partners

Middle School

Auer Avenue School
Barack Obama Middle School
Bruce Guadalupe Middle School
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School
Franklin Middle School
Greenfield Middle School
Hartford Avenue University School
Humboldt Park School
Lancaster School
Metcalfe Park School
Rogers Street Academy
Roosevelt School of the Arts
Sherman Multicultural Arts School
Story School
Thurston Woods School
Trowbridge School

High School

Audubon High School
Bay View High School
Carmen High School - South
Greenfield High School
Hmong American Peace Academy
Milwaukee High School of the Arts
North Division High School



PROGRAM OUTCOMES

GOAL 1: IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION

Objective: Students will increase their ability in Text Evidence

Of the 405 middle school students with matched pre- and post-test scores, 225 students (55.6%) had higher scores on the post-test than on the pre-test. The sign test was used to determine if the median post-test score is significantly higher than the pre-test score. This test indicated that the median post-test score ($Mdn_{post} = 3.0$) was significantly higher than the median pre-test score ($Mdn_{pre} = 2.0$) ($p < .0001$). Therefore, we conclude that there was a significant increase in text evidence median scores from pre- to post-test for middle school students across plays.

Of the 101 High School students with matched pre- and post-test scores, 45 students (44.6%) had higher scores on the post-test than on the pre-test. The sign test was used to determine if the median post-test score is significantly higher than the pre-test score. This test indicated that the median post-test score ($Mdn_{post} = 4.0$) was significantly higher than the median pre-test score ($Mdn_{pre} = 3.0$) ($p < .0001$). Therefore, we conclude that there was a significant increase in text evidence median scores from pre- to post-test for High School students across these plays.

GOAL 2: IMPROVE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Objective A: Students will build their Relationship Skills

Of the 398 middle school students with matched pre- and post-survey scores, 150 students (37.7%) had higher scores on the post-survey than on the pre-survey. Of the 98 High School students with matched pre- and post-survey scores, 43 students (43.9%) had higher scores on the post-survey than on the pre-survey.

Objective B: Students will develop their Social Awareness

Of the 404 middle school students with matched pre- and post-survey scores on this survey, 170 students (42.1%) had higher scores on the post-survey than on the pre-survey. Of the 99 high school students with matched pre- and post-survey scores on this survey, 34 students (34.3%) had higher scores on the post-survey than on the pre-survey.

GOAL 3: INCREASE THEATER APPRECIATION

Objective: Students will increase their appreciation and understanding of theater.

Of the 413 middle school students with matched pre- and post-survey scores, 195 students (47.2%) improved from pre- to post-survey.

Of the 101 High School students with matched pre- and post-survey scores, 46 students (45.5%) improved from pre- to post-survey.



ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE

Open-ended responses were included to gain an understanding of what the students gained from the Reading Residency program. 938 students completed the post-survey. 529 of them provided responses to the open-ended questions.

There are six main themes based on the students' answers. These themes are: students' feelings towards the program, theater knowledge, emotional growth, skill, lessons from play, and future. Below are the descriptions and explanations for each theme.

I. Students' feelings towards the program

42 students described both the plays and the Reading Residency program as enjoyable, fun, and memorable activities.

"...One thing I can say is that I enjoyed all the activities we did. From the pantomiming we did to the ridiculous quick sketches. I can say that these sessions were better than having an actual speech class every single day."

"I've learned that it takes time and effort to put a play together and isn't something easy to do, not just that but also that being part of a play is something that can take you to a different world."

II. Theater Knowledge

91 students described that they had better understanding on play preparation process. These students described their growing knowledge on preparation steps needed to create play, such as production process and actor preparation.

III. Emotional Growth

127 students described the emotional growth categories that they experienced through the program, which are: confidence (82 students mentioned confidence), the ability to share and express different ideas and thoughts in positive ways, the ability to listen and responding to other people's opinion in positive manners,

"One thing that I'm very grateful and also happy that I learned from this residency is how to have more manners, how to talk or express more feelings, confidence"

"One thing that I gained from this residency is that there is a limit to how far you can achieve if you work alone, but if you work as a team with everyone else, an ensemble, your achievements will be limitless."

collaboration, empathy, attention to detail, positive thinking, learning about oneself, trust, responsibility, patience, calm and openness, and honesty.

IV. Skills

17 students described increase in skills related to reading, writing and critical thinking skill.

V. Lessons from the Play

27 students shared various lessons that they learned from reading and watching *Guys and Dolls*, *Animal Farm*, or *Our Town*.

VI. Future

9 students expressed their growing interest in theater, plays, and acting.

"I hope that I can be in one someday and show everyone my emotions and help them understand the true meaning of a play like the performers did to while I watched Animal Farm."



SUMMARY

LESSONS LEARNED IN 2017/18

This season continued the pattern of the Reading Residency program yielding positive results. We learned a lot with the expansion this year from 42 classrooms last season to 58 this season.

1) We do not shy away from challenging classrooms as we strive to bring equitable access to high quality arts programming to all of Milwaukee's young people. This year was keenly difficult in a few classrooms and we needed to provide additional support to our Teaching Artists in those schools. In the 2018/19 Season, we are moving our part-time Reading Residency Coordinator to a full-time position to increase our capacity to address unforeseen challenges as they come up during the program.



2) We also felt the capacity with our pre and post-show workshops in the classroom, which are led by actors or artists from the production in addition to the Teaching Artist. The number of workshops across all of our programs increased significantly this season, which impacted the availability of the actors to teach the workshops. In 2018/19, we plan to hold steady at the middle school level in order to address this capacity challenge, exploring distance learning tools as an option for the pre or post-workshops.

3) Our social emotional learning measurement tools continue to change through our involvement with Milwaukee Succeeds, ensuring alignment with how we measure success of the SEL competencies. We are also exploring how we might share the survey data with students to make them more aware and involved in their own learning throughout the residency program.

FUTURE PLANS

We continue to examine the scalability of the program with Milwaukee Public Schools. Though we are holding steady for the number of classrooms in 2018/19, our goal is to increase middle school classrooms by ten each season over the next five years until we reach eighty middle school classrooms. We are also examining the efficacy of the high school track in relationships to other programs we offer for that age group. 2018/19 will be focused on building a solid foundation through increased staff capacity and continued fostering of relationships with Milwaukee schools. We look forward to continuing to expand this program to reach students throughout the city of Milwaukee.

"I learned of the importance in the characters' actions. I understand why relationships and obstacles in the play effect the overall character. Every aspect of the play must comply with the idea of the play."

SPONSORS

Thank you to all of our sponsors that allow us to bring this program to so many students throughout Milwaukee. Your generous support has given this opportunity to 1,558 students in 58 classrooms across 23 schools. The depth and breadth of this program put our total number of contact hours at 34,380 for the Reading Residency program.



Thank you

Bader Philanthropies, BMO Wealth Management, Einhorn Family Foundation, GMAR Youth and Realtors Association, Greater Milwaukee Foundation, The Harley-Davidson Foundation, Johnson Controls Foundation, Kohl's Foundation, Manpower Group, Northwestern Mutual Foundation, Ralph Evinrude Foundation, United Performing Arts Fund, Wisconsin Energy Corporation Foundation

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