Drew University

College of Liberal Arts

Assessment in the 230 Broadway Project and Beyond:

What Can Theatre Arts in Education Give Our Students Besides Theatre?

A Thesis in Theatre Arts

by

Emma Barakat

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Bachelor in Arts

With Specialized Honors in Theatre Arts

May 2017

Additional sections authored by Michelle Taliento, taken from her thesis “The 230 Broadway Project: Employing Playwriting and Community-Based Performance in Our Schools”

Abstract

Theatre arts has been known to decline in public schools in the past decades, in part because of the No Child Left Behind act of 2001. Another reason for this decline could be due to the fact that assessment, a relatively recent element of education, is hard to exercise when the skills of theatre are more qualitative than quantitative. Can theatre in education teach more than just theatre? I argue that it can enforce the skills of citizenship and creative literacy. Citizenship in this context is an attribute that gives students the ability to be aware of the world around them, form their own opinions, judgments and beliefs based on their observations and to have the courage to speak up about what they deem important. I define creative literacy as the ability to not only think creatively and innovatively, but to take those thoughts and be able to express them through writing, speaking, images and other measures of literacy.

In order to see if these qualities can be found in theatre programs, I look at the concept of assessment, researching how it came about and what assessment tools are available for theatre arts. As a highly qualitative area of work, I discuss if there are limits to assessment and if theatre arts can ever be assessed accurately using traditional tools. Examining the assessment methods of 52nd Street Project, Writers Theatre of New Jersey and AdvantageArts@Drew, three different forms of theatre programs in education, I found that my terms manifest themselves. After my research, I move on to observe and assess the 230 Broadway Project, a new theatre education endeavor by my colleague, Michelle Taliento, with Integrated Playwriting lesson plans based on the Playmaking model of Daniel Judah Sklar. I was able to witness Taliento's lesson plans in full force

and experiment with the kinds of assessment methods that might be most conducive for the work. The results of my research and observations are a set of rubrics and other assessment tools to be used in conjunction with not only Taliento's Integrated Playwriting, but any other theatre program looking to track the growth of citizenship and creative literacy within their playwriting programs.

Table of Contents

Introduction

I was a writing mentor for the course "Theatre in the Community: the Newark Collaboration," working with the class for the second time in the summer of 2016. Theatre in the Community is a class taught at Drew University, bringing together high school students from Newark and college students in order to write original theatre works that represent their unique voices and the issues they face in their community. Throughout my time with the class, starting in January of the same year until that summer, we covered difficult topics such as racial issues, media bias, homicide, black-on-black crime and gang violence. We were about halfway through the summer session when the professors decided we all needed to sit down and have an open discussion about the recent violence that surrounded the black community and how the students were processing it: that week two unarmed African-American males, Philandro Castille and Alton Sterling, were shot and killed by police—and both incidents were captured on video. Most of the writing mentors were white students, with a few exceptions. This meant our job was to listen, and the focus was on the students, the majority of whom were black with the rest being Hispanic, and how they needed to express themselves.

The most striking moment in the conversation was when a young fifteen-year-old, **S**, spoke up about her opinion. In the spring, **S** had written a powerful piece entitled "Mentally Unchained" (full poem found in Appendix A) talking about how all lives matter and we as a community had to come together to stop the violence and fighting in our country. Several times in the poem she would recite the line "all lives matter" as she stressed the importance of unity. Some of her teachers, while proud of her work, were

disgruntled by the fact that she, as a young black girl, was using the phrase “all lives matter” without understanding how that slogan was being used by opponents to refute the “black lives matter” movement. During the discussion on that day in July, **S** talked about how she had rewritten the poem after talking with her teachers.

At first, I was a little upset that she changed her mind just because someone challenged what she said. Whether I agreed with her statement or not, I thought she was entitled to state her opinion. However, **S** continued her comment by talking about the discussion she had with her professors, how they explained the message she was relaying with her original poem and asked if that was indeed the message she wanted to promote. She spoke to the fact that she did not quite understand the issue until she had the conversation and realized that was not in fact what she wanted to say. She re-wrote only some of the lines of the poem to more accurately depict what she was thinking and the idea she had wanted to communicate through her poem. That was when I realized the importance of what we were teaching these students. We were helping to shape **S**’s voice, leading her to understand the context in which she appropriated a popular slogan that had a different resonance than she was aware of. We discussed topics, found out what she was interested in and helped her work through her creative voice so that she could form an opinion, discuss it with peers, and express that opinion creatively. That is when I realized that theatre programs play a unique role in the lives of students different from the experiences of a traditional classroom.

Research Questions

This thesis suggests that using theatre as a primary element of education gives students the opportunity to develop the qualities of creative literacy and citizenship. When theatre programs work in full force, they ask students to talk about issues important to them, to write and speak about these issues, to form opinions and to incorporate them in their work in creative ways. Improvisation, acting, writing, speaking to peers-- all of these elements of a theatre class can work together to give students the skills of citizenship and creative literacy. In this thesis, I will define the terms creative literacy and citizenship. Are those attributes able to be taught? If so, how can they be put into practice? I will then ask whether theatre is particularly suited to encouraging and nurturing those qualities. Can those attributes be found in other existing theatre programs? If so, how can they be assessed? And what is the place of assessment in the world of theatre education? Beginning with the establishment of my terms, I will proceed to answer these questions through the course of this work.

Literature Review: Defining My Terms

Citizenship

What is citizenship? Why is it important? Robert D. Putnam, in his article on civic disengagement in contemporary America, talks about the fact that in today's society we deal with a lack of civic engagement in growing youths. He states that during the years where America grew in leaps and bounds when it came to medicine and technology, its people were becoming "less civic, less politically engaged, less socially connected...less committed to the common good...a loose aggregation of disengaged observers, rather

than a community of connected participants" (Putnam 135). He goes on to discuss the different ways in which civic engagement has fluctuated, saying that some social capital has declined less than others, but the trends are "pronounced and consistent...depleted roughly by one third since the 1970's" (Putnam 136).

He obtains his data from two databases. The first is the Roper Organization, which has conducted a survey every month for the past twenty-five years, asking roughly one thousand Americans twelve questions similar in form to questions such as: Have you attended a public meeting in the past year? Served on a committee for a local organization? Served as an officer? Written your congressman? Run for office? Etc. There are over 415,000 people in the Roper database and based on those results, there was a twenty-five percent decline from the 1970's to 1990's of people who had done any of the activities asked in the survey.

The second database Putnam uses to discuss the decline in civic engagement is the market research firm DDB, a company that commissions surveys asking Americans lifestyle questions in order to help sell products better. While the questions used to be simple—such as what type of laundry detergent do you prefer?—the firm realized that asking personal questions gave them a much better idea of the populace they were trying to sell to. In this way, Putnam has a database that asks respondents detailed questions about their lives, from how often they go to church to when they volunteered last to how many times they eat dinner with their family. Based on the results of these two database's records, Putnam tells us that social capital in general is eroding.

If society is becoming less civically engaged, then what kind of example are we passing on to our students? Are we teaching them what it means to be a citizen? School systems are required to have some sort of civic education in their curricula; every state includes civic learning or social studies in its standard curricula, whether it is directly in the curriculum or incorporated as a learning strand in the school standards. Every state also requires students to complete coursework in either topic before graduation, showing that our system demands some sort of proficiency in civic affairs from our students (Auck et al.).

We have these civic requirements in place, but what I do not believe our society does enough, however, is foster civic engagement in our youth, guiding them to form their own opinions and become active members of the community as they grow. Constance Flanagan, professor at Penn State University and developmental psychologist, is a specialist in the field of researching a child's civic development and engagement. She states in one of her many articles on the subject that "younger generations may be less 'civically engaged' or at least less inclined toward conventional political participation than were older generations," based on the renewed interest in the developmental roots of civic engagement (Flanagan 257).

We need the younger generation to replace the older generation and to bring to the table new ideas, passionate opinions, and rooted values. Where are they supposed to learn these values if not when they are young? Our society finds it important to teach children core subjects—math, history, literature—when they are still growing, recognizing the importance of a young, developing mind. But while these children are young and

developing, we should be giving them the tools to become involved in their community and be a contribution to society as well. As Gill Valentine phrases it in his article on children and their place in the "adult's public place," the conventional idea of children are that they are "human becomings" (Valentine 31) rather than fully-formed human beings. We should start considering them as participating citizens, not citizens-in-the-making, who must be informed and active in the world of civic engagement, especially since they are the ones who will take over once we are gone.

Two earlier research eras came about due to the very fear that youths were not ready to provide political stability and active participation as the older generation diminished. The first was in the wake of World War II and focused mainly on the idea of diffuse support, that is, support that is equivalent to legitimacy, that which is committed to an institution as an entity. Diffuse support does not mean compliance with everything an institution stands for, but it does equate to a "predisposition to comply" (Schebb 768). It contrasts with specific support, which is transitory, and changes based on the ideas put out by an institution, rather than support of the institution itself (Schebb 769). The WWII study looked into developmental foundations of diffuse support and how it was transferred across generations.

The second research era occurred in the 1960's and dealt with youth activism and how the younger generation grappled with political issues and contributed to political change. When taking the results of these research studies together, other scholars can look at the overall stability of a generation, considering how much and what they contribute to society. As Flanagan points out, however, what neither of those studies do is

look at the everyday life of a student as the starting point for examination or consider how political views and civic values can be formed and are "integrally related to other aspects of the human development (such as the formation of identity, values, and social ties to others)" (Flanagan 257). Researchers do not seem to consider fully the idea that the formation of civic values should go hand in hand with the formation of every other aspect of a youth's character and personality. Youths have been left out of the political conversation because of their "psychological immaturity" (De Castro 94), meanwhile the decisions being made affect them just as much as their elders. We should not wait until they are fully-fledged human beings to discuss the community and where they fit into it; if we are worried that they will not be involved in their community, then we should start that discussion as a part of their daily lives so that when they reach adulthood, those opinions and beliefs are already in place and they can be a fully active and passionate member of society.

One of the issues in educating students to become informed citizens could lie in the fact that the definition and duties of what a good citizen is and does are subjective. Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne wrote an article for the *American Educational Research Journal* titled "What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy." What they address, as illustrated in the title, is the difference in definition of what a good citizen is, which leads to difficulty in figuring out how to cultivate a good citizen.

Westheimer and Kahne narrow the idea of citizenship to three different types. The first is the personally responsible citizen, the type that fulfills their duty by "picking up litter, giving blood, recycling, obeying laws, and staying out of debt" (Westheimer and

Kahne 3). Programs trying to develop citizens in that vein focus on personal character, integrity, responsibility, etc. The second definition of citizen is the participatory citizen. These citizens are more involved in the civic affairs going on in the state, the country and the world at large. To foster that, education in government and community based organizations and how they run is encouraged by society. Westheimer and Kahne describe the difference between the two first types by saying that while "the personally responsible citizen would contribute cans of food for the homeless, the participatory citizen might organize the food drive" (Westheimer and Kahne 4). The last type of citizen that the article defines is the justice oriented citizen. This citizen is similar to the participatory citizen in that they both focus on the work of collective groups to make change in all communities. However, where they differ is the emphasis of the justice oriented citizen on social and structural problems, the analysis of the issues and the need to address the injustices. It is more about righting wrongs than volunteering at charitable organizations.

All of these definitions of what a good citizen is seem to be subjectively correct. However, giving the one, true definition of "good" citizenship cannot be done because of the difference of values that express what "good" actually means in this context. Because of this discrepancy, trying to establish school programs focusing on citizenship can prove to be difficult. Which definition is more important? How do we choose that? I think that because of the ambiguity of the term there is a loss in programs that teach good citizenship. This thesis suggests that we do not need to focus so much on the definition of citizenship so much as what a person needs to be able to be a contributing member of

society. In this case, what is more important than the definition of a citizen is identifying what all of these definitions have in common and finding a way to teach those qualities to produce engaged citizens, regardless of what kind of citizen one chooses to be. It seems that what all these definitions have in common is awareness of one's own perspective and those of others, the ability to speak up about things that are important and the ability to express those opinions. The types of programs we should be developing for high school students should teach them these qualities, the qualities of an engaged citizen who has an active presence in their community.

There is something else to consider when talking about growing young people and that is the concept of identity. The adolescent years are when identity is being formed and teens are most vulnerable to what surrounds it. They could be influenced by their family members or friends, whatever opinions people in their normal environment hold. However, it is important to get our children out into different environments where they are challenged to think in a different way than they are used to. By being exposed to a community with other individuals discussing issues from their own separate standpoint, teenagers are exposed to varying perspectives and opinions and are given a chance to think through the reasoning behind each opinion. This in turn gives them an opportunity to align themselves with a certain opinion, after contemplating what it means and if it does in fact reflect their views.

One of the last points that Constance Flanagan states in her article on developmental roots is the important shift away from the "youth at risk" paradigm and into "youth as asset" (Flanagan 260). Today's youths are tomorrow's adults and the

sooner we begin to groom them and expose them to larger communities and different values, the better prepared they will be when it is time to step up. We do not want to force our students into the arena of civic engagement; we want them to grow into it voluntarily, knowing what they want to support and how to do it. Children should be considered citizens; no matter what definition of "good" is being used to describe them, they should be given the tools, preparing them to be fully capable and willing to form their own opinions on topics, to want to get involved in issues that they believe in and to be interested in the well-being and betterment of the society in which they are a part.

Creative Literacy

The second term I will examine in this thesis is "creative literacy." Let us first break this term up into its two parts. The idea of literacy, in its barest form-- the ability to read and write--is such an important concept around which many of our societies revolve. We rarely encounter people on a daily basis who cannot read, unless they are under six years of age. However, as the New World Encyclopedia on Literacy tells us, before the 1400's, the "norm" was that most people were illiterate. Schools were not common institutions; it was difficult and expensive to procure an education, hence only the upper classes had access to teachers and even books in which to practice their literacy skills. The lower classes had to depend on the upper classes if they ever needed to employ reading or writing in their daily lives. From that point through the 1900's, literacy spread at an uneven rate, with factors again being social status, gender, age, ethnic group, etc. Different countries had different expectations and there were no universal assumptions of

literacy. However, by the late 1800's, formal education in civilized countries became quite common, due to rises in technology such as the printing press, enabling people to actually acquire texts in which to learn in the first place, and today in America, children are taught to read once they are old enough to attend school ("Literacy").

While levels of education in the United States still vary from person to person, about ninety-seven percent of the population at least has the ability to read and write ("Literacy"). Classrooms have such traditions as literacy circles, literacy centers, and literacy-focused time, all dedicated to fostering literacy in a student's everyday life (Ravitch 136). Literacy, as defined as the ability to read and write, is expected of everyone at this stage in our development. However, due to the fact that there is a need for more skills in our everyday life than just reading and writing, the definition of literacy has vastly grown since the 1400's. It is no longer just a "person's ability to decode and encode text" (Stordy 457). Since the mid-twentieth century, that definition has been replaced by the fact that reading and writing is just a means to an end, and now literacy can be determined as possessing higher cognitive ability in decoding and encoding specific texts for singular topics. Literacy is the general term; now it is time to get specific. Among the many terms for literacy there are information literacy, digital literacy, critical literacy, numeracy, musical literacy, orality, legal literacy; pick a topic and use it as an adjective for literacy and it is now a term to describe a person's ability to navigate that certain topic in not just reading and writing, but also, as Hillary Andreichik--an arts and activities researcher--states, "listening, speaking, viewing" (Andreichik 52) and any other form of expression.

One kind of literacy that seems to be overlooked when research is done is that of creative literacy. When the term “creative literacy” is searched online, there is a very limited amount of results. Even where it is found within a text, it is very rarely linked together as one, single term. It can be a confusing term for some people because of the ambiguity of the “describing” word-- creative. Often literacies are self explanatory and have the subject of the literacy in the name. Numeracy is knowledge and understanding of numbers. Digital literacy is the ability to use technology and computer products competently. Is creative literacy the knowledge of creativity? Is it possible to teach and be competent on the topic of creativity? Because of the uncertainty of the term, and the fact that creativity itself is subjective, creative literacy is not often discussed. There are, however, a few interesting articles which review the term and how it should be considered a staple of education.

In his article for the Art Education Journal, James Rolling Jr. starts a conversation about the term creative literacy and how it could be defined, referencing other authors who have also looked into the topic. He begins by talking about creativity’s role in the life of a child, specifically himself as a child. Rolling refers to his discoveries of the special “codes” and “systems” that other creative people shared; the world of creativity was like a secret society where individuals discovered the power of their imaginations and how to cultivate it as they grew. The challenge is how one communicates those new forms of thinking that have sprung from creativity, the “visual forms blended with word forms, story forms, design forms, moving images” (Rolling).

Rolling's answer is through creative literacy. He also offers an alternative, updated definition of literacy, that of "learning to interpret and serve as a catalyst for communication across multiple communicative modes and social contexts" (Rolling). If literacy now is defined as a decoding system that reaches across boundaries, then according to Rolling, creative literacy is the "fluency to recode content from one symbol system or network of meanings to another, through a practice akin to "conceptual collage" (Rolling). He goes on to discuss researchers such as Hillary Andreichik (mentioned above) who talks about the importance of making sure literacy has a place in the arts, as well as Amanda Alexander, Tuan Ho, Alexandra Overby and Brian L. Jones, who focus more specifically on digital and video games, such as Minecraft and their potential to foster critical assessment of creativity and finding a place for it in everyday life. Rolling finishes his brief article on a poetic note, stating that "the more creative activity we engage in, the more creatively we will forge our ongoing reinterpretations of life story, national narrative, and global community." Based on these statements, creativity is now being acknowledged as an integral part of a child's education and growth as a person. It is now up to us to access that creativity and find out how to cultivate it and share it with others; "we have the supplies; yet, as educators, we are still learning to use the tools" (Rolling).

While there are not many resources other than Rolling's about creative literacy specifically, there are two compelling articles, one written for Concordia University's literary resources journal (Blake) and the other from *Education Business* magazine online (Meers). Caitrin Blake, the author of the Concordia University article, has a masters in

English literature and teaches composition at Arapahoe Community College. Blake defines creative literacy as the "understanding of how to participate in the creative process and how to use creative thinking to see beyond what exists to what can be" (Blake). She argues that creative literacy should become a requirement in k-12 education, especially in today's world where cool toys and detailed video games mean that children are given less of an opportunity to use their own unique imagination. Studies have shown that creativity and innovation have declined in classrooms, becoming apparent in 1990. The reason for this, according to Blake's article, is the rise in the perceived importance of testing and following classroom instructions resulting in the decline of creative work for the students. With technology and the importance of numbers and percentages becoming prevalent, there may lie a threat to the nurturing of creative outlets which Blake argues are necessary in education. Technology is not likely to start declining, so in order to combat that problem, we need to begin introducing the concept of creative literacy as a mandatory part of education.

Education Business also stresses the importance of creative literacy and the benefits it encompasses. One of the biggest aspects the article focuses on is the engagement of students and the ability of creative literacy in practice to reach all kinds of children. There are numerous benefits, but most importantly, it "encourages greater pupil engagement, brings a subject to life – therefore capturing pupils' interest, and improves knowledge retention… [it] improve[s] oral and listening skills, encourage[s] team building, and can be made practical, suiting those who may struggle with some traditional methods of teaching, eg, children who are dyslexic...encourage reluctant readers, build

confidence, and help teach practical skills" (Meers). Many of these benefits were proved correct in research carried out by Kimberley Stafford and Myra Barrs for the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) in 2005, showing that linking creativity to literacy and traditional methods of teaching improved oral skills, built confidence, encouraged students to work as a team, and enabled them to make connections in different areas of their studies and life at large. This evidence ties in almost perfectly with Blake's evaluation of creativity in a curriculum and how, although it is difficult to assess and measure, teachers can evaluate by looking at "whether output engages its audience," if it represents the information in a unique way and if it provides students with the opportunity to develop "innovative solutions to a problem or issue" (Blake).

As we can see, there are teachers and researchers who are coming together to fight for the revival of creativity in a student's regular k-12 curriculum. Based on the definitions that both Blake and Rolling put forth, we can state that creative literacy is the ability to not only think creatively and innovatively, but to take those thoughts and be able to express them through writing, speaking, images and other measures of literacy. It is important to realize that both of the words in the term "creative literacy" are equally important. "Creativity" seems to pull focus when researchers discuss the definition. Yes, creativity is integral and "necessary to advance our world — it helps people imagine products, concepts and innovations that didn't previously exist. If future generations' creative abilities become too narrow, the future might stagnate" (Blake). However, creativity means nothing if we do not also teach students how to vocalize that creativity

and to know how to act on those thoughts, turning them into actions through literacy skills.

How Do We Teach These Concepts?

We have begun to establish what we mean by the terms creative literacy and citizenship. They are qualities that we want to encourage and foster in our students. We want to be teaching children to grow up as conscious adults, people who know how to form their own opinions, judgments, morals and codes of ethics and are then able to speak about those beliefs, express themselves in writing, speaking, movement, etc. Citizenship and creative literacy work hand-in-hand by encouraging students to think for themselves and then giving them the ability to express and speak for themselves as well. The question is, how can we teach these qualities?

Considering the abstract nature of both creative literacy and citizenship, we cannot technically teach them to students as a set of facts and figures. The most we can do is foster and encourage them by finding activities and exercises that ask them to use these attributes. When talking about the subject of citizenship, what many journalists and researchers have come to discover is that extracurriculars and community-based organizations can be the key to helping students become more involved citizens. There have been many movements to increase civic activism in schools and those projects have definitely increased awareness in the lives of the students who participated. One example is the Bayside Students for Justice, a curriculum implemented into an urban high school on the west coast, with the aim of developing community activists. The students involved

in the course went on to create their own ways in which to become active in their community. Some chose to study the SAT exams and assess their ability to adequately predict the success of students, while others examined child labor practices and what kinds of social, political and economical issues they raise. They handed out pamphlets, wrote presentations for their school and created videos illustrating their findings and what the purpose of their research was (Westheimer and Kahne 14).

This program was highly successful, giving the students opportunities to get involved in their community and fostering an interest in civic engagement. However, this was a class devoted entirely to encouraging students to pick topics and educating them on how to pursue activity in the topic. It is a very specific learning outcome that lets students dive right into the issues. I believe that, while these types of programs are informative and helpful when it comes to the topic of citizenship, there must be a way that we can foster, not necessarily the actual fulfillment of civic activism, rather the attributes a student should have in order to want to get involved on their own. I think there should be a way we can instill in our teenagers the desires to get involved and find out what they are passionate about without actually having them get involved through us of a format where they have no choice but to be active.

Creative literacy also presents an issue when talking about how to teach it. There does not seem to be a specifically right or wrong answer. As stated earlier, creativity is not something that can be taught, only "fostered and encouraged" (Blake). How do we foster it? Some of the ideas in the articles from Concordia University and *Education Business* are focused more specifically on creative literacy in terms of certain grade

levels. For example, Blake suggests that for preschoolers, a teacher reads them a story, then asks them to do things like place the characters in a completely different place and be able to draw it and describe it. Then they should be able to tell their teacher the story with this new environment so that it can be written down and turned into a new piece of work on the page. As the students get older, that process is continued when they are asked to read a story and write a short piece on what the characters do next. They are encouraged to think outside the box, stray from realism, add new characters and be able to articulately explain their ideas. After they are written, the stories are shared with the group and the favorite piece is turned into a performance. Interestingly enough, the article in *Education Business* also deals with a storytelling format as its base for encouraging creative literacy. They claim that you can use stories about buried treasure and pirates to teach geography, focus on characterization to discuss moral issues and dilemmas, and use stories placed in a certain time period, like Ancient Egypt, to become familiar with history and the landscape at a certain time period.

It seems that the attributes of a class that "teaches" creative literacy involves turning creative ideas into stories, acting out those stories, drawing pictures about those stories, etc. It sounds vaguely like a theatre class. Students are asked to think outside the box to create a work of art. They can either take from something already made or come up with their own story. From there, they get to explore and experiment with how to articulate those ideas, to figure out the best way to communicate. That is almost exactly what theatre programs ask students to do. Theatre classes have curricula that involve writing plays, character sketches, monologues, speeches, etc. Those works are then read

aloud, shared, acted out, discussed, to see if the writer was able to communicate their creative idea accurately. Creative literacy seems to align perfectly with what a theatre class can provide; does citizenship do the same? I believe that it does.

To reiterate, citizenship and creative literacy work hand-in-hand by encouraging students to think for themselves and then giving them the ability to express and speak for themselves as well. In the case of theatre classes, students are asked to write about something they feel strongly about, something that interests them, something that is outside their typical perspective. They are asked to decide what they want to contribute through their work to society, what they think is important to highlight. They are then helped to hone this contribution, to figure out how best to express their feelings, to find the most compelling way to connect to people. Theatre classes do have the ability to encourage students to be more socially and civically aware of what is around them and to take the new ideas and feelings fostered and turn them into a new and unique form of communication.

The Value of Arts in Education- Are They Declining?

These attributes of creative literacy and citizenship are valuable assets to any growing individual. We want our students to possess the qualities that allow them to stand up for their beliefs and strive to be a capable, eloquent contribution to society. And it seems that theatre classes are some of the most fitting places to foster and encourage such qualities. Therefore, it seems imperative that theatre arts classes have a central place in school curricula. Paul G. Allen, co-founder of Microsoft states, “In my own

philanthropy and business endeavors, I have seen the critical role that the arts play in stimulating creativity and in developing vital communities….the arts have a crucial impact on our economy and are an important catalyst for learning, discovery, and achievement in our country." One of the top pharmaceutical heads at GlaxoSmithKline was also recorded saying, "We need people who think with the creative side of their brains—people who have played in a band, who have painted…it enhances symbiotic thinking capabilities, not always thinking in the same paradigm, learning how to kick-start a new idea, or how to get a job done better, less expensively." Even Charles Darwin was quoted: ""If I had my life to live over again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week" (Stanford).

From scientists to educators to inventors, there seems to be a general agreement that arts in education are important. Quote after quote can be found of men and women in all fields attesting that without arts in education, we would not be producing full-fledged adults into society. Not just quotes, but evidence also shows us that arts in education are just as important as core subjects. Americans for the Arts provides statistics of how student's involvement in the arts correlates with the likelihood that they will stay in school and have improved test scores. The dropout rate in school, regardless of arts involvement or socioeconomic status, is at seven percent. Without arts involvement, that number rises to twenty-two percent in students with low socioeconomic status and drops to four percent in students with the same status if they are involved in the arts ("Students with High Levels of Arts Involvement: Less Likely to Drop Out of School"). The report goes on to quote details such as involvement in arts education makes students four times

more likely to be recognized for academic achievement, four times more likely to get involved in a science or math fair, three times more likely to win an award for school attendance or writing an essay or poem.

However, despite almost unanimous public avowal of the benefit of arts, they are consistently the first program to be cut in public schools. In 2001, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law was passed, meant to provide schools with more defined guidelines and improve education nationwide. It implemented standardized testing, with the scores published by the state. If the scores were not as high as they should be, teachers and staff faced the threat of replacement. While this act can be considered a good thing when talking about the education of our students, it focused specifically on core subjects such as math, English and science. Because schools staff had no choice but to improve their student's test scores, schools began focusing on the common core subjects and unfortunately, arts fell to the wayside.

In 2012, the U.S Department of Education released the findings of the first nationwide survey in a decade, documenting the state of arts education in public schools. It is especially important in that year because it was able to give an idea of what affects the NCLB law made on the arts. The report showed evidence that over the past ten years, access to art forms in school went from twenty percent to four and three percent, in the 2009-2010 school year respectively. In addition to showing the drop, the findings showed that there is a gap in the availability of arts education between the low-poverty schools and those in high-poverty schools, showing that the economically disadvantaged had even less access to arts because of their financial position (Parsad). Another report by

Americans for the Arts bolsters those numbers by providing the statistics for access to the arts in low-socioeconomic-status students. The chart shows that arts access for white students stayed in the general fifty-five to fifty-seven percent range while access for Hispanic and African American students dropped from around fifty to twenty-six percent from 1982 to 2008 ("Reaching Underserved Populations").

These reports show the blow arts education has received in the past decade or so, in both high and low income students, much of it due to the NCLB act, what was thought to be an improvement on education but in actuality caused the arts to suffer. Why is that? If arts in education are so important, why are they still considered lesser to math and sciences? The problem does not lie in the fact that the arts and the qualities they foster are considered unimportant. Rather, it lies in the fact that they are elusive, abstract qualities that cannot be tracked like math or the sciences. A teacher cannot give a test on creative literacy and grade a student's answers as objective, like he would a math test. The very core of these qualities is that they are singular to each person and subjective to everyone. The problem then lies not only in the execution of teaching these attributes, but the assessment of the results of teaching them.

Assessment- Its History and Value

Assessment has been a key aspect of all areas of teaching for years, although it was not always that way. Through the mid 1900's, the idea of assessment of work with different end results in mind was experimented with. In 1983 the report *A Nation at Risk,* issued by the U.S. Department of Education, stated that the schools of America have

reached an embarrassing level of mediocrity that used to be unacceptable in our history but that has naturally seeped into our way of life. It calls on the American people to step up and improve education so that we are helping our children become educated and informed, able to join the workforce when the time comes without them feeling ill-prepared. The risk from other countries surpassing America in things like better automobiles from Japan, more advanced machine tools from Germany and with South Korea creating the most efficient steel mill suggests that they are surpassing us in education too and the country is called to make sure that we as citizens do not slip into last place in our world of nations.

The report was a result of eighteen months of study and talked about the "indicators of risk" from the data compiled. There was ample documentation with sorry statistics including American students coming in last place in international academic tests when they used to come in first or second, about thirteen percent of seventeen-year-olds were considered functionally illiterate, there was a virtually unbroken decline in SAT scores from the years 1963-1980 and in addition to basic quantitative skills taught in school, many seventeen-year-olds did not possess the "higher order" intellectual skills we should expect of them and "nearly 40 percent cannot draw inferences from written material; only one-fifth can write a persuasive essay; and only one-third can solve a mathematics problem requiring several steps" (Reagan). It then goes on to state that the tools to fix America's education are all readily available and only need to be put into effect, tools like "the ingenuity of our policymakers, scientists, state and local educators, and scholars in formulating solutions once problems are better understood," "our better

understanding of learning and teaching and the implications of this knowledge for school practice, and the numerous examples of local success as a result of superior effort and effective dissemination" and our own dedication and that of our students (Reagan).

Two years after this report was published, the First National Conference on Assessment in Higher Education was held in SC in the year 1985, co-sponsored by the National Institute of Education (NIA) and the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE). The conference, spurred on by the distressing report from two years earlier, formed its centerpiece on three recommendations-- "that higher levels of student achievement could be promoted by establishing high expectations for students, by involving them in active learning environments, and by providing them with prompt and useful feedback" (Ewell 5). They realized that students could learn from their feedback and they now had the research tools to procure it. These results were strengthened by two other reports, *Integrity in the College Curriculum* (AAC 1985) and *To Reclaim a Legacy* (Bennett 1984), with their central argument being the "need for coherent curricular experiences which could best be shaped by ongoing monitoring of student learning and development" (Ewell 6).

There was another side of the conference that dealt with not only giving students feedback to improve, but calling for greater accountability which dealt mainly with k-12 education rather than higher education. In part, it stemmed from a renewed activism which believed that postsecondary education was a "powerful engine for economic and workforce development" (Ewell 6). Both the idea of feedback and accountability were reflected in yet another report, titled *Time for Results* (NGA 1986). While it was being

issued, states began to adopt assessment mandates for their schools, requiring that the results be reported to the state to see what the outcome of classes was. In 1987, about a dozen states had assessment mandates and by 1989, this number had grown to more than half (Ewell 7).

The general result of the conference was that assessment should be implemented into schools in order to prove that students were learning, to hold the students accountable to the education that money was being spent on and to find ways to improve so that students were learning to the best of their ability. One of the problems that had persisted before the conference and carries on through the years is the difference in definition of assessment. There were three definitions that rose to the forefront of the debate. The most established stated that assessment referred to the "processes used to determine an individual's mastery of complex abilities, generally through observed performance" (Ewell 7). This definition focused on developments over time and constant feedback given to students. The second definition focused rather on the subject of assessment used to "benchmark school and district performances in the name of accountability" (Ewell 7). Assessment in regards to the second definition took the form of large-scale testing programs and state-wide examinations. The third main definition of assessment defined it as a type of program evaluation, designed to "gather evidence to improve curricula and pedagogy for a class or school" (Ewell 8). Like the second definition, it focused on aggregate performance, not individual, and was all about improvement of an institution.

These definitions represent the constant push and pull of the two major outcomes of assessment: accountability vs. improvement. Other differences include whether the data is qualitative or quantitative—based on qualities that cannot actually be measured objectively or data derived from numbers and black-and-white statistics, respectively. There is also the issue of whether an individual student should be assessed or a class as a whole. Other problems standing in the way of assessment were how to implement, with most methods being standardized testing, evaluation forms or surveys for students to fill out to demonstrate their learning.

With issues like those stated always prevalent, assessment was thought to be a short-lived concept. However, today it is a guaranteed part of curriculum and under the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015*, it is needed in some form or another to prove that students are learning and that America's quality of education is keeping up with the rest of the world ("Historical Context: Overview of New Jersey's Statewide Testing Program"). Besides improvement and accountability, there is a third reason that assessment is sometimes unavoidable and that is for the necessary aspect of funding. If a program wants to continue to run, whether it is a school, extracurriculars in a school or a community-based project, money needs to be put into the effort in order to keep it running. Finding donors can be difficult, but something that you need in order to attract those donors is assessment of your work and how it impacts your area of focus in order to show why it is necessary and worth investing money in. People may have thought assessment was going away, but without this new term, only around thirty years old, teachers would not be able to show that their work is worthwhile after all.

Because of this rise in necessity of assessment, in the early 1990's, the nation embraced the concept of standards—"published statements that defined what students should know and be able to do in different subject areas at various points in their education"—as the basis for education reform ("A Snapshot of State Policies for Arts Education"). Standards-based education continues to shape the structure and design of our nation's current education system. Discipline associations adopted national standards that states could then use as guidelines for their own use within their jurisdiction. Schools must offer education in the subjects mandated, which includes English, math, science, foreign language and art, with the amount of credits in each differing per state legislation (Skinner). In the report *A Nation at Risk* discussed above, it states that "some worry that schools may emphasize such rudiments as reading and computation at the expense of other essential skills such as comprehension, analysis, solving problems, and drawing conclusions...that an over-emphasis on technical and occupational skills will leave little time for studying the arts and humanities that so enrich daily life, help maintain civility, and develop a sense of community. Knowledge of the humanities... must be harnessed to science and technology if the latter are to remain creative and humane, just as the humanities need to be informed by science and technology if they are to remain relevant to the human condition" (Reagan).

It is easy to assess math and science skills, as we have discussed. But is it as easy to assess the arts? A teacher cannot simply say a piece of art is good or bad. Picasso's paintings could have been deemed unrealistic and sloppy representations of life. Samuel Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot* contains an entire apparently nonsensical monologue

breaking grammatical rules. Art cannot be judged on the same terms as quantitative subjects such as math or science. Aesthetics are subjective; hence the perception of when a student has learned about an aesthetic is also subjective. I believe that theatre arts specifically can foster creative literacy and citizenship in our students, but that statement cannot be defended without the use of assessment. The question is, are assessment tools even capable of effectively determining the results of a theatre program? Assessment is so often heavily based in cold, hard facts, as we have discussed, but theatre deals with opinions and perspectives. Quantitative information is usually more valued because there is no subjectivity involved; it is what it is, with no question of opinion. Qualitative evidence will never be as succinct as a chart that you can glance at for results. It will also never capture the actual growth that can only be witnessed by being present in the room. It can tell the story of a young boy finding his voice, but it cannot encapsulate what it felt like to watch him do so. That does not mean qualitative evidence is useless, but it does mean there is more of a challenge when finding assessment tools to work in conjunction with theatre programs. While theatre arts needs assessment for the various reasons discussed, there may be limits to how completely these tools can appraise.

Methodology

Many theatre programs across the country employ assessment methods for the purpose of improvement and funding. In this thesis, I will examine three different types of community-based theatre programs—the after-school model, the teaching artist model and the hybrid form—to see how they assess their students. Each chapter will give a brief

history about the program, then move on to explore the assessment tools they utilize and the results the assessment uncovers. I will start with the 52nd Street Project—the after-school model—in chapter one, specifically looking into their new assessment tool they only recently implemented. While there are not yet results for the new method, I will suggest that the qualities already identified are conducive to encouraging creative literacy and citizenship.

The second chapter will examine the teaching artist model: Writers Theatre of New Jersey (WTNJ). I will not only analyze their assessment tools, I will also attend one of the classes to observe their in-field methods. AdvantageArts@Drew will be the focus of the third chapter, structured similarly to WTNJ with an examination of their methods and a personal observation to identify evidence of my terms within the student's work.

After examining the findings, with the knowledge of the assessment methods of all three programs, I will then assess, in chapter four, the 230 Broadway Project, a program using original lesson plans called Integrated Playwriting, written by my colleague, Michelle Taliento and influenced by Daniel Judah Sklar's Playmaking concept. After attending and supporting the implementation of her lesson plans, I will propose an original set of assessment tools to be used in conjunction with her curriculum. In addition, the rubrics I create can be used as a model for other theatre programs attempting to identify creative literacy and citizenship in the work of their students. In conclusion, I will discuss the possible limits of assessment and its application in educational theatre programming.

Chapter One

The 52nd Street Project: The After-School Model

History and Mission

"We all belong, we all get along!" is proudly emblazoned on hand-made signs throughout the 52nd Street Project's dedicated space, known as "The Clubhouse." Though students of many ages are "Project Kids" – from fourth graders to high school seniors – they all share an ensemble mentality: everyone is part of the collective creation of art. Though their casual motto is easy for the students to remember, their official mission statement gives a full picture of what the 52nd Street Project does:

> The mission of The 52nd Street Project, a community-based arts organization, is to bring together kids from Hell's Kitchen in Manhattan, starting at age ten and lasting through their teens, with theater professionals to create original theater offered free to the general public. By building on the core experience of accomplishment and collaboration, the Project fosters a sense of inclusion in a place where the children belong and where their creative work is the driving force. Through long-term mentoring relationships and exposure to diverse art forms (including Poetry, Photography, Theatrical Design, Dance, Stage Combat and Filmmaking), the Project seeks to expand the children's means of expression and to improve their literacy, their life skills and their attitude towards learning. ("Our Mission")

It is clear that the 52nd Street Project seeks to better students' lives by creating a place for

students to engage in an artistic craft. The Clubhouse is a safe, centralized place near the students' homes where they can go after-school to participate in programming. As a requirement of membership, all of the students live in the Hell's Kitchen, Manhattan area. The youngest project members are fourth graders, and they attend through their final year of high school – an after-school location close to where these kids live is ideal. Despite living in the same area of the city, all of the students come from different socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. They even attend different schools, some public and some charter.

The 52nd Street Project was developed by Willie Reale in 1981. Curt Dempster, Founder and Artistic Director of the Ensemble Studio Theatre, encouraged Reale to teach an acting class at the 52nd Street Police Athletic League's Duncan Center ("About Us") The Ensemble Studio Theatre remained an important partner to the 52nd Street Project, lending its theater space as the Project's primary performance home (Reale). In time, theaters all over Manhattan came on board to support the work of the Project by lending their spaces. For two decades, the Project borrowed spaces for performance from organizations like The Public Theater, Playwright's Horizons, and Vineyard Theatre and the Project hand-made props so that they could run on "almost no money" ("Show Archives") (In fact, nearly all of the props are still hand-made by production manager George Babiak). At first, funding was not easily secured – a note on one of the very first programs reads, "funding for tonight's program has not yet been found. If you or anyone you know can help, please contact Willie Reale" ("Show Archives").

Still, the Project continued to grow, serving dozens of kids each year. Eventually,

the program grew at an exponential rate, and funding was secured from charitable organizations and government agencies, including the Theatre Communications Group and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (Reale). The Project moved from the PAL, to a Clubhouse on the corner of 52nd and 10th, and more recently into the grand space at 789 10th Avenue with support from the Chelsea/Clinton Redevelopment Campaign. In 2010, the Project opened this facility, named the Clubhouse ("About Us"). It stands on 10thAvenue, between W 52nd and W 53rd, right across from Public School 111 ("About Us"). After all the years of its existence, it was finally considered an "anchor arts organization" in the Chelsea/Clinton neighborhood and was given major economic incentives by the community and the New York City Mayor's Office to build out and occupy the 789 19th Avenue Space and the Five Angels Theatre. Each show that is performed in the space also provides an opportunity to fundraise by selling merchandise and soliciting small donations.

While they are established as an official non-profit organization, the 52nd Street Project's guide *52 Pick Up: A Practical Guide to Doing Theater with Children Modeled after the 52nd Street Project* assures the reader that they do not consider themselves anything other than a place for children to do theatre: "The Project is a theater company not a social service organization." Author and co-founder Reale says that the 52nd Street project "[gives] a kid the opportunity to prove that he or she has something of value to offer, something that comes from within that he or she alone possesses, something that cannot be taken away" (Reale).

Interns are an integral part of the work done at the 52nd Street Project. Multiple

students from colleges across the country volunteer their time in the form of an internship with the Project each semester. As a Project intern in the fall of 2016, I had the opportunity to work directly with the Playmaking class and attend their weekend retreat to understand the process of Playmaking entailed. Due to a last-minute volunteer absence, I was also able to work directly with a student during their weekend retreat in Stone Ridge, New York. Interns also participate in the performances of shows, serving as the run crew and often getting the opportunity to participate in cameo roles.

Playmaking

The cornerstone program of the 52nd Street Project is Playmaking – the very first program that students are able to attend. Ten fourth-graders, all of whom live in the Hell's Kitchen area, are selected by interview to participate. These students come to the Project every Tuesday from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM, where they work with one teaching artist (at present, Associate Artistic Director Natalie Hirsch) and multiple class volunteers. Though volunteer attendance fluctuates, more often than not there is one volunteer for every student in the class. Over the ten-week course, students learn the basics of playwriting, including dramatic structure and play formatting. The class culminates in the students writing their first plays and a play reading with class volunteers, although these are not the final plays that are performed publically.

After the ten-week course is completed, all ten students attend a weekend retreat with their classmates, their teaching artist, Project staff members, and a new set of volunteers that serve as "dramaturge-directors." The dramaturge-directors are dedicated

to one student, whom they work with for the rest of the program. They help the student write their final play over the weekend, and direct the final play with two professional actors. Both the dramaturge-directors and the class volunteers are trained in protocol, the most important rule being to always support the students while they write, rather than provide the students with answers or suggestions.

After the students return to New York, the plays are typed up by the staff and handed off to the director-dramaturges. Together with two actors, they fully stage the student's play. The student is invited back into the process by joining them in a rehearsal.

Other Project programs

While Playmaking is the program that develops "Project Kids," there are many other programs that students have the opportunity to participate in throughout their middle and high school careers. One of these programs is called *One-on-One*. Each participating Project Kid is taken on a weeklong retreat and paired with a professional playwright. After getting a chance to get to know the child, the playwright is tasked with writing a two-person play featuring themselves and the child. *Playback* is another subsequent program, an elevation of the original Playmaking program. Participating students are paired with an adult volunteer (usually a professional actor). On a weekend retreat, the student writes a play for themselves and their adult partner.

There are other short-term programs that are also available to kids. Dancemaking, Storytelling, and Filmmaking are all classes that students take. In these classes, students are given another opportunity to participate in an artistic curriculum. Additionally, when

students aren't in structured programs, they can come by the Clubhouse every day for homework help with volunteers. They can also sign up to have a Smart Partner – a dedicated mentor they meet with once a week for activities inside and outside of the Clubhouse. Students are also able to become Teen Employees, where they can complete paid work as a secretary or an usher. Teen Employees are also volunteers in Playmaking class, serving as role models for their younger peers.

Finally, *The Teen Acting Ensemble* is the culmination of work a student does with the 52nd Street Project. Students belong to this program for two years, and they spend a significant amount of time honing their skills through workshops before finally working with an adapted Shakespearean text. The process for students' selection is really interesting; it is not about finding the most talented students, but the students who were most willing to try something new and immerse themselves in the unknown: "Talent is relative. Consider it your job to bring out whatever talent each teen possesses by giving them a set of tools and providing a context in which they can shine" (Ceraso 9-10). The Teen Acting Ensemble, like the rest of the curriculum at the Project, engages the students' individual talents and strengths. It is the responsibility of the teaching artists to really hone these skills and bring them forth through proper script adaptation. The abridged texts are chosen to really allow the students to shine in the best way possible.

Aside from the unique marriage of playwriting and acting, there are other distinctive parts of the 52nd Street Program curriculum. Each of the programs is also attached to a weekend or weeklong getaway for the students and the teaching artists. While they typically don't travel far (perhaps a nearby beach town, or upstate New

York), they are taken to new environments in order to encourage the children to step outside of the comfort zone. The 52nd Street Project is also associated with a number of host families who provide the children the opportunity to get "an inside look at the lives of other families" (Reale 51). Although kids living in New York City get an especially diverse look at life, bringing them to a new environment seems to be a great way to foster bonding between them and the professional teaching artists that they are working with. The getaways also provide guaranteed, dedicated work time with the students, and the location is just an added and inspirational bonus.

52nd Street Assessment Tools

The Project is funded considerably by donations and a pool of funders listed on their website. They are also specifically granted support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the Open Society Foundations and the Fund for the City of New York. However, as is the case with other theatre programs in the area, many of these funders call for evidence that the program is worth funding and because of the expansion of the program in 2010, the project was under increasing pressure to produce impactful and quantifiable results in order to maintain the financial support they needed. Before the expansion, the Project used a measurement system called Journey Mapping. This system focuses on the "customer" feedback in order to improve service, relying heavily on observation and anecdotal evidence (Burke et al. 21). However, this system was only

used in the Smart Partners program and there was no assessment method set up for the entire Project.

In 2013, Megan Burke, Swati Kasat, and Camille Lafayette—students from NYU Wagner's Graduate School of Public Service—wrote their capstone on the 52nd Street Project, with the end goal of presenting the program with the most appropriate assessment tools to uncover the results they needed to present to their funders. Entitled "Developing a System of Measurement and Management for the 52nd Street Project," the report moves through a summary of the program and the background issues of assessment before moving on to experiment with different surveys and questionnaires that could be used by the Project. After the history is provided, the capstone goes on to gather a list of qualities that focus groups and participants of the program have identified as areas where students grow. The participants included students who went through the process, parents who witnessed it, staff members who mentored and the teaching artists. The most frequently cited kinds of growth included confidence, artistic skills, self-efficacy, treating others with respect, being a role model, empathy, self-worth, being yourself, academic skills and self-control. With these outcomes in mind, Burke et al. focused on character strengths as the main target in data and sifted through four options of assessment tools to see which would most meet the needs and goals of the Project.

The capstone also outlined the three different data types they would be dealing with and how that data would be gathered. The first data type is demographic data, which will be monitored through intake forms given to the parents once their children enter the program. The form asks basic questions such as name, date of birth, race, gender and

questions regarding the financial status of the family. Additionally, there is a companion survey to be administered with other reviews to monitor demographics that change over time, like school, grade level and other after school activities (Burke et al. 53). The second data type is dosage, which is the total number of hours a child spends at the Project. It will be collected through each of the programs that a student is a part of, such as the Theater and New Platforms, the Homework Help & Drop-in, Smart Partners and Teen Employment. Finally, the third type of data is the choice of survey that the capstone landed on, specifically the full VIA (Values In Action) Youth Survey, a survey which measures twenty-four character traits, among them leadership, creativity, social intelligence, teamwork and appreciation of beauty and excellence.

Results of 52nd Street's Methods

With these three types of data, Burke et al. set up a system of assessment for the Project to enforce, starting in 2013 when the capstone started collecting data, and continuing to work with the goal of reaching their objectives in December of 2018. Because it has only been four years and there is still another year before the proposed end date, the Project did not have any results to offer me when I conducted my research. However, within the capstone there is a section that lists the character traits that have been identified—through other social science research studies, program evaluations and meta-analyses—to be a result of the Project's programs. Among those character traits are self-efficacy, creativity, respect of others, empathy, and integrity (Burke et al. 94). In comparison, the qualities that the capstone determined to be most important to track

within the Project are self-control, self-efficacy, respect for others, being a role model, empathy, be yourself, artistic skills, self-worth, persistence, cooperation and school-bonding, most of which are included above. Additionally, all of those traits, or some form of them, are tracked by the VIA Youth Survey, which means that based on the previous research conducted on the Project and with the help of the VIA Youth Survey, the results of the past four years of data should show increases in the eleven character traits that have already been identified as objectives.

Applying My Concepts

Again, because I have no concrete results to examine for evidence of my terms, I can make no statement as to whether the 52nd Street Project helps to foster citizenship and creative literacy. However, through some analysis of the projected goals of the Project, I can suggest it is possible. For instance, there are qualities that contribute to the citizenship among the list. Some of those qualities are empathy and respect for others. In order to possess citizenship as I have defined, a student must be able to know themselves and their own opinions as well as understand the morals of the people and society in which they live. They must be able to identify what is important to them and be able to work towards it, as well as being aware of the other opinions in the world. I believe that empathy and respect for others are an integral part of that attribute. A student cannot care about only their voice; they must respect and listen to the voices of those around them. Without respect or empathy, citizenship becomes selfish and narrow-minded and does not fulfill the definition established.

Creative literacy can also be supported by some of the qualities that the Project nurtures, such as creativity and integrity. Creativity is a clear parallel; a student cannot possess creative literacy without also being creative. Integrity, as well, may not be as obvious a link, but it is an important part of creative literacy. Creative literacy means being able to communicate creative ideas in a clear, concise way, through any medium. It also means finding a way to communicate those ideas to another individual in a way that they can understand and relate to in some way. It must pull some sort of emotional response out of someone else so that they find it meaningful in some way. In order to produce meaningful work, the artist must possess integrity, a way to relay the true and important. Creating work with no meaningful or truthful content will not bring people in to understand and relate to it. Even though the Project may not have the results of their program, we can see from the qualities already identified as elements of the programs that the Project may in fact nurture and encourage the qualities of citizenship and creative literacy.

Chapter Two

Writer's Theatre of New Jersey

History and Mission

A conference room in a lower-level suite of the Madison Community Center is covered floor-to-ceiling in oversized Post-it notes. Each sheet is dedicated to a different educational theorist, philosophical movement, or theatrical practice. This place is the think tank of the Writer's Theatre of New Jersey, a non-profit community-based theatre

organization operating out of Madison, New Jersey. It is a transitional time at WTNJ, explains the Director of Marketing and Community Development, Walter F. Rodriguez. To be at 'best practice,' they are in the process of exploring new methodologies. As a company over thirty years old, WTNJ prides itself on innovating new ways to provide "quality writing programs to schools and community-based organizations" (Writers Theatre Education Programs).

The mission statement of the WTNJ educational programs is currently to help create "lifelong learning experiences in writing, theatre and the creative process" (Writers Theatre Education Programs). The Writer's Theatre of New Jersey (WTNJ), formerly known as Playwright's Theatre of New Jersey, was founded in 1986 when playwright and Drew professor Buzz McLaughlin shook hands with the superintendent of Madison schools at the time, Larry Feinsod. Feinsod had always been a huge supporter of arts integration, and when it comes to theatre, playwriting is often the last thing people think about. Both McLaughlin and Feinsod wanted to find a way to educate their children and keep the arts alive. Their concept was based on the model of bringing professional writers and theatre practitioners into the classroom to lead these workshop residencies, giving the students "life-long learning experiences in writing, theatre and the creative process" (Writers Theatre Education Programs). A few years after they were established, WTNJ created a partnership with New Jersey State Council of the Arts and the New Jersey Writers Project, adding poetry and prose to their offerings. Besides workshops that teach the writing aspect, their work includes residencies focusing on the performance of theatre and poetry.

While WTNJ hosts staged readings of new plays written and performed by professionals, their primary goal is education. They have a large array of educational programs for all ages throughout the state of New Jersey. One of their most common programs is the New Jersey Writers Project (NJWP) where they work with approximately 15,000 students annually to teach playwriting and the process of creating theatre. The residencies are offered to grades 3-12, lasting anywhere from four to twenty-one days. A professional teaching artist will come into the classroom and, either under the supervision of the student's regular teacher during school hours or completely on their own after school, will guide the students through the process of writing, each one finishing the residency with a draft of their own original play. Once the plays have been written, the Language-in-Motion Residencies allow the students' work to be read by professional actors to an audience. From there, they can be taken to the New Jersey Young Playwrights Festival, a contest where the playwrights work with professional actors, dramaturgs and directors to perform their script for written response and public feedback. These residencies can have a huge impact on the confidence and creative abilities of students, allowing them to see that their work is always worth being read. A fifth grade student at the Dennis O'Brien elementary school, located in Dover, New Jersey, is a testament to how a student can grow to feel more confident in himself, stating, "I used to think that my stories weren't good. I used to not want to read my stories, but I learned to write stories with meaning, and now I feel more confident" (Writers Theatre Education Programs). This is not hard-cold evidence that can be used for assessment, due to the fact that I cannot look at the student's improvement and see if in fact he has learned to write

stories with meaning, but it at least shows that the students feel stronger about their own abilities.

These workshops take place in schools around Madison, christened the Rose City Initiative, but also travel to Newark, as part of the Brick City Initiative. For about twenty-five years, WTNJ has been working with Newark Arts Education efforts to bring classes to Newark students and, partnered with Newark Board of Education and a group of committed area nonprofits, they create programming for Project Plus, the summer school enrichment program of the Newark Schools. Programs also include the Newark Writers Festival and senior citizen workshops throughout the city.

Other than NJWP, WTNJ offers programs like Creative Art Academy (CCA) where both children and adults are taught high-quality professional writing and performance skills. Poetry Out Loud (POL) is a poetry recitation competition for high schools students, founded in 2006 by National Endowment for the Arts and The Poetry Foundation. The goal is to learn about poetry through performance and the program is administered in partnership with the State Arts Agencies of all fifty states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. WTNJ, partnered with the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, facilitates the program in New Jersey. Another poetry program is the New Jersey Youth Poet Laureate, a state-wide contest for young high school poetry, rap and spoken word writers where winners will receive a book deal, a Governor's Award and multiple performance spaces to show their work throughout the year.

All of these classes and competitions are based in the concept of writing, teaching students to use their creative voice and literacy skills as a way of expression. The teaching artists cater to the schools within which they work, shaping the residency into whatever the school requests. It is a very fluid process, singular to each teaching artist's style and the school in which they are teaching. If the teaching artist is a musician, they incorporate music into their teaching. If they specialize in haikus, the class will be about poetry and its different forms. WTNJ admits that not everyone wants to be an artist or playwright, but these classes are not about giving the world more and more theatre artisans. WTNJ claims that "hands-on work in the arts can change the way we think about ourselves and the world around us. It brings confidence and creativity to everything we do...builds tolerance, empathy, and patience, and helps us get along better with others. Student success in school has been linked to arts participation and the arts encourage the creative and holistic problem-solving skills required in the 21st Century job market" (Writers Theatre Education Programs).

In an interview with Jim DeVivo and Walter Rodriguez, Director of Education and Director of Marketing and Community Development respectively, they both stressed the importance of the mission of WTNJ. One of the questions they ask in the evaluation forms at the end of each residency is, "What have you learned about your classmates?" DeVivo speaks to that being one of the most essential questions. If they can help their students make a connection with someone, be able to say that "Sarah has a cat or his dad is overseas" then they have helped them reach out and experience other people's lives in some way. WTNJ's mission is not arts education for "creating new artists." Rodriguez

claims it is about “getting them to connect to each other and learning to open yourself up to possibilities and people around you. That’s what the arts do, and that’s what they’re there for...learning to connect with human beings, to be real with them and vulnerable with them without... having those walls and defense systems up” (DeVivo and Rodriquez). WTNJ is about fostering students and helping them grow as people, encouraging them to connect and touch each other’s lives.

WTNJ’s Assessment Tools

Like most theatre programs, WTNJ relies on assessment a great deal, both as a tool for improvement and as a way to attract donors and prove that their work is worth investing in. Also like most theatre programs, assessment is a difficult area of work to tackle; it will never be easy to encompass the amazing work a teacher can see in students as they grow by just writing it down. WTNJ is primarily funded through Arts Council, private donors who specifically support arts founders and in part by the Victoria Foundation, all of which call for evaluation statements and proof in some way that the work being done is impactful. These funders require yearly reports in order to renew their support and continue to show the progress of the program. In addition to the problem of funding, many schools that WTNJ works within must have their teachers meet certain Common Core and learning standards, so assessment is needed to show that the students are learning in order to have access to them. WTNJ’s main method of assessment is through evaluation forms and a most recently developed method of teaching artists

journals. In addition to those forms, they rely heavily on anecdotal evidence from the teaching artists to really portray the impact their classes have on students.

At the end of every residency, students and teachers are given an evaluation form that they must hand in, along with two-three student portfolios showcasing the work of the residency. The evaluation form is brief and simple. Besides factual, necessary questions, such as the name, date, grade, teaching artist name and classroom teacher name, the students are asked to give their opinion on the class as a whole. There are four questions, all opinion based, on the rest of the form:

- How much did you enjoy the NJWP Program?
- What did you like the most about this program?
- What do you think is the most important thing you learned in this program?
- What else would you like to learn about?

The answers to these questions can then be used to assess the usefulness of the program, what worked and did not work, what should be fixed, and what brought out the most response. It also can be shown to possible donors. In addition to those questions, there are additional forms that ask the questions: “What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about your classmates?” The only type of questions that are quantitative in any way are those asking students, for example, to rate the residencies from one to five. Those are the only questions that have an actual number to assess. In a world where the importance of technology is quickly rising, numbers, percentages, ratios, etc. hold great value. Numbers are cold, hard, facts, objective statements. It is no wonder, then, that people are more satisfied if statistics show that seventy-five percent of children

improved in their writing skills by ninety-five percent or that two-thirds of schools in the country produced better test scores by incorporating theatre in their curriculum.

However, in a conceptual field such as playwriting, one where words hold the most power, numbers cannot fully assess the results. This can be a difficult obstacle to overcome when quantitative assessment is more blatant and undeniable. That does not mean that the results of the program are any less important. In fact, there is something to be said for qualitative information and how much it can affect someone's decision to invest in a program. Numbers cannot give donors a vivid picture of how one shy student who never spoke one day opened up and shared a poignant piece of their world with the class. They cannot include the details of a student's progress in the class through turning his negative feedback into constructive criticism, by stepping back and not being the first to speak about only his opinion and the difference in which they spoke to their teaching artist. These details are why the program is so powerful and they are details that quantitative information cannot portray.

The daily journal is a new addition started only just this year that will ask the teaching artists to write about the experiences of the day and keep track of certain students and their progress. WTNJ is hoping that this daily journal will give a clearer sense of the entire process from week to week, tracking the internal changes of the school and giving the reader a more complete picture of what goes into the residency, aside from the artist's final report which must be completed at the end of the session. Because this is the first year experimenting with the idea, there is no evidence to promote the journals.

Again, they will rely heavily on anecdotal evidence, which seems to be the most impactful resource that WTNJ possesses.

DeVivo claimed that when annual reports are turned in at the end of the year, the anecdotes, rather than the statistics, are the most useful: “those stories are more important...more impactful” (DeVivo and Rodriquez). Both DeVivo and Rodriguez demonstrated the method in which they would present anecdotal stories to funders, proving their potency. DeVivo talked about an acting class he taught at Manhattanville College a few years ago. Because of the arts requirements in schools, the class was at least fifty percent business majors. The challenge, DeVivo stated, was finding out how acting can relate to those students. In fact, that is what WTNJ asks their teaching artists to do: to “find that personal connection from subject matter to student’s lives...that’s the trick” (DeVivo and Rodriquez). He knew that the business majors needed a reason to understand how the work of acting related to their own life and how they could study it without feeling like they would never use it again. At the end of the class, DeVivo knew he was successful in his goal, at least in one student’s life. One of the business majors, also a hockey player, approached DeVivo, telling him that during his final marketing presentation where he was required to present to a board, he used the methods of the class to remain calm and get him through it. He used his suit as his costume, his aspirations of a qualified, intelligent marketing researcher as his role and the board as his audience. He thanked DeVivo for the class, attesting that it changed the way he thought about himself and his role entirely. As a business major, he may never have to act again, but he will

have to pull those skills out of him daily in order to succeed; that class will never be just another arts requirement.

Rodriguez also talked about a young boy in his combined fourth and fifth grade class. The boy joined the class two weeks late and from the start was very clingy, always trying to win Rodriguez's approval; obviously he felt like an outcast to the rest of the class. He seemed to act out on purpose, accepting it has his "role to play" (DeVivo and Rodriquez) in the classroom. All of the other children thought he was weird, and he seemed to think so too. Once the students began to write, the boy became less dependent and was completely enveloped in his work, although his reputation as "the weirdo" did not change.

One day, the rough drafts of the plays the class had been working on were read out loud for everyone to hear. The boy had written about a young boy his own age who was abandoned by his father, then lost his mother and lived in the woods behind school in order to continue his education. The character has dreams about his father, who is always cruel to him, but he still wants to meet him in person one day. The play talks about how the character grows up, continues to fight for his education, and while he meets his father and is disappointed in the encounter, he is still able to move on and feel proud of the life he built for himself.

At the end of the play's reading, there was silence in the classroom. "Wow, that's really deep," one of the other students finally said. From then on, there was a different dynamic between him and the rest of the class. He was feeling respect from his peers for the work he did, which made him flourish all the more and his old reputation did not last.

Not every residency has a huge transformation like that, but when it happens, both DeVivo and Rodriguez can only describe it as “fulfilling and wonderful” (DeVivo and Rodriquez). It is moments like those that are proof of the benefit arts education can have on young minds. That playmaking class gave that particular student the chance to “open up a little bit and grow a little bit and feel respected for the first time and maybe in a long time by his peers” (DeVivo and Rodriquez). That kind of progress is important, but it is hard to track and assess when it is seen in the boy’s demeanor alone. The story is powerful, but the program has no other way of relaying this bit of information other than a heart-warming anecdote.

Observing WTNJ’s Methods

When visiting WTNJ, I had the pleasure of observing the last session of the class Rodriguez taught, the one in which the young boy in the anecdote above was a participant. After interviewing WTNJ and hearing about their methods, I was eager to see them in action. The class was a rambunctious group of fourth-fifth graders, mostly girls with only two boys. The structure of this last class was that each student would hear their final draft read aloud by professional actors and once it was finished, the class would offer feedback and suggestions. Among the group were the typical “theatre” kid students, some girls who were a little louder and bolder than the rest of their classmates, cracking jokes, jumping around, speaking to Walter (Rodriguez) as if they were his own age. The boys and some of the other girls were relatively shy and did not speak much. Rodriguez did not treat any of them like little kids, but spoke to them as he would a class of any age.

This sort of attitude fostered respect among all of them as well as created an open line of communication between student and teacher. The majority of the plays that were read were what would be expected of ten-year-olds: scavenger hunts, slumber parties, friends at school, etc. However, there were a few plays and young playwrights that particularly stood out to me.

There was of course the boy from Rodriguez's story, a skinny red-head who spoke very openly with Walter and almost always had some sort of feedback to give the young playwrights at the end of a reading. Considering what Rodriguez had told me about the boy's original shy demeanor and awkward behavior in the class, I was pleased to see the transformation I had been told about. When he spoke, the students listened, and he always had something worthwhile to say. His comments were not silly preferences like some of the students were giving, "Why did you name her Mary?" or "I think you should put a dog in your play." Instead, he offered practical craft-oriented suggestions, telling the playwright that one section was maybe a little unclear and he did not understand, or just honest praise for their ideas and execution. The story about his transformation that Rodriguez told was now manifested before my eyes. Another pleasure was being able to hear his play in person. It was definitely the work of a ten-year-old, but the ideas that he talked about-- acceptance, fortitude, thirst for knowledge-- seemed far more advanced than an ordinary fifth-grader would be able to convey. This student was given the chance to express himself, maybe for the first time, and he really showed everyone who heard his play that everyone's opinions and thoughts are worth hearing.

Besides the young boy I had already heard about before observing the class, there were two other students that particularly stuck out to me, for both their demeanors in class and their actual writing. The first of these was one who seemed to be a ringleader, a tall girl who spoke very clearly and loudly and had something to say about every piece. When it was her turn to announce her play, she stood up and went right to the actors, telling them the general arc of the story, explaining typos she already knew might be confusing and talking about the areas she might work on in the future. The play was about siblings who broke their parents wedding vase and had to decide if they try to hide it or confess and tell the truth about what happened. There were stereotypical characters among the siblings, like the goody-two-shoes, the trouble-maker and the scaredy-cat, and I was impressed by the characterization that she gave to each child and the moral of the story proclaimed at the end. It was a very clear play, much better written and more thought-out than the other work we had heard so far. However, it was her attitude with feedback that drew my attention the most. With her confidence and obvious popularity, I thought she might be more averse to any sort of constructive criticism. She received various comments, both from the students and the actors, some were constructive and helpful, while others were definitely personal preferences and not very applicable. Whether the comments were good or not, the student noted them, sometimes explained her reasoning, but overall was very receptive and open-minded no matter what was said. That sort of self-awareness in such a young student was very heartening to see.

The other student that struck me was another young girl, very quiet, who had forgotten her final draft and had her mother volunteer to drive home to reprint it so that it

could be performed. The play was about unicorns, fairies and a quest in a fantastical world. Not only was it highly imaginative, it also had a relatively sophisticated plot for such a young writer, and made more sense than most of the other plays read that day. There were not many comments made in general, other than students talking about what they liked. Considering the realistic nature of most of the other plays written that day, I thought it was refreshing to see a student employ their powers over imagination.

Applying My Concepts

Through my observations in the classroom as well as hearing about WTNJ's program, it is clear to me that the results support my proposition that theatre education can help foster citizenship and creative literacy. I was not able to observe the classroom throughout the entire process, so I cannot comment on any comparison from the beginning to the end. I did, however, have opinions based on Rodriguez's comments and was able to study the student's conduct and hear the writing that they had been working on over the past few months. Even from the short time I had with the class, I witnessed behaviors that I believe showed the students' capabilities in the qualities I have defined.

The quality of creative literacy manifested itself in the classroom especially well. Considering the fact that my time was mostly spent hearing their plays read aloud, it makes sense that I would pick up on their competency to express their creative ideas through writing more easily. As mentioned above, it was most clear in the shy, young girl who wrote a story about fantasy characters. Most of her peers wrote very realistic stories. Writing assignments in school usually ask for nonfiction, like history reports, book

analysis, etc. This girl, along with one or two other students, seized the moment and used her play to create a work of fiction, exercising her imagination and creativity. It is not often that students receive the chance to write whatever they want. Sometimes it is hard to be given such a broad assignment. Most students would write what they know. It was refreshing to hear students write about things they do not technically know. However, not only did a small number write about highly imaginative subjects, they did it with clarity and direction, employing theatrical methods like exposition and articulated stage directions to show their grasp of the medium. When comments were made about some of their fabricated characters, they were able to talk about them quite knowledgeably as if they were facts and not fiction. It was nothing extraordinary that the animals talked or that characters were magically transported home, and when asked about the purpose of the unicorn, the student nonchalantly explained that he was in possession of the secret key that the girl needed to escape and there was no other way to get out except to answer his riddle. The playwright was able to use her creativity to conjure up an original story, fostering not only her own creative literacy, but that of those peers who heard the story and asked questions.

Citizenship was a harder quality to observe in such a short time. There were little details here and there, though, that showed in small ways that the playmaking class helped to foster this awareness in the students themselves and the world in which they lived. The first was already mentioned in the louder girl who wrote about the vase. In her play, she wrote about different types of siblings and how they would all react, also incorporating the character of the father. A part of the reason why the play was so

interesting was the fact that she gave each character a real voice and thought about them as different people. She did not write everything from her point of view, but took the time to look at different perspectives in the same situation and what that meant for her characters. This self-awareness is important in citizens. Most heartwarming is that she wrote about something that she obviously believed in and wanted to talk about—the importance of telling the truth and being honest with your parents. She found something that she wanted to share with the world and she found a way to do so in an interesting way.

The young boy who wrote about his character who lived in the woods also showed some interesting perspective. When Rodriguez first read the student's play, he thought that maybe there were some issues in his home-life, especially regarding his father, due to the rocky relationship that his character had with the father. However, Rodriguez quickly learned that the father was actually very involved in the boy's life and he was in class when I attended, sitting with his son and being very openly affectionate. The fact that the student had a very nurturing father but wrote about a young boy who was ignored by his father showed a sense of self-awareness, as well as creativity in being able to think of a character so different from himself. On top of that, his play was about a child fighting for education and overcoming the odds to get what he wanted. Again, the student found a topic he thought should be discussed, something he definitely felt passionate about, and devoted a play to spreading that strong belief. It is hard to identify citizenship in children when they are so young, but to have fourth-fifth graders take their thoughts, find their important morals and write about them creatively are some of the first

steps to making sure they continue to stand up for and express their beliefs and opinions as young adults too.

Chapter Three

AdvantageArts@Drew: The Hybrid Form

History and Mission

Students from Drew University walk into the Theatre Classroom at the Bolden Center in Newark, New Jersey. It is just after our spring break, and the groups of students had been separated for that time. **Z,** a Newark student, walks up to the group of Drew students and throws his arms around each of them. “I missed you so much!” **Z** says, genuinely. He gives his Drew University student partner an extra big hug. “I can’t wait to show you what I was working on while you were gone.”

AdvantageArts@Drew is a partnership between Drew University in Madison, New Jersey and the Marion A. Bolden Center, an after school program in Newark, New Jersey. The goal of AdvantageArts is to bring Newark public school (NPS) students interested in creative expression together with Drew mentors, who will help students in the process of creating original theatre-- devising their own pieces through writing, dancing, acting and singing. Meeting twice a week, both at the Bolden Center and at Drew, the college students and NPS students develop the work together, each week requiring progressively more engagement and focus until at the end of the semester, original plays and pieces are produced for an audience. The partnership was initiated in 2010, after Professor Chris Ceraso, Professor Rodney Gilbert and Drew President Robert

Weisbuch began a conversation about increasing civic engagement at Drew. Ceraso had been a part of the 52nd Street Project (discussed above) and Weisbuch was interested in creating a program like that, where Drew mentors and Newark students would come together to create theatre. With that goal in mind, Ceraso and Gilbert, an adjunct professor at Drew who also taught in Newark, joined forces to implement the AdvantageArts class, offered yearly at Drew in the spring semester. In 2011, Dr. Lisa Brenner, who had already begun laying the groundwork by implementing an applied theatre class and starting the first Theatre in the Community program in 2009, joined the team with Ceraso and Brenner running the class out of Drew and Gilbert facilitating the partnership with Newark.

The students come from Newark public schools, although in recent years, the program has opened up to charter school students as well. Public or charter school, the students that are a part of AdvantageArts represent Newark's underserved population, in which ninety-seven percent of the student body is Black/African American. Less than fifteen percent of the population has earned a college degree and the median household income is less than $21,000. On top of that, High School Proficiency Assessment scores show that both math and language lag by about thirty-five and twenty percentage points, respectively, behind state average (Brenner and Ceraso). Brenner speaks to the particular need that these students have. Coming from such underserved communities, "these teenagers have a critical need for inspiring role models and peers who value achievement; for help in developing college readiness skills; for direction in identifying educational and career options; for guidance in exploring their gifts and talents; and for activities that

give them structure and supervision when school is out to help them avoid becoming victims of drugs, violence, crime, and unwanted pregnancies" (Brenner and Ceraso).

The program has found great success in its endeavors. It has expanded from one class in the spring semester to a full-year program with a fall preparation semester and a four-week summer session where the students perform original works as well as professionally-authored pieces. Not only does the program provide students with the opportunity to learn theatre skills, it helps to motivate them to pursue a college education, fostering and encouraging college readiness. In addition, Gilbert along with Michelle Morgan and Horace Jackson, Newark liaisons from the Bolden Center, specifically recruit students who they see could benefit from the theatre classes, moving through the community with alumni from the program, making sure no child is left behind. It is also important to note that AdvantageArts is not just a community-based program that equates to a charity case for Newark students. The goal is to educate NPS students in theatre skills while at the same time instructing Drew college students on how to be effective mentors and teachers. This union of college and high school students is essential to the program. The Drew students do not command the respect that the professors do, but are still old enough to set an example to the high schoolers. They bridge the gap between teacher and student, helping to create a stronger bond as a class. The entire program is built on this idea of differences. There are two Drew professors and two Bolden Center teachers in the process which, combined with the different students, provides a blend of many different races, genders, religions, etc. The goal is to find the commonalities between the variety of members, identifying issues and connections, exploring every

perspective. Everyone in the room is a part of the learning process, no matter what their role is. It is not just a class for the students; it is a class for the mentors and professors too. Many students from both Drew and Newark return to participate in the class multiple years in a row. An extraordinary bond is formed throughout the process; “There is also a lot of love and a lot of fun in the program!” Brenner enthusiastically remarks (Brenner and Ceraso).

AdvantageArts Assessment Tools

AdvantageArts is funded by both Drew University and the Newark Public schools, with additional donations from the Victoria Foundation, Casement Fund, Paul Drucker, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Neuberger Foundation and some individual donors. In order to gain continuous support from these institutions, Brenner and Ceraso write grant proposals every year, as well as interim and end of the year reports. The Victoria Foundation carries out an on-site visit, observing one of the class sessions and all donors are invited to attend the final performance of each class.

In order to show improvement and success in their reports and proposals, the program uses assessment tools such as interviews, surveys and journals, although they have not come up with any standardized system yet. They do, however, track college enrollment and the employment of students who have “graduated” from the program. Their learning outcomes stated are separated into outcomes for both the Drew and NPS students and singular to just the NPS students. Learning outcomes stated for both the Drew and NPS students include growth in theatre skills, collaborative skills such as

listening, organizing and sharing responsibility, having one's creative voice validated, gaining a fuller sense of self, fostering respect for others, etc. The outcomes listed for the NPS students alone address topics like literacy, self-expression, empowerment and social development (full list of both sets of learning outcomes found in Appendix B).

Journal reflections, required by the Drew students as well as any NPS students taking the summer session for credit, seem to show the most evidence that there is improvement in the learning outcomes set forth. In the journals, students demonstrate their capacity to assess themselves and their peers, to improve their writing skills, develop their own voice and comment on their experiences regarding collaboration and responsibility. Many of the games have specific learning outcomes and skills and the journals are the perfect place to see if the student felt that those attributes were the ones exercised. One theatre game that pushes students to trust each other is "The Penguin Game," an exercise where you close your eyes and try to find your partner by making and listening for the agreed-upon sound both partners will be calling. One Newark student wrote about the challenges he had in participating, saying, "Being someone who doesn't usually trust people, this was helpful because being blinded starts to generate uncomfort and worriedness, but you have to trust that someone is looking for you also and feeling the same way...it allows you to build a better foundation with someone to achieve a common goal" (Brenner and Ceraso). This kind of evidence shows that the goals of the class are at least working from the perspectives of the students and gives the professors insight as to how they should shape the rest of the program based on what worked and did not work. Other than journaling, there are not any consistent forms of

assessment. Surveys are given out at the end of the summer program with a few basic questions about the experience, what skills they learned and what they are most proud of. Those are all filed and recorded as journal reflections, however, and are all qualitative information asking the student to self-evaluate and give their personal opinion.

AdvantageArts receives funding every year because of their reports, but there is an on-going search for better forms of assessment. The difficulty lies in not just finding other methods, but also the fact that the program itself is an optional after-school class where attendance is not mandatory and is subject to the NPS bussing system. This inconsistent turn-out coupled with limited time makes it hard to devote more time to assessment when the program wants to focus on the development of the student's work. The journals and occasional surveys carry the brunt of the evidential load, but the program is looking to advance their assessment methods in the future to more accurately portray their results.

Observing AdvantageArts Methods

Not only have I conducted research on AdvantageArts, but this program is especially personal to me because of my participation. In the spring of 2016, I was enrolled in the Newark class at Drew and continued to act as a writing mentor for the summer session as well. It was this program that really fostered in me the idea that theatre arts can give students such important attributes, and I was able to see the benefits it reaps first hand.

As has been stated above, theatre programs are hard to assess as an outsider, but once you are in the room, the results can seem so obvious. My work with the program over the two sessions in which I was involved consisted of writing with the students, being an example to step outside the box, helping to shape their own work, performing their words-- the list goes on and on. Each week could be completely different from the one before. My observations of AdvantageArts taught me that there is place for everyone in theatre. Not all students were interested in the material. Some did not have the patience to write, others just wanted to make jokes and be the class clown, some were too shy to stand up and read their own words. On the other hand, there were students who were born to perform, loved the limelight and would always raise their hand first to contribute something meaningful. As a mentor, it could be discouraging to be partnered with a student who did not seem to care or be interested in the work when we saw our peers working with other more open students.

However, I quickly learned that it was not about trying to make students care; it was finding what students cared about. I was partnered with a young boy, **D**, who turned everything into a joke to get laughs from his friends. Everyone else was writing serious monologues, honest and emotional poems or just very heartfelt scenes. Meanwhile, **D** took anything even remotely serious, like a couple fighting in the streets, and turned it into what his excuse was for being late to class. I was not sure what to do, not because I did not think he should write funny work, but because he did not seem interested. When I would ask him what would happen next, it was his reflex to make it funny rather than to think about what he wanted to happen next. We wrote a monologue, but I did not feel that

he had any pride or emotional stake in the work. We had been working for a few sessions and everyone else was wrapping up their pieces, but I did not feel satisfied in letting him use the writing.

Over the past few weeks, **D** and I had connected over the fact that he loved to sing and he would always be humming a song under his breath, waiting for me to notice and comment. I finally did the obvious and asked him if he wanted to turn the monologue into a song. He said he had tried to write songs in the past but never managed to finish anything. I myself used to have difficulty writing songs and was a little intimidated by the process, so I told him we were in the same boat and we would figure it out together.

Over two sessions, only about a third of the time the other students had, we wrote a song. We talked about his monologue and what themes and feelings it was talking about and wrote a song about those themes—wanting the violence to stop, wishing people would treat each other better, being scared to speak up. It finally felt like we were getting somewhere; he was engaged and excited to work. We would run through the Bolden Center, from the music room to the theatre room, looking for space to try the melody one more time or rewrite that one verse. I arrived home that night and immediately recorded the melody, playing it on my ukulele, and sent it to my professors to pass on to him over the weekend. The best part about it was that it was his words and his music, with only slight prompting and direction from me. The song was such a hit that we performed it not only at the end of the year performance, but again in the summer session and multiple times at civic engagement events to show the results of the Newark program. We were

like a little two-person traveling band, with friends humming the song and professors asking for recordings (lyrics to song found in Appendix C).

I think it was in those moments that I realized the powers of the Newark class and theatre programs in general. There is a place for everyone, you just need to work hard enough to find it. AdvantageArts takes the time to find out what that special niche is for each student, producing work that is all the more personal because of it.

Applying My Concepts

While the program acknowledges that assessment is one of their biggest challenges, I still consider the journals to be very important evidence towards their learning outcomes while also acting in support of the qualities of creative literacy and citizenship. The performances that occur throughout the course and at the very end are also a means of assessment using the student's demeanor and performance capabilities.

There are so many brief clippings that can be pulled from the Newark student journals that it is hard to pick just a few. Many journal entries testify to the increase in confidence, trust and overall growth as a person as well as a theatre artist. One student went on to talk about how the program fosters not only trust, but a sense of community, which is a contributing factor to the idea of citizenship. "Being around the same people everyday allows you to get to know them better as if you're at home," he writes, "In a community, support comes from all over, this is how people & the community itself grow…I felt supported by the directors...Although, I was being criticized, it was for a good reason and my director was helping me become a better actor through it" (Brenner

and Ceraso). In addition to things he enjoyed learning, he talks about his discomfort with opening up to people right away and memorizing a script as one of the main characters. However, instead of closing himself off because of his discomfort, he expresses the benefits of being pushed outside of his comfort zone and how "it can be beneficial...it enables me to become a better actor and person by not only being more open, but having the confidence to do something I at one point hated" (Brenner and Ceraso).

While it is not clear-cut citizenship in the sense of the word we have been using, the program definitely lends itself to teaching students self-awareness and awareness of the world and people around them. He feels criticized for his acting, but he also knows it is for the best and is able to look at the situation from an outside perspective, enabling him to understand the circumstance better. That is one of the first steps of citizenship and forming your own opinions—to be able to look at something from all sides and be aware of the many different ideas and types of people that surround you.

Another female student commented on the qualities that the program gave her as a student and as a person. She talked about the many literal theatre skills she learned, how before when she saw a play or read a book, she did not think about it or its message, but now she knows about the development of characters and the play as a whole, different styles and genres and what the process of producing a play looks like. It taught her to "appreciate and notice its development" and pay more attention to the way art is created. She speaks of how theatre can give students so many important lessons, how "we're all one big family through the arts" and how, as this was her first performance in any theatre play, she was proud to be able to "overcome my nervousness and dislike of public

speaking...I saw I could be strong and confident, even if it was just for a show." She goes on to delve a little deeper even, saying that the experience gave her the ability to "get my words across...I'll be growing and learning, bettering myself...I really feel like this program helps me be outspoken...it triggered an inner confidence...to fight off the nervousness I feel in uncomfortable situations ...I know the skills I acquired from this program will definitely help me in the jobs I take on later in life" (Brenner and Ceraso).

Because this is self-assessment, we cannot say if what the student says is fact or not, other than what we can draw from her performance. However, that does not discredit the words. The fact that she was able to identify her weaknesses and see the areas of improvement and how it was useful to her also signifies a growing sense of awareness. In addition, she showed signs of growth in creative literacy in reference to that fact that she now feels that she can communicate better, putting her thoughts into words. Both she and the writer from the earlier reference have not declared their moral values or personal opinions, saying the program helped them find their voice. They are, however, showing signs of those equally important attributes of awareness and self-evaluation that contributes to the idea of citizenship, which is why I find this program to be another example of theatre fostering those skills.

The journals are a good place to view the students' inner workings and how they feel they are affected. However, the actual work and writings of students is also an important aspect of assessment in the program. The anecdote that began this thesis, about **S**'s poem on the All Lives Matter/BLM movements, was one of the moments I witnessed as part of the program over the summer and I find it to be a stirring example of both

creative literacy and citizenship. Her ability to pick a topic close to her heart and community, creating such a strong personal statement, was impressive enough from a fifteen-year-old. However, she not only exhibited citizenship in her autonomy and awareness of thought, but also used creative literacy to express those thoughts clearly and eloquently in one of the most moving poems I have heard written by a student.

While there are countless other pieces that could be brought under the microscope, there were two other student's work that stood out as particularly interesting examples of citizenship and creative literacy, and most importantly they had almost completely opposing messages. The first was from **T,** a shy seventeen-year-old with a powerful talent over words. She wrote the poem "A Child's Place," a piece about the violence of Newark that she sees around her and the hypocrisy of adults telling kids to "stay in a child's place" when their life forces them into the role of adults (full text found in Appendix D). When she delivered this poem her voice would shake, and I for one was always very emotionally affected by her words; anyone who heard it said the same. Like **S**, **T** wrote about something so obviously important to her, something some people might find abrasive because of her blunt, open language and obvious message. Also like **S**, she wrote about it with an amazing mastery over words and knowledge of the content—citizenship and creative literacy perfectly expressed.

The second monologue is a good reference piece because of its opposing material. **C**, also seventeen, was one of the most out-going, confident students in the program at the beginning of the 2016 spring semester. While we lost him towards the end of the program to a job opportunity that was deemed more important, before he left, he wrote

what could only be described as a speech about the amazing city of Newark (full text found in Appendix E). This piece stood out because of the upbeat and positive nature, compared to the intense works about the violent and abusive community that the other students wrote about. Instead, **C** listed all of the things he loved about Newark, asking "why not?" instead of "why?" The parks, the schools, the culture, the music—there are so many things to love about Newark if you can look past the grim reputation it has. **C**'s opinion was so powerful because it was the opposite of the others. He did not just take the rumors about Newark for granted and write about that; he did not choose to write about the bad things on which all of the other students focused. Instead, he made his own choices and formed his own opinion, writing about what he thought was most important to say.

One student's work was not better than the other because of the opinions and beliefs expressed, and that is exactly why I think theatre work is necessary. This program gives students the opportunities to voice their opinions, to discuss them with their peers and to experiment with theatrical forms of writing as a means of expression. **S**, **T** and **C** all wrote about different sides of the same coin and all of the work was inspirational and eloquent. This kind of freedom among high school students should be encouraged more often because this way of thinking and writing is what will help to foster the creative literacy and citizenship that makes them each so individual. Theatre work can provide students with these necessary attributes, which we have seen from past programs.

Chapter Four

The 230 Broadway Project

How it Began

Michelle Taliento is a senior at Drew University, double majoring in English, with a focus in contemporary American literature, and Theatre and a minor in Applied Performance. Throughout all four years at Drew, Michelle has been a Civic Scholar as well as a Baldwin Honors member and has been interested in teaching since she began her college education. She knew from the beginning that she wanted to teach theatre specifically, in some form; “I think you need to really be passionate about it and believe in its importance in order to teach it well,” says Taliento—she always knew theatre was important, but was not sure how to make it work in schools. After taking the Newark Collaboration class and going on to study and intern at the 52nd Street Project (two programs already analyzed), Taliento realized that she could attain her goal of teaching theatre to all schools in the form of Playmaking.

Through her required honors thesis as a senior at Drew University, Taliento attempted to offer a solution to the current dilemma in arts education, which she examined in full. Through her findings, she realized that public schools in new Jersey are not able to offer full, specialized arts classes in general, theatre or otherwise. Because schools are mandated to offer arts by law, a solution is to provide integrated arts education instead, classes that focus on the more academic subjects—such as math, science and English—while also providing artistic opportunities within those topics. Based on her understanding of integrated arts programs, Taliento proffered that

Playmaking can successfully be adapted to meet student's needs in a typical, public school ELA classroom. She looked at the current climate of arts education in public high schools, focusing particularly on New Jersey, look into theatre-based after-school programs already in existence, determining the difference between the 'Teaching Artist Model' and the 'After-School Model.' Lastly, she experimented with the idea that theatre-based curriculum can successfully be adapted to incorporate ELA Common Core Learning Standards, through lesson plans which she calls Integrated Playwriting that she wrote herself and put into practice in a classroom.

Taliento used the Dr. Marion A. Bolden Student Center as her classroom. It was "an obvious choice for a community partner based on Drew's working relationship with them during the Newark Collaboration class offered each spring and summer," Taliento says (Taliento). While Drew is active with the Newark students during those times, the fall semester is left almost entirely devoid of collaboration (although starting this fall, there will be a dance program installed). The Bolden Center, while offering a range of programs, is lacking in classes that teach reading and writing development. By bringing Integrated Playwriting to Newark, Taliento believes she offered the students a class that will teach them academic skills that were lacking previously while also providing them with an opportunity to voice their creativity.

Experience

Besides being a part of those two programs, Michelle has worked extensively with children throughout her years at Drew. In 2015, she interned with Rosie's Theater

Kids, a non-profit organization located in Hell's Kitchen which provides free conservatory-style training for students from fourth grade through all four high school years. The training focuses on performance, including elements of dance, voice and acting. The goal of the organization is to get every student enrolled in high school or college by the end of their time at the program and they offer free counseling and tutoring to ensure this goal is met.

In the summer of 2016, Taliento went on to intern for Opening Act, another non-profit organization with offices in DUMBO, Brooklyn. Opening Act was unique because it offered after-school programming at the schools themselves, instead of offering classes at separate locations. Because of these varying spaces, Opening Act can offer services across multiple boroughs, working with forty different high schools. It was a different experience for Taliento, going from the one location at Rosie's Theater Kids to such a fluid environment, but because the curriculum was designed specifically per school to meet the student's needs, it allowed her to see what went into the administration and planning behind each individual program.

That following fall, Taliento worked with the 52nd Street Project. As discussed earlier, this program deals directly with the concept of Playmaking, a phrase coined from Daniel Judah Sklar. Being able to teach Integrated Playwriting in Newark and interning at 52nd Street helped inform her planning and decision-making. Taliento was able to observe a Playmaking class and meet with a number of staff members who have been involved in Playmaking for many years. "They were my inspiration for teaching

Playmaking," Taliento states, "and without this organization, I might not have realized it even existed" (Taliento).

Other than those internships, Taliento feels that she is capable of taking on this particular challenge because of the experiences she has already received as a student at Drew University. Taliento is already familiar with the students at the Bolden Center because of the Newark Collaboration class and the location and accessibility of the program. She is also taking classes in the Masters of Arts in Teaching program that Drew offers as a concentration. These classes enable her to learn about Common Core standards, learning assessment and other educational methodology and pedagogy. Outside of the classroom, Taliento is a Writing Center tutor, which gives her the tools to teach writing skills. Also a Civic Scholar, she has taken an in-depth look into the non-profit and community-partner programs. Taliento claims that "this project is truly the culmination of everything I have studied at Drew: theatre arts and its application outside of performance, writing studies, youth literacy, and community service. Aside from the tangible skills that Drew has given me to complete this project, nothing qualifies me more than the passion I have discovered for this work in my three years here. I feel a true responsibility and need to adapt this model and make it work for more students, and I care deeply about community-based theatre projects like this" (Taliento).

The Process of Integrated Playwriting

In order to create her own lesson plans, Taliento used Daniel Judah Sklar's book, *Playmaking: Children Writing & Performing Their Own Plays*. "With an end goal of a

short play," Taliento says, "it became easier to separate days into activities that would culminate in them writing the play" (Taliento). After dividing each week into how the plays would be slowly developed, Taliento added other activities and warm-ups typically seen in theatre classes that seemed to pair the skills that were discussed that day in the writing section. For example, she uses the day that talks about time/place/at rise to play games dealing with sensory details and the world around the students that might help them enhance the world of their plays. While the lesson plans were developed with certain goals in mind, they fluctuated based on what was actually accomplished in the classroom. Like other theatre-based programs, Taliento preferred the method of providing the students with what they need. She left cushion-room for more explanation on some areas if needed, while also providing additional activities if she saw the students needed more of a challenge.

The goal of these lesson plans, for Taliento, is to have them finish a ten-minute play. Included in her goals is that of incorporating activities that meet Common Core ELA Learning Standards for every week, ensuring that the work would actually be enhancing their literacy. In addition to Common Core, the lesson plans also ascribe to National Core Arts Standards, the state-adopted learning standards for performing arts. Taliento wanted the Newark students to gain some sort of beneficial experience while working with Drew students and in future, hope to truly test out her lesson plans by incorporating them in her own classroom.

Taliento believes that her Integrated Playwriting is really special because of the autonomy it gives the students. There are no limitations or rules; they are allowed to write

whatever they want, unlike typical English or writing classes that have specific assignments. Because of this independent choice of topic, the students have the ability to truly invest emotionally in what they are writing. Writing plays "allows them to explore their problems on a subconscious level. The struggles, desires, fears, and needs of their characters are often ones that they share, whether they realize it or not" (Taliento). Taliento does not want to claim that Integrated Playwriting is the only way for theatre to be taught in a classroom. Rather, she wants to prove through her lesson plans that it can help teachers achieve their learning standards in a new way while also letting their students explore a beneficial art medium. Taliento believes that what makes Integrated Playwriting viable in a typical classroom is the fact that teachers do not have to be trained in theatre in order to use the lesson plans. It does not primarily build theatre-based skills, focusing on literacy-based skills instead, and she wants to encourage regular classroom teachers to adopt such a blend of academic and creative skills into their classroom, giving them the means to do so.

Challenges and Limitations

Going into this process, there were several challenges and limitations that Taliento faced. The first is the very important element of time. Instead of having a daily class like Taliento envisioned her lesson plans being used for, she was given only one class session, two hours a week, with the exclusion of Thanksgiving and winter break. With such limited time with the students, the impact that Taliento hoped to have may be

lessened and the time they will have to be writing their plays had to be extremely productive, something that cannot always be guaranteed with high schoolers.

The idea of productivity and time leads into the next biggest challenge that Taliento faced in order to experiment with her workshops in an after-school program in Newark. While the Dr. Marion A. Bolden Student Center is a useful resource for students, it is an after-school program and attendance is not required. Because of this casual atmosphere, it is hard to find any sort of consistency in the classroom. There could be anywhere from two students to nine students on any given week, with some students starting halfway through or never returning after the first session. The lesson plans are designed for consistent attendance and build off of one another and with the lack of consistent attendance, it was hard for Taliento to really see how her lesson plans thrived.

Another challenge that leads from inconsistent attendance is the very fact that it is an afterschool program. While WTNJ is also an after-school program, it happens in the classroom with their usual teacher overseeing and handing off the reins to the teaching artist. The 52nd Street Project is also an after-school program, but because of its location and the age of the students, attendance is consistent and the children are young enough to listen to their elders more readily. Having such a distinction between regular classes in school and classes at the Bolden Center does mean that the students do not think of the Bolden Center as strictly and respectfully as school. It is their choice to be there and it is fun which means there is a challenge to gain their respect and attention in order to be as productive as possible. In an ordinary classroom, time would not be taken out of the

lesson plans in order to help the students focus, which means Taliento lost even more time because of the environment.

Chapter Five

My Assessment Methods

Assessing the impact of theatre arts in education can be a difficult task. After examining three different theatre programs in the area, it seems safe to say that anecdotal evidence is a key element to showing the results of the program and attracting donors. With that in mind, I decided to merge some of the assessment methods described in the programs above into one and the main form of assessment that I used throughout the process was my own journaling conducted every session as an outside observer.

Like AdvantageArts, I journaled my experiences throughout the process and like WTNJ it was from the point of view of a sort of teaching artist, not the students of the class. However, an element that I found to be most important was that I was an outside observer. When Michelle was creating the lesson plans, I was asked if I had any preference or say in what was taught. After thinking about it, we decided that my role would be most important as an outsider looking in on the process. It is easy when you are in the room and connecting with the students to see the amazing improvements and benefits of a program. Relationships are made and affection is fostered in this type of environment. While that is a good thing ordinarily, I believe that assessment will be more valuable if it comes from someone more removed, assessing the program as a disconnected source. I had formed bonds with those students who had been in the

program since I joined, but I let Michelle teach the class while I merely observed and took notes.

Because I found outside observations vital to such a process as this, I also included audience surveys into my assessment methods. At the very end of the process, when the lesson plans had come to a close, the scenes that the students wrote were performed for a large audience of fifty+ people. At the close, I handed out surveys to whoever was willing to fill them out (everyone was very enthusiastic), with questions that asked the audience to think about character and plot work, choosing their favorite scene to comment on. The survey asked only four questions:

- What about the language stood out to you? Were there any lines of dialogue or word choice that intrigued you?
- What about the characters made you connect with them? What did you want to know more about them?
- What images/metaphors/ themes were strong?
- Did any particular moment move you emotionally or intellectually? Why?

At the end of the survey, extra comments and questions were welcomed.

This entire process was experimental for both me and Michelle, so I decided to include another survey for the students themselves. The other programs asked for self-reflective work so I decided to do the same by writing a quantitative survey asking the students to rate from one to five how they felt about eleven questions inquiring about their opinions on their creativity, confidence and acceptance in their community (full survey and results found in Appendix F). The questions are all subjective, but can be used

as evidence of learning in the students. They were given in two separate surveys to use most importantly as a comparison, one at the beginning of the program and again at the end after the final performance.

In addition to those questions, the final survey also included some qualitative information about the student's opinions on their work and the lesson plans (full survey found in Appendix G). These were also subjective and called for the student to reflect on their own work and progress. Other than those surveys and my own journaling, the only other forms of assessment that I chose to use are the actual writing and work of the students throughout the ten sessions.

Results of the Lesson Plans

From October to February, Taliento and I traveled to the Bolden Center, teaching and observing (respectively) ten lesson plans, with a performance of the work at Drew University on the eleventh meeting and a reflection day on the twelfth. On the seventh session, the AdvantageArts class at Drew joined us as writing mentors to expedite the last few steps of the process. As expected, the entire process of implementing the lesson plans was unpredictable; some days we had three students, some days we had up to ten. Lesson plans that were created with the end result of a play had to be adjusted so that the students should have at least a scene finished. Concepts had to be retaught and material rehashed as students came and went. This made it very difficult for Taliento to truly implement the plans that she wrote and for me to assess students overall progress from start to finish. In

the end, the most valuable forms of assessment for our purposes were the audience surveys and the student writing.

I wrote this thesis with the purpose to show that theatre arts in education can help to foster creative literacy and citizenship in students. To see how the results of these lesson plans contribute to evidence of such a conjecture, let us quickly redefine those terms. Citizenship in this context is an attribute that gives students the ability to be aware of the world around them, form their own opinions, judgments and beliefs based on their observations and to have the courage to speak up about what they deem important. Creative literacy is the ability to not only think creatively and innovatively, but to take those thoughts and be able to express them through writing, speaking, images and other measures of literacy. The two terms work together, with citizenship providing the material and topics that creative literacy seeks to convey. After examining the work of the students and taking into account the audience's opinions, I believe that these lesson plans did indeed foster creative literacy based on the content and style of the plays written. Citizenship may have been harder to identify as a learning outcome, but I suggest that even in the short time we had with the students, the aspects of citizenship dealing with awareness—of self and of the world—were found among the student's writing and demeanor.

Creative Literacy in their writing

If creative literacy is the ability to express one's unique ideas in an innovative way, then the best place to find evidence of such literacy is through the student's actual

plays. In this category, I think the creativity overflows. Many writing assignments in school are specific and targeted with some sort of prompt—response papers, analyses, compare/contrast, etc. Taliento's prompt—while having directions such as "write about someone similar to you" or "write about someone different than you"—did not ask of any specific themes or foci from the students. This type of freedom let the students use their imagination a little more, without the restrictions of a typical classroom, and the lack of formal barriers showed in the writing of the students, as we will see.

Each play was unique to each student as well. Comments on their originality came up quite often in the audience surveys: "It was very cool to see that the writers got to write in their own individual voices, and each play had a very distinct voice. It was also cool to see how they experimented with different voices," "The dialogue in different scenes really stood out from each other. Each playwright really showed their individuality," "I wanted to further explore their worlds. Some of it was very imaginative. I was curious about the worlds created. The characters and the worlds were different" (Barakat). It was apparent to the audience that each play was the brain-child of a very specific student. The beauty of creativity is that each individual has their different brand of thinking and each student's brand could be seen in the characters and plot that they wrote about.

Creativity is important because it is about finding new ways to express the same thing. It is valued in advertisements, entrepreneur work, presentations; it is not about finding new information so much as it is about finding a new way to present the same information, and combined with literacy, a student can be innovative in their thoughts

and also have the ability to express those innovations. Based on the assessment methods that proved to be more useful, I constructed a rubric for identifying and measuring creative literacy in the student's writing. The rubric is rooted in three different assessment methods—the content of the play, the themes of the play and the audience's reception of the play, found through the audience surveys. It focuses on three important aspects of creative literacy. Imagination is key because a student cannot be creative and not have any imagination. Coherency, while not an obvious relation to creative literacy, is actually very important. A student can be creative and imaginative, but if they do not know how to first of all express those ideas as the literacy aspect suggest, but secondly to focus on a topic and channel that creativity and imagination towards that one goal, then the results may just end up to be creative ramblings. Lastly, integrity is included for the same reason it was identified in the 52nd Street Project, as the need for truthful, meaningful work in order to be relatable and successful.

Creative Literacy	**4- Excellent**	**3- Satisfactory**	**2- Below Average**	**1- Unsatisfactory**
Imagination	The student created a fully realized, specific dramatic world that was detailed, believable and manifest in the writing	The student created a world that was detailed and believable but not fully manifest in their play	The student created a world that was believable but did not have many details or manifest itself in the play	The student did not create a world that was detailed or manifest in the play
Coherence	The student was able to	The student wrote with some	The student rarely wrote with focus,	The student's writing was

	write with focus, clarity and precision built on a consistent theme and topic of their own choosing	focus, clarity and precision built on a consistent theme and topic of their own choosing	clarity or precision built on a consistent theme and topic of their own choosing	unfocused and lacked clarity and precision
Integrity	The audience in general found the work to be truthful and meaningful	The audience in general found the work to be mostly truthful and meaningful	The audience in general found the work to be somewhat truthful and meaningful	The audience in general did not find the work to be truthful or meaningful

Many of the students excelled in part one of the creative literacy rubric. By the end of the process, the class presented six scenes from their plays. Out of the six, three were created in a different universe, one played around with other dimensions and the last two were placed in our world. **S**, who was part of the program again, and her sister, **J**, both wrote within the same world of Purgatory, where their characters are infinities fighting for control over Heaven. **J**'s play happens first in time (full text found in Appendix H), with **S**'s acting as a sequel (full text found in Appendix I). **S**'s exploration of, not the typical Purgatory, but her own version, exhibited competency in part one of the rubric, the ability to create a fully-realized, individual world of the play. In her world, there are different rules and traditions that she expresses through the use of dialogue, stage directions and flashbacks, giving the audience a clear picture of what that world looks like.

S also paired the use of part one with part two, coherency. While her world was new and original, her themes dealt with sacrifice and love, two very common elements of the human experience, establishing that theme almost immediately and supporting it throughout her play. On the other hand, her sister **J,** whose play takes place in the same world, did not show as high numbers for part one because she did not create the world herself. Instead, halfway through writing she decided to work with her sister and followed the rules of the world dictated by her sister. She did, however, show more ability in part two, dealing with the same themes as her sister and fleshing out the complexities of the theme through her dialogue.

Many audience members chose to talk about the entire performance of all six plays, rather than focusing on an individual piece. Even without the specificity, part two of the rubric can be exhibited through the audience comments, with one member saying, "I was surprised by the...descriptions of stage direction and intrigued by the harshness of each world and how they used fantasized realities to display simple themes" (Barakat). This outside acknowledgement that the students were grappling with simple ideas and expressing them in their own way and a focused manner shows us that even in the short time we had with the students, creative literacy was beginning to grow.

The audience surveys provided me with abundant evidence for part three of the rubric especially. One of the plays that elicited the most emotional responses was "A Guyanese Dream," written by seventeen-year-old **Z** (full text found in Appendix J). His play was about a young Guyanese boy, Zaire, whose father was killed during a drug deal. With the absence of the patriarch, Zaire and his mother moved to Newark to start a new

life, where he his bullied for being a foreigner. “Conversation between the mom and son moved me emotionally/intellectually,” wrote one audience member, followed by similar quotes such as, “it moved me emotionally because I could feel the pain that student felt” (Barakat). The audience members felt the truth in the story that **Z** wrote, which is why they had such an emotional reaction. This direct reception to the student’s work and how he connected with the audience on emotional levels is a clear example of creative literacy in the writing.

Citizenship in their content

Citizenship was a little more difficult to find evidence of in the student’s work. However, one of the first steps to being aware of the world and creating a personal moral compass to fight for is achieving self-awareness and understanding what is important to one’s own life. Each student wrote about simple themes in creative ways, but what I came to realize throughout the process of assessment is that each student was writing about themselves. No one in the class was a hybrid or lived in Purgatory or had schizophrenia or even with the realistic themes had ever grown-up in Guyana and seen their father shot. Nonetheless, each play was very clearly a piece of each student’s life and what they were struggling with personally.

The second rubric I created outlines the subheadings of citizenship and what can be found in the student’s work if they were exhibiting such qualities. Again, evidence for this can be found in the student’s plays and audience feedback, plus the additional writing prompt given at the end of the performance.

Citizenship	4- Excellent	3- Satisfactory	2- Below Average	1- Unsatisfactory
Self-Awareness	The student consistently demonstrates awareness of their own opinions, attitudes and relationships by using their personal experiences to create characters similar to themselves and their life	The student usually demonstrates awareness of their own opinions and experiences by using their personal experiences to create characters similar to themselves and their life	The student sometimes demonstrates awareness of their own opinions and experiences by using their personal experiences to create characters similar to themselves and their life	The student demonstrates little or no awareness of their own opinions and experiences and does not use their personal experiences to create characters similar to themselves and their life
Empathy	The student demonstrates awareness of differing opinions and their place in the world by consistently creating characters different from themselves and their opinions	The student demonstrates awareness of differing opinions and their place in the world by usually creating characters different from themselves and their opinions	The student demonstrates awareness of differing opinions and their place in the world by sometimes creating characters different from themselves and their opinions	The student does not demonstrates awareness of differing opinions and their place in the world, never creating characters different from themselves and their opinions
Engagement	The audience in general related to and empathized with the material	The audience in general found the material to be mostly relatable and empathetic	The audience in general found the material to be somewhat relatable and empathetic	The audience in general did not find the material relatable or empathetic

While Taliento and I both surmised the students were writing about personal feelings and using them in their characters, there is evidence to show that in eighteen-year-old **K**'s case, he undoubtedly was. His play begins on a typical beach, but swiftly shifts to the male character's imagination, in Smallville, on the planet China book in the tenth dimension (full text found in Appendix K). The time is pudding, where "two intangible beings converse telepathically with looks on whether the concept of making sense exists, until their minds completely clear and they forget they were conversing but still give each other looks of reassurance" (Gallegos). The scene asks the actors to imitate "The Scream" painting by Edvard Munch and the dialogue consists of words like "phantasmagorical" and "ephemeral" as his characters wonder if they exist and how. After this scene, we travel back to the beach where the male character has undergone a change through his daydream and the play continues on in such an abstract fashion until we discover, at the end, that the male is a schizophrenic patient in a treatment facility where little progress is being made on his mental health.

The main character repeats multiple times in the dialogue that he wants to seize the moment, that he does not want to waste any time with his girlfriend and he feels this strong desire to live life to the fullest while they are young, before it is too late. After examining the writing prompts that they were given at the end of the process, my suspicions that the main character was a representation of **K** himself were proved. In the answer to his greatest fear, he wrote down "wasted youth" (Barakat). While these words were almost exactly the words he chose for his main character in his play, what he wrote down for his favorite song/lyrics I found even more telling. The song he chose was

"Don't Fear the Reaper," by Blue Oyster Cult, copying the lyrics that said, "Seasons don't fear the reaper, nor do the wind, the sun, or the rain (we can be like they are)." His biggest fear is wasted youth and his favorite song encourages people to live their lives without the fear of it ending. These feelings are echoed in his character that he wrote about and based on the comparison of both his play and personal writings, it is clear that **K** demonstrated capabilities in part one of the citizenship rubric.

While most students seemed to write more about people with their own opinions, **T** provides us with strong evidence of competency in part two of the rubric, empathy. Her scene was about three students, two females and one male, discussing where they wanted to go to college (full text found in Appendix L). Shantel talked about how she wanted to go to Harvard, leave her hometown and start her new life. She does not understand why Cassey wants to go to Spelman and why Raheem supports that decision. Cassey and Raheem try to make Shantel understand that schools like Spelman, which is number one on the list of historically black colleges and universities (HBCU), will foster the sense of culture and family that is important and will surround their students with other individuals who go through similar struggles. The two friends encourage Shantel to look into an HBCU school like Spelman, but Shantel seems to brush them off and heads home.

It is clear from the direction of the play that Shantel will eventually change her mind and understand why her culture is so important, but **T** still takes the time to make the main character someone with differing opinions than herself. When the play was read aloud, **T** asked to read the part of Cassey, saying things she so clearly believed in as that character. It was obvious that she related to the character of Cassey, but she still chose to

create Shantel as her protagonist, a character who had a different view of the world, giving herself the chance to explore and sympathize with the idea of someone unlike her.

Fifteen-year-old **A** was one of the students who wrote about an alternate universe, telling the story of Jace, a young girl who is a hybrid—half vampire, half werewolf (full text found in Appendix M). Jace has a talking teddy bear who is her best friend and she has a crush on Carter, a secret vampire himself. The play is about Jace wanting to find love through Carter, despite the fact that they are natural enemies. This play, more so than many others, seemed to elicit the biggest reaction from the audience as they expressed in their surveys how well they could relate to the characters and themes. This feedback provided me with the most evidence in regards to part three of the citizenship rubric. Multiple audience surveys commented on how they related to the character, saying, "I connected with the hybrid the most," "I connected... because of them dealing with their differences/feeling like an outsider. I wanted to see more in their personal lives" and "I connected with the theme of outsider—something which I feel we can all relate to at times." **A** succeeds in taking a simple theme and finding a creative way to discuss it, creating her own fully-realized world and most importantly in this example, writing material that is accessible and relatable to an audience.

As we can see evidence of in some of the works, the student's chose personal emotions and opinions to write about in their plays, which is an important fact to take into account. Each student wrote about something very personal to them and used the time in class to hash out how they felt about it—were they proud of their problems? Were they looking for answers? Were they just looking to tell their stories? They took basic

parts of their personality and used their creativity to transform it into something an audience could relate to, serving the purpose of art and playwriting, but also serving themselves and giving them a chance to explore their sense of self and others with differing opinions. Figuring out who they are and how they feel about their own life is the beginning of citizenship and these students demonstrated their capabilities in the quality through their writing.

Other Observations

The rubrics I constructed for the qualities of citizenship and creative literacy provide a general overview of the kind of progress a student should be displaying through a program like this. However, there are some other interesting observations I found that lay outside of the rubric that are worth mentioning. One of the students, **J**, had the most radical transformation out of the all the other students.

As mentioned earlier, I handed out a short qualitative survey at the end of the process and her answers are what I find most interesting. Throughout the entire process, **J** was disinterested and unfocused. In the early stages when everyone was writing, she would talk and distract other students and only work if Taliento sat with her and coached her through. When Drew mentors stepped in to help in the last couple weeks of the process, she was still unresponsive and would only answer questions, never showing initiative or excitement like every other NPS student. Taliento and I discussed her behavior, trying to figure out what she needed to engage more; I thought maybe she just did not care to be in a theatre class and only took it because of her sister.

Taliento decided that it was time to improvise and act out the first page or two of dialogue that the students had written thus far, so Drew students paired up with the NPS writers and performed the beginnings of each scene. The entire process with **J** that day had been pulling teeth. However, the second we called "action" and she began performing her piece, she seemed to spring into character. She still was quiet and not as expressive as the other students, but there was an added attitude that seemed to thrive when people were watching. She responded well to laughter, flipped her hair and even moved a little differently as she read. The situation reminded me of when I worked with **D** last spring. We just needed to find what made **J** want to be there, and I think performing was what she wanted.

Every time there was an audience in the room, I watched **J** to see how she would react and every time, she seemed to flower. I honestly believe that she needed some sort of recognition from outsiders, some sort of spotlight, to feel that she was doing well. At the final performance, she was excited and ready to read her part. In the talkback section where the students were asked what they thought of the process, she was one of the first students to raise her hand, talking about how her play went in a different direction than planned but she ended up liking it. In the short answer section of the survey that she took a few days later, when asked if she wanted continue writing, she wrote, "Of course I do" (Barakat).

In fact, the talkback is where a lot of students shined. Being able to present their work to such a large crowd of strangers who responded so positively is definitely a large contributing factor to the confidence they felt. They had performed before, but just to

each other and our class, people who have to be there. Knowing that an audience will show up, listen and applaud gives their work a sense of importance they would not have if they were not able to share it. After the performance, the students were given a chance to tell the audience how they felt about the process. “Interesting,” **S** responded, raising her hand immediately, “it was interesting to put myself in a character like me and then not like me at all” (referring to a prompt that Taliento gave them at the beginning of the semester to help them begin their plays). **J** was also one of the first to respond with the comment above, speaking louder than I’ve ever heard her talk. **Z** quickly followed saying that through the process he “felt like a producer...I didn’t know I could write anything.” He was also one of the students to use many of the technical aspects of playwriting that Taliento taught, researching every area of his script and employing stage directions with the help of his mentors.

Most of the students’ comments reflected important parts of the process that the audience (through their comments) and I have already pointed out. “It was inspiring,” **A** answered, “I liked creating characters like myself and then opposites ones, then adding things like vampires and werewolves.” She spoke to the idea that it is a simple concept, but then she got to use her imagination to make it more than a typical story. Other students just expressed their enjoyment of writing. “Writing a play is like watching a movie in my head,” said **K**. That was the second time he said that over the course of the process, voicing that opinion in class one day; he obviously thought it was important enough to say more than once. **T**, whose play was about a guy getting cheated on, no talking animals or made-up worlds involved, was also one of the more aloof students.

When asked what he thought, he answered, “It was eye-opening. I liked it more than I thought I would.” After weeks of seeing a student struggle to get involved and thinking he may not be getting anything, it is reassuring to hear him say that it affected him in the end.

Something else that stood out to me was the fact that the majority of the comments from the audience surveys centered around two ideas: naturalness and relatability in the work and honesty in the content. So many viewers talked about how natural the language was, how it felt real and relatable, the language was modern and enjoyable and they just wanted to hear more. They also talked about the idea of censorship and how they admired the honesty that all the students put forth as well as the idea that there were no rules. There was some cursing in some of the scenes and no content was restricted; anything was worth exploring. This sense of inclusiveness and the students picking what was important to them showed in the work. “Choosing harsher words added to the scene,” wrote one audience member. “The bluntness of the pieces was refreshing and really funny,” wrote another,” I thought they didn’t shy away from anything which I appreciate.”

These comments made me realize the many additional reasons why theatre arts in education are important. Students do not find writing like this in other areas of study. English and literature focus on form and content based on prompts, books or lesson plans. Playmaking has a form and structure, but it is all geared towards encouraging imagination and freedom of thought. Students were taught about conflict and the arc of a play, they were given direction on how to write in the style of a play and the importance of prior

circumstances and inciting incidents among other elements. It is a well-structured craft that has rules and guidelines in the structure but leaves room for creativity and imagination at its core. This Integrated Playwriting class in particular focuses on the students. As the audience pointed out, there are no rules about what students can write about. They are given the opportunity to express themselves in a school setting and for others to hear their words. This is so important to the growth of young people, especially as they figure out who they are and what is important to them. Censorship and restrictions are everywhere in school. While rules are important in the lives of our growing youth, it is equally important to give them a space where they can feel a freedom of expression and exploration in a supportive environment.

Conclusion

The final performance at the end of the process was one of the most rewarding experiences. People recognized the universal themes these students are struggling with, connecting them to their own life and feeling the power that playwriting can have in the hands of young students. When asked to add any additional comments about the performance at the bottom of the survey, audience members wrote messages of encouragement for the whole program: “Great job by all of them and I’d love to hear/read more of what they create in the future, see the progress,” “Amazing job!,” “It was really heartwarming to see kids find playwriting. Good job and thanks <3,” “Great program.”

While these words of praise are encouraging, I finish this thesis with recognition of the limits of my work. I asked at the beginning if assessment is effective in

determining the results of theatre programs, considering the sometimes ephemeral, qualitative nature of theatre work. Based on my findings, I believe that I was able to create a rubric and a way to at least identify certain attributes in theatre arts. However, I did have to admit when a method did not work. As mentioned above, one of the assessment tools that I experimented with but did not make it into my final recommendations was a baseline survey that I asked the students to take at the beginning and end of the process. When I calculated the results (found in Appendix F), I found that there was only some growth in students like **S** and **J**, while there was some regression in others. Even though some of the numbers supported the fact that students were growing, I did not think that particular method was reliable or accurate.

The baseline survey was asking the students very personal questions and the answers relied heavily on how the student felt at that point in time. Just because **S** moved up two numbers when talking about her level of confidence does not prove that she is now a more confident person because of the Integrated Playwriting class. As much as I would like to show that, the baseline survey was very dependent on the attitude of the student at the time they took the survey and I could not use it as factual evidence when defending my methods.

At the end of my work, I must ask myself an important question. Assessment is considered to be of high importance in this country, but can every subject be assessed thoroughly? Unfortunately, I think in terms of strict assessment tools, the answer is no. Assessment is not and may not ever be perfectly conducive to educational theatre arts and there are areas of growth that assessment tools will never be able to capture. I was able to

witness firsthand **J**'s growth in being able to speak up in front of a crowd and finding her creative voice. Taliento and I both watched **S** grapple with her creative instinct throughout the creative process and compared her attitude in the beginning to her attitude at the end. However, all we can do is tell others about what we saw. Those kinds of changes cannot be measured by someone outside of the process and it may never be able to be assessed unless someone is in the room for the entirety of a program.

I did, however, learn that, while some areas of work may not be measurable, there are most definitely aspects of our work that can be assessed and proven. When I began my research, I was convinced that an element of quantitative information was vital for my tools. I tried to find a method that worked and I could not. What I did find, though, was that qualitative evidence is so much more important than others at first might perceive it to be. Yes, numbers are undeniable facts. But once I constructed my rubric and was able to draw a line from one quality to an example of it in the student's work, I was able to see those results just as clearly as a statistic, and more importantly, I was able to show that growth to others outside of the creative process. Assessment may have a long road of evolution ahead before it can accurately portray the results of programs such as theatre. In the meantime, though, there are tools at our disposal that we can use to identify important skills, if we only know how to apply them to the work.

Through this thesis, I defined the terms creative literacy and citizenship and identified them throughout three different programs in the New Jersey/New York area. I have identified the integral role assessment plays in theatre arts. While I have not established a set way to teach these terms, I have suggested that theatre arts is an

environment that leads to the fostering and encouragement of them. Integrated Playwriting and theatre arts do not teach creativity; each student thought up their own characters, worlds and themes, with only general guidance and prompting from their mentors. It does not teach citizenship either, because citizenship is singular and unique for every individual and you cannot teach someone what is important to them.

What this class does, though, is foster those qualities; it gives students the opportunity to exercise them. In a world where they are being taught how to do things either the right way or the wrong way, it is imperative that we provide them with the choice to choose what they think is right and wrong and to express that decision however they see fit. With lesson plans like what Taliento has written paired with assessment tools and rubrics helping to identify these characteristics, students are given the chance to grow in areas in which they may not typically get the chance to grow. These attributes are important to encourage as we raise the next generation to hold the world on their shoulders; programs like these have the ability to cultivate the students so that they are ready to do so.

Bibliography

"A Snapshot of State Policies for Arts Education." *Arts Education Partnership* (2014): n. pag. Web.

Andreichik, Hillary. "Reconsidering Literacy in the Art Classroom." *The Education Digest*(2015): 52-55. Web. Nov. 2015.

Auck, Alyssa, Dave Rogowski, Hunter Railey, Jan Brennan, Paul Baumann, and StephanieAragon. "50-State Comparison: Civic Education Policies." *Education Commission of the States*. N.p., 12 Dec. 2016. Web.

Barakat, Emma. Audience Survey. Madison, NJ. Drew University. 1 March 2017.

Barakat, Emma. Baseline Survey. Newark, NJ. The Marion A. Bolden Center. 6 March 2017

Blake, Caitrin. "Defining Creative Literacy: Why Students Should Learn to Think Creatively." *Literary Resources* (2015): n. pag. *Concordia University Nebraska*. Web.

Brenner, Lisa and Chris Ceraso. Personal Interview. 22 January 2017.

Burke, Megan, Swati Kasat, and Camille Lafayette. *Developing a System of Management and Measurement for the 52nd Street Project*. Thesis. NYU Wagner, 2013. Print.

De Castro, Lucia Rabello. "Political Participation in the School Context: Youths' Experiences in Collective Action." *Children, Youth and Environments*, vol. 17 (2007): 93-111. Print.

DeVivo, Jim, and Walter F. Rodriguez. Personal Interview. 20 December 2016.

"Literacy." *Funk & Wagnalls New World Encyclopedia*, 2016, p. 1p.

Ewell, Peter T. "An Emerging Scholarship: A Brief History of Assessment." *National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)* (2002): 1-31. Web.

Flanagan, Constance. “Developmental Roots of Political Engagement.” *Pennsylvania State University* , Apr. 2003, pp. 257–261. Print.

Gallegos, Kenny. *Mental Phantom.* Play. Marion A. Bolden Center. Newark, NJ. 2017. Print.

“Historical Context: Overview of New Jersey’s Statewide Testing Program.” *Historical Context: Overview of New Jersey'S Statewide Testing Program*. NJ Department of Education, July 2016. Web. 04 Apr. 2017.

Meers, Tonya. "Bringing Together Creativity and Literacy." *Education Business*. Karen Hopps,n.d. Web. 03 Apr. 2017.

Parsad, Basmat, et al. *Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools: 1999-2000 and 2009-10. NCES 2012-014*. National Center for Education Statistics, National Center for Education Statistics, 01 Apr.

Putnam, R. D. (2001), Civic Disengagement in Contemporary America (The *Government and Opposition*/Leonard Schapiro Lecture). Government and Opposition, 36: 135–156.doi:10.1111/1477-7053.00059

Ravitch, Diane. *Edspeak: A Glossary of Education Terms, Phrases, Buzzwords, and Jargon*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum.

“Reaching Underserved Populations.” *Post-Secondary Education and Technology* (n.d.): n. Pag. *Americansforthearts.org*. Web. 4 Apr. 2017.

Reagan, Ronald. "A Nation At Risk." *Archived*. US Department of Education(ED), April 1983. Web. 22 Dec. 2016.

Rolling, James Haywood, Jr. "Creative LITERACIES." *Art Education* 68.1 (2015): 4-5. *ProQuest.* Web. 27 Nov. 2016.

Schebb, John M., and William Lyons. "Diffuse Support, Specific Support and Attentiveness: Components of the Public's Assessment of the Supreme Court." *Southeastern Political Review*, vol. 27, no. 4, Dec. 1999, pp.765–780. Print.

Skinner, A. "Standard High School Graduation Requirements (50-state)." Education Commission of the States, 2016. Web. 22 Dec. 2016

Stanford, Gully. "Useful Quotes for Arts Advocates." *National Performing Arts Convention*. Design Brooklyn, 27 Mar. 2012. Web. 03 Apr. 2017.

Stordy, Peter Howard. "Taxonomy of Literacies." *Journal of Documentation* 71.3 (2015): 456-76. *ProQuest.* Web. 23 Nov. 2016.

"Students with High Levels of Arts Involvement: Less Likely to Drop Out of School" (n.d.): n.pag. *Americansforthearts.org*. Web. 4 Apr 2017

Taliento. Michelle. Personal Interview. 18 February 2017.

Valentine, Gill. "Children should be seen and not heard: the production and transgression of adults' public space. *Urban Geography*. Volume 17, 1996, pp. 205-20. Print.

Westheimer, Joel, and Joseph Kahne. "What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy." *American Educational Research Journal* 41.2 (2004): 237-69. Print.

"Writers Theatre Education Programs*." Writers Theatre of New Jersey*. Writers Theatre

of New Jersey., 11 Apr. 2016. Web. 25 Jan. 2017.

Appendix A

"Mentally Unchained"
by **SR**

Newark is like the purge
Every man for it self
If you getting robbed outside you better not
Even look for help
Crips and Blood run
Nahh this ain't no Democracy
Lil kids getting shot up on the block
Now that's a tragedy
Black lives matter
Man I don't believe that
We kill each other like it's a game of base-
Ball and it's our turn to bat
You better not walk outside with a new
Pair of sneaks on they'll snatch 'em off
Your feet in a hurry and then speed off
You gotta look both ways
Cause somebody always double crossing
You
Man they'll treat like a street
Cause somebody always running over you
Black lives matter
Nah that ain't true
Lil kids nowadays only see red and blue
Lil kids throwing up gang signs
To them education isn't important
They rather be outside chill with the
Crooks
Then be with the classmates learning new
Things in the books
Man why is that
Why are the girls so quick to jump one
Another
And why are they so quick to rob their own brother

Black lives matter
We are a community
When we stand back to back
It makes a stronger unity

We need to stop all the murder
And take away the pain
We need to stop all this
Discrimination
Because we all bleed the same
We need to make a change
We need to make it right
We need to make so that
She won't have to pray that no one take
Her son tonight
Give the homeless a home
And let out that boy's brother
And please don't shoot that man up to
Take away that baby's father
Black lives matter

We need to come together
Or this city's gonna shatter
Well that's all the bad things that I really
Gotta say
I ain't gonna go into details but we really
Need to change
Stop all the gangs
And stop all the violence
Stop all the killings
And stop all the fighting
If black lives matter then the things I'm
Asking wouldn't be a problem
We need to make a change and that
Change starts with us
All we need is a lil bit of trust

Appendix B

AdvantageArts@ Drew Learning Outcomes:

COMMON TO BOTH DREW AND BOLDEN	BOLDEN STUDENTS
1) To hone traditional theatre skills in a challenging, unfamiliar environment.	1) To enhance literacy and self-expression through the language of the theatre, in written, oral and physical form.
2) To enhance collaborative skills, ie, listening, organizing, coordinating efforts, allocating and sharing responsibility, etc	2) To gain a sense of personal empowerment through the consistent, committed support of bona fide cultural institutions for personal and communal creative work
3) To have one's creative voice validated both within and without the "home" community by meaningful public presentation in each place.	3) To give students from inner city Newark access to the Drew campus and community, and by extension, to foster a sense that the university life and education is a viable option in their lives.
4) To develop the reflective capacity to assess one's life and experience not only from the standpoint of personal history, but in relation to the experience of diverse others.	"Social development," in the sense that students will learn to put forth their thoughts and concerns articulately and with confidence, in a variety of social relationships, from peer collaborations to

	mentor/mentee interactions, student/teacher associations, and with figures of authority.
5) To gain a fuller sense of self, and the self-confidence to put one's voice forward.	
6) To foster respect for the unique experience of others, and to recognize that knowledge, even wisdom, often resides in life experience and personal history as well as in more traditional forums.	

Appendix C

"Why?"
By **D**

Why do we treat each other this way?
When we're honestly all the same
All the violence and killing are driving me insane
So why do we treat each other this way?

People fighting with each other, they have no respect
They don't understand life's too short to have regrets
I don't think they realize that we're all we've got
That we should live together and give all that hate up

I tried to keep to myself, didn't wanna get in the way
With all these voices telling me I'll never be anything
I'm gonna make a change
For me and my community

Why do we treat each other this way?
When we're honestly all the same
All the violence and killing are driving me insane
So why do we treat each other this way?

Appendix D

"A Child's Place"

By **T**

Stay in a child's place
The smoke of stress is not your business
Stay in a child's place
Sorrow and sickness
She was his Mrs. and now he goes missing
Stove on temperature rises, they fly in, it's blazin', hell like, jail like
Stay in a child's place
Where's pops locked
Mom's fein for white rocks
Hustlin' is all big bros got
Can you really complain
Especially since you don't have the gold to be rockin your silver
I'll beat the hell out of your mother, nothing you can say
Rape you and your little sister!
"Brought you into this world and I can take you out"
I said this groooown folks business
"You got McDonald's money?"
Stay in a child's place
What you do, what you wear, what you eat
You don't choose your family members
Money saved for college tuition? Face grimace
Your birth was a mistake
Don't know where you went wrong because the birth of your child was also a mistake
Thrown to different foster homes
Jokes are known to be thrown
You hear someone play about how their father isn't there and yours really isn't
Lexia's got your head on the desk
Funniest kid in the class and you'll still get an F
Even in the bigger picture your input is missing
Why are black women's hair, body and style being stolen by those who oppressed it and now seen as trendy?
"Kim K boxer braids" and "Kylie Jenner lips" are you kidding me?
Why they wanna say nigga but don't want to be racially profiled and brutalize by the police
How you have an issue with me wearing weave but bash the next girl for rockin her fro?
My hair is nappy and my edges aren't naturally laid
I got gel and edge control for days
Yeah we might chew on frosted honey buns for 50 cent
And continue to wonder why that little yogurt cup is $5
Let me not forget to mention

Why my people still being brutalized because the police think they can
I still want to know what happened to Sandra Bland
So no, I will not stay in a child's place

Appendix E

"Why Newark?"
By **C**

They ask why Newark? Because they hate the place. Because the first thing they think of when they grow up here is leaving. Because here bullets fly, times are hard and jobs are scarce. But why not Newark? Why not a good education, and the opportunity it provides? Why not Why not the cherry blossoms at branch brook park, and the jazz festivals at Ivy Hill? Why are we looked at last as a great city yet looked at first as a dangerous one? Why not Newark? Because *we* are Newark. And listening to everybody in here today, there's one thing I'm sure of: we can't let other people write our story for us. We have to do that for ourselves.

Appendix F

The 230 Broadway Project Baseline Survey

- I feel supported at home.
- I feel supported at school.
- I feel supported at the Bolden Center.
- My opinion matters.
- I am confident.
- I am creative.
- I can share my ideas with others without feeling judged.
- I have the ability to succeed.
- I can express my thoughts clearly and eloquently through my writing.
- I can express my thoughts clearly and eloquently when I speak.
- I work well with others and am an important part of any group.

Results from Beginning to End:

Question:	K	T	Z	S	A	J
I feel supported at home.	5-5	3-3	5-5	2-3	5-5	3-4
I feel supported at school.	3-1	5-5	3-3	1-1	5-5	2-4
I feel supported at the Bolden Center.	4-4	4-3	2-2	2-4	5-5	4-5
My opinion matters.	5-5	4-3	5-3	0-3	5-5	1-3
I am confident.	5-5	5-5	4-4	-5-1	5-5	1-2
I am creative.	5-5	5-5	4-3	5-5	5-5	4-4

I can share my ideas with others without feeling judged.	5-4	5-5	5-4	5-2	5-5	1-2
I have the ability to succeed.	5-5	5-4	5-5	15-3	5-5	2-3
I can express my thoughts clearly and eloquently through my writing.	5-4	5-5	4-4	5-5	5-5	4-3
I can express my thoughts clearly and eloquently when I speak.	5-3	2-2	3-4	5-5	4-5	2-2
I work well with others and am an important part of any group.	5-4	5-5	4-4	4-3	5-5	3-3

Appendix G

The 230 Broadway Project Self-Reflection Survey

- What skill sets did you learn during the process of writing a play? Explain your reasoning.
- What are some of the themes of your scene?
- Name one part of your play/scene you are proud of. Why did you choose that?
- Name one part of your play/scene that you would have liked to work on more. Why did you choose that?
- Do you want to continue writing?

Appendix H

GUILTY

by **J**

SCENE ONE: In The Bed

LILITH

Lilith's thoughts: Why am I still up it's midnight. I mean how the hell can I tell him this? He's going to think I'm insane. (*Turns around and kisses Jay on the cheek.*) Hey babe are you up?

JAY

(*In a very sleepy voice.*) Yeah babe, what's up?

LILITH

I've been thinking about us and I think we should take it to the next level.

JAY

(*Sits up wide and awake and slightly confused.*) What next level?

LILITH

(*Stalls kinda, but chuckles.*) We should go get pizza, we never ate it before together or have some tacos or something. I mean we can also talk about this sacrifice.

JAY

What sacrifice? Lilith stop talking jibberish. I think you watched too much *Vampire Diaries* and *Supernatural.*

LILITH

(in a very Sarcastic tone.) Akikiki whatever. I think we should talk about this sacrifice in the morning over Starbucks. I'm in the mood for a White Chocolate Mocha

JAY

What sacrifice babe?

LILITH

Why is he not understanding? This is so hard on me and he's not complying! I'm going to be glad when I kill him! Wait... No I won't I love him. Why would I say that I'm so fucking awful. He deserves better.

(*Angry and annoyed.*) Stop asking about the sacrifice! Damn it!! (*Calms down.*)

Babe I have to tell you about something because it's very important and it involves you and some other things, and some other people, and um ... blood.

JAY

(*Scared and concerned*.) Blood?! What the hell Lilith. I need you to snap out of this.

LILITH

(*Sarcastic.*) And I need you to stop whining and being immature. I mean shit it's not everyday that someone needs your blood.

JAY

(*Moving off the bed.*) Should I call the cops?

LILITH

No you should…

JAY

(*cuts her off*) Run?

LILITH

No just lay here.. please. Look let's forget about this and go on a vacation tomorrow.

SCENE TWO: Road Trip

LILITH

Who the hell is tapping me early in the morning! I just went to damn sleep.

JAY

Hey babe wake up. It's time for our road trip and I got the kids ready.

LILITH

Damn I should've thought this through I don't my kids around as I rip his throat out… I mean as we take a lovely trip to Mystic Falls. What is wrong with me? Maybe I shouldn't do this, but I have to find out what down there.

(*Lilith gets ready and Jay, Lilith and the kids get in the car*.)

LILITH

I didn't think we we're going to take Ama & Ana..

JAY

I thought this was family road-trip, but I'm kinda sleepy.

(Jay goes to sleep and Lilith drives. Later Ana starts crying)

LILITH

(*Stop by the Mystic falls sign*.) Come on baby don't cry are almost there. (*Pats Ana's back*) Stop crying you bastard before wake up your sister. Noo sorry baby… I didn't mean it like that.

(*Finally she gets Ana to stop crying and finish driving to the Salvatore Cemetery*)

LILITH

(*Waking Jay up)* Hey Babe wake up we're here.

(*Thinking:)*This is it. I don't know if I can do this.. I need to rip his damn heart with my teeth and get it over with, but I love him…What about my kids. You won't be needing them little bastards after you find Avarice.. Avarice?

JAY

(*Gets out the car and walks around and touching the gate*) Hey uhm, Why are we in a Cemetery?

LILITH

(*Reaching through his chest*.) This!... (*realizing what she did*) I'm so sorry. Babe

JAY

(*Gurgling and dying*) Why?

(*Pulls her hand and his heart out realizing it's not working*.)

LILITH

(*Crying*) WHY THE FUCK ISN'T IT WORKING!

END PLAY.

Appendix I

DRIVEN BY DARKNESS

By **S**

SCENE ONE:
Time: BC Unknown
Place: Heaven

(AVARIS is walking through an old house. SHE sees a journal near a large brown mirror. SHE reads a page of it.)

AVARIS

To my courageous son, Jaxeous. Thou art destined to be king. If thou art reading this, that means that heaven has won and you are now locked in this mirror. Thy mother and I hath made the decision to keep you in this mirror for thy safety. Avenge thy siblings, thy mother, and I.

(SHE sits down, looks into the mirror at HER own reflection.)

Worthless. Useless. Unwanted. (She repeats these words a number of times.

(SHE caresses HER face)

FLASHBACK

ANASTASIA

(yelling) Why are you so different? What did we do wrong with you? The others are perfect.

MICHEAL

(looking HER in the eyes; with a cool yet angry voice) You are a disgrace. Do you need an example in life? Look at your siblings; they are greatness in itself.

AVARIS

(tearfully) I'm trying every/ day, I-

MICHEAL

(slams hand down) No, you don't try at all. I'm just tired of seeing your face. The only thing we see when we look at you, is failure. You are unneeded and unwanted.

ANASTASIA

You are the darkness itself.

SCENE TWO: Present day.

(AVARIS picks up the candlestick, and goes to smash the mirror. JAX (within the mirror) braces for impact. The mirror is hit and there is a large crack down the center. JAX appears)

AVARIS

Who are you?

(There is no response.)

What do you want.

(No response.)

Why are you in the mirror?

(No response.)

How did you get there?

JAX

One question at a time.

AVARIS

Who are you?

JAX

I am Jaxeous, prince of purgatory, and you my dear, are in my realm.

(JAX picks up a family portrait and examines it closely.)

AVARIS

How did you get in that mirror?

JAX

My parents put me here because Hell lost and Heaven won and blah, blah, blah, blah.

(HE lies on bed in room.)

Who are you?

AVARIS

I am--

JAX

You're the daughter of Anastasia and Micheal. The dark one, well, at least one of the dark ones. Now you're down here, ready to ask for my help to take over Heaven, isn't that right?

(HE gets off the bed, HE walks towards HER, inspecting random objects along the way.)

AVARIS

How do you know all of this? And since you know everything, how are we going to get up there and how are we going to take over Heaven?

JAX

(HE says this with a creepy smirk.) First, we'll need a blood sacrifice at the gate, which will take us days to get to. It's a lot of hiking through Hell and hard work. Are you ready for all of that, holy princess?

AVARIS

Don't call me that, my name is Avaris, okay? Got it Jaximus?

JAX

It's Jaxeous.

AVARIS

Whatever, I'll just call you Jax.

SCENE THREE: Hell

AVARIS

It's been three weeks Jax, can we take a break?

JAX

People in hell don't take breaks.

Avaris

(SHE rolls her eyes) I just want to stop for a drink of water.

JAX

People in Hell want ice water.

(Laughs loudly at HIS own joke.)

AVARIS

(SHE looks confused) What?

JAX

(waves hands) It's just a human joke.

(THEY walk a little further.)

All right fine you can drink your holy water, go and rest your feathers.

AVARIS

One. It's not holy water. Two. I don't have feathers. Aren't you a little bit too rough to be royalty?

JAX

How do you mean?

AVARIS

Forget it.

JAX

So, what will you do once we are in Heaven?

AVARIS

First, I would find my sister Lilith.

Jax

Oh? I heard that she was a badass.

AVARIS

Once I am reunited with my sister, I will return to Heaven to spite my parents and my siblings, and I will become the queen of it and any place I shall choose.

JAX

Okay... Where do I fit in in all of this?

AVARIS

Well, you can be my dark knight.

JAX

(whispers to HIMSELF) Well, she has to go.

AVARIS

What?

JAX

Nothing. Let's continue.

AVARIS

Okay. What will you do if given the chance to be king of Heaven?

JAX

I would destroy Heaven and rebuild purgatory. Anyone who remains alive after that would become my slave.

AVARIS

Okay. Where do I fit in in that plan?

JAX

Who says you'll be around then?

AVARIS

Umm... nevermind. Let's just keep walking.

(THEY reach the gate.)

JAX

Okay, we're here. Now give me the knife.

AVARIS

But there's no animal to sacrifice, where is it?

JAX

Right in front of me.

AVARIS

So you lied to me? You dragged me along for all this time, just to sacrifice me in the end? What is your motive?

JAX

I want to take over Heaven. I need to avenge my family.

(HE lunges at HER, but SHE takes out the knife. SHE grabs HIM by HIS neck and holds HIM.)

AVARIS

I'm so sorry. I didn't want to do this. I am not evil. I am Heaven.

JAX

Before you do this, you should know that your sister is very evil. She kills without hesitation. If you open that gate, you give her the ability to take over the world.

(SHE slits HIS throat, killing HIM. The gate opens, revealing LILITH, who is holding a glass of blood.)

LILITH

Hello, sister. I came to rescue you.

(THEY grab hands)

AVARIS

Come sister, let's take over the world.

END PLAY.

Appendix J

A GUYANESE DREAM
By **Z**

SCENE ONE: Guyana, 10:00pm

(Flashback. ZAIRE SR. was a basketball star, but HE had a child at a young age so HE had to get a job, and crack was HIS only way to make money. The CRACKEAD and ZAIRE SR. meet at the basketball court behind ZAIRE'S house.)

ZAIRE SR.

You didn't give me all of the money.

CRACKHEAD

Yes, I did.

ZAIRE SR.

Don't ever come to me for drugs again, BITCH!

CRACKHEAD

Who you callin a bitch for two years I've been knowing you and you've been treating me like this.

(BOOM)

ZAIRE JR.

(Screams) Daaaad!

MOM

Oh my god, call 9-9-9!

SCENE TWO: Present day.

(ZAIRE JR. and HIS MOM are packing getting ready to go to the airport to fly to Newark, New Jersey)

MOM

Come on finish packing your stuff, we're going to miss our flight, hurry up

ZAIRE JR.

Why are we leaving?

MOM

We are leaving to have a better life. Ever since your father died it's been hard.

ZAIRE JR.

I can work, I guess.

MOM

No, I'm the provider. You just stay in school and play basketball. And don't worry about anything else.

ZAIRE JR.

(sigh) Whatever.

SCENE THREE: Newark, NJ

(THEY just got to THEIR apartment in Newark and ZAIRE JR. is already complaining. ZAIRE does not realize that HE will have a better life here than in Guyana)

ZAIRE JR.

Why does it look like this it doesn't look like home? It smells different here. Mom you always make these wrong stupid decisions

MOM

You're just like your father never satisfied. Be happy you have a roof over your head. Go unpack.

(ZAIRE JR. sighs)

MOM

Hurry up you have school tomorrow

ZAIRE JR.

Mom are you kidding me it's midnight.

(closes door)

She's already getting on my nerves man.

(HE sits on HIS bed, thinking about HIS father)

MOM

ZAIRE! Get up. You're going to be late have a good day at school, be careful these kids are different. Are you leaving without giving me a hug?

(THEY hug)

(*HE goes outside and HE notices the differences in Newark- Different people, and how they dress. This is not like Guyana. ZAIRE is very observant. HE walks into Fredrick Douglass High and meets with the PRINCIPLE*.)

PRINCIPLE

You're Zaire Harrison. You are our new student. Welcome, your room is English 102.

(As HE goes in the room, HE holds HIS paper with HIS class schedule.)

ZAIRE JR.

Hi, how are you? I'm your new student Zaire Harrison.

MS. WATSON

Oh we've been expecting you. Introduce yourself to the class, tell them who you are, where you're from.

ZAIRE JR.

I'm Zaire I'm from Guyana I'm 16 I play basketball, and I love curry goat.

(People in class hear the accent and start laughing. giggling Some guy calls HIM a loser.)

BULLY

What is curry goat? This guy is a loser; go back to where you're from

MS. WATSON

Class we don't do that here, apologize right now.

BULLY

Whatever, I'm sorry.

MS. WATSON

Please take a seat Mr. Harrison

(JOYCE comes in and goes to HER seat)

MS. WATSON

Good morning Joyce, take a seat

JOYCE

Hi

ZAIRE JR.

(to HIMSELF) Wow.

END PLAY.

Appendix K

PHANTOM REALITY
By **K**

SCENE ONE: Sunset, a couple sitting on a blanket by the beach.

GEORGE

My goodness.

CASSEY

Huh?

GEORGE

I really dislike the beach.

CASSEY

Why say something like that? I mean What's not to love about the beach

GEORGE

Tons, the sun is too hot, the water is always salty, the sand gets in your… everything. But also there's something really special about this.

CASSEY

About the beach? What are you saying?

GEORGE

I'm talking about this moment in time, being here with you. We're both so young and we have our lives right there, in front of us. If I were to die here, with you that would be ok.

CASSEY

George! How can you say that! Don't talk about dying so casually.

GEORGE

I'm just saying that it's nice to spend time with you and I think this moment is so special.

CASSEY

Whatever, you always say stuff like that. George, I have to leave soon…

GEORGE

You've only been here for a little, can't I just enjoy this for a while longer?

CASSEY

I know. I'm sorry, George.

(CASSEY exits, as SHE leaves the scene changes)

NARRATOR

Entry 1; “it was the 10th dimension, time was pudding”. (mumbled noise) recorded an encounter during a daydream...

Two CREATURES look at EACH OTHER in deep recognition of THEIR inability to exist but telepathically communicating EACH OTHER’S frustration at the current situation. THEY grab EACH OTHER’S face and distort THEIR faces into the scream painting.

CREATURE 1

OUR TALKS ARE EPHEMERAL.

CREATURE 2

PHANTASMAGORICAL.

(GEORGE watched, then realizing HIS place in this new world)

GEORGE

What is this place?

(GEORGE searches HIS surroundings)

NARRATOR

“There was a box on the ground. It just appeared”

(GEORGE explores the box, picking it up)

GEORGE

Woah, this is amazing. What is perception?

NARRATOR

But he said it rather, unimpressively.

(CREATURE speaks to GEORGE)

CREATURE 1

Perception is only what you want to see.

GEORGE

Trying to… Ugh, hard to... elaboration?

CREATURE 2

Time is eternal, thought is momentary.

GEORGE

Wait, I think I can hear what you're going to say before you say it. It's all clear to me now, I was a universe! I am continuous thought!

NARRATOR

As he expressed it, he was back at the beach… *(becomes muffled and trails off)*

(GEORGE is back at the beach, in the same position with HIS girlfriend)

GEORGE

Woah.

CASSEY

George…? You trailed off.

GEORGE

I understand now Cassey, I can make this moment last forever!

CASSEY

What are you on about now?

GEORGE

I can hear what you say before you say it.

(At the same time)

GEORGE

What?
What are?
Stop it!

CASSEY

What?
What are?
Stop it!

GEORGE

I am a universe, Cassey. A God. I can perceive reality.

CASSEY

Ok, you're scaring me George.

GEORGE

Let me show you.

CASSEY

No, I'm leaving.

(CASSEY exits, with HER departure the scene changes and we see GEORGE in a strait jacket. The NARRATOR a DOCTOR, talks with the NURSE.)

DOCTOR/NARRATOR

How is the patient?

NURSE

No progress today, unfortunately.

GEORGE

It's always nice to be present in the moment, isn't it?

END PLAY.

Appendix L

PINK SATURN

By **T**

SCENE ONE

TIME: Night, October 7, 2017.

PLACE: In Brooklyn, around William High Library.

SHANTEL

I can't wait until these college acceptance letters come back.

CASSEY

I just want to go to Spelman sooo bad. That's all I ask!

SHANTEL

To go to Harvard is all I ask.

CASSEY

I just think it's better for me to connect with my black identity and as a black woman- being black in general in this country there is a lot of issues our people face. Yeah it would be nice to enjoy the infamous American Dream..but can't you see the gentrification, food deserts, police bru-

SHANTEL

So what's wrong with going to an Ivy League? I swear it is always black this black that with you, I hate when you speak like this...I just wanna be me and live my own life.

CASSEY

FYI Ivy Leagues don't matter Shantel, I mean they do, but I can go to Spelman and be just as or even more successful as anyone who goes to an Ivy League. Plus, Spelman is the #1 HBCU! I can be with my sistahs, learn, advocate, and have fun. Maybe you just need to open up your mind to the world these issues will affect you have been affecting you all your life. Do you see where we go to school?

SHANTEL

HBCU?

RAHEEM

(*Looking at books in the library, interferes into the conversation.*) Historically black colleges and universities. You should consider looking into them.

SHANTEL

Why do you think so? (*Faces his way curiously.*)

RAHEEM

For one, I know that it's very comfortable to be with those who understand you, where you come from and go through similar struggles in this world. They're also very family based. My cousin went to Clark Atlanta and he says everyone always looks out for each other...and no awkward history classes. (*laughs*) But I also agree with Cassey you should listen to her.

CASSEY

(*rolls eyes*) Exactly.

SHANTEL

So there's only black people?

CASSEY

And if there is? We gravitate to our own anyways, its natural.

RAHEEM

The majority, but it's very diverse and open to any race, it's just historically black.

CASSEY

Please look into them Shantel! I know for sure Howard has amazing doctorate programs. (*nudges her*)

SHANTEL

Yeah, yeah. It's almost five, I gotta go home.

RAHEEM

It's dark, let me walk with you.

CASSEY

Yeah let him walk you, I have to pick up my baby sister. (*faces Raheem*) Or you know she may be too blind of the world that she can't see it's dark and there's a such thing as gangs outside.

SHANTEL

(*rolls eyes*) I guess I don't mind. (*Shantel and Cassey begin to pack up their belongings*.)

CASSEY

See you tomorrow Shantel! Peace Malcolm X (*laughs and throws up black power fist*)

SHANTEL

See you.

RAHEEM

(*Raheem throws up black power fist*) Nah you're the Malcolm

SCENE TWO:

(*Raheem and Shantel leave the school and began to make their way to Shantel's house. As they're walking there is an awkward silence between them.*)

RAHEEM

(*breaking the silence*) What school did you originally want to go to?

SHANTEL

Harvard. (*opens up more*) I want to go to school and study, become a doctor and help my aunt out so she isn't piled with so many bills. Right now I'm an intern at Walkins Hospital.

RAHEEM (*nods*)

So what's after that?

SHANTEL

(*Shrugs*) I don't know....just live life I guess.

RAHEEM

You don't think about the things that Cassey tries to talk to you about

SHANTEL

Not really I just want to focus on myself and being financially stable when I'm older.

RAHEEM

You ever wonder why you have to worry about that in the first place? (*face full of confusion and sighs*) You really don't see what's goin on in this wo-

(*Police pulls up on the curve of Shantel and Raheem and quickly jumps out of his vehicle holding his gun towards Raheem and his eyes on Shantel*)

POLICE

(*loud aggressive tone*) What are you kids up to?

(*Raheem attempts to move to protect Shantel.*)

POLICE

(*shouts*) Hey! (*Slams Raheem into the gate.*)

(*Shantel gasp putting her hands over her mouth. Raheem shifts his head towards her and they lock eyes.*)

END PLAY.

Appendix M

A HYBRID'S SECRET LOVE
By **A**

SCENE ONE: JACE and CHARLIE sitting in a hut

(*CHARLIE is JACE'S favorite teddy bear, THEY have always been together. CHARLIE loves JACE genuinely but HE is tired of JACE always complaining about how much SHE likes CARTER (a boy) and always afraid to talk to HIM.*)

JACE

Why? I mean what's the point? I open up and get hurt. I want to love, I do but I'll basically be asking to get my heart broken.

CHARLIE

You have to open up to the possibility of love, because life is too short to be afraid, it's better to love and get your heart broken rather than not love at all.

JACE

You're right but I'm scared.

CHARLIE

That's okay, but you won't succeed unless you try.

JACE

That's why you're my favorite teddy bear.

CHARLIE

I'm tired of you complaining all the time, if you don't anything about Carter, then I will!!

JACE

Well damn!! why didn't you say that before!!

CHARLIE

Doesn't matter, what's the next step?

JACE

I don't know, I'm afraid.

(CHARLIE sighs)

SCENE TWO: Near the river.

CHARLIE

(HE glances to the left near the river) Isn't that the guy you like?

JACE

Yes?

CHARLIE

Well, what are you waiting for? Go talk to him.

JACE

No! He's a human, I'm a hybrid and I'm blue and I live off of blood and meat, that will never work.

CHARLIE

You never know unless you try.

JACE

Ugh, fine.

(JACE walks over to CARTER)

CHARLIE

You go girl!!

JACE

Hi, Jace.

CARTER

What did you call me?

JACE

I mean Carter.

CARTER

Well, I'm busy.

JACE

That was rude.

CARTER
It was rude for you to walk over here and talk to me.

(JACE walks away)

SCENE THREE:
(JACE and CHARLIE back at the hut, JACE is crying)

CHARLIE
It's okay don't give up yet.

JACE
But I want to so bad.

CHARLIE
But if you give up you will never know what it feels like to love again.

(JACE rolls HER eyes)

CHARLIE
(scoffs) Don't catch an attitude with me I'm trying to help you out.

(*JACE sighs in disappointment, storms out of the hut to hunt for tigers. CARTER did not mean to run into JACE, HE was walking home. CARTER runs into JACE who is eating a tiger. HE stands there paralyzed. JACE looks up, HER mouth is full of blood. CARTER runs away. JACE uses HER vampire speed to catch up to HIM.*)

JACE
Don't be afraid I won't hurt you.

CARTER
(cocky attitude) I'm not scared.

JACE
Well then, why'd you run.

CARTER
Okay you got me.

(Silence)

What are you?

JACE

I'm a hybrid.

CARTER

Well, that's cool!!!!

(CARTER makes a nervous face that JACE gets curious about)

JACE

Why the face?

CARTER

Because I have a similar secret

JACE

You can tell me I won't tell anyone.

CARTER

Well, I'm a vampire.

JACE

Well that explains a lot.

CARTER

Well yeah, that explains my crappy attitude earlier.

(*THEY both have visions at the same time, THEY are staring into space. The visions will be read aloud. JACE'S vision: SHE wants to meet HIS family, and maybe have babies in the future. CARTER'S vision: JACE doesn't know what can happen if SHE meets HIS family. SHE knows THEY might not like HER, but vampires kill wolves. THEY will try to kill HER after SHE meets THEM.*)

JACE

Are you ok?

CARTER

Yeah, I’m fine.

(*CARTER thinks HE should not share the vision with HER. The two walk away talking to EACH OTHER.)*

END PLAY.