



WHERE THEATRE INSPIRES LEARNING

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NEA Assessment Summary

With funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, Making Books Sing provided Musical Theatre residencies for seven New York City Public Schools located in Manhattan, the Bronx, Queens and Brooklyn. Twenty-five classes, ranging from 2nd-6th grades, participated in fifteen-session residencies focusing on theatre, playwriting and songwriting. These residencies, which promoted literacy and social development, tied in directly with the English Language Arts curriculum and Theatre Blueprint. Each residency class worked with two Making Books Sing teaching artists in adapting a class chosen book into an original musical. Students explored the literary and thematic elements of their story, and each class collaboratively wrote an original five-scene play and song based on their interpretation of the story.

Making Books Sing assessed the impact these extended Musical Theatre residencies had on students', particularly ELL students', ability to read, write and speak in the English language. In these seven schools, thirty-five students were selected as a controlled group for assessment. These students were selected because they struggled with some or all of the following skills:

- Responding to verbal queues
- Responding to visual queues
- Displaying confidence when communicating ideas in the English language
- Articulating ideas verbally
- Physicalizing ideas

Over the course of the fifteen sessions, these students were observed by their classroom teachers and Making Books Sing teaching artists. Their individual growth and understanding was assessed through theatre and writing activities that specifically connected to the skills listed above. Baseline questioning, rubrics, photos, teachers' observations, teaching artists' journals, student quotes and samples of student work were all methods used to assess student learning. The majority of the students displayed marked improvement in the following areas:

35 students assessed	Pre-Residency	Post-Residency
Consistently responded to verbal queues	31%	57%
Consistently responded to visual queues	31%	74%
Consistently displayed confidence when sharing their ideas in English	25%	49%
Consistently articulated verbally	29%	51%
Consistently physicalized words/thoughts	29%	46%