

# Working With Community & Cultural Resources

## Benchmark

## Partnering With Theater Organizations Outside of School

- **Students expand and invigorate their theater learning through school partnerships with theater organizations and teaching artists.**

Students will be able to:

- Experience the range and diversity of local and New York City theater and theater arts organizations.

### Suggested Activities

- Attend a live theater performance at a theatrical venue, such as a local middle or high school, college or university, community-based organization or professional theater.
- Students tour the performance space in their own school, or at a high school, local or professional theater, with particular emphasis on the front of house, backstage, box office and seating areas.
- Participate in pre- and post-performance audience opportunities, including meet-the-artists sessions, talk-backs and hands-on workshops.

## Benchmark

## Working With Theater Professionals in the School

- **Students expand and invigorate their theater learning through partnerships with theater organizations and teaching artists.**

Students will be able to:

- Participate in short- and long-term artist residencies that are integrated into the school theater program.

### Suggested Activities

- Invite a theater artist from your school or local community to perform for the class, and engage in a guided conversation with the artist about his/her career and the students' response to the performance.
- Plan a short- or long-term artist residency, aligning the artist's work with the goals of theater program such as additional support in theater games, musical theater, costume design or puppetry.



# Working With Community & Cultural Resources *continued*

## Benchmark

## Use Theater Archives, Online Materials, Libraries, Museums and Other Resources

- **Students expand and invigorate their theater learning by using theater resources.**

Students will be able to:

- Begin to use the vast array of materials that relate to theater research and recognize where the resources can be found.

### Suggested Books and Resources:

*Angelina, Star of the Show* by Katherine Holabird  
*The Bunny Play* by Loreen Leedy  
*Time Out Kids New York*  
*Pamela's First Musical* by Wendy Wasserstein  
*Olivia Saves the Circus* by Ian Falconer

See Suggested Reading and Repertoire/Appendix D.

### Suggested Activities

- Create a classroom library or a section of the school library as a student theater resource center containing:
  - theater storybooks
  - children's theater scripts
  - posters
  - articles
  - original theater art work
- Assign students individually or in small groups to bring in theater flyers, advertisements, programs, ticket stubs or theater photographs to create a classroom theater collage or to add to the theater resource center.



## Benchmark

## Performing in the Community

- **Students demonstrate their theater learning by sharing and performing for others in the community.**

Students will be able to:

- Share their original or scripted creations with peers.

### Suggested Activities

- Share student presentations (puppet theater, storytelling, choral scene work, mini-plays) with peers, other classes, younger students and families.

# Working With Community & Cultural Resources

## Benchmark

- **Students see live theater in school and at outside venues through partnerships with theater and theater education organizations.**

## Partnering With Theater Organizations Outside of School

Students will be able to:

- Experience the range and diversity of New York City theater and theater arts organizations in their own neighborhoods and in the city as a whole.

### Suggested Activities

- Attend at least one performance a year outside the school setting; at a local high school, college or university, a local community-based organization or a professional theater company.
- Participate in pre- and post-performance talk-backs with cast and crew.
- Encourage students and their families to explore family matinee opportunities, theater workshops, after-school programs and classes designed for children at community centers and local and professional theaters.

## Benchmark

- **Students explore theater organizations and companies through in-school residencies aligned with the theater curriculum.**

## Working With Theater Professionals in the School

Students will be able to:

- Participate in short- and long-term artist residencies that are integrated into the school theater program to support Theater Making, Theater Literacy and Making Connections.

### Suggested Activities

- Research the theater arts organizations working in your school to learn:
  - the organizations' purpose or mission
  - when they were founded
  - what type of work they produce
  - who their audience is
- Interview a professional theater artist working in your school about his/her career, training, goals and experiences.
- Conduct a survey of the school faculty and parent body to identify resources for the performing arts, such as costume designers and stitchers, playwrights, directors, choreographers, scenic artists, etc.



# Working With Community & Cultural Resources *continued*

## Benchmark

- Students become familiar with various resources for learning about theater.

## Use Theater Archives, Online Materials, Libraries, Museums and Other Resources

Students will be able to:

- Research and explore the world of theater and theater organizations through museums and electronic and print resources.
- Take a virtual tour of a performing arts complex, theater or theater workshop. Identify and download images related to the front of house, backstage, dressing room areas, etc.

## Suggested Activities

- Visit the school library and identify the section on theater and drama.
- Locate and identify theater artifacts from contemporary or historical theater using original documents or reprints, including programs, articles, posters, and photos of notable theater professionals.
- Use online resources to deepen students understanding of theater performance by researching historical and cultural setting, period dress and customs.

## Benchmark

- Students share their theater learning through performances for others, including their own school, families, and communities.

## Performing in the Community

Students will be able to:

- Share their Theater Making with the larger community.

## Suggested Activities

- Perform for the school or other classes, parents and families.
- Explore options to perform in DOE/Regional Performing Arts Festivals.
- Invite the local community, including businesses, senior centers, and fire and police stations, to attend school performances.



## Suggested Resources:

- Carnegie Hall: [www.carnegiehall.org/article/the\\_basics/art\\_tours.html](http://www.carnegiehall.org/article/the_basics/art_tours.html)
- Centerline Scenic Studios/Works in progress: [www.centerlinestudios.com/progress.html](http://www.centerlinestudios.com/progress.html)
- The Kennedy Center: [www.kennedy-center.org/about/virtual\\_](http://www.kennedy-center.org/about/virtual_)
- New York State Theater/New York City Opera: [http://cinderella.nycopera.com/virtual\\_tour.phptour/home.html](http://cinderella.nycopera.com/virtual_tour.phptour/home.html)

# Working With Community & Cultural Resources

## Benchmark

- **Through school partnerships, students broaden their horizons in theater and gain an understanding of the mission and goals of theater organizations.**

## Partnering With Theater Organizations Outside of School

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the mission and audience for a particular theater company or presenting organization, including theaters categorized as Broadway, off-Broadway, not-for-profit, community, commercial, Western, non-Western, repertory-based and experimental.

## Suggested Activities

- Visit a working rehearsal for a professional or non-professional theater company.
- Take a backstage tour with lecture/demonstration of basic production elements.
- Participate in lecture/demonstration sessions on various theater-related topics, such as design for theater.
- Participate in master classes and/or workshops offered by local and regional theater companies
- Write critiques and reviews of productions, and send them to theater press offices or education departments to spark an ongoing correspondence.
- Visit design studios and theater production shops to interact with designers, technicians and other backstage theater professionals.
- Interview by e-mail or in person a staff member at a theater or theater education organization.

## Benchmark

- **Students increase their capacity in Theater Making through collaborations with theater professionals.**

## Working With Theater Professionals in the School

Students will be able to:

- Work with theater professionals in either long- or short-term residencies connected to and supporting the course of theater study.

## Suggested Activities

- Collaborate with playwrights, actors, directors, designers, dramaturges and other professionals to develop or enhance a theater piece for performance.
- Collaborate with school arts faculty in producing the elements of a theater piece, such as designing and building sets, creating choreography, or adding songs and music.
- Invite professional actors to give staged readings of original student scripts.
- Survey the school faculty and parent body to identify professional theater artists in the community with whom to collaborate.
- Use the Internet, periodicals and magazines to research theater companies coming to New York City, and invite them to interact with students in master classes and workshops.
- Provide students with opportunities to interact with professionals including:
  - Reading a review; writing a response to that review and sending it directly to the critic.
  - Seeing a production; writing a response to the design, direction or acting, and sending it to the artist.



**Images from the backstage tour of the Apollo Theater in Harlem.**

# Working With Community & Cultural Resources *continued*

## Benchmark

## Use Theater Archives, Online Materials, Libraries, Museums and Other Resources

- **Students increase their understanding of theater history and compare diverse productions and theater companies by using various research resources.**

Students will be able to:

- Use the resources of museums, libraries, archives and online resources for theater research.
- Develop an understanding of theater history through a study of the architecture, clothing and customs of a particular period and culture.

### Suggested Activities

- Take trips to libraries or museums (art, cultural, history and natural history) for research purposes.

Associated activities include:

- journal entries
- collages
- creative writing
- research papers linked to the creation, design or production of plays
- Use the theater archives and collections of the New York Public Library for the Performing at Lincoln Center in researching a school play to be produced.
- Use online research to examine a theater company in a different culture or country.
- Use theater archives, libraries or museums to compare and contrast two different productions of the same theater piece.  
Photos, design drawings, Playbills, videos, and costume renderings can be used to show how different companies interpret and produce the same work. Compare two productions of the same play produced in different times or cultures.
- Use online resources to research a theater company from a different country. If this company were coming to New York, attend a rehearsal, ask the company to conduct a master class, or invite the company to the school.

### Suggested Reading and Resources:

*Theatre Research Resources in New York City* by Martin E. Segal  
Theater Center

The Museum of the City of New York has an extensive theater collection and exhibitions.

The New York City Public Library system offers a search engine online for identifying theater resources in the public library system:  
<http://catnyp.nypl.org/search~/d>



# Working With Community & Cultural Resources *continued*

## Benchmark

- **Students share their theater learning by performing for others including their own school, families and communities.**

## Performing in the Community

Students will be able to:

- Perform for peers and the wider community including parents and guardians, other schools and community groups and senior centers.

## Suggested Activities

- Create an original theater piece and perform it for an audience from a different community.
- Choose an audience, and then develop an original theater work appropriate to the age and interests of the audience.
- Take part in a regional middle school theater festival. Participate in a wide range of activities onstage and off, such as playwriting, acting, directing, producing, marketing, dramaturgy, box office, carpentry, design or criticism.



# Working With Community & Cultural Resources

## Benchmark

- **Students invigorate and broaden their understanding of theater through collaborative partnerships with theater professionals.**
- **Students gain an appreciation of the range of performance opportunities available to them through ongoing experiences with theater in New York City.**

## Partnering With Theater Organizations Outside of School

Students will be able to:

- Identify different theater organizations and build active and meaningful partnerships with them.
- Research theater organizations covering a wide range of missions, cultures, styles and forms. Include theater companies, theater schools, arts service organizations and non-traditional theater events.

## Suggested Activities

- In small teams, students identify and research different theater companies active throughout the city, particularly within the school's neighboring community or borough, and present their findings to the class. Research the company's history, mission, performance style and programs to create a future mock season for the company.
- Organize a group of peers and parents to attend an evening performance of their chosen company.
- Attend workshops, lectures and/or panels conducted by key company artists.
- Conduct e-mail interviews with key staff, artists and directors from a theater company.
- Participate as a volunteer in the company's youth programs, festivals or community events.
- Contribute a short piece to the company's website, such as a student review of a company production or an invitation for other students to partner with the company.
- Become familiar with local and state arts councils, such as New York State Council on the Arts, Bronx Council on the Arts, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and their role in supporting local theater. Conduct research on theater programs in the various communities.

## Benchmark

- **Students invigorate and broaden their understanding of theater through collaborative partnerships with theater professionals.**
- **Students gain an appreciation of the range of performance opportunities available to them through ongoing experiences with theater in New York City.**

## Working With Theater Professionals in the School

Students will be able to:

- Collaborate with theater professionals directly in the school. Collaborations may be linked to a student production or may be integrated within theater or general curriculum.

## Suggested Activities

- Identify professional theater artists within the parent community or others who are able to contribute their expertise toward a school production. Artist collaborations may include the following:
  - Artists working directly with students, conducting workshops in acting, voice, diction, dialects, movement, stage combat or mask work, or any area of expertise that could be applied to a student production.
  - Directors partnering with a teacher or student to stage a production.
  - Playwrights guiding the creation of an original student work.
  - Set, costume, lighting and sound designers working on productions.

- Musicians, composers and musical directors.
- Choreographers working in the staging of a production.
- Stage managers or technical experts.
- Invite professional artists to perform with students to strengthen the students' development and command of their own craft as performers and theater makers.

# Working With Community & Cultural Resources *continued*

## Benchmark

## Use Theater Archives, Online Materials, Libraries, Museums and Other Resources

- **Students increase their ability to use a variety of resources in researching and writing about theater.**

Students will be able to:

- Use the resources of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center Library.
- Identify additional online, museum and library resources for design and historical research, and share with others.

### Suggested Activities

- Create outreach materials for an in-school or professional production.
- Use online and/or library and museum resources to create a study guide for fellow students that includes written and visual information, such as:
  - historical background
  - production information
  - interviews with cast and production staff
  - activities for further exploration
  - suggested discussion questions
- Build a website that includes information about a school production, as well as a performance history of past productions including, designs, programs and reviews.
- Visit museums or use a museum's website to view resources related to a play, the performance tradition, or the historical period of the work. For example, study the representations of performers in ancient Greece and Rome on urns or friezes at the Metropolitan Museum of Art to inform a production of *Medea*.
- In groups, assemble multimedia biographies of notable performers, such as Paul Robeson, Eleanor Duse, James O'Neill or Marcel Marceau. Investigate the question: "Why is this artist notable within his/her own culture or time period?"
- Visit a theater bookstore and report back on the range of books, recordings and resources that are available.

### Suggested Reading and Resources

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The New York City Public Library system offers a search engine online for identifying theater resources in the New York City Public Library system: <http://catnyp.nypl.org/search~/d>

