Summary of Assessment Findings
Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth

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Observed Program

_Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth_, a Young Audiences New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania (YANJ-YAEP) residency is in its second year. The project was an outgrowth of YANJ’s 2011 work with New Jersey Learns (NJ Learns), a program that unites schools and communities to initiate, develop, and sustain the innovations and best practices that contribute to the principles of Education for Sustainability (EfS). The residency was supported with a grant from the 2012-2013 MetLife Arts for Learning for Life initiative. The 10 day theater arts residency took place in three Middle Schools, 1) Tacony Academy Charter School, 1330 Rhawn St, Philadelphia, PA 19111 2) Windfield Park Middle School, 7 1/2 Gulfstream Ave Township of Winfield, NJ 07036 and 3) William B. Cruise Memorial School, 390 Gregory Avenue, Passaic, New Jersey 07055. As defined by EfS, the objective of these residencies was to develop an awareness among participants of "the commons; those things upon which we all depend and for which we are all responsible". The creative process of script and song writing were used as techniques to realize the program goal.

During this residency young artists in 6th, 7th and 8th grades, with support from selected grade level teachers and/or art specialists, were given the opportunity to learn the writing and theater skills needed to create, develop and present an original script and song. The program provided participants with a collaborative experience in which they were able to develop skills in the fields of language arts, social studies, science, and the visual and performing arts. Students had the opportunity to share their personal concerns about the environment, and then to express their concerns as writers, musicians, visual artists and performers. After developing a script, participants had the opportunity to perform their work before an audience. Each performance concluded with a discussion among audience members and performers. Although these overall goals for the residency were the same for each site, this report documents how each learning community shaped the residency to create a unique and meaningful experience.
Windfield Park Middle School

The learning community at Windfield Park Middle School was especially committed to tailoring an inclusive, interdisciplinary residency with a strong community outreach component. The demographics of the participants included a range of developmental levels which made room for students with disabilities. During the creative process the students and teachers at Windfield Park welcomed learning and participation that was meaningful and appropriate for a variety of learning styles.

At this site in addition to the participating students from three grade level classes (6th, 7th, and 8th), the language arts, the special education, art, music and science teachers became an interdisciplinary part of the collective. In addition to the scheduled residency days and typically scheduled classes during school hours, the art teacher shaped the after school art enrichment class around the project, and documented the project with a blog (www.exploringthecommons.blogspot.com). The enrichment class created costumes, props and sets, including topography of the Windfield Park community. This artwork was created from repurposed plastic bottle tops and used as the backdrop for the performances. Additional interdisciplinary collaboration for this residency was contributed by the music teacher who helped students create a musical accompaniment for the lyrics they wrote during their language arts class. The science teacher at Windfield Park made connections to EfS by exploring the impact of harmful dyes on human and environmental health. While in science students experimented with natural dyes, including black walnut, red cabbage, carrot, beet and spinach. The materials created from these science experiments were used to construct costumes and props.

As a result of the 8th grade students experiencing the 2011 Beyond Recycling residency, the teaching artist, teachers and participants implemented a new framework for the 8th grade residency. The returning students focused on deepening their personal connection to the community by conducting first person interviews with community leaders who showed a commitment to leading sustainable practices within the Windfield Park community. The student led interviews offered an opportunity to collect primary source material from community members including, the township’s director of mutual
housing, registrar, clerk, attorney, mayor, a police officer, and the school custodian. The students learned how to utilize Ipads to record the interviews. Next the students analyzed the interviews and created monologues based on the first person narratives. In addition to primary source interviews the students also identified, analyzed and created monologues about the important natural resources and historic figures of the community. Topics of research included the Rahway River, the local woods, “Wise Fox” (a legendary Lenni Lenape Indian), and Windfield Park’s historic photographer.

To conclude this residency participants shared their work multiple times during one day. The schedule allowed students in grades K-5 to experience the work as a staged reading. In addition to sharing the staged reading at their school, the 8th grade students also shared the work at the local Senior Center. During the discussion after the staged reading at the Senior Center, audience members shared additional stories about the history of Windfield Park.

Tacony Academy Charter School

At Tacony Academy Charter School three classes of 7th grade students and one teacher participated in Beyond Recycling. Many participants reported that the commons and the organizational tool of mind mapping were new concepts to them. Additionally, students mentioned that the opportunity to create a script helped them to better understand exposition, rising actions, falling action, resolution and character development, the use of perspective as a writing tool, and how to format and create dialogue. One repeated experience mentioned by students at Tacony Academy was the way the experience provided opportunities to overcome obstacles while working within a group setting. Additionally, students commented on how the experienced encouraged them to think about the effect their personal behavior has on the community, city, state, and the world. Students explained that throughout the process of creating a script they worked hard to agree on which idea to develop. The participating classroom teacher mentioned that during the research, writing and sharing phases of the residency students took ownership of their learning. She stated that the experience boosted student confidence, while also supporting students to go through the steps to improve the work. The classroom teacher also noted how the teaching artist modeled multiple entry points into learning. One example included how writing and improvisational theater
were used as a means to engage the students to generate and develop script dialogue. According to her these methods proved to be successful for those students who typically showed a difficult time with collaborative projects. One example of her observation was when a reluctant writer becomes aware that in the safety of a small group of peers, her ideas are as golden as anyone else's. To conclude the residency at Tacony Academy students shared a staged reading of the work with younger students.

William B. Cruise Memorial School

At William B. Cruise Memorial School four classes of 6th grade students, two science teachers and one professor in residency from William Paterson University participated in Beyond Recycling. During this residency participants thought globally about what they could do to protect the commons. Participants researched the history of ancient civilizations, earth processes, waste management, recycling, and water treatment while they made connections to the commons and real life examples of sustainability. This research was conducted primarily through the internet and connected to a school wide initiative to increase student access to and application of technology based research tools. The teacher participants reported an increase in students making connections across the curriculum, as well as an increased awareness of the how the everyday behaviors of humans have unintentional consequences.

At this location students self-selected areas of interest as they developed the residency’s goals. For example while most of the students used text to express their script ideas, several students showed an interest in developing their ideas through drawing. In response the teaching artist welcomed opportunities for these students to make connections to the art of comic book making. Students expressed that during the creative process they generated many ideas, and had to work hard during the editing and revision process to integrate the most relevant ideas into the collective script. At times the development and revisions required students to engage in the democratic process of voting. The students at William B. Cruise took seriously their responsibility to pass down their knowledge to younger students. In thinking about how to connect with the audience, students worked to infuse humor into their writing. Students equally commented on the importance for the script to be interesting and engage the imagination of the audience members to imagine how people can work together to
preserve the commons. To conclude the program at William B. Cruise students shared a staged reading of the work with younger students.

Having been given the opportunity to take creative risks, these bright and dedicated young artists emerged from these residencies with a deeper understanding of how the arts help transform knowledge into social action. Students and teachers reported that having a teaching artist contribute to the learning community was a positive and enriching experience for the entire school community.

The goal of Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth was to support young people to acquire the knowledge, understanding of, and skills needed to create an original script and song. The residency structure gave students the opportunity to:

• Experience exemplary theater art through an in-school performance by a professional theater company that modeled an issue based play.
• Understand the skills needed to create and perform original work, as well as understand practical knowledge of “the commons” as it applies to the daily lives of a participant and his/her community.
• Co-Create an original work that is a staged reading for younger students.
• Connect to the critical issues of sustainability in the community and the world. Make connections between experiences in other subjects in school and his/her life outside of school with participating in a Theater Arts residency.
• Be assessed according to national or state arts education standards.

This program assessment was based on the following:

• Two videotaped interviews with a diverse yet small sampling of 4-6 students, and all participating teachers were conducted at the middle and end of each residency. (It should be noted that one location was unable to complete exit interviews)
• Pre, middle, and post online surveys were completed by students and teachers (due limited technology access the pre and middle completed surveys from Winfield Park students and teachers were paper and pencil surveys)
• Student work samples
• Informal conversations with lead artists Eloise Bruce, Pat Flynn, and Zach Green, and participating teachers

**Pre-Residency Student Survey:**

All participating students and teachers were given an online or paper/pencil survey prior to the start of the residency. Participants were asked to answer eight questions. Questions and summary of response follow:

1) Please complete the following information.
   *Today’s Date, Grade/Class/Period/School*

2) Are you a boy or a girl?

3) Please describe any meaningful or important personal experiences you have had in the arts. (Are you an avid reader/writer? Play an instrument? Love movies? Always sing to the radio?)

   “I love movies and plays and theatrical performances because they make me think about how other's people's lives are all different in all different kinds of movies, compared to my life,” “sometimes I like to read, I love movies,” “I love sketching things,” “I like to sing with the radio,” “I like to dance,” “I play the guitar, piano, and the flute!”

4) Describe yourself as a learner. (e.g. Do you enjoy learning something new and like to ask lots of questions? Do you feel apprehensive about learning because you don’t like knowing?)

   “Yes I like new things and no I don’t like asking questions, ”I like to enjoy learning something new because it might be something that I want to do,” “It’s interesting to figure out that there are so many more things about the world and so many more words and methods to know, that I feel happy to get the chance and opportunity for this,” “I feel apprehensive about learning,” “I expect to learn the
skills for acting,” “I want to learn new things but it’s hard when you don’t get that much time and help so I get confused.”

5) Describe what you expect to learn from your participation in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth.

“I really don’t participate in taking care of the earth beyond recycling,” “I expect to learn a lot about acting and taking care of the community,” I expect to learn the process of recycling. And I want to learn if we can make stuff by ourself from recycling material, “I expect to learn how to right a better story, play, or just write something that is on my mind.”

6) Have you ever created your own production, written a script, a song, or performed in a staged reading before? If so explain what you have created.

“No. I have danced for ballet but never created my own production,” “I have written songs and stories before, but I have never really written or thought about creating a theatrical play, performance, production, movie, or story. The skills I used were fairly simple to write the songs and stories; I always just jot down whatever comes to mind.”

7) Have you ever viewed an issue based production before?

“Yes, I saw a play on bullying,” “Yes. We had Jump with Jill at my school...The issue was based on health and having a lot of energy,” “No I don’t think so.”

8) Have you ever been able to use the arts as a way to learn or process new information? What do you think you could gain from creating in an art form?

“I’ve used drawing to process descriptive words. Like if someone is in a person’s home and they’re making tea and the author just uses a stream of descriptive words, if someone animated that scene it would be easier to understand for me,”
“I have not,” “I’m not able to learn the arts because I don’t got a class in arts and I wish to learn about arts.”

Pre-Residency Teacher Survey:

1) Please complete the following information.
   Today’s Date: 
   Teacher’s Name: 
   Grade Level of Students: 
   School: 
   City: 
   State: 

2) Please describe any meaningful or important personal experiences you have had in the arts. (e.g. are you an avid reader/writer? Play an instrument? Love movies? Always sing to the radio?)

   “I thoroughly enjoy several aspects of the arts. I have a background in acting/theater. I have a minor in theater from West Chester University and have also studied improvisation with various teachers in Philadelphia,” “I am a passionate museum goer, reader, and a lover of art and music.”

3) Describe yourself as a learner. (e.g. Do you enjoy learning something new and like to ask lots of questions? Do you feel apprehensive about learning because you don’t like "not knowing"

   “I love learning new things and constantly seek new experiences,” “I really enjoy learning especially when I make a conscious effort to research a topic that I have been very curious about.”

4) Have you had any experiences learning or teaching in a team? If so, what worked about learning something new alongside another person? What didn’t work for you? What needed to be done better to make the experience useful?

   “I have team-taught in the past. I find it difficult if it is for the entire day and one person tends to overwhelm the other. The team works best when each person
uses their strengths,” “I enjoy both learning and teaching in a team setting. Working alongside someone else opens up the opportunity for multiple perspectives.”

5) What do you hope to gain from your participation in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth? Please share your major educational interests. (For example, increasing curriculum connections, project based learning, or student engagement, etc.)

“Our students are using this for their service learning project this year. I would like them to feel ownership of something. This group is also the most difficult behaviorally in the school. I want them to be seen in a positive light in the school,” “I hope to gain new knowledge about how to create expressive pieces of artwork using recyclable material.”

6) What kinds of experiences have you had using education for sustainability and/or the arts in your classroom? Describe why you utilize education for sustainability or the arts, and what you think your students gain by working in an art form.

“I think students who are not usually strong in "typical" academic subjects will have the opportunity to shine through this program,” “Last year I participated in a similar experience with Young Audiences where the theme was sustainability. Educating students about sustainability through the arts and utilizing the creative process, gives students the opportunity to learn in an interactive way.”

7) Do you have any major concerns about this project?

“No I do not. I am so excited and thankful!” “My only concern is the changes from last year, including increased work when the artist is not here. I’m concerned about the number of class periods and I hope I can accomplish all that is expected.”
Mid-Residency Student Survey:

All participating students and teachers were given an online or paper/pencil survey half way through the residency. Participants were asked to answer six questions. Questions and summery of response follow:

1) Please complete the following information.

Today’s Date, Grade/Class/Period/School

2) Are you a boy or a girl?

3) Describe what is most interesting and exciting about your experience in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth.

“The most interesting thing is to get to put on a play,” “What is most interesting to me is making the play,” “You get to talk about the commons and act and you can write your scripts,” “I think that the most fun part was when we did dialogue and i like when we put the story together i think my class and I really enjoyed this program. Ps this was so awesome,” “I think the fact that we, the students, get to put our input in and our opinions and ideas, is the most interesting and exciting thing about the program,” “doing the improv,” “The best thing is learning how to do plays and learning about sea life.”

4) What is one thing you are learning that you did not know or understand before your participation in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth?

“I learned about a climax,” “How to make a play,” “It takes 16 years to decompose a water bottle,” “Everything goes together in the world,” “I learned about the commons,” “I never thought that making a play could be so hard. We have to think about the props and what everyone is going to say,” “The thing that i did not know be 4 I went to the was how to write a correct script,” “I didn’t know what improv was,” “How much or carelessness affects the ocean.”
5) Describe what you are creating during your collaboration in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth?

“We are making a play for the little kids,” “We are working together to make a play write,” “We are creating a play about recycling, mother nature, and the commons,” “I would describe this as fun, creative, awesome, and cool. I like that she took us step by step with this play,” “What my class is creating is a staged reading about the pollution in the ocean.”

6) What do you want to know more about?

Amongst several student responses of “nothing,” other students replied, “Recycling,” “I want to learn more about the process of recycling,” “I want to know more the skill of acting,” “I wanna know where all the trash goes when it goes into the trash truck and when it’s at the dump.”

Mid-Residency Teacher Survey:

1) Please complete the following information.
   Today’s Date:
   Teacher’s Name:
   Grade Level of Students:
   School:
   City:
   State:

2) To date, how satisfied are you with the Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Care and Share for the Earth project?
   1) Extremely Satisfied
   2) Moderately Satisfied
   3) Neither Satisfied nor dissatisfied
   4) Moderately dissatisfied
   5) Extremely dissatisfied
   Please Explain

3) Describe how your collaboration in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth has affected the culture of your school.
“Students learned how to work in groups successfully.”

4) What techniques or ideas have been most useful to you in your own teaching practice? As you describe your learning, please include any new vocabulary, skills, or techniques that you did not previously use in your teaching practice.

“Working in groups to come up with ideas for the play.”

5) Describe what is most interesting and exciting about your collaboration in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth.

“Watching the students work in groups,” “I enjoy that the project is interdisciplinary in nature. This provides me with opportunities to work with my colleagues in a new way. I think this is a useful project to show students just how connected their learning across classrooms can be.”

6) What is one example where you observed the impact this project has had on student learning? Describe the connections you and your students are making to other subjects in school and/or your lives outside of school.

“I have noticed how excited the students are when they are in discussion about the project.”

**Mid-Residency Student Interviews:**

A small group of four to six students of diverse abilities, sex and ethnicity made up the student sampling for the mid-residency interviews. The interviews were videotaped by YANJ staff member. During these interviews four to five questions were asked. At times during the interview process the follow up reply of, “Tell me more about that.” was presented by the interviewer. Data collected during the mid-interviews were reflected back to the teaching artists as a way to gage the future direction of the residency. Questions and summery of responses follow:
1) Describe what you are experiencing during Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth? Think about what you are doing, seeing, hearing or touching.

   Student responses included, “We are learning about the commons, which basically means everyone is connected,” “How to write scripts and songs,” We are working collaboratively,” “We are brainstorming to come up with ideas for the play,” We want to send the message to people in a funny way,” “We are helping others to know that pollution is bad,” Some students discussed the need to use imagination as a way to think about how to make the information interesting. Students reported theater and song composition games including Tableau and an improvisational game with movement and sound.

2) Identify the main thing you are learning that you did not know or understand before this residency? Think about new vocabulary, skills and information you did not know before.

   The EfS performance indicator of “the commons” was consistently identified as new knowledge that participants did not understand before the residency. Students expressed that “the commons” taught them that many things in the environment are connected, and that as citizens everyone has a right to “the commons.” Many students mentioned that pollution is not good, and that people need to protect natural resources like oil and water. Some students reported elements of script writing such as exposition, rising action, climax and resolution, as well as an awareness of writing for younger learners as being the main thing learned that was not understood before the residency.

   Participants reported that creating a script and song required them to collaborate and compromise with peers. During the creative process participants noted at times it was difficult to consider and include everyone’s ideas. One group of students mentioned the need to “vote on ideas” and that “the script may not have a happy ending.” Mind mapping, a visual brainstorming technique used during the residency to organize student thoughts and assess a student’s
understanding of “the commons” was additionally noted as a new information that participants found useful.

3) Describe what you are creating during this residency.

Students reported creating a script, a play, songs, mind maps, props, and comics. “We are imagining how to create crazy ideas,” “We are writing, drawing and acting.”

4) In what ways did the residency experience help you to connect the arts to other things you have learned in school or your life outside of school?

“This program reminded me of the work I have done in Health and Science. When I buy stuff I have to think about it before I buy,” “Like in Language Arts we learned new words, like Wombat,” “This residency connects to language arts because we are creating the beginning, middle and end,” “I learned that my behaviors effect others,” “This experience is helping me to improve in writing.” “This residency is helping me to become a cartoon artist.”

Mid-Residency Teacher Interviews:
1) Describe what your students are experiencing during Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth? Think about what they are doing, seeing, hearing or touching.

“Students are becoming more aware of our community,” “Students are gathering in groups to collaborate,” “Students are taking ownership of their own learning, they are accepting the ideas of their peers and editing their work,” “Students are gaining a deeper understanding of the value of volunteerism,” “Students are getting up and reading in front of others,” “Students are sharing knowledge with their family and community,” “Students learn the terminology of the commons and are learning about the environment.”
2) Identify the main thing your students are learning that they did not know or understand before this residency? Think about new vocabulary, skills and information that your students did not know before.

“Students are writing first person monologues,” “Students are learning about global warming,” “In science we discussed chemical dyes and natural dyes,” “Students need to write in stage directions,” “Student have been asked to punctuate voice and develop characters,” “In terms of the Language Arts end, the students have not had many opportunities to be involved in the actual writing of a play, so they have learned quite a bit about that. The actual format of the play writing like putting the character’s actions in parenthesis.” “I was really amazed at how well they are all working together. Everyone is very accepting to everyone’s ideas, and their ability to edit and change things. The special education students look forward to everyday when Eloise comes. Writing usually causes them stress, but her they are all doing very well.”

3) Describe what your students are creating during this residency.

“Students are making costumes, masks, scenery.” Students are creating a backdrop out of recycled and natural materials,” “Students are creating a script and writing lyrics for a song.”

4) Describe one instance where you saw an increased development in the student’s engagement of the creative process.

“When the students were trying to name the characters, it was exciting to see them taking ownership of particular roles, because of their involvement of creating the characters.”

5) Identify one example where you observed a student making a connection to other subjects in school, his/her life outside of school, or used the experience to make a connection with another student.
“In Our Town (title of script) one of the interviewees made an interesting point to the students that Winfield is a community that is built on volunteerism, and without the effort of volunteerism on the community, the community would not exist. We had a volunteer police, fire and first aid squad. The kids made the connection that in order to have a community that thrives like Winfield does they themselves must become volunteers,” “The students have made many connections on so many levels from many departments from our school. The art, science and music teachers have thrown themselves into this work very actively,” “In a photography after school class the students are relating their learning in this residency with their work as photographers.”

Post-Residency Student Surveys:

The post-residency survey was completed by all participants. Questions and summery of responses follow:

1) What did you experience during your participation in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth?

“I experience being a super hero, saving water for the people and fighting bad guys,” “I experience during my participation in beyond recycling and creating communities that share and care for the earth is how to work together and not to take advantage of the things i have because one day they might be gone,” “I experienced that it takes a long time to make a play,” “I experienced how it felt to be performing,” “I thought it was fun because we were creating a play and watched some of my friends act like weird characters,” “I created and performed a one-of-a-kind play about the environment,” “I experience how to recycle and how to be a actor.”

2) What new thing did you discover during your participation in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth that you did not understand before?

“I discovered how long it takes to do a play and how long it takes to come up with a script,” “I discovered that you can make saving the earth seem fun,” “Little things can make the earth polluted,” “That play writing can be really fun,” “At first I didn’t know about the common and what i could do to help the earth,” “I didn’t understand the commons and never heard about it until now the other things i
never heard about was the stories that the teachers told or showed us, that amazing.”

3) Explain what you created during Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth?

“We created a play with super heroes and bandits that steel water,” “I created a mask, tree branch, and bad guys mask,” “I created scene 2 or 3. I created it with Khari Banks and Ramon Alemadia,” “I helped create the posters for the play with other people in my group,” “We created a play called Mother nature Style and we had to put together a script we also and to create props for the play,” “I helped create a play for the 1st graders,” “We created a play about a boy named Eduardo who tries to help the animals at the park, but messes up. Magical creatures show him what he really has done and cures he sick Mother Nature,” “We created a script and acted it out. We also brainstormed to make a script,” “We created a chart to explain and show the commons,” “I created with my class a little comic.”

4) In what ways did the experience help you connect the arts to other subjects that you study in school?

“It helped me connect to art and english,” “This experience helped me connect to english more because i found out that you can do it in different ways and to look at my subjects differently,” “It helped me in science because our play was all about nature,” “It helped me connect to science, because in science we learn about many plants and animals and things. These are all parts of the earth, (nature) which we need to keep clean,” “this helped me with science because we are learning about our world and many other things,” “because we used art when drawing the commons and we used science when we came to think about their importance we also used many other subjects to show the commons importance.”

5) In what ways has this program helped you be a better learner?

“This program helped me be a better learner because it gave me a chance to do things on my own while learning new things,” “It helped me learn how hard it can be to write and preform a play,” “It helped because we can learn about plays and
what it takes to make them,” “The program helped me by showing me different ways to look at my subjects,” “It helped me by listening more when discussing important things/ situations,” “This program help me to become a better reader to learn about the commons and everything about it.”

Post-Residency Teacher Surveys:
1) To date how satisfied are you with the Sustainability through the Arts professional development experience? Please Explain
   1) Extremely Satisfied
   2) Moderately Satisfied
   3) Neither Satisfied nor dissatisfied
   4) Moderately dissatisfied
   5) Extremely dissatisfied

2) Explain what you and your students created during Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth?

   “I was responsible for helping students compose original music for their plays. Students brought their created lyrics to music class. Students first established the overall rhythm of the words. Students then experimented with pitched instruments (Boom whackers and xylophones) to get melodic ideas for the songs. Some students also just experimented with their voices. We then combined these melodies and rhythms to write the tune of their song. The students then had discussions on what instruments/other features they wanted their songs to contain. For the 8th grade classes, they decided which verses of their songs they wanted to rap and which they wanted to sing.”

3) How did your thinking change during your participation in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth?

   “Instead of the focus being solely on the integrity and presentation of the finished art project, I was able to see the value of the creative process that students went through and the conversations students had about utilizing recyclable materials for a greater purpose, “At first, I was honestly a bit concerned with having students entirely compose their own song. I was concerned that it would be difficult to compose one song with such a large group. As the students only
began with me at the end of January, I also was worried time would be an issue with this project. As we began working together, the students proved that they were very capable of working together and making informed musical decisions as a part of this project.”

4) In what ways did the experience help you to connect the arts to other subjects that you teach?

“I was able to incorporate information on found object art and collage art. Additionally, by having students create an aerial map of Winfield, students had the opportunity to practice their map reading skills as well as learn about the geography and topography of their town.” “We were able to draw connections to creative writing and poetry through the lyrics that were brought in. We also made the connection to drama by understanding that music had a role in helping to tell the story they had written.”

5) How did your experience change your behavior toward Education for Sustainability?

“As the music teacher, I have not really considered the implications of Education for Sustainability in my classroom before. I think this project shows us all that this is something that can stretch to all areas of the curriculum. I think it would also be interesting to include a lesson/unit on making music with recycled materials. This is something I have worked with a bit before, but one of our 8th grade students actually suggested playing recycled coffee cans as drums as part of their play.”

“This experience made me aware of how important it is to teach students and future generations about sustainability. This is a concept that we are all familiar with, yet it is often something we don’t discuss very often because we are always on the go….I am now definitely an advocate for sustainability education in the classroom.”

6) How will you use what you experienced in your teaching practice?

“For me the most exciting part of this experience had to do with how many people were involved in learning. Almost every subject (reading, writing, science,
history, music, and art) was involved in the creation of this play. This made for exciting collaborations between teachers and students and simultaneously caused the students, faculty, and staff to understand the bond of having a close school community. I love the idea of having students perform and inform people in their surrounding community about important issues through the use of an artistic medium: whether it’s a play, an artwork, a song, or all of these things. I would love to do a similar community-based project in the future.”

**Post-Residency Teaching Artist Surveys:**

1) How is the students’ experience with the art form different today when compared with the first few session experiences?

   “The 6th and 8th grades had never written a play. The 7th wrote a second play this year.”

2) Describe one instance where you observed a change in the students’ comfort with creating?

   “One student was so inarticulate that you could not understand him even if you were right next to him or even if he was miked. The day of the performance the audience understood him and he was one of the best speakers.”

3) Describe one observation that shows an increase in the students’ understanding of the art form? Think about how students create, perform and interpret during the class.

   “One of the special ed students in his second year writing plays wrote two of the monologues and part of another. He listened to the directions, did the research and used what he learned last year.”

4) What is one example where you observed a student making a connection to other subjects in school or their life outside of school, or used the art form to make a connection with another student?

   “I worked with all of the students to come up with science projects that have a connection to the commons i.e. the feasibility of solar and wind power in town, composting and so on.”
Post-Residency Student Interviews:
The same group of four to six students interviewed during the mid-residency interviews made up the student sampling for post-residency interviews. The interviews were videotaped by YANJ program staff. During these interviews five questions were asked. At times during the interview the follow up reply of, “Tell me more about that.” was presented by the interviewer. Questions and summery of responses follow:

1) Describe the things you experienced during your participation in Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth?

   Student responses included, “We experienced fun while creating a script, and making up the characters,” “We performed for the 1st grade,” “We designed props,” “It was good to experience a wide range of things because then you can know what you want to do when you get older,” “We experienced how to practice and get ready,” “The teacher guided us along and we had fun.”

2) Identify one main thing you learned that you did not know or understand before the residency. For example what new vocabulary, skills, and information did you learn that you did not understand before?

   The students reported that the Efs concept “the commons” was new information. The students from Winfield Park who participated in last year’s Beyond Recycling program reported that although they had explored “the commons” the residency this year helped them to better understand the concept. Students expressed that they learned the art of Tableau. Several students expressed that it was new for them to “write a play and perform it for younger students.” In some cases students reported the writing elements of intro, extro, exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution as new knowledge learned during the residency. “I had to use my previous knowledge, and put it together with what I was learning.”

3) Explain what you created during Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth? When you were creating how did it make you feel?
In some cases students reported the experience allowed them to express their voices as individuals. Students also shared that they felt good about mentoring younger students and the opportunity to share their work with others. “We created a staged reading,” “We created a backdrop out of repurposed bottle caps.”

4) In what ways did the experience help you to connect the arts to other subjects that you study in school?

Many students mentioned that the residency helped them to better internalize the writing skills and vocabulary that are explored in language arts, as well as concepts in art, music, science, and health.

5) In what ways has this program helped you become a better learner?

“This program helped me to be engaged,” “It helped me to pay more attention because I wanted to learn more,” It helped me to have better perspective for the creative process and a different and deeper experience.” “The program helped me to imagine what I needed to do.”

Post-Residency Teacher Interviews:
1) Describe the things your students experienced during Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth?

Teachers mentioned that students experienced an integration of acting, language arts, visual art, music and science. Teachers also commented on students experiencing conversations that reflected their community. “There were so many facets, first and foremost the students gathered in groups and created mind maps, then they moved onto working on the actual play writing, and divided into groups they worked on different acts and scenes of the plays, and then they worked on costumes and sets, and the performance,” “They were able to see a project from start to finish,” “The student created unique plays that had to deal
“with the environment and the earth,” “This project gave all students a part to participate.”

2) Identify one main thing your students learned that they did not know or understand before the residency. Think of what new vocabulary, skills, and information was introduced that they did not understand before?

“They were introduced to mind mapping and stage directions,” “The word the commons and what that means in reference to the environment. They also worked with natural dyes and added scientific vocabulary to their learning.”

3) Identify one example where you observed a student making a connection to other subjects in school, his/her life outside of school, or used the experience to make a connection with another student.

“It did connect to the art, music and science program in our school, as well as the language arts program. Also to members of the staff who may not have been involved in the performances, for example our custodian was very involved with setting up the background and with things involved with putting the performances on. The kids knew that there was an entire working together of the entire building,” “I found that some of our special education children rose to the occasion with this project.”

Summary

As observed in the completed participant and teacher surveys and during interviews with participants, teachers and artists, the stated outcomes for this program were achieved in and through the following activities.

- Experience exemplary works of art: including, but not limited to, an in-school performance dealing with a real life social issue performed by actors from the George Street Playhouse, a read out loud classroom experience using traditional folklore; viewing video of master storytellers via you-tube; exploring the work of lead artists.
• *Create artwork:* in a co-creative process participants brainstormed ideas, reflected upon, edited, and revised an original script and song.

• *Perform artwork:* Upon revision and completion of script and song each class rehearsed, and performed a staged reading for younger students. Participants shared the process of creation with audience members, as well as invited audience members to take on a project of their own.

In addition the Beyond Recycling: Creating Communities that Share and Care for the Earth residency addressed the following New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Visual and Performing Arts, Language Arts and Science:

• **Standard 1.1 The Creative Process:** All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles that govern the creation of works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
  
  • As evidenced in conversations between students, teachers and artists. Students were able to view the creative process as similar between the art forms of script and song writing. They saw the creative process as the constant even though specific skills and techniques may differ between art forms.

• **Standard 1.3 Performing:** All students will synthesize skills, media, methods, and technologies that are appropriate to creating, performing, and/or presenting works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
  
  • As evidenced by students during their final showcase. Student creations including, props, costumes, scenery, backdrops, were presented alongside written work in a cohesive event. Students were able to articulate to the audience the skills and techniques used to write and produce a script and song.

• **Standard 3.2 Writing:** All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.
  
  • As evidenced by students during the writing process. Student creations presented a clear and concise articulated idea and considered the perspective of the audience.

• **Standard 5.10 Environmental:** All students will develop an understanding of the environment as a system of interdependent components affected by human activity and natural phenomena.
• As evidenced by students during their active participation in discussions about “the commons”. Themes shown in student mind maps and script development presented an understanding of interdependent components of human activity and natural phenomena.