Premiere Stages School Time Residencies

Premiere Stages offers residencies in playwriting both for at-risk school students and advanced young writers in central and northern New Jersey. The residencies were created to assist teachers with meeting the Core Curriculum Content Standards in literacy while introducing the arts to children who have had little or no experience with live theatre or creative expression. Since our initial residencies began we have expanded to provide in-depth playwriting training to gifted students, augmenting arts experience and solidifying vital creative thinking skills. Each residency is designed with the specific needs of the each school’s students in mind. Through initial meetings with school teaching and administrative staff, residencies are developed collaboratively to maximize the impact of the residency’s augmentation of the classroom curriculum. A residency typically consists of 6-8 sessions, each focusing on a different aspect of playwriting and the process and specifics of creating a play. For example, in the residency designed for Rahway Middle School, students were studying the Stone Age and early civilizations in Social Studies. Premiere teaching artists and the classroom teacher worked closely to incorporate historical elements and themes into the students’ works, thereby reinforcing classroom lessons and finding new and dynamic ways to explore historical material. Each residency culminates in a presentation of the student works as read by professional actors for the entire school, rewarding students for their dedication and bolstering student self-esteem. For a specific overview, please see the attached lesson plan from Premiere Stages residency at Rahway Middle School.

About Premiere Stages

As the professional Equity Theatre-in-Residence at Kean University, Premiere Stages is committed to serving the cultural needs of the campus community and the northern and central New Jersey regions. Premiere Stages actively engages and enhances the specialized training programs at Kean University while embracing and serving a culturally diverse audience, underserved children, and a broad pool of regional artists.

Premiere’s programming is comprised of three major artistic initiatives:

- **Arts Education:** *Introducing NJ children and teenagers to the art of dramatic writing and performance, increasing literacy, facilitating creative written expression, and encouraging collaborative teamwork.*

- **Professional Development for University Students:** *Bringing world-class artists to the Kean University campus for master classes, offering exposure for student writing and acting through*
showcase performances, and providing students with professional experience as actors, understudies, and interns in a variety of technical and arts administration fields.

- **New Play Development:** Cultivating talented writers, supporting the development of new plays through workshops and fully staged productions, bringing high-quality professional productions to a diverse audience.

The residencies are a program of Premiere’s educational wing, **The Premiere Play Factory**. Play Factory was created to make the arts experience available to children throughout central and northern New Jersey, particularly those who are traditionally underrepresented. By offering a diverse selection of innovative arts education programs for young people, Premiere Stages introduces students to the craft of theatre with an eye towards increasing literacy, supporting English language learners, modeling the collaborative process, and encouraging self-expression.

The goals of the Premiere Stages Play Factory are to:

- Serve as a hub of arts and arts-based education that combines artistic excellence, confidence building, creative self-expression, and teamwork.

- Increase children’s understanding and fulfillment of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in Literacy as mandated by the New Jersey Department of Education.

- Increase access to and participation in theatre arts by underserved youth and children with special needs.

- Develop and cultivate partnerships and collaborations with professional theatres and organizations that share similar goals to enhance and broaden arts opportunities for children in the region.

- Offer a diverse selection of new and innovative projects for young people to provide an introduction to the arts experience and an environment in which children can discover and express their creative selves.

- Provide professional theatre performances specifically geared to children and families living in the central and northern New Jersey regions.

- Increase access and participation for children with special needs and at-risk youth by providing free tickets, transportation, and special services to performances.