

Program 7: Making the Most of Community Resources

Theatre

SEGMENT 2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Stephen DiMenna **Clare Bauman**
27 years teaching 13 years teaching

About the School

**High School of Telecommunication
Arts and Technology**
Brooklyn, NY

Type:
Urban/Comprehensive

Grades:
9-12
Students:
1,200
Low/Middle socio-economic status

Arts Requirement:
New York has a 1-credit art or music
graduation requirement (180 minutes of
instruction per week for one year)

About the Residency Program

Faculty:
2 (1 teacher and 1 teaching artist)

Organization:
Theatre Development Fund's
Stage Doors program

About the Featured Class

Senior Playwriting:

Students are exposed to the art of playwriting through reading published plays, participating in acting/ writing exercises, and finally writing a one-act play of their own.

Students receive four teaching artist visits to prepare for, and follow up on, a trip to see the performance of a Broadway or Off-Broadway play. Students also experience four lessons related to the play, which their classroom teacher plans with the teaching artist.

Preparations/Prerequisites:

Eligible students are seniors in the spring term who have passed the state's Board of Regents exam.

Student Motivation:

Mixed. Students are motivated by hearing their words performed.

Student Level:

Mixed. Most students have never written a play before.

In the Teacher's Words

How did the play influence the lessons used in the classroom?

Stephen DiMenna: Sarah Jones's one-woman show "Bridge & Tunnel" is a series of monologues based on real characters. We decided to have the students create monologues based on real people they meet in their community. They interviewed immigrant members of their community and from that source material wrote dramatic monologues.

What was the culmination of the monologue project? Were the monologues ever performed for a larger audience?

Clare Bauman: Students incorporated the monologues into their one-act plays. These plays were performed for the whole school in a Playwriting Festival.