

STORIES THAT DANCE PROCTORS



Project Description

Real life turns to art! This collaborative effort between Proctors, Northeast Ballet Company and students from three school classrooms captures the stories of talented Capital Region youth and transforms them into a spectacular full-scale production to be performed live at Proctors! The residency includes professionals from Proctor's Education Team as well as professional dancers and Artistic Director Darlene Myers of Northeast Ballet Company in the classroom for full week of residency, in addition to a dress rehearsal with full production team at Proctors and two live performances in the Spring. So, get your imaginations ready, and write your story.

Details:

How can YOUR class be involved?

Three classrooms will take a seat in the director's chair, and create a performance from the ground up. Working with Proctor's Education department and Northeast Ballet Company, each class gets a full week of residency to work on all the production elements that turn their story into a dance:

- *Writing the Story (in class pre-residency)*
- *Character Development*
- *Choreography*
- *Music Selection*
- *Lighting Design*
- *Sequencing*
- *Costume Design*
- *Marketing and More!*

Each class will meet with Proctor's Education Department to get the ball rolling and learn about the magnificent theatre, the creative process and what it takes to present a work of art. Next, the talented professional dancers of the Northeast Ballet Company help foster the wild imaginations of students in creating a real show! Students take on an active role in this production through creating themes and making major artistic decisions. Eligible grades are 2nd through 5th.

Impact:

Proctors and Northeast Ballet Company developed the Stories that Dance program to combat the declining literacy rate in children, boost creativity, confidence and problem solving skills. The creative writing portion of the dance literacy project will directly relate to curriculum in English and ignite the wild imaginations of students. Through the process of creating a story and recreating it as a dance students will learn about, setting, character, conflict and resolution. Through the arts and the use of dance to deliver this information, students will be actively engaged, exploring rather than replicating. This process promotes creative, independent thinking and learning, and a full curriculum guide complete with activities and lesson plans is available for teacher use. Northeast Ballet teaching artists and students will select music, discuss lighting and special effects, costume design, character development, sequencing, marketing and promotion of their show in the same ways we use these elements in our professional productions. Using all of the information they have acquired, and with Proctors and Northeast Ballet teaching artists encouraging them, the students choreograph their very own show! And it's awesome!

Objectives:

The Stories That Dance Project will improve reading and writing skills, basic literacy, and empower students with a tool for self expression.

- 75-100 students, teachers, administrators, and 30 artists will participate in the program (maximum of 30 students per class)
- Students will learn how to write a story: about character, setting, conflict and resolution.
- Students will learn about character development, beginning, middle and end of stories.
- Students will learn ballet terminology and movement.
- Students will learn dance choreography.
- Students will learn about costuming, lighting design, music interpretation and sound amplification.
- Students will learn how to put on a show in a professional theatre.
- Some students will perform on stage with professional dancers for their story.
- Students learn how to use dance as a tool for self-expression and communication.



Measurable Outcomes:

Stories That Dance Residency Measurable Program Outcomes

- Self-Expression Through Mastery of Theater Skills
- Storytelling: ability to communicate narrative
- Dance: Expressive body movement
- Memorization and retention of choreography
- Ensemble and Collaborative Interaction Skills: listening, responding and interacting with the director and other performers
- Strategic and Logistical Skills: planning and problem solving
- Self-Actualization and Reduction of Negative Behaviors:
- Attendance
- Participation teamwork

- *Leadership*
- *Improved self-esteem and self-confidence*
- *Improved impulse control*
- *Decreased aggressive behavior*

Evaluation:

All outcomes are measured in the form of student and teacher journals that are kept throughout the project. The outcomes are also measured and documented in film that is taken throughout the project. Publicity releases will be requested of all students in order to be included in the film and other press opportunities.

School Commitment:

REQUIREMENTS:

- *One class (up to 30 students) can participate so that all students get complete and individualized attention. The project is specifically targeted to 2nd-5th grade.*
- *The story must be written in advance as a classroom project and submitted by February 1. Author visits or workshops may be possible. Call for information.*
- *The story will be developed to be performed by professional dancers. Some students may be able to perform as well, but will not be on stage for the entire dance. The focus is on the production as a whole, and the creative process.*
- *One full week of residency - 1.5 hours each day, preferably after lunch will be working with the artists from Northeast Ballet Company in your classroom. A large open area where the students can move is needed. (a gym or stage). Please reserve the space well in advance.*
- *A dress rehearsal is required between 2-6 pm (DATE TBD.) Any dancers and readers must be at Proctors for this. One hour will be devoted to each school during this time. Parents and volunteers have been especially helpful with this.*
- *SHOW DATE (TBD early April) 10am and 7 pm. The Stories That Dance performances at Proctors attended by regional schools, parents, families, and the community. (Dancers must be at the Theatre by 9 am for morning show and 5:30 pm for the evening show for costumes)*
- *Planning between Proctors and the teacher is available and encouraged at a mutually agreeable time.*
- *Consecutive planning meeting in February will take place between teachers, Proctor's and Northeast Ballet Company's Darlene Myers.*
- *Proctors works in partnership with schools to raise funds for the program. Please call with questions.*
- *Due to the high demand of the program and limited class participation, applications are accepted between April-June the previous year.*

Christine Sheehan, Director of Education will administer the program, and act as liaison between Northeast Ballet Company artists and schools.

Contact info:

*Christine Sheehan, Director of Education
518.382.3884 x 112
csheehan@proctors.org*

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT

STORIES THAT DANCE **at** PROCTORS

"Stories That Dance was wonderful and a project that needs to continue. What brilliant minds, talent, and dedication. Thanks Chris, Darlene, teachers, students, dancers, stage, and all. It was uplifting and ingenious."

Kathleen Cetnar

"It was such a pleasure to watch the great show at Proctor's today. You are a superb arts educator. It was a pleasure to watch you in the film coordinating such a rich educational experience. Your dance group was great as was the choreography."

Tom Schott

"Kudos to you guys for the Stories That Dance project....I thought the performances were outstanding..kids were talented, creative and all around awesome.....great job to you all!"

"I loved Stories that Dance. Congratulations on an exciting project! I took my 4th grade music students and they were so focused and interested. The teachers I went with would love to be involved in a project like that. I hope you will continue to do more like this in the future."

Michelle Gatta Gallant, Niskayuna School District

"I just wanted to tell you how much we all enjoyed the show today! I was so impressed, not just with my own class, but with all the stories! Every parent and student that was there raved about it! I can't wait to get the dvd! We'll probably show it at the PTG meeting."

Liz Kalac, St. Stanislaus School

Comments overheard after the show:

10-12 year old boy: "That was Awesome!"

Teacher(wiping tears from her eyes): "That was soooooo amazing!"

Usher: "This was as good or better than the other children's shows I've worked."

Paul Kazee

EDUCATION **at PROCTORS**
432 State Street Schenectady, NY 12305
proctors.org/education