

## K-6 Residency Models:

### Literacy Live

**Overview:** Literacy is more than the ability to read the printed word. It is also the ability to put those words into context, to think deeply about character, plot, and theme, to make meaningful connections to the world and the self, and to interact with literature in a vivid and powerful way.

*“High level of involvement in theater correlated to high levels of achievement in reading proficiency. Low socio-economic status (SES) students highly involved in theater outscored the low SES students who were not involved in theater in reading proficiency.”*

-Involvement in the Arts and Human Development: General Involvement and Intensive Involvement in Music and Theater Arts, *Champions of Change*, 1999, p. 14

Theatre has long been an effective medium for developing comprehension skills in students of all ages. Literacy Live takes the most powerful learning activities and teaching strategies from theatre education to develop comprehension by bringing language into action.

Students will be able to...

- a.) Infer, predict, analyze, interpret, sequence, and elaborate on features of fiction or nonfiction using learning activities and explorations from the theatre.
- b.) Compare and contrast genres, themes and features of literature through improvisation, role drama, and interpretive, shared story telling.
- c.) Debate, critique and interpret character qualities and other subjective features from literature.
- d.) Design, imagine and create original stories and short performances and improvisations to synthesize knowledge and understanding of learning goals from literacy.

*“Ten weeks of in-class drama coaching in a remedial third and fourth-grade classroom helped the teacher and students transform their approach to reading and improve the students’ attitude about and success in reading. Dramatic training and expression offered students the opportunity to contribute their own background knowledge and understanding, improve their accuracy and momentum, broaden their understandings and expressive choices, and begin to see themselves as actors, or active readers. That sense of achievement positively affected their self-perception.”*

*-Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development, 2002, pp. 56–57*

## Linking to the Standards: Literacy Live Residency

### Example

**Content Area, Strand and Scenario:**

**Language Arts, K-5**

Reading, Literature

**Key Ideas:** Craft and Structure; Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

**Scenario:** A second grade teacher is getting ready to teach a unit on realistic fiction. With a wide range of reading levels in his class, he wants to create a differentiated approach to a whole group reading project.

While the majority of students are developing phonemic awareness and fluency, many lack high-level comprehension skills. Thinking, analyzing and talking about books is still a struggle for many. He seeks a project that will both motivated and challenge his readers to dig deeper.

**Literacy Live Connection:**

The teaching artist begins her work by organizing students into cooperative, ability-based groups who share a single story. She builds content for the work of theatre by having students engage in a variety of visualizing, physicalizing, and collaborating exercises, followed by critical response discussion.

First, she has students work together to explore lower level thinking skills through theatre. Sequencing is practiced and then brought to life through tableau, or frozen pictures, with students interpreting the characters, symbolic gestures, and actions of each group. Stories are retold through a variety of improvisational exercises, and theme is explored by “getting inside the author’s mind” through several theatre games.

Higher order thinking is then activated through character elaborations, inference-based role drama explorations, and reinterpretations of conflict and resolution brought to life through short performances.

A final phase of reflection and shared critical response prompt metacognitive insights.

**Link to Standards:**

MN Language Arts Standards, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

2.1.1.1 Ask and answer such questions as *who, what, where, when, why,* and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

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| 2.1.2.2 | Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.                           |
| 2.1.3.3 | Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.  |
| 2.1.5.5 | Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.             |
| 2.1.6.6 | Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud. |
| 2.1.7.7 | Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.    |
| 2.3.0.4 | Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.   |