

Education at Roundabout: It's About Turning Classrooms into Theatres, and the Theatre into a Classroom



Jennifer DiBella, Mitch Mattson, and Jonathan P. Jones

Abstract The intersection of a professional theatre company and a country's largest public school system is rich for reflection and development. This article explores that space in relation to Roundabout Theatre Company, a not-for-profit Broadway theatre company with in-school and after-school residency models, and more than a dozen New York City public school partnerships. The article describes Roundabout's lesson planning and facilitation methodology, the Theatrical Teaching Framework, and the program's 20-year history. That history includes situating arts education within the NYC Department of Education over those years. The evaluation demonstrates that although there are positive outcomes for young people and teachers (classroom and pre-service), the challenges of school leadership turnover and main-stage representation remain independent of the arts integration goals and skill building achievements. The reasons for these outcomes are explored and examples of classroom impact are shared in this chapter.

Keywords Roundabout Theatre Company · New York City Department of Education · Arts education · Theatrical Teaching Framework · Aristotle's Poetics · Thematic question · Co-teaching · Classroom residency · World AIDS Day · Common Core learning standards · International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) · City College of New York · School of Education

J. DiBella (✉) · M. Mattson
Roundabout Theatre Company, New York, NY, USA
e-mail: Jenniferd@roundabouttheatre.org; mitchm@roundabouttheatre.org

J. P. Jones
Department of Music and Performing Arts Professions-Educational Theatre Faculty,
New York University, New York, NY, USA
e-mail: jonathan.jones@nyu.edu

1 Introduction

Turning theatres into classrooms and the classrooms of New York City into theatres — that is what Education at Roundabout prides itself on achieving each year for over 18,000 students and educators across 265 schools. For over 20 years, Roundabout has developed education programs that aim to provide participants with access to the arts, encourage them to be active participants in their education, cultivate skills they will need to succeed in college and careers, and give their teachers the tools to help students flourish. Education at Roundabout strives to use theatre to enhance teacher practice and deepen student learning by engaging participants in active learning and collaboration, empowering participants to become agents in their own learning and lives, connecting their work and participants to Roundabout Theatre Company, engaging participants in exploration of the universal themes found in Roundabout's shows, and customizing their work to accommodate the needs and interests of their participants. Roundabout is dedicated to using its resources as a professional theatre to accomplish the following objectives: transform the classrooms of New York City public schools by creating learning opportunities across all disciplines through the exploration of theatre and by collaborating with teachers and teaching artists to infuse theatrical teaching strategies into their curriculum; engage students in theatre experiences that explore the universal themes of the human condition and develop their ability to think critically about the theatre they attend; build a community of confident, expressive young people who, in producing classic and original plays, are committed to and responsible for their own learning; foster a new generation of artists and arts administrators by providing career development opportunities through apprenticeships and internships in Roundabout's administrative and production departments; and expand the impact of Roundabout's productions by providing historical, literary and social contexts in the classroom and the theatre.

Roundabout employs over 50 highly trained teaching artists with diverse artistic backgrounds. The teaching artists' practice is grounded in a unique instructional model which melds a backwards design approach with a structure that is loosely based on Aristotle's *Poetics*. Developed by Roundabout staff members, the Theatrical Teaching Framework posits that every great lesson has the elements of a great play (Roundabout 2015b). When employing the Framework, Roundabout teaching artists first identify the aim for a given residency or workshop which is posed as a thematic question and align their lessons with the theatrical plot structure which is meant to provide a sequence of activities that builds towards learners' understanding of the thematic question. Elements of plot that comprise the Framework include: inciting incident, exposition, rising action, moment of truth, falling action, and denouement. Further, the teaching artists and partner teachers consider ways to incorporate artistry, character, language, musicality, and spectacle to better engage participants. The goal is to craft a lesson that is highly engaging, well-scaffolded, academically rigorous, and connects theatre skills with the core curriculum.

This Teaching Framework is an important engagement tool, especially when working with underserved populations. Working in all five boroughs of New York

City, 76% of the students that Roundabout engages with come from economically disadvantaged communities who are living below the poverty line. In comparison, “by the time they reach 6th grade, middle class kids have likely spent 6,000 more hours learning than kids born into poverty” (The After School Corporation 2015). Roundabout teaching artists and partner teachers utilize the Framework to increase the learning opportunities for these underserved student populations.

This chapter explores how Education at Roundabout navigates challenges that have emerged from their school partnership programs utilizing the categories and definitions from Roundabout's unique pedagogy, the Theatrical Teaching Framework, as a lens of inquiry.

2 Thematic Question: The Line of Inquiry or Challenge that the Learners Investigate

How does a Broadway Theatre Company respond to the challenges that emerge when they partner with the nation's largest public school system in an effort to provide innovative education programs for underserved young people?

3 Inciting Incident: Learners *Engage* in the Investigation of the Thematic Question Through an Action or Event

One of the classes was oppositional and defiant. I felt they were not open to me or to theatre in general, and as I started the story whoosh, I realized that nobody was going to participate. After Ms. X interceded and I explained the rationale for the activity, I made an adjustment and had everyone make a tableau for each character I described. In this way, no one had to be in the spotlight, and we asked for full participation from everyone. It wasn't ideal, but it felt like the right adjustment for this group. (Roundabout 2016)

While there is nothing particularly unique about the circumstance this teaching artist described following the conclusion of a residency at an Education at Roundabout partner school in 2016, it does point to the body of challenges that have been documented during recent academic years at Roundabout's partner schools. A 2014 evaluation report by Philliber Research Associates (PRA) which was commissioned by Education at Roundabout identified challenges and program recommendations from Project Coordinators (Roundabout staff), school principals, partner teachers, and teaching artists alike. Though all stakeholders were widely positive about their experiences participating in these school-wide partnerships, the challenges serve as the 'events' that Education at Roundabout needs to address in order to answer the thematic question.

The Project Coordinators identified the following: a lack of understanding of partnership goals on the part of administrators and teachers, teachers who were only somewhat interested in taking students to the theatre and find it difficult to take

students on field trips, a lack of sequential arts programming in some partner schools which would support students who are interested in pursuing a career in the arts, and a lack in the availability of information on colleges and careers in the arts. Additionally, the Project Coordinators seldom observed their partner teachers enlisting the expertise of colleagues, using theatre in the classroom as part of their teaching, or initiating theatrical projects though the principals and administrators claimed these activities were happening with more frequency.

The partner teachers identified a lack of co-planning time and scheduling difficulties with the teaching artist, and an overall lack of time with the teaching artist. Contrasting this, the principals did not identify any challenges regarding the partnerships, though they did indicate a number of ways that the partnerships could be built upon which included focusing on student 'buy-in' and commitment from day 1, building partnerships with non-theatre teachers, building capacity in the ESL classroom, creating plays that have to do with world history, curriculum mapping, teaching strategies utilizing the arts, and expanding the partnerships to reach more students.

The teaching artists identified student behavior as a considerable challenge, whether the students were rambunctious or subdued. Time management was also a challenge, as were student punctuality and attendance, interpersonal concerns with the partner teachers, inadequate space, and lack of access to materials.

The PRA report provided additional anecdotes from the teaching artists which included, "One of my 'cool kid' students was not pleased about seeing *Harvey*. She said, 'I am really NOT excited about this play.' I encouraged her to give it a try. Well, when the show was over, her entire body language had changed. She could hardly sit still and was smiling from ear-to-ear." Another teaching artist shared, "A student said on the first day of the unit, 'I hate this class. I hate Shakespeare. This is stupid. I don't want to do it.' The last week of the unit, the same girl stormed into class and said, 'You didn't pick me to act for everyone. Why not? You don't like me? I'm acting. That's it.' All of this was said in a loving, non-threatening way, and it actually testified to the success of the unit." Like the anecdote that began this inciting incident, these quotes demonstrate the temporal nature of some of these aforementioned challenges as interest and behavior on the part of all stakeholders changes over time. However, whereas the teaching artist or partner teacher can alter their lesson plans in the moment or over the course of a unit of study, some of the challenges mentioned above point to more systemic concerns that Education at Roundabout will need to navigate in order to achieve success in their school partnerships.

4 Exposition: The Vocabulary, Concepts, and Tools That Will *Introduce* Learners to and Allow Them to Investigate the Thematic Question

In order to investigate the thematic question and situate the challenges identified above, this section provides a brief overview of Education at Roundabout, an introduction to the small schools movement in New York City (which constitute many of

the schools that participate in the school-wide partnerships), an overview of the school partnership curriculum models, and the evaluation and data collection processes which produced the challenges identified in the inciting incident.

According to their mission statement, Roundabout Theatre Company is committed to producing the highest quality theatre with the finest artists, sharing stories that endure, and providing accessibility to all audiences. A not-for-profit company, Roundabout fulfils its mission each season through the production of classic plays and musicals; development and production of new works by established and emerging writers; educational initiatives that enrich the lives of children and adults; and a subscription model and audience outreach programs that cultivate and engage all audiences. Founded in 1965, Roundabout Theatre Company has grown from a small 150-seat theatre in a converted supermarket basement to become the nation's most influential not-for-profit theatre company, as well as one of New York City's leading cultural institutions. With five stages on and off Broadway, Roundabout now reaches over 700,000 theatergoers, students, educators and artists across the country and around the world every year.

Roundabout's education programs are designed to engage students in non-traditional ways of learning in order to help them acquire the skills needed to be productive, engaged citizens. The aims of Roundabout's education programs are to: (1) provide access to theatre for students with limited or no exposure to the arts; (2) provide enriching in-school programs for students and schools most in need; (3) motivate students to stay in school and graduate; (4) better prepare young people for success in college and careers; and (5) help teachers and school leaders engage their students and connect their work to the Common Core Standards. Roundabout endeavors to achieve these goals through education programs that range from school-wide partnerships and afterschool programs, to professional development workshops for teachers, and a comprehensive apprenticeship program. Roundabout also provides a wide variety of adult learning programs for subscribers and other patrons through the Theatre Plus programs.

The most recognizable and one of the oldest formal drama programs in the New York City public school system is at LaGuardia Arts High School. Founded as the School of Performing Arts in 1948, a theatrical training program is offered in addition to the standard academic curriculum prescribed by the New York City Department of Education (Grubin 1983; LaGuardia High School 2015). LaGuardia was followed by Talent Unlimited in 1973. Talent Unlimited began as an arts program that required students to attend their home schools for academic work, and then they attended Talent Unlimited for arts instruction each afternoon. Subsequently, their programming was expanded into a stand-alone school for the performing arts (Talent Unlimited High School 2016). In addition to LaGuardia Arts and Talent Unlimited, the Professional Performing Arts School opened in 1990 as a combined middle and high school offering similar programming to that of LaGuardia albeit with a significantly smaller enrollment (Professional Performing Arts School 2015). These schools are highly selective, leaving students with an interest in theatre arts who could not gain admission at one of these schools with few options for a sequenced education in theatre unless schools without a theatre focus happened to offer such a program which were considerably limited.

New York City's small public high schools of choice (SSCs) have helped to address this limitation, particularly those with specialization in the performing arts. SSCs are small schools that exist within larger comprehensive schools. Starting in 2002, the SSCs were meant to promote "academic rigor, real-world relevance, and personalized relationships" (Unterman 2014, p. 2). Education at Roundabout partners with five of these SSCs including Bronx Theatre High School, Brooklyn School for Music and Theatre, Brooklyn Theatre Arts High School, Fordham High School for the Arts, and Repertory Company High School for Theatre Arts. In fact, Education at Roundabout developed Bronx Theatre High School and Brooklyn School for Music and Theatre as part of New York City's New Century High Schools initiative. In the case of Bronx Theatre High School, Roundabout developed the school in 2003, not necessarily to address the lack of access to arts-specialized high schools, but to create a neighborhood school where theatre is used throughout the school curriculum to theatricalize and enliven teacher practice and in turn keep students engaged in school. Over a decade later, Bronx Theatre High School and the four other partner schools are thriving with an average 4 year graduation rate in 2013–2014 of 77.4% (New York City Department of Education 2016a) compared to the New York City average of 68.4% (New York City Department of Education 2016b).

The school-wide partnerships provide custom created residencies designed to meet the needs of each school across all subject areas, from language arts and history to math and science, and provide students with opportunities to attend Roundabout productions. These residencies follow four different curriculum models: perspectives, curriculum connections, script analysis, and producing partners. The perspectives residency explores a central literary, historical, or sociological theme through the study of theatrical discipline. Students then explore that theme through the lens of another theatrical discipline to deepen their understanding of that theme through different perspectives with twelve visits from a lead teaching artist and four visits with a design teaching artist. The curriculum connections residency is structured around the content, skills, and learning that students need in core subject areas with ten visits from a Roundabout teaching artist. The script analysis residency is aimed at improving literacy and comprehension. Using script analysis techniques, students examine a theatrical text to explore the given circumstances and make inferences based on evidence found in the text during ten visits from a Roundabout teaching artist. Finally, the producing partners residency provides the resources of a professional company to engage students in the practice of theatrical skills. Working on their own production with teaching artists in all areas of theatre (design, directing, stage management), partners replicate the functions of a professional theatre during ten theatrical mentoring sessions with a Roundabout teaching artist.

The role of the partner teacher is integral in each of these residency models. Rather than having the teaching artist show up and work with the students, the partner teacher attends an initial orientation meeting with the teaching artist to plan the scope of the residency, they participate in one co-planning meeting for each workshop, they develop lesson plans with the teaching artist, they team-teach each work-

shop with the teaching artist, they support the residency goals in between the teaching artist visits, assist school administrators with the logistics of the field trip to the Roundabout performance, insure students follow proper theatre etiquette while at the performance, and complete an impact report at the conclusion of the residency. The teaching artist participates in the partnership in collaboration with the partner teacher as outlined above, in addition to aligning with the partner teacher's curriculum goals and Common Core Standards, connecting the residency to a current Roundabout production through skills, content, or themes, serving as a theatre guide during the performance field trip, and sharing a residency plan, mid-residency report, and reflection packet (teaching artist impact report, teacher impact report, and student surveys) for the residency.

The reports indicated above form the basis of Education at Roundabout's evaluation processes. The evaluations collected include the residency plan, the mid-residency report, the teaching artist impact report, the teacher impact report, and student surveys which are conducted both at the start and conclusion of the residency. These reports provided the bulk of data for the 2014 Evaluation Report by PRA, though they also utilized additional evaluation forms completed by the Project Coordinator (Roundabout staff) and the school principals. Most of the questions relate to similar themes across participant pools in order to gather diverse perceptions of similar prompts (such as: participants are engaged in active learning, participants engage in theatrical processes, and other items relating to artistic choices, self-expression, and critical thinking skills). These prompts are rated using a Likert-scale, with ranges including never, seldom, sometimes, and often or not well at all, not very well, somewhat well, and very well. Additionally, there are short constructed response prompts which allow the participants to provide narrative responses. The anecdotes provided in the inciting incident were obtained from these short constructed response prompts.

The volume of evaluation data that Education at Roundabout has amassed demonstrates their dedication to understanding the effectiveness of their programming. They can (and do) utilize this data in order to identify the challenges that are emerging within individuals programs, take steps to address these challenges, and improve the overall efficacy of the work that they do.

5 Rising Action: Learners *Apply* Vocabulary, Concepts, and Tools to Respond to the Thematic Question Through a Sequence of Activities

In light of the overall goals and implementation of Education at Roundabout's school-wide partnerships and the ongoing evaluative activities, we return to our thematic question: how does Roundabout respond to the challenges that emerge when they partner with the nation's largest public school system in an effort to provide innovative theatre education programs for underserved young people?

Though the myriad challenges referenced in the inciting incident are considerable, analysis of the collected data shows that the Roundabout show-going experience is the first professional theatre experience for 35% of the students, 40% of participating students speak English as a second language, 100% of the partner teachers reported the Roundabout residency/lesson curriculum was clearly connected to the Common Core Learning Standards, and 96% of students have their artistic choices realized on stage or in a theatrical class project.

In the pre-residency survey of eighth graders at one partner middle school, the majority of student surveyed (217 students) reported that they wanted to come to class *sometimes*, but after the Roundabout residency the great majority reported that they wanted to come to this class *often*. The significance of this increase is supported by a rise in student and teacher reported participation in discussion/activities and working with other classmates. This is important because the element that Roundabout teaching artists are bringing to the classroom is not curriculum – it is theatre. Theatre and artistry are used to teach the classroom curriculum and it is working in so far as it enables students to work collaboratively more often, and with a greater desire to learn.

One recent example of this growth took place in the fall of 2014 at a high school in Manhattan. In a mixed grade classroom a project was set up to explore issues of identity and perception around HIV and World AIDS Day. A Roundabout teaching artist playwright asked students to consider: how do actors use photographs to inspire and create character and story? It is important to note that in the fall of 2014 much of the media was consumed with stories about the Ebola virus. The teaching artist reflected on the experience with this story:

The student is from Ghana. She has experienced a lot of abuse and prejudice from other students in the school about being African. We encouraged her to write a monologue about her feelings about Africa and HIV. She had previously told us that what her peers often say to her makes her ashamed to be African. She wrote the speech. [...] When she presented, she brought all her passion and anger to the piece. When she started, the audience was not with her – they were heckling – yes, HIV does come from Africa; yes, Ebola does come from Africa. But, she continued, impassioned. The audience started to agree with her, and join her in unity – she turned the audience around and got an enormous, enormous round of applause. When she finished with “We all come from Mother Africa,” Mrs. D and I were crying.

Four months later, the student was asked to share her monologue and represent her school on Roundabout’s Broadway stage at the 2015 Student Theatre Arts Festival, where she faced a similarly enthusiastic audience response.

Education at Roundabout benefits greatly from the privileges of working with the main stage productions. The staff and teaching artists have access to incredible resources, including a comprehensive archive, which is housed in Roundabout’s main administrative offices. Students and teachers have access to award winning Roundabout artists, post-show talks, artist visits to classrooms, and speakers for graduation events. The programs are funded through government grants, foundations, individual donors, and small contributions from each partner school. Roundabout’s Executive Staff and Board of Directors are extremely supportive of the education programs, which fosters an environment of innovation and rigor.

Having access to Roundabout's resources allows the Education staff and teaching artists to be responsive to trends in education. For example, when the Common Core Standards were first introduced in 2009, Roundabout was able to dedicate time to look for natural alignments within existing programming and train the staff to help teachers and students as they adopted the new standards. To prepare their teaching artists and partner teachers, Roundabout slowly started integrating the Common Core language and instructional shifts into the bi-annual teaching artist training seminars and professional development workshops for classroom teachers before the standards were officially rolled out.

In order to better prepare students for college and careers, the Common Core initiative asks educators to shift from content-based instruction towards skill-based learning. This shift aims to give students the tools to access the content information they need to excel in whatever subject area they choose to explore. This "skills-based" shift aligned with the arts integration work that Roundabout was already facilitating in classrooms. Theatre artists are required to carefully analyze a script and make choices based on evidence found in the text. Skills like close reading and identifying the author's purpose are important to helping students make strong artistic choices. Another big push found in the English Language Arts Common Core is an emphasis on using non-fiction and informational texts. In order to support this initiative, Roundabout encourages partner teachers and teaching artists to use historical primary sources and scholarly articles to help build a social, political and cultural context for plays they are exploring with students. Furthermore, they are reminded to use Roundabout's Upstage Playgoers Guides, which include interviews with artists working on the main stage productions, which are strong examples of non-fiction resources (Roundabout 2015a).

The Common Core also aligns with Roundabout Theatrical Teaching Framework. One of the most important elements of the Framework is "Language." The Common Core requires "regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary." By asking educators to be intentional about their language and vocabulary choices, Roundabout is supporting the language acquisition skills that students' need in order to be successful in college and careers – introducing students to professional language and concepts during classroom and after-school residencies.

6 Moment of Truth: Learners *Demonstrate* Their Understanding of the Thematic Question

Although working with small schools has proved successful in many ways, Roundabout still faces many challenges navigating these distinctive environments. From leadership changes, to sharing performance spaces, to high teacher turnover, working in these small specialized high schools can be difficult and risky. A report by the Center for New York City Affairs states that "teacher turnover is higher in the small schools than in the system overall. Several new schools lost nearly half their teachers in a one-year period. Principal turnover has also been high: fifty-six of 124

principals—nearly half—hired to open new schools between 2002 and 2004 have departed” (Hemphill et al. 2009). Since 2003, Roundabout’s Bronx Theatre High School has had three principals. Additionally, Roundabout teaching artists and staff will often invest a great deal of time and resources into a new teacher only to have them leave the following year.

This inconsistency challenges both Project Coordinators and teaching artists alike as relationship development and maintenance is so important to the residency model. However, the requirement that the teaching artist and partner teacher first meet to identify curricular goals for the residency helps to counteract this. This way, even if the stakeholders change, the model remains the same: these two professionals come together to establish goals for the partnership, the teaching artist introduces the Framework, and the two collaborate on planning and team teaching throughout the duration of residency. Additionally, Roundabout offers an annual Theatrical Teaching Institute each summer which is a 6-day professional development program for teachers, other professional development programs for theatre teachers through the New York City Department of Education’s Office of Arts and Special Programs, and the bi-annual Teaching Artist Lab which offers professional development for the Roundabout teaching artists. These programs support the teachers and teaching artists, introducing new concepts to some (the Framework and residency models) and offering a review of the policies and procedures for the residency models for the veteran teachers and teaching artists.

Providing education and outreach programs as part of a large non-profit theatre company comes with its privileges and challenges. It is a main tenant of Roundabout’s education programs to connect residency work to the main stage productions. Teaching artists make connections to the theme, content, and/or the form of the theatrical piece the students are working on by using the skills and form of a theatrical discipline to activate content from a core subject area. In general, the lack of diversity in artistic and professional staff as well as in characters and stories presented on stage is a major challenge on Broadway. A 2013 study by The Asian American Performers Action Coalition showed that in the 2011–2012 season, only 6.1% of performers in Roundabout shows were from minority groups compared to an average of 19% minority performers for sixteen non-profit theatres in New York City. As such, it is sometimes hard for Roundabout’s students (most of whom are people of color) to make personal connections to the artists working on the main stage. The focus on thematic and content connections in the residency models helps to bridge this divide, but in order for the Education program to make real headway in this area, the play selection and casting choices at the Company at large (and indeed, across all professional theatre) need to be re-examined. To that end, Roundabout is committed to producing work by playwrights from traditionally under represented communities, a good example of this is the 2015 production of *Little Children Dream of God* by Jeff Augustin which tells the contemporary story of a Haitian immigrant. Moving forward the organization is also committed to casting more people of color on all stages, though the statistics from the 2011–2012 season demonstrate that the Company has work to do in this area.

And of course, Education at Roundabout is still left with the challenges identified in the inciting incident. How can Education at Roundabout respond to the growing list of challenges and continue to deliver high quality educational experiences? The answer is simple: address the challenges that they can control, and develop new programming to meet the growing needs of their participants. The following anecdotes provide a window into how Education at Roundabout is working towards addressing their participants' needs through the implementation of new programming.

The classroom teacher turns off the lights. The students look around. With the curtain pulled shut, the only light in the room comes from a clip light with a red gel. It sits on the floor in the center of the room. The teaching artist warms his hands over the "fire" and gestures for the students to join him. They leave their seats and circle up: some warm their hands; a few make invisible s'mores. The lighting design teaching artist asks, "How did this one light transform this classroom?"

A class at a high school on Staten Island is exploring advertising art. In a 12-week residency with a theatre business teaching artist and partner teacher the students explore the Thematic Question: "How does a theatre company's marketing, archives, and audience services departments support the theatre's artistic mission?" During the visits, through the lens of Roundabout shows and business practices, the students learn about audience services, immersive design, archivist, branding, graphic design, digital marketing, email marketing, ad buys, networking, and constituent management databases. They come to understand how Roundabout's marketing department works with outside vendors; how key art is adapted in house for a variety of applications; how email marketing works on a basic level; how a marketing manager thinks about leadership and strategy; how to access an archive and what is held there. The post residency application of these skills is providing the marketing and design themes for the school's holiday concert. The students are empowered as the designers, the marketers, the decision makers, and use industry language and standards wherever possible.

These two examples identify Education at Roundabout's unique focus on technical theatre residencies and making concrete curriculum connections to business, math, and science. The PRA report (2014) indicated that up to that point, most of Roundabout's partner teachers were from English language arts or theatre faculty, and if Roundabout wanted to meet their goal of broadening their involvement in the partner schools, they would need to engage with more partner teachers from other subject areas. These two residencies are emblematic of how these new connections can function and still utilize the Framework.

The Common Core asks that, whenever possible, educators provide a connection to "industry" so that students can be exposed to varied possible career options. Over the past three years, Roundabout has worked to capitalize on the rich resources the theatre has to offer students in their partner schools and after school programs. Not only do students regularly attend Broadway and Off-Broadway productions, and have the opportunity to meet with professional actors, but Roundabout also looks for less traditional connections to professionals in the field. For example, a partnership was created with the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) to create the "Hidden Career Path" program, where students meet IATSE members working at Broadway theatres to learn in detail about their roles and

responsibilities and to receive all access tours of the professional spaces. Additionally, they have developed and implemented the College and Career Readiness Day (CCRD), an annual event that provides the juniors and seniors at schoolwide-partner schools an opportunity to learn more about arts-focused colleges and careers. In 2016, the CCRD was attended by 77 students from six schools. Workshops were provided to prepare students for college applications; theatre professionals sat on panels to engage with the participants about how to obtain requisite training for their positions; mock interviews were held; and participants had the opportunity to establish networks with students from other partner schools.

7 Falling Action: Learners *Reflect* on the Moment of Truth, Articulate Their Choices, and Justify Their Responses to the Thematic Question

In the fall of 2015, Education at Roundabout formed partnerships with two institutions: City College of New York and Columbia University. Roundabout partnered with City College of New York's School of Education to create a new course for pre-service teachers and teaching artists. The "Fundamentals of Teaching Technical Theatre" develops students' content area knowledge and pedagogical philosophy of design and technical theatre disciplines including scenic, lighting, costume, sound, and stage management. Candidates experience, examine, and experiment with the teaching of technical theatre disciplines for classes K-12. The latter half of the course provides hands on experience mentoring middle school students through a production process. The class takes place at Roundabout's Education Studio and a public school in Harlem.

With Columbia, Roundabout's education staff worked with faculty to establish a specialized training course for 30 MFA students. The curriculum was adapted from Roundabout's Theatrical Teaching Institute, a week-long professional development intensive for classroom teachers and teaching artists. This opportunity provided Columbia students with practical experience that may help them in securing teaching positions when they graduate.

These two partnerships with higher education institutions as well as the existing education programs align with Roundabout's desire to support students and future educators. Roundabout is also creating a new Theatrical Workforce Development Program to connect recent high school graduates to the industry. The program reflects Roundabout's efforts to take a leadership role in the creation of a training program for New York City public school students that results in tangible pathways to careers in technical theatre. This three-year program will train and help to place 20 high school graduates each year into paying professional production positions. The program's goals include providing tangible pathways to careers for New York public school students who may not have the resources for a four-year degree training program or to work without pay as they gain experience, educating and encour-

aging a new generation of theatre professionals, and diversifying the field of professional theatre as the larger entertainment industry seeks to connect to new and diverse audiences that better reflect the make-up of the community at large.

8 Denouement: Learners *Anticipate* How Their Responses to the Thematic Question Might Be Applicable in the Future

As Education at Roundabout moves forward with their recent initiatives, it will continue to refine existing programs which will enable them to both address the challenges that have emerged in their existing programming, while also expanding the scope of their offerings to meet the wider needs of their participants. Education at Roundabout seeks to transform, build, foster, and expand the role of the arts in the lives of young people, whether that involves making cross-curricular connections to theatre, providing a direct pathway to professions in technical theatre, or developing future audiences for the theatre company which will in turn help to create a community of engaged and empathic citizens.

The recent initiatives at Roundabout will do little to impact the teacher and principal turnover rate, but rather, maintaining relationships and expanding their reach within these schools enables their partnerships to become a fixture of the curriculum at these sites, regardless of the staffing changes. Further, the new initiatives remain untested, but Roundabout's commitment to data collection, analyzing the results of program evaluations, and willingness to revise existing programs and implement new ones when warranted demonstrates an ethic of reflective practice which the field as a whole would do well to establish at all levels of arts partnerships.

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