



## SMARTS Arts Integration @ South Side Academy

In December 2019, SMARTS Theater Teacher Randall Brammer spent two weeks at South Side Academy as an Artist-in-Residence to collaborate with teacher Grade 4 and 5 English and social studies teacher Sarah Walsh. Students were demonstrating their learning of vocabulary through weekly tests on Fridays. At any given week, 15-50% of students in the classes were failing the tests. In Grade 4, about nine out of 18 students were scoring 18/20 or higher. In Grade 5, only six out of 16 students each week were consistently scoring 18/20 or higher. Significant growth occurred in Grade 4 students ZH, DJ, CAM, FP, and AR and in Grade 5 students NA, DC, KAD, LH, JPS, and CS.

Brammer worked with Walsh to use theater to teach vocabulary. Students learned the meaning of new vocabulary terms by working together to create scenes, which provided them both kinesthetic and visual memory cues for each of the new terms. In a charades-inspired lesson, the rest of the class had to guess the vocabulary word being acted by the group.

“Students learned the best embodying actions to the words,” Brammer said. “It made sense because they were on their feet. There’s a big difference between sitting and trying to memorize what the word means or getting up on their feet and putting themselves in a fake scenario. It’s memory association where it’s not word to word. It’s word to movement or word to visual.”

Walsh said her students always enjoyed learning vocabulary, even though many students were low performing. The theater arts integration allowed them to imprint new memories and acquire body memory. The entire class enjoyed movement, creating scenes, and working with partners.

“For the students who usually passed the test, they were going to pass anyway. It seemed to improve some of the scores for the lower scoring students,” Walsh said.

After one week of arts integration, in Grade 4, scores improved, where 13 out of 18 students received a score of 18/20 or higher. Only three students with extenuating circumstances in Grade 4 failed the test. Every student in Grade 5 passed their Friday vocabulary test, with 12 out of 16 students receiving a score of 18/20 or higher.

In both classes, students who had typically scored 18/20 on the tests, performed at or near the same level as they had without Arts Integrated lessons. At least three students in both Grade 4 and Grade 5 that had consistently under-performed on the tests by scoring 70% or less achieved an 18/20 or higher after one week of arts integration.

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**SMARTS, Students Motivated by the Arts**

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[www.SmartsArtSchool.org](http://www.SmartsArtSchool.org)

**SMARTS Theater Arts Integration**  
**@ South Side Academy, Grade 5**  
 2019-2020, Quarter 2 Vocabulary Tests



Student	11/1/19	11/8/19	11/15/19	11/29/19	12/06/19	12/13/19
NA	14/20	3/20	13/20	x	x	19/20
DC	9/20	9/20	10/20	x	9/20	19/20
SD	15/20	9/20	14/20	x	x	15/20
KAD	4/20	4/20	9/20	x	x	14/20
KED	18/20	18/20	20/20	18/20	15/20	20/20
NF	18/20	13/20	20/20	20/20	18/20	20/20
KG	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20
LH	9/20	11/20	16/20	x	6/20	20/20
EJ	18/20	20/20	13/20	18/20	20/20	19/20
LJ	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20
JM	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20
MP	x	x	x	x	x	x
JPS	x	x	6/20	8/20	11/20	18/20
XS	20/20	15/20	x	20/20	15/20	20/20
CS	5/20	6/20	9/20	6/20	9/20	16/20
AW	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20

**SMARTS Theater Arts Integration**  
**@ South Side Academy, Grade 4**  
 2019-2020, Quarter 2 Vocabulary Tests



Student	11/8/19	11/15/19	12/06/19	12/13/19
RA	4/20	8/20	1/20	0/20
AC	x	20/20	20/20	20/20
KD	x	x	x	11/20
JD	20/20	x	20/20	15/20
KE	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20
BH	x	x	18/20	18/20
ZH	8/20	13/20	4/20	20/20
CJ	20/20	20/20	13/20	20/20
DJ	14/20	20/20	11/20	20/20
KL	18/20	20/20	16/20	16/20
CAM	x	13/20	8/20	18/20
CIM	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20
FP	10/20	14/20	10/20	18/20
MP	20/20	18/20	14/20	20/20
LP	18/20	x	x	11/20
AR	13/20	18/20	10/20	20/20
TS	20/20	20/20	20/20	20/20
MT	x	x	15/20	18/20

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