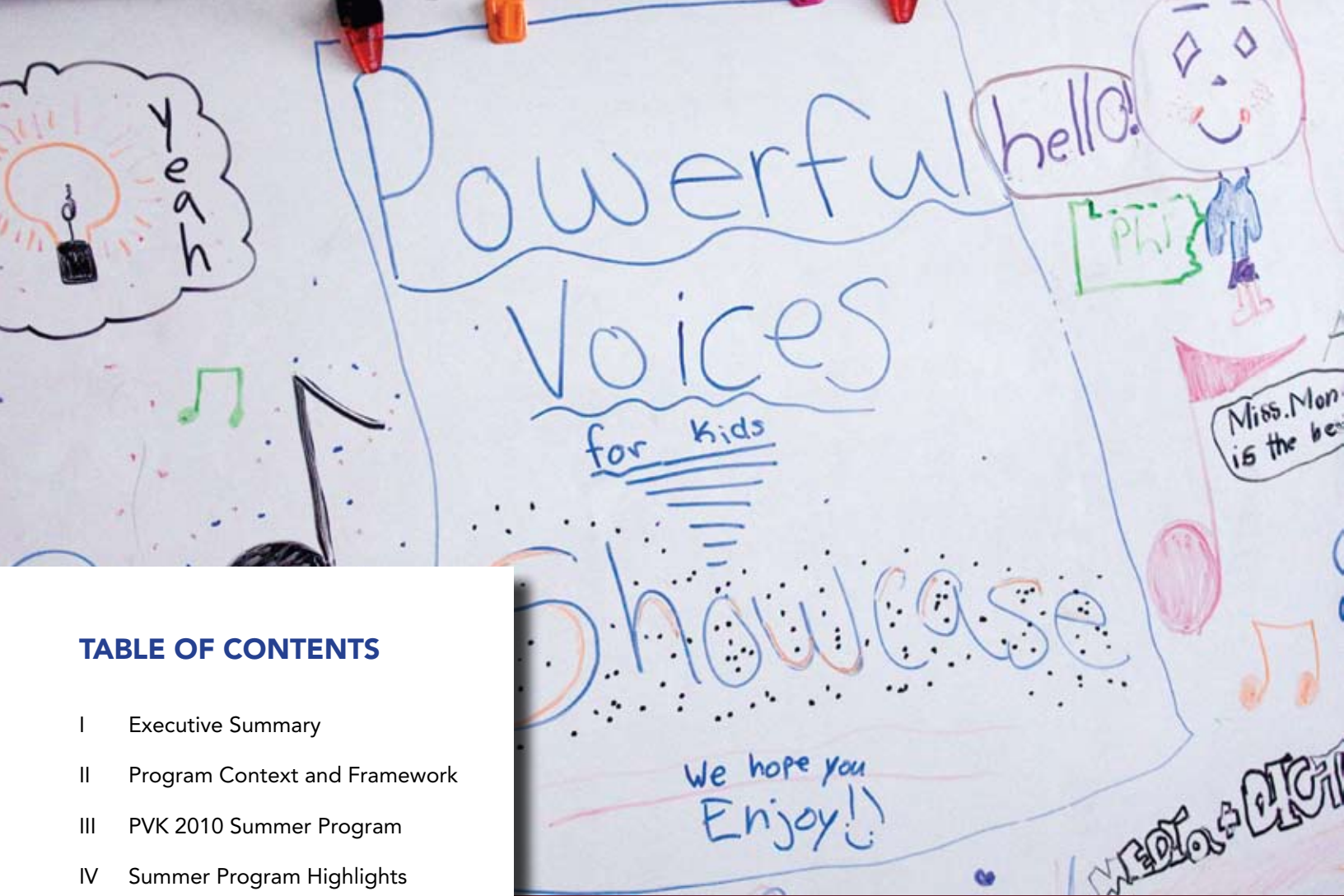


**YEAR TWO**  
Stewardship  
Report 2010

**Powerful  
Voices**  
For Kids





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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Powerful Voices for Kids is a university-school partnership between the Media Education Lab at Temple University's School of Communications and Theater and the Russell Byers Charter School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The mission of the program is to strengthen children's abilities to think for themselves, communicate effectively using language and technology tools, and use their powerful voices to contribute to the quality of life in their families, their schools, their communities, and the world.

There are six components of the program:

- (1) A summer enrichment program in media literacy for children in grades K-8;
- (2) Professional staff development programs for educators;
- (3) Multimedia curriculum development and video documentation;
- (4) An in-school and after-school mentor program;
- (5) Research and assessment on the impact of media literacy education on student learning;
- (6) Parent and community outreach.

Children who participated in our program experienced an innovative pedagogy approach that combines play and learning in the course of media analysis and production. They read, viewed and listened to a variety of traditional and popular culture media texts and learned to think abstractly about questions of authorship, audience, and purpose across all types of media. Children had rich technology and media production experiences in web, video, music, and video game production. Students of all ages were asked to think critically—asking questions of *how* media is constructed and *why* it is constructed the way it is—and our research evidence demonstrates that students as young as six years old showed significant progress in abstract thinking about media messages.

We offered rich professional development opportunities for classroom teachers in 2010 through two different programs. The *Open Doors Staff Development Program* reached 70 educators from across the region and across the country during the summer. Teachers who participated in the Open Doors program learned crucial media and technology integration skills and concepts while observing the summer program for children. They then planned a strategy to transfer what they had

learned to their own classrooms. Survey results show that 91% of participants felt confident that they could use media literacy instructional strategies in their classrooms. Another program, the *PVK Small Learning Community*, is targeted to reach 12 teachers from the Russell Byers Charter School. This program consists of 25 intensive hours of graduate-level instruction offered throughout the 2010-2011 school year. This program is designed to increase RBCS teachers' understanding of media literacy while supporting the development of their technology integration skills.

We are beginning to develop the quality of staff needed to roll out the program at the regional level. We hired a full-time curriculum developer who will compile the program's best practices and produce written curriculum documents for instructors. Our in-school mentor has been hired as a full-time technology coordinator at the Russell Byers Charter School and works year-round to help integrate media literacy and technology at the school. We have received a formal commitment from Wayne Elementary School in Radnor PA to become the second site for Powerful Voices for Kids in 2011, enabling us to pilot-test a program for scale-up.



## PROGRAM CONTEXT AND FRAMEWORK

*Powerful Voices for Kids* has been developed through collaborative research and planning by co-founders Renee Hobbs and Laurada Byers, supported over two years by grants from the Otto Haas Trusts (2009), the Wyncote Foundation (2010), the Verizon Foundation (2009), the Lenfest Foundation (2009), and the Byerschool Foundation (2010).

The *Powerful Voices for Kids* program transforms reluctant, passive learners into active and passionate citizens. For children ages 5 – 14, the program emphasizes self-expression and advocacy skills, reasoning, critical thinking and communication skills (including the social responsibilities of using 21st century technologies) as well as collaboration and conflict resolution skills.

When children are engaged and motivated in learning by the use of familiar media and technology tools, they realize the strength of their own voices, and develop confidence in using their powerful voices to advocate for themselves, their peers, and their communities.

We deepened the quality of the program in a number of ways during its second year in 2010. A comparison reveals the differences in the program over two years:

PROGRAM FEATURES	YEAR 1 (2009)	YEAR 2 (2010)
<b>Number of children enrolled</b>	Full day: 0 Half-day: 77 Total: 77	Full day: 26 Half-day: 57 Total: 83
<b>Number of program hours per child, summer program</b>	Full day: 0 Half-day: 64 hours	Full day: 140 hours Half-day: 70 hours
<b>Number of staff</b>	8	13
<b>Teacher: Student ratio</b>	7:1	7:1
<b>Number of teachers receiving professional development training</b>	Summer: 24	Summer: 70 School Year: 12 Total: 82



## POWERFUL VOICES FOR KIDS (PVK) 2010 SUMMER PROGRAM

**Focus of the Program.** The summer program was offered to students in grades K-9 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. from Monday through Friday during the month of July. The program was designed to connect school and learning with contemporary culture, using mass media, popular culture, and digital technology to engage students in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and production activities. Appendix A includes five sample lesson plans that provide a snapshot of PVK's unique instructional approach.

**Program Scope.** In 2010, the *Powerful Voices for Kids* summer program expanded its scope within its pilot site school. The program increased to serve 83 students from 30 neighborhoods in Philadelphia; we trained 13 new and returning instructors in media literacy pedagogy. We also launched a morning enrichment program for 26 students not enrolled in the academic remediation program offered by RBCS faculty, enabling these children to experience a full day of *Powerful Voices for Kids* programming. Additionally, we expanded enrollment to include alumni students of Russell Byers Charter School in grades 7, 8 and 9, and lengthened the instructional week to five days. Appendix B includes a list of program staff in 2010.

**Administrative Support.** The school administration at Russell Byers Charter School played a substantial role in helping to sustain and enhance the summer program. Increased financial support from the Byerschool Foundation enabled us to offer scholarships to nearly all participating families, keeping program enrollment fees at a modest level (\$75/weekly for half-day; \$150/weekly for full day). The school also covered the costs of additional staff members to support program management. In 2010, students were also provided with free bus transportation, free lunches and snacks. RBCS Founder Laurada Byers and Principal Drew Smith have inspired us to think about more ways to expand the program in the coming school year.

**Final Products.** Students enrolled in the *Powerful Voices for Kids* summer program created over 20 multimedia projects including comic books, video games, websites, fiction and documentary films, public service announcements, original songs and music remixes, and written work including news articles, essays, web content, and short stories. Students shared their work with peers, teachers, and parents across two days of group presentations at the end-of-summer celebration.

**Video Production.** Students created a number of video productions falling into three main categories: in-class documentation (often captured by students themselves), classroom exercises, and completed production work.

**Professional Media Experiences.** Students were also exposed to a variety of experiences with professional media-makers, including field trips to the children's television station, Sprout; the headquarters of the TV news aggregator website, Red Lasso; the *Philadelphia Inquirer* editorial office; and the Public Media Commons at PBS affiliate WHYY. Students interacted with and learned from several guest speakers including independent filmmakers, an advertising agency account executive, music producers, and a local television news crew, who produced a short news segment on *Powerful Voices for Kids*.

## SUMMER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**Kindergartners** learn “real” and “fake.” Kindergartners took their first steps into abstract thinking by exploring how reality is represented through media and producing their own media work. Students created multiple versions of themselves as superheroes, using digitally manipulated photographs combined with student artwork. As a final product, children filmed a puppet show. When we spoke to one kindergartner three months after the end of the program, he quickly recalled his learning, separating a stack of images from television shows into “real” and “fake” piles, with fiction and animation in the “fake” category and non-fiction and sports in the “real” category. He distinguished between cartoons and reality (“there are people who make the drawings talk”) and was able to identify advertisements easily.

**First graders** think abstractly about media. First grade students learned core media literacy concepts about authors, audiences, and the purpose of media messages (to inform, to persuade, to entertain). Lessons included role-playing (students played audience members like “old men” and “teenagers”) and decision-making (students used a unique visual display system to make inferences about purpose and target audience). Students enjoyed sharing stories, applying knowledge of new concepts to different kinds of media, and finding voice through small student film and art productions. They viewed the work of a professional filmmaker, videotaped themselves asking him questions, and were delighted to receive a video message from him, responding personally to their questions.

**Second graders** use media for self-expression. Second grade students focused on using various forms of media to express their creativity and points of view. Students integrated their own poetic writing into songs, commercials, and public service announcements (PSAs). They met with a local advertising specialist and created their own anti-littering video PSA, which was featured on the Philadelphia city government website ([www.philadelphiastreet.com](http://www.philadelphiastreet.com)). Other public service announcements were written, performed, and produced by students to deal with issues such as fighting and violence.

**Third graders** learn “media games” and media demystification. In addition to multimedia projects that included collaborative websites, music videos, and public service announcements, third grade students made great progress in learning about media through innovative games. In “Media Charades,” students used the conventions of charades to reinforce learning in core media literacy concepts including author, genre, media type, and purpose. In “Removing the Pedestal,” third grade students distinguished between a celebrity’s

public persona and his or her biography, exploring which aspects of their persona matched up to lived experience and which did not. In their games and media productions, third graders took their first steps as online researchers by practicing sound online research skills to find credible information.

**Fourth graders** discuss news versus gossip. Sparked by interest in the trade of basketball player LeBron James to the Miami Heat, fourth grade students began to openly discuss topical and controversial topics in entertainment news. Students discussed purpose, credibility, and point of view to separate well-reported news on important issues with poorly-researched or gossip-based reporting on celebrities’ lives. Students learned how they could create their own media messages in print, online, and through music to “talk back” to untrustworthy sources of information.

**Fifth and sixth graders** take social action through media. Fifth and sixth grade students created diverse, high-quality media productions to give voice to their own concerns about topics including violence in the community, drug abuse, and sexual harassment. Instructors modeled positive, socially-conscious media in film and music, drawing extensively from a body of youth media production work. Then students used professional experiences at media organizations like news aggregator Red Lasso ([www.redlasso.com](http://www.redlasso.com)) and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, as well as professional resources like the Temple University music studios, to create their own socially-conscious media messages. The students’ positive hip-hop remix, “Stop the Violence,” gave students voice as songwriters, singers, rappers, and filmmakers to express a positive message for their community.



**Fourth grade students began to openly discuss topical and controversial topics in entertainment news.**



**Middle school students** work on independent media projects. Four alumni students of Russell Byers Charter School participated in Powerful Voices for Alumni, an intensive all-day summer enrichment experience for middle and rising high school students. They completed an array of collaborative and independent media projects based on their media literacy learning through the month. A rising eighth grade student interested in video games used the video game software Scratch to create an interactive narrative about a day in his life. Another rising eighth grade student learned how to DJ using computer software to “mash-up” new and old music. After a workshop on copyright and fair use, he incorporated a political message about violence in the African-American community over the past twenty years to justify his use of copyrighted materials as a fair use transformation of his original sources. One student created multiple screencasts—video capture of a computer screen with simultaneous voiceover—in which she analyzed recent and “classic” shoe commercials using a set of media literacy critical questions. She created a multi-channel installation through which she could reflect on the analysis experience. Another student used slideshow software to create a multimedia poem describing her ambivalent and complicated relationship to media—a form of self-expression that, as she told us in an interview, she does not tend to experience in other academic venues.

**Morning enrichment students** study representation, comics, and video games. This year we taught three morning enrichment programs for 26 children in Grade K-1, Grades 2-3, and Grades 4-6. Because we were able to offer morning programs, these children had a full-day experience in the *Powerful Voices for Kids* program, for a total of 150 hours of instruction. Kindergarten and first-grade students took some of their first steps toward abstract representation by focusing on self-portraits and the avatars that represent them. These activities ranged from classic art-making practices like self-portraiture to novel media literacy techniques like creating a media collage from magazines. Second- and third-grade students learned about fiction and non-fiction comic art, making both individual and collaborative comic projects. They learned the codes and conventions of comic art and used this knowledge to tackle the social issue of homelessness. Children created a comic entitled *The Life of a Homeless Person*, which uses a combination of photographs, original drawings, dialogue and writing including a special commentary section on how homelessness is portrayed in children’s films. Students in Grades 4 - 6 learned video game production using Scratch, a free video game production program. They synthesized research on “flash mobs” in Philadelphia—those spontaneous and often controversial youth gatherings coordinated through social media—into simple interactive video games. They learned how to represent choices and consequences by considering the differing points of view of teenagers, parents, teachers, and police officers.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATORS

**Open Doors: Increasing Visibility Across the Region and Across the United States.** To increase the number of educators with interests in media literacy and technology integration at the elementary level, we developed a free program for educators entitled Open Doors. This program consisted of five 4-hour sessions of instruction. Each of the five workshop days had its own theme, guest speaker, and opportunities to connect concepts and skills to first-hand classroom observations of media literacy in action in *Powerful Voices for Kids* classrooms.

More than 70 local and national educators enrolled in one or more days of the program, including educators from elementary, middle, and charter schools from around the region and from states including Colorado, North Carolina, Virginia, and California. Participants could attend as many or as few days as they wanted; local educators generally came for one or two days, while those coming from other states generally participated in all five days of the program. Participants learned media literacy concepts and skills and developed plans of action to integrate media and technology into their own classrooms. As a result of exposure to this program, we were invited by one elementary school principal to bring *Powerful Voices for Kids* to Wayne Elementary School in Radnor, PA.



**PVK Small Learning Community: A Sustained Professional Development Experience for RBCS Teachers.** We continue to support the professional development needs of the RBCS faculty and, in the process, develop capacity for *Powerful Voices for Kids* staff to strengthen their own expertise in teacher training. We are offering a 20-hour program of professional development to RBCS faculty during the 2010-2011 school year. Using the *communities of practice* model, the goal of the program is to increase teachers' understanding of media literacy education and support their comfort in implementing technology activities with their own students. Participants will develop a written lesson plan that integrates media and technology into a classroom topic, either alone or in collaboration with another teacher, and will then assemble a sample showcase of student work and compose a written reflection resulting from the lesson.

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND DOCUMENTATION

**Staff Training.** We offered a more formal training program for new instructors in the *Powerful Voices for Kids* summer program in 2010; teachers received 10 days of training. As a result, they were better prepared and more confident in their role as teachers in 2010. Training included multiple classroom observations and consultation from Russell Byers School classroom teachers, role-playing and practice lessons, lessons on classroom management, and consulting and coaching by program staff.

**Video Documentation.** A full-time videographer captured 36 hours of classroom instruction in the 2010 program, along with several hours of student and instructor interviews. These video documents have been edited into six long-form narrative pieces that take viewers inside PVK classrooms. We have also created many short one-to-four-minute examples of instruction to be used in staff development and instructor training. In addition to professional videography, teachers and older students also participated in video documentation of their own classrooms. Students conducted interviews with other students and staff for their own short documentary projects, and instructors frequently recorded and reviewed their own classroom practices using FlipCam technology.

### **Teacher Reflections on the Learning Process.**

The *Powerful Voices for Kids* program is as much of a dynamic learning experience for instructors as it is for the students who enroll in the program. The 13 *Powerful Voices for Kids* summer instructors kept records of their classroom practice to identify their successes and areas for improvement in the classroom using Wikispaces, a password-protected online forum for group members to share writing and view that of their colleagues. These four themes emerged in teachers' reflective writing:



**Emotional Resiliency:** Some new instructors were exhilarated by their first teaching experiences and others expressed feelings of frustration. As one teacher wrote, "I still struggle with what ends up being over-ambitious lesson plans but I remind myself to focus on the important small strides that have been made; for instance, yesterday every student got a chance at holding and playing with a camera. Though I get frustrated at times, my overall outlook and sentiment towards my class and our progress together is so positive."

**Self-Assessment:** Many instructors dedicated a significant amount of their reflective writing to assessing how they taught, managed their classrooms, and how they grew as both teachers and learners. Teachers used their reflective writing to self-assess their own curriculum choices. For example, one teacher wrote, "I used a World Cup commercial to introduce my students to South Africa and apartheid and it went way over their heads! This did become a teachable moment...but I have to come better prepared when presenting media texts. I need to be a step ahead and ask myself: is this text developmentally appropriate for my students? If not, how can I make it accessible? And if I cannot make it more accessible, I should scrap it!"

**Classroom Management:** New teachers struggle to establish their authority in the classroom. We introduced teachers to specific instructional techniques from *Teach Like a Champion* (2010), a book on classroom management by Doug Lemov. Some teachers were not always effective in maintaining a respectful and orderly environment. One teacher wrote, "I did a poor job of establishing a strong voice at the beginning of today. There was constant moving around, getting out of chairs, needing band-aids, dancing, touching, complaining, all of which meant constant interruptions, and I hated turning into this disciplinarian for the sake of order. I am in search of that sweet balance between fun and learning." Other teachers began to gradually recognize the process-based nature of teaching and learning, as described by another instructor, "I know the goal is to get these kids excited about media and enable them to grasp important competencies and skills while still having fun, but I keep getting bogged down by some of the disruptive behaviors that interrupt class time. That said, I'm becoming increasingly aware of my students' resilient behaviors and how quickly they are able to quickly regain productive attitudes either after I use a strict tone or the class is disrupted."

**Situating Media Literacy within Broader Social Contexts:** Over the course of the month, many instructors considered how their lessons fit into broader educational and societal contexts. For example, one teacher wrote, "The theme that I am most excited to teach is media for social change. I am excited to make media that raises awareness about social problems, illuminates complexities, and inspires understanding and action across diverse groups of people. I'm hoping that by exposing my 5th graders to how media can be used for social change will empower them to be change agents. And if they are not, at least they will learn and hopefully enjoy the other facets of the program and become more critical of the media they consume; at the very least, they will strengthen their reading, writing, and collaboration skills."



## IN-SCHOOL MENTORING

**Full-Time In-School Mentor.** In the fall of 2010, John Landis joined the staff of Russell Byers Charter School full-time as their Technology Coordinator, having previously served as the in-school mentor for *Powerful Voices for Kids* during the 2009-2010 school year. In his new position, he oversees media and technology integration into classrooms year-round. In just under six months, the technology coordinator has:

- ◆ installed a small computer lab for 24 students in the lower level of the building
- ◆ organized and implemented a plan to put ceiling-mounted projectors into every classroom
- ◆ used an online blogging tool that students as young as eight years old have begun to learn
- ◆ installed an HD flatscreen television in the school's lobby to display student art and video work
- ◆ developed a plan for a one-to-one laptop program utilizing a portable laptop cart.

During the fall of 2010, John Landis met with all 400 students at least once a week and also offered after-school enrichment activities. He has designed and taught lessons in online ethics and privacy with students between the ages of 8 – 12. He has taught filmmaking and video game

production to older students as a component of storytelling and creative writing. He has also worked with classroom teachers to integrate media and technology into semester-long classroom expeditions, which synthesize academic learning with media analysis and production activities.

**Connecting to the Classroom: Activities During 2010.** All members of the RBCS staff agreed that more teachers used media and technology than ever in the history of the school. Here are some samples of classroom activities implemented in the spring and fall of 2010:

- ◆ Grade 6 students developed persuasive commercials to promote a school book club event
- ◆ PVK students developed an activity to explore visual storytelling using pictures from magazines
- ◆ Students in Grade 1 created a stop-motion animation on echolocation in bats.

## RESEARCH AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

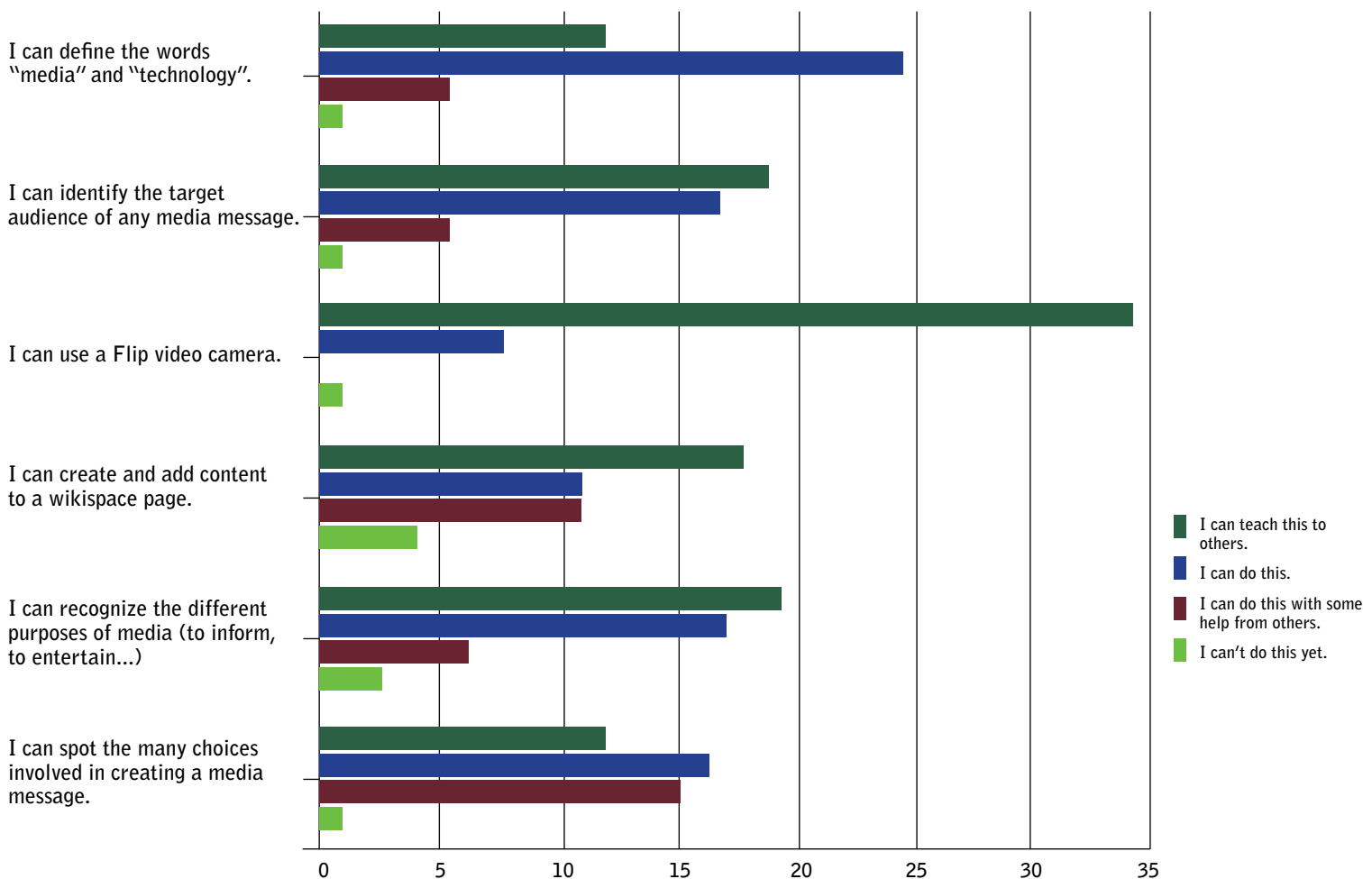
**Formal Research.** Two research studies were conducted in 2010. First, we refined a measure (used for the first time in 2009) for assessing children’s understanding of authors’ purpose and target audience using a *card sort* task. A sample of 40 children was tested during the first week of the program and again in week 4. These results were compared to a control group of children who were not enrolled in the PVK. Children in kindergarten, first, and second grades enrolled in the summer program did significantly better than peers who were not enrolled in the program. Children’s understanding of purpose and target audience is associated with the development of print literacy skills. We also collected data on children’s understanding of media and technology using a *concept mapping tool*. We are currently analyzing data that depicts students’ connections between media literacy learning and “home knowledge” of the media and technology that they use in their everyday lives.

### Summer Program Evaluation.

To assess program effectiveness, we asked 48 children in Grades 3 – 6 to complete an online survey, assessing whether the program accomplished its goals. We used a mix of open-ended and scaled items. As shown on Table 1, for most of the learning targets, children felt a sense of mastery, indicating that they can do these skills or teach them to others.

**Table 1. Children’s Self-Assessment of Learning**

Which learning targets did you meet this summer? Rate Yourself.



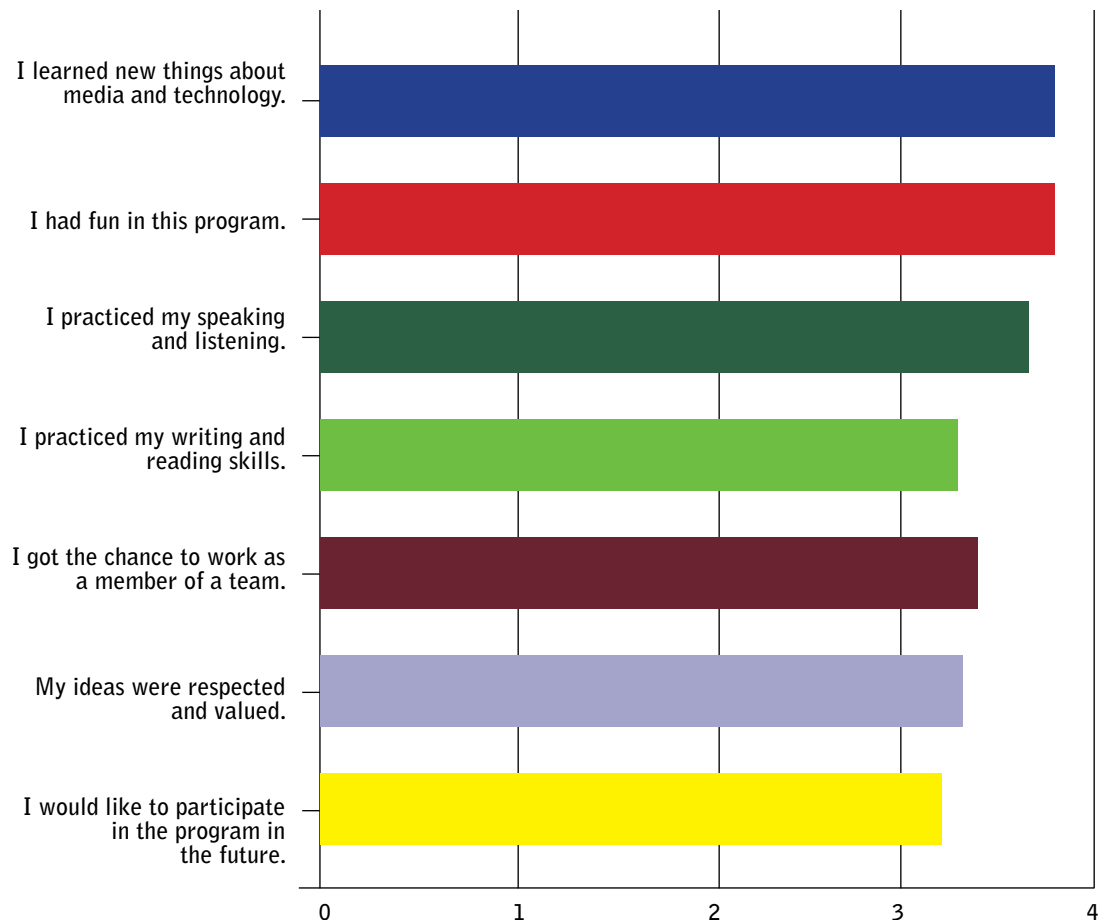
In an open-ended question, children were asked what they liked about the program. They offered these responses:

- ◆ I like when I got to make a dragon comic.
- ◆ I had a lot of fun this summer with all of my friends.
- ◆ I really had a lot of fun learning how to use and define media and learning how to make a movie and to use a flip camera.
- ◆ I liked talking about singers.
- ◆ I liked that we talked about LeBron.
- ◆ The teachers and the way they teach us.
- ◆ I liked when we made a song in Ms. Mona’s class.
- ◆ What I liked about this program is that I got to learn about technology.
- ◆ I liked making homeless people comics in Ms. Rachel’s class.

Then we asked 48 children in Grades 3 – 6 for feedback on the characteristics of the *Powerful Voices for Kids* learning environment. Children’s assessment of the quality of the learning experience was high. On a 4-point scale, children consistently ranked the learning experience highly, as shown on Table 2.

**Table 2. Children’s Assessment of Program Quality**

Think about your experience this summer and offer your opinion.





**Assessment of Open Doors Professional Development Program.**

We measured the success of the Open Doors program by asking participants to assess specific characteristics of the program and to self-assess whether the program had met specific learning objectives. Results shows that program participants valued many components of the program, as 92% of participants rated the workshops as better than other staff development experiences they have had in their careers. 91% of participants felt confident using media literacy skills and concepts from the Open Doors program in their own classrooms. One teacher wrote, “Because of the Open Doors program, I finally realize what I want to do in my school library/media center to make my curriculum more relevant to my students.” Appendix C provides an overview of the program content and Appendix D displays participants’ ratings of their own learning.

The flexibility of the workshop series allowed teachers with an interest in media literacy education to get a taste of the *Powerful Voices for Kids* pedagogy. While this approach allowed us to expose a large number of educators to the program, this design did not allow us to develop an appropriate level of structure for those who attended multiple days, which may explain some of the ratings of program satisfaction shown in Table 3.

One participant who attended only one day of the workshops nonetheless had a powerful learning experience with other educators: “My own motivation [was] reignited by the apparent passion and interest in the room.” Educators who attended multiple workshops commented on the program’s unique approach to learning. Many teachers identified daily classroom observations as the most rewarding aspect of their experience. One teacher explained, “I like the hands-on nature of what the students were learning as well as the way the instructors were learning [from one another].” Another teacher commented on the staff reflection model: “I think that this reflective practice is very valuable and made more so by the deliberate method in which you engage daily.”

**Table 3. Open Doors Participants Assess the Quality of the Learning Experience**

Quality of content:	
Theory, concepts and lectures	4.35
Quality of instructional team	4.64
Opportunity to be challenged and supported in learning	3.91
Model lessons and activities	3.90
Activities using Flip cam and online technology tools	3.83
Quality of reflection and discussion	4.35
Interaction with children, teachers and staff	4.17
Classroom observation experiences	3.81
Relevance of the program to my work	4.61

(N = 23) 5 = excellent, 4 = very good, 3 = good, 2 = fair, 1 = poor

## PARENT AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

**Parent-Child Workshops.** We have begun piloting parent workshop programs to enroll parents in supporting their children's engagement with media and technology. *Powerful Voices for Kids* instructors served as facilitators on two occasions, May 18 and May 25, 2010, to host a "Video Game Night." Parents and children ate pizza, played video games together, and learned to ask questions that connect analysis and critical thinking to game play. These included strategies such as prediction questions, "like and dislike" questions, and encouraging students to teach the game to parents.

### Parent Leadership Development.

In collaboration with the Home-School Association, we have formed a Parent Advisory Board with influential Russell Byers Charter School parents. The Board is responsible for working with *Powerful Voices for Kids* on future workshops, early enrollment in the summer program, and continuing to emphasize the parental role in media literacy education. The Russell Byers Charter School Alumni Association, consisting of parents of students who have graduated, and the Home-School Association have both actively participated in the enrollment and outreach process. The *Powerful Voices for Alumni* program was aided by community outreach from the Alumni Association. One parent of a student who participated in *Powerful Voices for Alumni* has said in Alumni Association meetings that the program was life-changing for her daughter, and was directly responsible for her daughter's newfound sense of focus and drive in her school work. The Home-School Association helped to raise awareness in the school prior to the program and will help market the Summer 2011 program.

### Press Coverage, Collaborations, and Conferences

- ◆ Renee Hobbs' editorial about the *Powerful Voices for Kids* program was published in the *Philadelphia Daily News* on July 19, 2010.
- ◆ A short TV news story about children's work exploring media coverage of flash mobs was presented on the local NBC affiliate.
- ◆ An online news article about children's examination of flash mobs in Philadelphia was published on the website Spot.U.S.
- ◆ Temple University's News and Communications bureau created a 3-minute video about our work, which is available on their website
- ◆ Our work in creating non-fiction comics with children resulted in a potential collaboration with the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia. We met with members of the Education staff whose impending move to Center City, Philadelphia has inspired us to have students create comics, short films and other media about the art collection and education philosophy of Barnes Foundation founder Albert Barnes.
- ◆ We shared our experience with *Powerful Voices for Kids* at various conference presentations, including the Digital Media and Learning Conference in LaJolla, California (February, 2010) and the World Summit on Media for Children and Youth in Karlstad, Sweden (June, 2010).

## FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

**Overview.** During 2010, we spent \$188,097 to serve 83 children and 82 educators, for a per-person cost of \$1,145. Appendix D presents the budget for the 2010 program.

**Income.** Total income in 2010 was \$189,690. We received \$150,000 from the Wyncote Foundation. Tuition fees brought in \$31,740 in revenues, an increase of \$16,946 from income earned in 2009. The Byerschool Foundation donated an additional \$7,950 to make the tuition fee more affordable for RBCS families.

**Additional Expenses.** The Russell Byers Charter School expended an additional \$84,293 for resources to support the program, including a summer program coordinator, bus transportation, school nurse, and facilities expenses.





I HOPE YOU HELP OUT AFTER READING THIS COMIC.



THE NAME OF OUR COMIC IS: "WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?"



THE HOMELESS NEED YOUR HELP!

ONE DAY A GIRL SAW A HOMELESS PERSON SLEEPING ON A BENCH.



THE BOY AND GIRL GAVE SOME OF THEIR ALLOWANCE TO A SOUP KITCHEN BECAUSE THEY WANTED THE HOMELESS TO EAT HEALTHY.

THE GIRL RAN TO GET HER BROTHER AND THEY BOTH SAW THE HOMELESS PERSON AND THEY WANTED TO HELP.



TO HELP THE HOMELESS THEY HAD A YARD SALE AND SOLD THEIR OLD THINGS SO THAT THEY COULD GIVE MONEY TO THE HOMELESS SHELTER.





## NEXT STEPS

The climate continues to improve for digital and media literacy in the United States. In the Knight Commission's 2010 white paper, "Digital and Media Literacy: A Plan of Action," Renee Hobbs recommends that a national network of summer learning programs be created to help integrate digital and media literacy into public charter schools. Such a national network is needed because schools could leverage in-school summer programs to fully realize the transformative potential of digital and media literacy education. Toward that end, in 2011, we aim to accomplish these goals:

**Program Materials Published and Available Nationwide.** We will publish a book with complete multimedia support materials about the *Powerful Voices for Kids* program and create an online community for educators who participate in the program. A book proposal is now under review at Corwin Press (Sage Publications, Beverly Hills).

**Increasing Visibility in the Charter Schools Community.** We believe that charter schools in low-income communities are receptive to innovation and ready to implement in-school summer learning programs like *Powerful Voices for Kids*. Over one million children in 3,500 schools are enrolled in public charter schools. Right now, 75% of American children receive no summer learning experience during the months of summer vacation. Much of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by the summer learning loss that disproportionately affects low-income children. By blending fun and education and keeping kids involved in learning activities during the summer, *Powerful Voices for Kids* can be a national model for urban charter schools. We intend to coordinate with the Philadelphia Alliance for Public Charter Schools to expand *Powerful Voices for Kids* in 2011. In addition to philanthropic support, direct city, state and federal funding will be needed to build, sustain, and expand the *Powerful Voices for Kids* network.

**Program Expansion.** We also think the time is ripe to test the viability of in-school summer programs for more affluent communities, too. *Powerful Voices for Kids* has received \$10,000 in funding to pilot a new program in Radnor, Pennsylvania at Wayne Elementary School. One of our instructors from our 2010 summer program will begin the process of in-school mentoring on-site in the Spring 2011 school semester. In the summer of 2011, a fee-based summer enrichment program will be offered to students along with a staff development program for educators. *Powerful Voices for Kids* will also inspire teachers to introduce the instructional practices of digital and media literacy during the academic year. By engaging students in enrichment activities that capitalize on their interests in mass media, popular culture and digital media, the program enables children to build positive relationships with peers and adults, use digital media and technology for learning, and develop critical thinking and communication skills.



Example screencast: Queen Latifah – “U.N.I.T.Y.” (1991)

Student 1: We listened to the song “U.N.I.T.Y.” by Queen Latifah. I got from the song [the message] that women should stand up for themselves and don’t let men abuse them.

Student 2: I did not like how men were hurting women. If you are a man and you are hurting women, you are a punk.

Student 3: I liked how Queen Latifah was boosting up girls’ self-esteem.

## APPENDIX A: SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

### LESSON 1: ANALYSIS

*Powerful Voices for Kids* instructors treat print, visual, audio, and digital media texts as equally important in analysis activities. Instructors were particularly successful integrating *screencasting*—using computer software to continuously capture a portion of a computer screen and simultaneously record commentary—into traditional analysis activities to foster both planned and spontaneous analysis of media texts. Students were able to use the mouse pointer to identify formal aspects of photographs and videos, and could easily select, rewind, and re-view portions of advertisements, music videos, and other media.

#### Example Lesson Plan:

#### “Create a Music Video Screencast” by Emily Bailin (Grade 4)

**LT1:** I can tell you the story in a music video and give my warm and cool feedback.

**LT2:** I can write a script with a partner from observations we make about a music video.

**LT3:** I can create a screencast using a script.

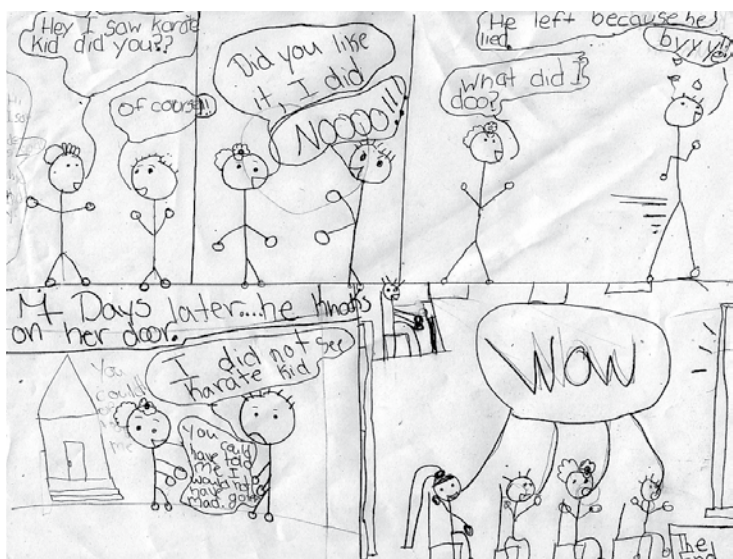
**Engagement** Q: What do we like about our favorite song or music video? What story is that song telling?

**ACCESS** *Introduce* a set of music videos by Public Enemy, Queen Latifah, and KRS-One. *Introduce* the Jing software by modeling a spontaneous screencast with another video.

**ANALYZE** Ask what is the story of the model video? How does the video connect to history? Give warm and cool feedback—what do we like/dislike and why? Who is the target audience? What evidence in the video supports our answers?

**ACT** Students *create* their own screencast in pairs. They view the video, discuss, plan, and compose their script, and then record a voiceover.

**Reflection** Q: How did the music videos we analyzed demonstrate the powerful voices of their authors? Give warm and cool feedback of each other’s work.



Two second graders transcribed recorded dialogue about the film *Karate Kid* (2010). Then they turned this dialogue into a story, including a fictional resolution that happens “seven days later.”

### Example Lesson Plan:

#### “Writing Realistic Dialogue” by Rachel Hobbs (Grades 2 & 3)

**LT1:** I can record and transcribe dialogue.

**LT2:** I can explain how the style of my dialogue affects how an audience might read it.

**LT3:** I can write and draw a comic using both real transcribed and fictional dialogue.

**Engagement** Q: What are your favorite movies? [Preparation for transcription exercise—record discussion in groups of two or three]

**ACCESS** Select and copy a section of the discussion that you like in writing. Define: “tone,” “dialogue,” “conversation.”

**ANALYZE** Discuss: What is the difference between dialogue and conversation? How and why did we select the portions we selected? What is the difference between dialogue and description (speech/thought bubbles or narrative text)?

**ACT** Students write and draw their own comic based on their dialogue.

**Reflection** Q: How did the words we transcribed change depending on how we wrote and drew the speech in our comics? Warm and cool feedback of work.

### LESSON 2: WRITING

Instructors consistently integrate writing activities into their lesson plans. Media productions generally begin with designing, planning, and writing out ideas as part of the brainstorming and planning process for video, video game, or web-based formats. Creative writing, journalism and non-fiction writing, and poetry are also important forms of expression for children in the program.



### LESSON 3: PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

Performance, public speaking, and debate are skills that students develop across the age spectrum. For students such as our rising first graders who are still too young to participate directly in video post-production, performance lends authenticity to activities that involve planning, scripting, and crafting. Kindergartners created a puppet show as their final product and performed for friends and family. Older students used performance as a means of adopting new perspectives—by role-playing as a particular player in a political debate or current event situation—and also to share classroom work that was not intended for online distribution. While some products are “polished” for distribution, other classroom exercises are best kept as forms of practice, skill-building, and play. Performance activities also strengthen students’ public speaking skills in a way that pre-recorded productions do not.

#### Example Lesson Plan:

#### “Perform a PSA remix” by Osei Alleyne (Grades 5 & 6)

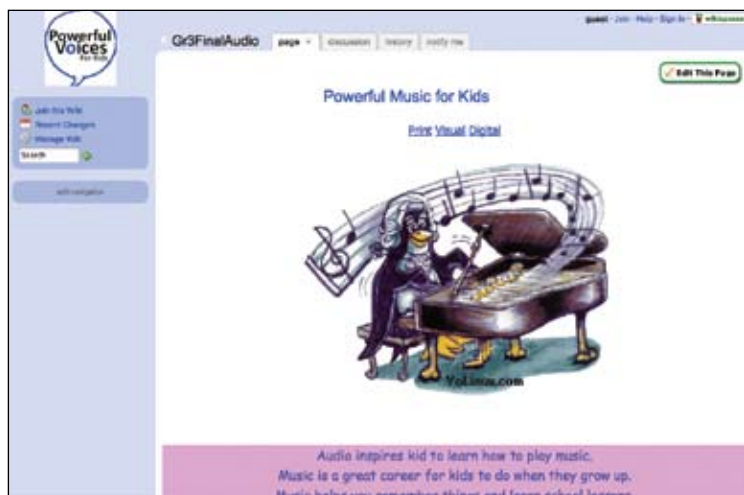
**Engagement** Q: What is a remix? What is a Public Service Announcement [review]?

**ACCESS** *Define:* remix, instrumental, vocal track, verse, chorus.  
*Listen* to a selection of instrumental versions of popular songs over which we will write new lyrics.

**ANALYZE** *Discuss* topical issues we want to address [these are drawn from video PSAs the children have already created]. *Choose* an instrumental song based on which you think will best help you write new lyrics according to your topic.

**ACT** In groups of four, *compose* one verses and one chorus that match the instrumental track you have selected.  
*Perform* your new remix in front of the class.

**Reflection** Q: How and why were our new messages appropriate for the music we chose? How and why were our remix vocals effective in creating a new message? Warm and cool feedback of performances.



One of four web pages developed by third grade students, who wrote about how different kinds of media can be used to help people: “Audio inspires kids to learn how to play music.”

### Example Lesson Plan:

#### “Helping People Through Media” by Valerie Laranko (Grade 3)

**LT1:** I can identify the four parts of every website.

**LT2:** I can use online searching, copy and paste, and screen capture to find media whose purpose is to help people.

**LT3:** I can design and create a website designed to tell people about helpful media.

**Engagement** Q: What print, visual, audio, and digital media have we seen or used that is designed to help people?

**ACCESS** Describe the four parts of every website: URL, Title, media (content), and links. Use simple and well-known examples to illustrate: Google, YouTube. In four teams each assigned to one type of media (print, visual, audio, digital), have students use online searching to *find* one picture, one reliable website, and one video related to helping people. Capture this media by downloading, using screen capture, and copy and pasting.

**ANALYZE** Review the media we have found through online searching. Discuss: How does it help people? What do we want to tell people about these media?

**ACT** Design the website on paper according to a format: one picture with five sentences underneath; one video with five sentences underneath; one link to an external website. Then create the website on Wikispaces using technical knowledge from a previous “profile page” assignment.

**Reflection** Q: Now that our information is online, who do we want to see it and how might we inform others in order to help them? Warm and cool feedback of student work.

### LESSON 4: GATHERING INFORMATION USING RESEARCH

Research skills are essential for students constantly exposed to endless information streams in a variety of media outlets. *Powerful Voices for Kids* instructors focused on simple online research concepts such as distinguishing between a search engine and a website and using keywords effectively.



Grade 1 students planned, storyboarded, and filmed a short “how-to” video about properly taking care of your pet.

## LESSON 5: CREATE A MESSAGE USING MEDIA PRODUCTION

Many of our student final products were the culmination of learning technical skills and analysis skills around diverse components of production including filmmaking, photography, comic art, video game programming, building a website, and audio and video remixing. These activities generally involve students in substantial levels of collaboration and problem-solving.

### Example Lesson Plan:

#### “Video: How to Take Care of Your Pet” by Kate Spiller (Grade 1)

**Engagement** Q: What pets do you have? How do you take care of them?

**ACCESS** Introduce a “how-to” video format with a simple example. Establish the purpose of our how-to video: to inform. Establish our target audience: pet owners—kids and adults.

**ANALYZE** Ask about common features of “how-to” videos—voiceover describing various steps in the process, etc. Discuss: what is the most important information we want to share with others?

**ACT** Write five steps collaboratively. Draw pictures of which frame [term learned in a previous lesson] will accompany which step. This is our storyboard. Practice saying the line loudly and clearly with our props (to be determined by the class). Film each line using students as actors and videographers—use tripod for a static shot and have students select the frame. Import footage and place in sequence using FlipShare editing software.

**Reflection** Q: Will our film reach our target audience? Does our film achieve its purpose? Warm and cool feedback of our work.

## APPENDIX B: POWERFUL VOICES FOR KIDS TEAM

**FOUNDERS:** Renee Hobbs and Laurada Byers

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### MEDIA EDUCATION LAB

Founder: Renee Hobbs

Program Coordinator: David Cooper Moore

Research Associate: Molly Schlesinger, Emily Bailin

Summer Program Instructors: Osei Alleyne, Emily Bailin, Nuala Cabral, Maria Cipollone, David Cooper Moore, LaShon Fryer, Rachel Hobbs, Tanya Jackson, John Landis, Val Laranko, Deirdre Littlejohn, Raphaële Saïah, Mona Shater, Kate Spiller

Videographer: Natasha Ngaiza

Open Doors Teacher Educators: Renee Hobbs, David Cooper Moore, John Landis, Kristin Hokanson, Sherri Hope Culver, Kelly Mendoza

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### RUSSELL BYERS CHARTER SCHOOL

Founder: Laurada Byers

Principal: Drew Smith

Summer Program Coordinator: LaTanya Redden

Technology Teacher: John Landis

Classroom Teachers: Aisha Al-Muid, Taylor Capaldo, Bill Fitzgerald, Ty Ivery, Amy Jared, Nora Hildebrand, John-Carlos Marino, Jasmina Rodriguez, Casey Sacchetti, April Tomarelli, Sarah Wing





## APPENDIX C: OPEN DOORS WORKSHOP AGENDA

MONDAY, July 19, 2010

### **An Introduction to *Powerful Voices for Kids* and Media Literacy**

**Activities:** Discuss program components and vision of *Powerful Voices for Kids*. Use Key Concepts of Media Literacy in a view and discuss activity. Explore our love/hate relationship with different forms of media in a collaborative writing activity. Connect concepts to observations and video recording of classroom instruction. Reflect on the day along with *Powerful Voices for Kids* instructors.

TUESDAY, July 20, 2010

### **Research and Scholarship in Media Literacy Education**

**Activities:** Compose interview questions for teacher-student interviews. Conduct formal interview research with summer program students. Collect video documentation and transcription for group discussion. Read and discuss national media literacy pedagogy and the National Association of Media Literacy Educators (NAMLE) Core Principles. Use Core Principles in a view and discuss activity, "Talking Back to Advertisements with Students."

WEDNESDAY, July 21, 2010

### **Teaching Popular Culture in the Classroom**

**Activities:** Share concerns and anxieties about teaching popular culture in the classroom. Play "Popular Culture Family Feud," in which teachers' concerns are the subject of a game show. Listen to and discuss the components of a pop song. Connect learning to a plan of action for integrating popular culture into a new lesson.

THURSDAY, July 22, 2010

### **Using Online Tools for Media Literacy in the Classroom**

**Activities:** Discuss the ethical considerations for communicating online. Compose, produce, and share a screencast activity—the simultaneous recording of a computer screen with voiceover. Give warm and cool feedback and provide online comments. Explore other blogging and commenting tools for communicating with teachers after the session. Observe use of technology in *Powerful Voices for Kids* classrooms. Participate in group reflection with *Powerful Voices for Kids* instructors and workshop participants.

FRIDAY, July 23, 2010

### **Reflective Practitioners in Action**

**Activities:** Experience examples of current student work, including a live performance of an anti-violence song, a video created by first grade students, and a comic book being developed by second- and third-grade students. Observe and participate as co-teachers in a *Powerful Voices for Kids* classroom. Group discussion: create a plan of action for next steps to bring back ideas to your workplace.

## APPENDIX D:

### EVIDENCE OF LEARNING: SELF-ASSESSMENT BY OPEN DOORS PARTICIPANTS

#### CORE IDEAS AND CONCEPTS

I can define digital and media literacy.	3.47
I understand the elements and rationale for the <i>Powerful Voices for Kids</i> program.	3.27
I can explain the theoretical rationale for <i>Powerful Voices for Kids</i> .	3.33
I understand that digital and media literacy is a community education movement.	3.23

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#### OBSERVING LEARNING IN ACTION

I can make connections between classroom observations and my own work as an educator.	3.69
I appreciate the relationship between play and learning.	3.86
I understand the relationship between media analysis and media composition.	3.44
I recognize some instructional strategies that support student media composition projects.	3.22

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#### TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

I can use a FlipCam to record an interview.	3.62
I can compose a media message using screen-capture tools.	3.56
I can download FlipCam footage to a computer and save it for later.	3.14
I can use an online blog (Posterous.com) to share ideas.	3.86

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#### PERCEIVED RELEVANCE

I have a plan to bring back what I have learned to my students and colleagues.	3.50
I recognize the importance of exploring ethical issues regarding the use of online tools.	3.67
I can explain the purpose of copyright and fair use as it applies to education.	3.67
I am aware of the role that media and technology play in the lives of children today.	3.77

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4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree

## APPENDIX E: PROGRAM BUDGET 2010

INCOME		INCOME	TOTAL	EXPENSES–MEL	EXPENSES–RBCS
Grant	Wyncote Foundation	150,000			
Grant	Byerschool Foundation	7,950			
Fees	57 half day participants	16,690			
Fees	26 full day participants	15,050			
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>			<b>189,690</b>		

### OPERATIONS

Executive Director	Renee Hobbs		26,000	
Administrative	\$14/hour		6,000	
Office	\$180/month (computer, phone, fax)		2,160	
Website	Maintenance, support		3,500	

### PVK SUMMER PROGRAM

Instructors	12 teachers @\$15/hr			36,000
Refreshments	Students, teachers		5,334	
Books			570	
Materials	Supplies		1,993	
Materials	Supplies		2,484	
T-Shirts	175 shirts @ \$12		1,440	
Video cameras	15 flip cams		1,386	
Data projectors			2,264	
Copying			1,706	
HS Intern	\$7.50/hr			1,575
Parking/Travel			456	

### CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Program Director	Full time with benefits			30,000
Benefits	Benefits at 34%			10,147
RBCS	Faculty stipends		9,000	
Faculty, Open Doors	Honorarium		6,000	
Program				
Meals	Small Learning Community		2,231	

### RESEARCH AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Research Associate			24,000	
Video Editor	Flat fee			5,000
Research Assistance	Consultant, research asst			5,000
Travel			2,352	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>188,098</b>	<b>87,722</b>

### RBCS ADDITIONAL EXPENSES

Facilities Expenses	\$35/hour, month of July			39,200
Bus Transportation	\$200/day x 7 buses			28,000
Coordinator	Summer Program			15,000
School Nurse	Month of July			2,093
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>				<b>84,293</b>





**POWERFUL  
VOICES  
FOR  
KIDS**

Find us online at  
[www.powerfulvoicesforkids.com](http://www.powerfulvoicesforkids.com)

