TAKE THE LEAD AT THE OLD VIC

PILOT PROGRAMME EVALUATION JUN—JULY 2018
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EDUCATION AT THE OLD VIC

For over a decade The Old Vic has developed and delivered dynamic, relevant and responsive education projects that provide stimulating and bespoke opportunities for young people from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Our renowned projects support schools, teachers and young people, offering high quality theatre and enrichment experiences. We do this through free theatre tickets to Old Vic productions, tailored learning experiences at the theatre, in the classroom and online, and innovative employability and training programmes for 16—25 year olds.

Our social mission is woven into the fabric of The Old Vic and what we do. We champion creative approaches to social mobility, education and engagement, seeking to support young people to be the best they can be.

‘I’m slowly beginning to ask more questions in class. Since I have more self-belief, I have more confidence in my studies’ Student
TAKE THE LEAD

Between 2015—2017, The Old Vic ran an ambitious employability programme with schools across the UK called Stage Business. Building on the strengths of this programme and incorporating research into social mobility and employability reports, we developed Take the Lead.

Communication, teamwork, problem solving, self-belief and self-management were identified in Youth Employment UK’s Employability Review 2017 as crucial skills for young people to succeed in employment. Drawing on The Old Vic’s extensive experience as a theatrical institution, and designed in collaboration with schools, businesses and creative learning specialists, Take the Lead uses theatrical techniques, creative workshops, special events and additional learning resources to explore these skills, giving young people increased ownership over their next steps.

Take the Lead launches fully in the 2018/2019 academic year. In June and July 2018 we ran a pilot programme across two London secondary schools.

TAKE THE LEAD AIMS

— To provide 50 students from two schools the opportunity to take part in a high quality bespoke education programme for free

— To enable participants to develop a toolkit of transferable skills that will empower them to have increased confidence over their next steps

— To support participants to develop the five core employability skills of self-belief, communication, teamwork, problem solving and self-management

‘I confidently approach new opportunities without being scared’ Student
‘I feel meeting new people is now a situation, especially in the workplace, I can confidently tackle’ Student
AIM ONE

To provide 50 students from two schools the opportunity to take part in a high quality bespoke education programme for free

In June and July 2018 Take the Lead was piloted with two selected schools, Newham Collegiate Sixth Form and St Thomas the Apostle Sixth Form.

Newham Collegiate Sixth Form is a free school, part of the City of London Academies Trust and the A Level Centre for a group of local Newham secondary schools. Students are academically high achieving but many lack confidence in communication. In order to fully test the structure and content of the programme we then identified a second school with a different demographic of students and needs, St Thomas the Apostle. The Peckham based school had previously been part of our Schools Club Programme with 24.1% of students eligible for free school meals and 31% eligible for pupil premium.

Schools selected students from across their sixth form who they felt would particularly benefit from the programme aims. The selected schools joined us at The Old Vic for a launch event and then undertook three half day workshops over three weeks, focusing on the following skills: communication, teamwork, problem solving, self-belief and self-management. Students were also provided with an additional printed learning resource and a digital platform to support their learning outside of the workshops.

Workshops, resources and digital content were designed by the Education and Community team alongside creative learning specialists and in consultation with teachers from the selected schools. We also created an online survey that was sent out to various business contacts across insurance, finance, consultant and arts industries to establish what different professions look for in prospective young employees, which was then incorporated into workshop plans.
AIM TWO

To enable participants to develop a toolkit of transferable skills to empower them to have increased confidence and ownership over their next steps.

To launch the pilot and introduce the programme to the selected schools, The Old Vic hosted an event in the Rehearsal Room. Students from both schools attended the two-hour Curtain Up event which included:

— An introduction from guest host, Jacob De La Rose, and the Education and Community team
— Guest speakers including performance poet Debris Stevenson, communications expert Amanda Parker and Old Vic Education and Community programme alumni Angel Isaac. All spoke about their individual journeys and the idea of celebrating mistakes before the guest host then ran a short Q&A
— A musical performance from musician and singer Taliwah who performed two of her songs and shared her story of leaving a major record label to start her own independent record company
— A short employability skills workshop which aimed to:
  — Introduce the five core skills of the programme
  — Encourage students to network
  — Interact with students from a different school
  — Introduce The Old Vic’s way of working
— A networking opportunity, for young people to meet each other, as well as Old Vic staff, Take the Lead facilitators and the guest host and speakers

Having listened to the guest speakers and been introduced to the different skills that were due to be explored during the programme, participants were asked to think about their own goals and to take ownership of the outcomes of the project.

To increase the accountability for these goals, we asked the young people to share their goals with a student from a different school. In their pairs each young person wrote an inspirational message to one another to help them achieve these goals. At the end of the programme we then delivered these back to the students.
To further encourage participants to take ownership of these transferable skills early in the process, we introduced an additional learning resource. The Prompt Book was a digital resource, with particularly relevant pages provided in paper form. It was created to give students the opportunity to further apply their learning from the workshops to their own experiences and included:

— An individualised personal development plan that participants could develop during and post-workshops, enabling them to set project goals
— Tips on how to build a CV
— Tips on writing effective cover letters
— How to write in a professional capacity (e.g. emails)
— Where to start your job search
— Tips on interview preparation
— Inspirational case studies from young people in employment from various industries
— Guidance on presenting their learning from the workshops to other students for the Curtain Call assembly
— Online interviews with various members of Old Vic staff
AIM THREE

To support participants to develop the five core employability skills of self-belief, communication, teamwork, problem solving and self-management

Workshops were designed to develop these five core employability skills, with each session building on the last and giving participants a practical toolkit to develop these skills and apply them to their own experiences.

Throughout the programme, participants engaged in the following three modules hosted in an Old Vic space:

LEARN YOUR PART

A half day workshop in The Old Vic Rehearsal Room focusing on communication, self-belief and self-management, which helped participants:
— Develop their communication skills through theatre techniques
— Identify some of their core strengths and skills
— Start the process of utilising their communication and other identified skills and strengths to be the best version of themselves

BUILD YOUR COMPANY

A half day workshop in The Old Vic Rehearsal Room focusing on teamwork, problem solving and communication, which helped participants:
— Apply the communication skills and other identified skills developed in Learn Your Part to building their own production companies and working together to pitch ‘the next Old Vic production’ to Old Vic staff
— Continue to identify strengths and skills within themselves and others
— Work as part of a team to solve problems creatively and present ideas effectively

TAKE TO THE STAGE

A half day workshop in The Old Vic Workrooms focusing on teamwork, problem solving, communication, self-belief and self-management which helped participants:
— Take the skills developed in the previous two workshops and apply them to ‘real world’ situations by participating in a ‘recruitment relay’. This took participants through the process of applying for a job including CV writing, interview technique, writing professional emails and planning ahead
— Reflect on and evaluate the learning process, both as individuals and as part of a team
— Celebrate themselves and their skills, and feel empowered to present the best version of themselves to others

To further embed the workshops aims, participants were encouraged to refer to the Prompt Book in between sessions to reflect on their learning, read relevant sections and think about their progress towards the goals they had set themselves.

The final stage of the project will see students host an interactive assembly for the rest of their school, using the skills they have learned to share their new knowledge in a creative and engaging way. This ‘Curtain Call’ will be scheduled in the 2018/2019 academic year for both pilot schools in conjunction with teachers, adapting to schools’ busy timetables. This event will be integral to assessing the impact of the project on how the participants present themselves and the improvement in public speaking.
‘It has helped me to build the confidence needed to say yes to opportunities. I will definitely try hard and get involved with more projects outside my study’ Student
OUTCOMES

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

22
- participants came from Newham Collegiate Sixth Form

19
- participants came from St Thomas the Apostle

79%
- of participants had never visited The Old Vic previously

88%
- of participants felt inspired to visit again

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

100%
- of participants rated the overall programme as excellent to good

- of participants rated the facilitators as excellent to good

- of participants rated the Curtain Up event as excellent to good

WORKSHOPS

0
100%
of participants rated Take to the Stage as excellent to good

0
98%
of participants rated Learn your Part as excellent to good

0
90%
of participants rated Build your Company as excellent to good

‘It was inspiring watching my classmates taking the lead alongside me’ Student
95% of participants felt they had a voice in the workshops

95% of participants felt inspired by the workshops

83% of participants made use of the Prompt Book

83% of participants rated the Prompt Book as extremely or very useful

**CORE SKILLS**

After taking part in the programme...

75% of participants improved their communication skills

70% of participants improved their self-belief

65% of participants improved their teamwork skills

60% of participants improved their problem-solving skills

58% of participants improved their self-management

95% of participants felt they had a voice in the workshops

95% of participants felt inspired by the workshops

83% of participants made use of the Prompt Book

83% of participants rated the Prompt Book as extremely or very useful

**ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK**
TEACHER FEEDBACK

100%

- of teachers rated the overall programme excellent to very good
- of teachers rated Curtain Up as excellent
- of teachers rated Learn your Part as excellent
- of teachers rated Build your Company as excellent
- of teachers rated Take to the Stage as excellent
- of teachers found the content extremely or very useful

67%

- of teachers stated their students used the Prompt Book

CORE SKILLS

Reporting against the workshop aims, teachers also evaluated their students’ development of the core skills:

Learn Your Part: communication, self-management and self-belief

Newham Collegiate stated that all these skills were developed
St Thomas the Apostle one teacher stated that all skills were covered, another highlighted teamwork, communication and confidence

Build Your Company: teamwork, problem-solving and communication

Newham Collegiate stated that all these skills were developed
St Thomas the Apostle highlighted teamwork and confidence

Take to the Stage: teamwork, problem-solving, communication, self-management and self-belief

Newham Collegiate stated that all these skills were developed
St Thomas the Apostle one teacher stated that all skills were covered, one teacher stated teamwork, problem-solving, self-management and self-belief

‘It was lovely for them to receive such detailed feedback. It showed the members of staff had really listened’ Teacher

‘It was really nice to hear the pupils speak so highly of each other thanks to you’ Teacher
A recent survey found that 65% of future jobs have not yet been invented which means that we need to be teaching young people to be resilient, creative and adaptable thinkers. With the current pressures on the education system and the move towards an exam focused system many students are being left behind and teachers are finding less time to concentrate on crucial transferable employability skills. Take the Lead was developed to harness the power of creative learning and the transferable skills that can be developed through creative engagement to support teachers, schools and young people in developing social mobility.

Across three weeks Take the Lead enabled us to work with 41 students from two contrasting schools, supporting them to develop five core employability skills of self-belief, communication, teamwork, problem solving and self-management. Participants were encouraged to take control over their next steps through an engaging and high quality creative learning programme which pushed and challenged them in a supportive environment.

Students were inspired by working in a theatre environment and also by the range of professionals that they were able to meet. Participants noted that they felt challenged throughout and enjoyed having space in the sessions to immediately use the skills that they were being taught, for example being able to undertake an interview in a high pressured environment and giving a presentation to members of The Old Vic Production team.

The programme was developed to support students of a range of abilities, studying a range of subjects and also taking a variety of career and further education paths. The idea of taking risks and making mistakes was implemented from the beginning of the programme and participants were challenged to take risks in a playful space that allowed them to grow in confidence throughout. Participants and teachers noted that they had developed skills in teamwork, empathy and communication through the way in which they were challenged to work as a team to complete tasks and also give constructive feedback to each other. The Prompt Book encouraged them to work on their self-management skills and allowed them to track their own learning.

‘The project was methodically and thoughtfully planned and delivered to ensure that students were able to develop specific skills that they actually need to succeed in the work place. [It] showed a keen awareness of what skills students need to develop. Simon and Sonia were enthusiastic, formed great relationships, set high standards, and created an environment in which students were meaningfully able to take the lead. Students were able to develop confidence, develop new skills, and work together very effectively. [It] was a very innovative way of using theatrical skills and drama exercises to help students to develop professional skills’ Teacher
RECOMMENDATIONS

Theatre engagement
As we move to working with 20 schools and 1,000 students the delivery of the programme will shift to be in schools. To keep the connection with the building and theatre we will look to keep the Curtain Up event at The Old Vic and offer participants the opportunity to come and watch a production.

Prompt Book
To encourage the development of self-management and to encourage participants to take increased responsibility over their development we will look to give each student a printed version of the Prompt Book. We will also develop the online content by including interviews with professionals from a range of businesses.

Teacher Involvement
To support schools and teachers and to have a wider impact on students not engaged directly with the programme we will be developing the teacher involvement in the project. We will do this through an initial meet and greet, a CPD session and a supporting teacher resource pack which will include additional creative exercises, signposting for further projects and advice and tips on how to make the most of the programme and extend the learning of participants.

Business Involvement
To make the content as varied as possible and to expose participants to a range of career paths we will develop the involvement of professionals from a range of businesses. This will include ensuring a variety of speakers at the Curtain Up event, expanding the online interviews to include a range of professionals from different contexts and inviting professionals to be involved with the workshops.

‘I hope this programme will continue to inspire other students and make them more confident. Please keep it up’ Student