

## NEW YORK

### English/Language Arts

Drawing on research that links the development of **personal narratives** to improvements in overall school performance and in personal identity development, the curriculum engages students in an **authentic writer's process** including:

- Drafting
- Reviewing
- Reflection
- Editing
- Research
- Re-writing their own original stories, plays or scripts

Students also learn to apply **story-writing techniques** to plot, theme, character development, and dialogue.

The writing involved in the contest process, as described in the *Curriculum*, allows students to amply meet all four Learning Standards, in particular:

Standard 2: "As speakers and writers, students will use oral and written language for self-expression and artistic creation."

### Health Education

In the process of discussing, researching, writing and analyzing the topic of masculinity students will develop such Health Education **literacy and skills** as:

- Gender analysis
- Relationship management
- Communication
- Decision making
- Advocacy

As students write for the "What's the REAL DEAL?" contest, they apply their increasing functional knowledge of **sexual health, sexual risk** and **violence prevention to real life situations**. The learning activities in the unit include:

- Role plays
- Research
- Creative writing
- Reflection portfolios
- Community action
- Discussion

Standard 1: Personal Health and Fitness

#### Health Educational Navigational Stars:

Standards-based: "maintain and enhance personal health", "manage personal and community resources."

Skills driven: students "learn, practice and apply skills successfully, numerous times, with positive reinforcement and social support."

Learner centered: students "construct their own knowledge and skills and personally apply them to relevant health situations."

Strength-based: "building on young people's existing strengths, skills and competencies."

Authentic: "application of health knowledge and skills in relevant situations."

### Theater Arts

Students create, research, develop and perform original plays or scripts about masculinity. They can perform the plays or scripts they create for the school and for the wider community, as they become advocates on issues around masculinity. Field reporting from around the world suggests that projects that engage adolescents in writing and performing thematically relevant scripts can lead to increases in self-esteem, to greater civic engagement among youth and to increases in knowledge about sexual health issues.<sup>1</sup>

Standard 1: Creating, performing and participating in the Arts  
Standard 2: Knowing and using Arts materials and resources

***Blueprint for teaching and learning in the Arts:***

***Theater*** strands:

- Theater making
- Developing theater literacy
- Making connections
- Working with community resources
- Exploring careers and life long learning

**Social Studies/ Civic Engagement**

Students discuss, research (by applying the critical evaluation of sources) and analyze “change and continuity”; and “cause and consequence”; in society over time through the lens of masculinity. All the learning activities in the lessons on masculinity have extension activities specifically for Social Studies, in order to bring the learning on masculinity into the context of a school’s regular Social Studies content.

Standard 5: Civic Engagement, Citizenship, and Government:

“Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of ...the basic civic values of American constitutional democracy; and the roles, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship, including avenues of participation.”

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<sup>1</sup> For example, one such project reported outcomes that were at least partially attributed to the intervention, including: changing attitudes among adults toward adolescents’ need for education; increased school attendance; changed gender norms (e.g., girls and boys no longer sitting separately at meetings, greater latitude for girls to speak with boys); greater utilization of health services, increased community goodwill toward project; increased motivation among peer counselors; reduced consumption of pornography (a project aim); drop in number of pregnancies and abortions among teenagers and unmarried girls. See United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 2006. “Art Is In Our Blood: Educational Street Theater in Sri Lanka.” In: Case Studies from RHIYA: Good Practices for Creating an Enabling Environment EU/UNFPA Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in Asia (RHIYA).