

PRIME TIME
FAMILY
READING



PRIME TIME
PRESCHOOL

TOGETHER/
UNIDOS



National Endowment for the Humanities
ENGAGING YOUTH

IDEA LAB



PEOPLE &
STORIES/
GENTE Y
CUENTOS



MISSION
US

NATIONAL
HISTORY DAY



 NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

Greetings,

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is a federal grant-making agency that awards competitive grants to institutions and individuals for humanities-focused projects. NEH grantees are from cultural institutions such as museums, archives, libraries, colleges, universities, public television and radio stations. NEH-funded projects vary from seminars for teachers and scholarly publications to digital apps and documentary films.

This report highlights six NEH-funded projects designed to support youth and their families, specifically urban and at-risk youth. These programs demonstrate the diversity of the agency's work and the many strategies for engaging young people. Through their focus on humanities education, collaboration, and community building, the programs benefit young people across the country. These are just a few examples of how NEH funding fuels innovation, increases communication, and strengthens communities. Some of the programs mentioned in this report, such as Together/Unidos, engage smaller groups of teens and young adults in local activities while others, like National History Day, engage thousands of children and teenagers through nationwide initiatives.

I am proud to say that the content of this report was produced entirely by student interns at the NEH. The layout, graphics, and design of the pages you are about to read are the product of a student practicum at the Washington, DC campus of Boston University's Center for Digital Imaging Arts. Because of the students' hard work, the NEH was able to compile these reports without the use of taxpayer funds. I hope that you will share this report with your staff, constituents, and colleagues.

Sincerely,

Courtney Chapin

NEH White House Liaison and Director of Congressional Affairs

Building communities through the humanities.



People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos students

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1

PRIME TIME FAMILY READING TIME

Introduction

Early childhood education with a focus on reading and critical thinking equips a child for future success. The mission of PRIME TIME Family Reading Time is to combat intergenerational illiteracy by engaging young children and their families in reading and discussions. PRIME TIME was created by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities (LEH), an NEH-funded state humanities council (see side bar). Through NEH's Federal/State Partnerships Office, PRIME TIME has been adopted in 42 states across the country.

PRIME TIME has seen huge growth since its inception in Louisiana in 1991, and now has over

1,492
sites

These sites are located in

42
states

Across the nation each year, PRIME TIME has as many as

57,761
participants

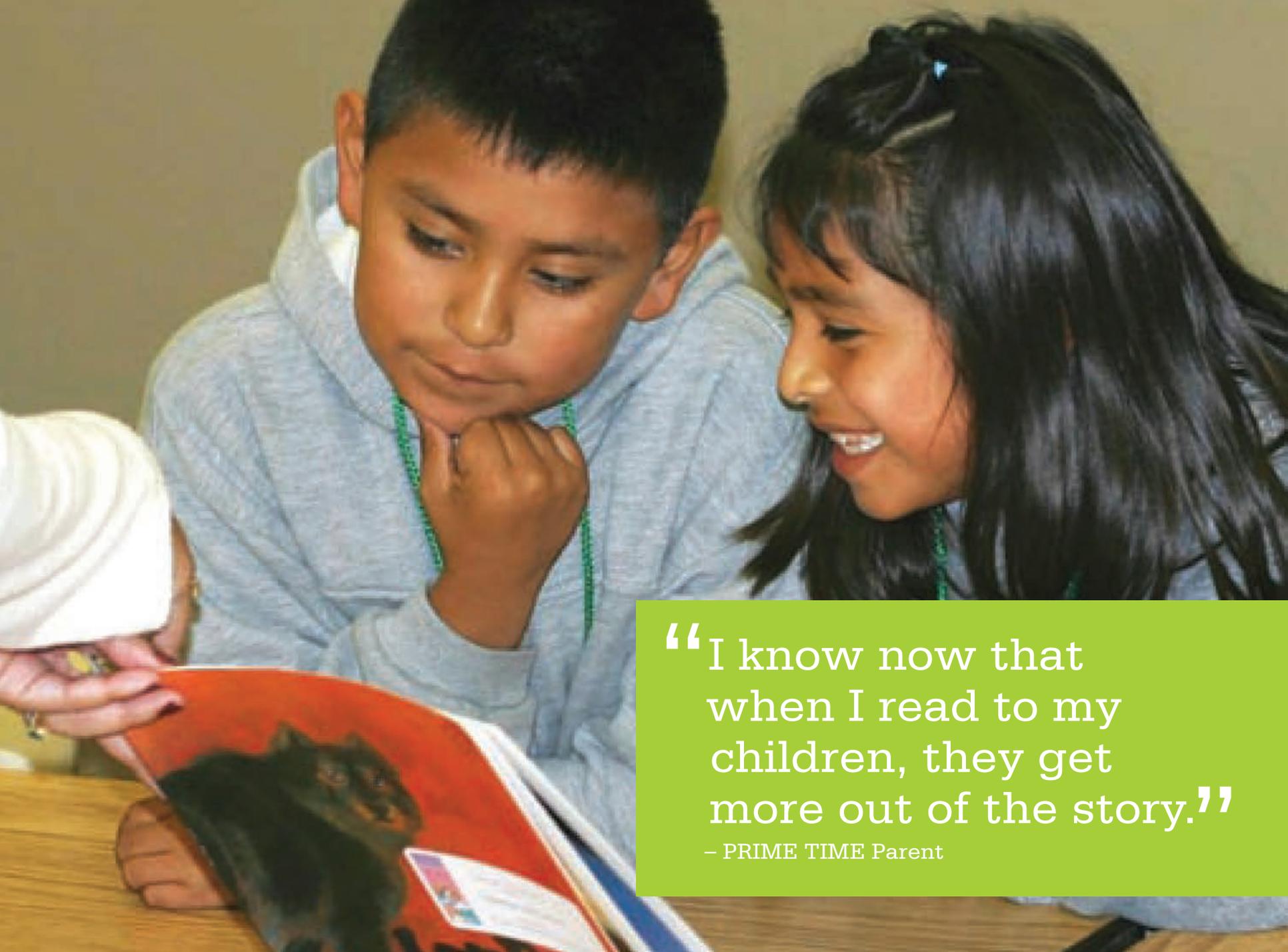
How It Works

PRIME TIME is a set of unique, humanities-focused, and outcomes-based programs designed to engage underserved families in an exploration of the humanities and early childhood education.

PRIME TIME Family Reading Time combines storytelling and discussion in one 90-minute session per week for 6 or 8 weeks. A storyteller reads beautifully illustrated, award-winning children's books that include culturally diverse stories from around the world. Children engage with fairy tales, folk stories, fables, historical accounts, and poetry.

The discussion leader then guides the group to personally connect with literature by asking open-ended questions. The program demonstrates how literature can enrich one's life. It models family bonding through literature by providing families with critical information on library resources to continue reading together after the program ends.

To recruit participants, PRIME TIME coordinates with the host library, schools, community centers, churches, and after school programs. Each PRIME TIME program provides resources for up to 25 parents/caregivers and their children (ages 3 to 10) to participate. The program provides transportation, books, and meals.



“I know now that when I read to my children, they get more out of the story.”

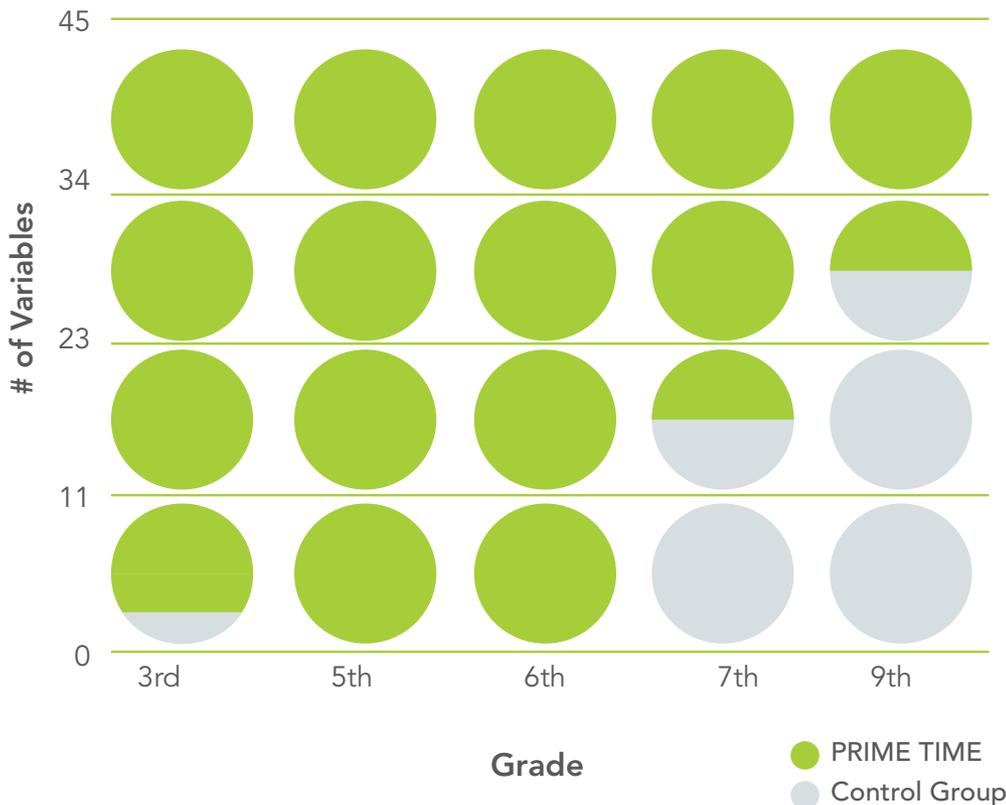
– PRIME TIME Parent

10 YEAR STUDY RESULTS

The Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities commissioned an impact study chronicling 10 years of PRIME TIME from James Edward Barr, Ed.D., Professor Emeritus Nicholls State University. The study shows that students who participated in the PRIME TIME program during their early elementary years (1st through 4th grade), performed at a higher level on Louisiana state exams.

iLeap Performance Ratios

of Variables PRIME TIME Participants Scored Higher vs. Control Group



Affiliations

PRIME TIME is always looking for state and local institutions to become affiliate members. PRIME TIME Affiliates are independently funded sites located outside Louisiana. Affiliates can be statewide institutions (humanities councils/departments of education), regional agencies (literacy councils/library systems) or individual libraries, schools, community-based centers, etc. that are self-supported, administered, and implemented. More information can be found here: <http://leh.org>.

Training

PRIME TIME provides training workshops for those seeking involvement both in Louisiana and around the country.

Initiatives

The program includes a number of focused initiatives: PRIME TIME Family Reading Time, PRIME TIME Preschool, PRIME TIME Teacher Institutes for Advanced Study, and PRIME TIME Homeroom (an upcoming teacher professional learning initiative).

For More Information

Visit the Federal/State Partnership page at www.neh.gov to find more stories about state humanities councils' projects.

2

PRIME TIME PRESCHOOL

Introduction

PRIME TIME Preschool, a subdivision of PRIME TIME Family Reading Time, is a unique program for educationally and economically vulnerable Louisiana families with children between the ages of 3 and 5. PRIME TIME Preschool introduces young children to the humanities and literature in a way that is developmentally appropriate and engaging. PRIME TIME Preschool focuses on literacy acquisition and early literacy skills needed for school readiness, the development of higher-order thinking skills, and new opportunities for experiential learning. PRIME TIME Preschool demonstrates how NEH-funded programs can be adapted for new audiences.

How It Works

PRIME TIME Preschool is made available by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities through partnerships with childcare centers, schools with preschool programs, Head Start programs, and other educational facilities. Participants in PRIME TIME Preschool programs meet for 90 minutes a week for six weeks in a venue provided by the partner organization. The program focuses on literacy skills that are essential to early childhood education. Facilitators give parents tools to share books with their children by equipping them with questions that encourage critical thinking, ways to make reading enjoyable and relevant, and ways to demonstrate a love of learning.

119%
attendance
growth

comparing attendance numbers from session 1 to session 6

82
participants

children 3 to 5 years old and their parents/caregivers graduated

160%
participant
increase

from first to second year

81%
family
retention

with families who participated in four or more sessions

100%
of parents

said attending PRIME TIME Preschool positively changed the way they read and discuss books as a family



““ When parents feel that their child’s school is offering every opportunity for extended learning, it promotes confidence in the school. ””
– Rochelle Wilcox, PRIME TIME Preschool Program Coordinator & Director, Wilcox Academy of Early Learning, New Orleans, LA

““ It has made my son want to read more books. He wants me to read to him. He now brings books for us to read. ””
– Parent, Jonesville Elementary School, LA



Partnerships

All PRIME TIME programs are partnerships with schools, libraries, childcare centers, or other public service venues. In fall 2012, LEH first implemented PRIME TIME Preschool in 55 schools and childcare centers in Catahoula, Orleans, and Sabine parishes in Louisiana. LEH annually offers several rounds of grant opportunities for potential host venues to receive funding for PRIME TIME programs. LEH funds programs through the funding it receives from the NEH as one of 56 state humanities councils.

3

NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Introduction

Sometimes the best way to learn is by creating — each year students involved in National History Day create original films, live presentations, critical research papers, exhibits, and websites that bring history to life.

How It Works

National History Day (NHD) is a national academic competition, for both elementary and secondary school students, that emphasizes gaining new historical knowledge through primary and secondary research. By creating a competition for students, NHD raises historical awareness and ignites a passion for knowledge in America's youth. Each year, more than half a million students are encouraged by teachers nationwide to participate in NHD. Students compile, analyze, and interpret historical data through research at libraries, museums, archives, oral history interviews, and exploration at historic sites. Each student then conveys what he or she has learned through original papers, websites, documentaries, and performances that are judged in competitions beginning at the local level. Winning students advance to state and national competitions. The top submissions are entered into the Kenneth E. Behring National History Day Contest held each June at the University of Maryland at College Park. The NEH sponsors 16 awards presented annually to students at the National Contest. Winning students are named National Endowment for the Humanities Scholars.

**2,400
students**

and their parents and teachers gather each year at the University of Maryland, College Park for the Kenneth E. Behring NHD Contest

**Over
600,000
students**

participate annually in all U.S. states and territories

**All 50
states**

currently have NHD programs in addition to Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, China, Korea and South Asia NHD affiliates

In 2011, President Barack Obama awarded National History Day a

**National
Humanities
Medal**

“ Students have always told us how much they loved their NHD experience and how it has changed their life, both in their academics and their careers. History not only teaches students about the stories of our past, but is vital to creating a generation of young people who can apply these lessons to the future. ”

– Cokie
Roberts



“ I have learned there is always a different side to the story that’s just under the surface that’s waiting to be discovered, and that no opinion is not worth at least some level of consideration, no matter how outlandish it may seem. ”

– Student Participant

16 awards sponsored by
NEH are awarded each
year at the National
Contest in Maryland

“ This is as nearly a perfect curriculum as possible, because it teaches research, writing, product development, technology use, and personal skills as in learning to interview. ”

– Teacher Participant





Fast Facts:

- NHD can be integrated into any social studies or history classroom to help teachers expand and enrich the existing curriculum.
- NHD developed assessments that can be used to structure and monitor student learning through research projects.
- NHD annually conducts a one week summer institute for middle and high school teachers. The structure of the summer institute is focused on a topic of historical significance and is held on location.
- NHD awards annual scholarships to universities and colleges for students who submit outstanding entries.

Recognizing Educators

National History Day provides awards to recognize exemplary teachers and educators from across the country:

The History Channel Award for Service

The History Channel sponsors the History Channel Award for Service, presented to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to history education through service to the NHD program. The winner receives a \$5,000 cash prize.

The Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year Award

The Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year Award recognizes outstanding NHD teachers. Two state winners, one at both the junior level and senior level, are selected from each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense Schools, International Schools-Asia and the U.S. territories. The winners of the national awards are selected from among the state awardees. Each state winner receives \$500 and the national winners receive \$10,000.

4

PEOPLE & STORIES / GENTE Y CUENTOS: STORY TALK

Introduction

People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos is an educational nonprofit dedicated to introducing new audiences to their literary heritage. The NEH has supported this nonprofit through major grants to various projects, including a recent \$300,000 grant to implement the Story Talk program. Story Talk is a youth-focused discussion series that includes readings and in-depth explorations of contemporary and classic short stories. The program helps young people apply literary themes to their personal experiences while allowing them to communicate with their peers across cultural, ethnic, and class differences.

How It Works

In cooperation with 20 public libraries in 12 states, People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos provides 80 Story Talk series made up of groups of 15-20 teenagers. Each series is 8 weeks with one 90-minute session per week. A trained program coordinator meets with groups of teens to read aloud, in English or Spanish, a short story with thematic depth and literary value. The session culminates in a discussion about the themes present in the works and how each person can relate to them.

People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos measures and documents public benefit with a self-reporting survey that determines participants' assessment of their growth and comfort level with their reading and communication skills. Program coordinators submit a final report assessing progress of participation and the depth and complexity levels of the discussions over the eight weeks.

1,500
participants

in People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos programs regionally and nationally over the course of a year

80
Story Talk
Series

held each
year in
conjunction
with over

20
Public
Libraries

12
States

currently
hosting
programs



“ It breaks down stereotypes by showing common experiences through literature. ”

–President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities
Coming Up Taller Awards

“ People & Stories provides a glimpse of the world of the humanities, opening students’ minds to critical thinking and problem solving. ”

– Rev. Brian McCormick, President, Martin House Community for Justice Foundation

More Programs

People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos began in 1972 with the mission to create greater access to literature, focusing on populations and communities with limited educational opportunities. Many of the initiatives, like Story Talk, offer reading and discussion programs in English and Spanish.

In addition to programs geared to youth, People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos runs programs that reach individuals in residential treatment facilities, prisons, homeless shelters, adult education programs, libraries, and senior centers.



5

IDEA LAB

Introduction

What does the “pursuit of happiness” really mean? Students from across Oregon gather in Idea Lab, a summer program run by Oregon Humanities (OH), to discuss happiness and how people of different ages, ethnicities, and incomes experience and pursue it. Oregon Humanities is one of 56 state humanities councils funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

How It Works

Idea Lab is a three-day residential learning experience in which 20 high school teachers and over 100 rising seniors explore the pursuit of happiness through workshops, lectures, films, and discussions. Since 2006, Idea Lab has provided teachers the opportunity to develop professionally while creating a meaningful, college-like experience for high school students between their junior and senior year. Teachers and students take courses together, which sets Idea Lab apart from most other continuing education and college readiness programs. Idea Lab is supported by the NEH, Oregon Humanities, foundations, and individual donors. This support goes toward fellowships and scholarships, which underwrite the program costs for participants. As a result, while Oregon Humanities' actual cost per student is \$700, the fee per student is \$150, which many schools, districts, and families split (see side bar).

24
teaching
fellows

from all around the state of Oregon were selected this year to participate in the course

11
fellowships

will be awarded to teachers by OH for the summer program

45
credits

for continuing education can be earned by teachers by participating in an Idea Lab session

70
student
scholarships

have been awarded by Idea Lab for the Summer Scholars Program

““ Our teachers come from a variety of disciplines...they come together to design a curriculum that is just right for this group of pretty remarkable students who attend Idea Lab to enhance their experience within a three-day period. ””

– Alicia Crawford,
Program Coordinator

““ I work with students all the time in the classroom, but I seldom get a population of students that is homogeneous in the sense that they’re all very rigorous and critical, smart and gifted academically. ””

– Idea Lab Instructor

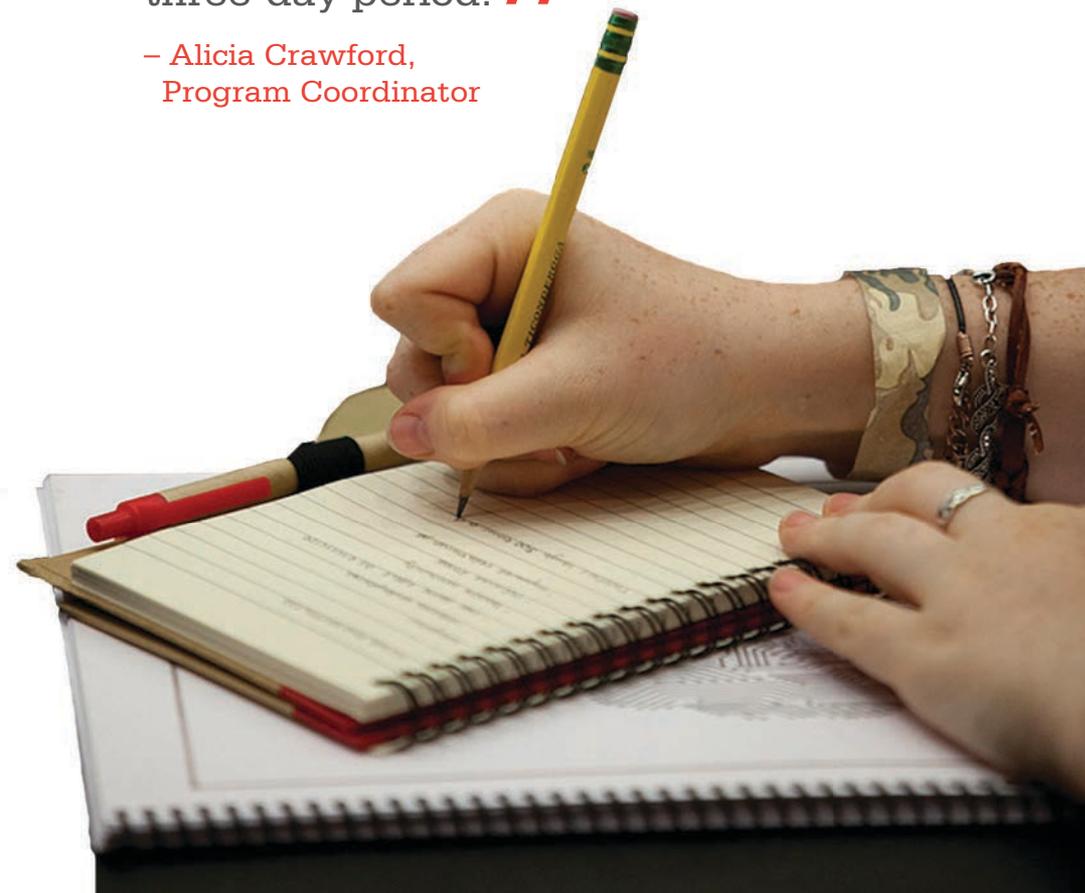


Sponsorship Options

In order to encourage broad participation statewide in Idea Lab, Oregon Humanities (OH) offers several options for Oregon schools and families. Oregon Humanities covers room and board costs for all teachers and students, and offers travel stipends for those who qualify.

Sponsorship and Cost-share Options	Who pays teacher honorarium?	Who pays the student fee*?
A. School Sponsorship	School	School
B. OH Sponsorship	OH	OH
C. School & Family Cost-share	School	Families
D. School & OH Cost-share	School	OH

*\$150 Fee (Five to ten students = \$750 - \$1,500)



6

TOGETHER / UNIDOS

BOOK TALK FOR KIDS & PARENTS

Introduction

Studies demonstrate that children begin to lose interest in reading for fun around ages 9, 10, and 11. As a result, the New York Council for the Humanities created Together/Unidos to focus on sustaining the desire to read in children. The program involves parents in the process to equip them with educational tools.

How It Works

Together/Unidos offers a forum for parents and their children (ages 9 to 11) to gather at their local library to talk about books and humanities ideas. The New York Council for the Humanities, funded in part by the NEH, runs the program with libraries across New York. Before each of the six 90-minute sessions, the family reads either a picture book or a novel that explores courage, freedom, or community—the three program themes. During each session, dialogue between parents and children fosters an educational atmosphere and further emphasizes the importance of reading. A librarian and a local humanities scholar co-facilitate each Together/Unidos session. In addition to the Council's sponsorship, Together/Unidos received NEH funding as a part of the We the People initiative.

17
libraries

across the state of New York have recently held Together/Unidos programs

8-15
families

per reading program

6
sessions

each session lasts

90
minutes

30
copies

of each book (15 in English, 15 in Spanish) are sent to the library from the NY Council

\$1,000
stipend

is awarded by the Council to successful applicants. It contracts directly with the library to supply all books and necessary expenses such as childcare and materials

“ We have been continuing to discuss books as a family. [The program] has helped us become better readers and taught us what books are. They are not just paper and ink; they are precious. ”

– Parent Participant

“ Reading is not something I usually like to do, but I loved the [Together] program at my library... Most of the books we read and discussed were about people who had challenging problems to solve and I learned that we can grow from solving the problems that come in our lives. ”

– Child Participant



Expanding Together/Unidos

Potential sites can apply to host the series through the New York Council for the Humanities. The Council offers two online webinars for its Together program, “Introduction to Together,” which introduces potential host sites to the program, and a “Host Site Coordinator Orientation” for host sites.

It is now offering a new, community-themed book list made up of six wordless picture books and graphic novels, which will serve English language learners and struggling readers.

7

MISSION US

Introduction

The National Endowment for the Humanities funds the creation of digital education programs to deliver humanities content to students. *Mission US* is a free, interactive, online game that allows players to learn about particular eras in American history through a role playing game. The game recently won a gold medal at the Serious Play Conference in Redmond, Washington for its innovative approach to historical education.

How It Works

Students assume the role of a young person of a particular time period and must navigate historical settings while investigating primary documents. The first mission, "For Crown or Colony?" examines the different perspectives of British rule in the weeks leading up to the Boston Massacre. The second mission, "Flight to Freedom," depicts the complexity of slavery and the road to liberation. Each mission is accompanied by an Educator Guide equipped with background information, related activities, and additional resources to help teachers supplement the game's exploration of themes in American history. WNET New York created the program with funding from NEH's Division of Public Programs. WNET created an iPad app with additional NEH funding.

50
states

nationwide participated in a study by the Education Development Center, which concluded that there were significant gains in student comprehension of American history

9,700
teachers

have used "For Crown or Colony?" in their classes

1,000
students

in 7th and 8th grade have been exposed to *Mission US* in the classroom

95%
of teachers

in the study said that their *Mission US* students developed greater understanding of historical perspectives on the Revolutionary Era than the students in comparison classrooms

“ Teachers need more resources like *Mission US*. It engages students and fosters interest in a neglected subject area. *Mission US* develops critical thinking skills that are lacking in many students today. *Mission US* inspires students with minimal exposure to US History to take an interest.”

– Renee Paterson, Teacher, Las Vegas, NV

MISSION US A REVOLUTIONARY WAY TO LEARN HISTORY

LOGIN REGISTER

HOME ABOUT PLAY EDUCATORS HELP CONTACT

Mission 1: For Crown or Colony? PLAY
It's 1770. You are Nat Wheeler, a 14-year-old apprentice in Boston. When fighting starts, what will you do?

Mission 2: Flight to Freedom PLAY
Will you ever truly be safe?

About Mission US
Mission US is a multimedia project that immerses players in U.S. history content through free interactive games.
Mission 1: "For Crown or Colony?" puts players in the shoes of Nat Wheeler, a printer's apprentice in 1770 Boston. They encounter both Patriots and Loyalists, and when rising tensions result in the Boston Massacre, they must... ([read more](#))

MISSION 1 TRAILER

MISSION 2 TRAILER

THINK FAST!
ABOUT THE PAST
Test your knowledge of history as you race against the clock!
Three free ways to play:
APPLE IPAD
ANDROID TABLET
PLAY ONLINE

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About EDSITEment

Mission US is one of many NEH-funded projects featured on EDSITEment, a website run by the NEH, that features humanities lesson plans and educational resources for teachers, parents, and students. EDSITEment is a partnership among the NEH, Verizon Foundation, and the National Trust for the Humanities and is a member of the Thinkfinity Consortium of educational websites.

All websites featured on EDSITEment have been reviewed for content, design, and educational impact in the classroom. They cover a wide range of humanities subjects, including American history, literature, world history and culture, language, art, and archaeology. EDSITEment was selected as one of the top 25 websites for 2010 by the American Association of School Librarians and has been accepted into the Smithsonian Institution's Permanent Research Collection of Information Technology, the world's premier historical record of computing applications and innovations.

8

CONCLUSION

Projects In Progress

This report features only a small selection of the NEH-funded initiatives that serve K-12 and pre-kindergarten audiences. Often, NEH funding goes toward the early developmental stages of a project. The Lower Eastside Girls Club's Girl/Hood project and the Florida Humanities Council's TeachingFlorida.org are long term projects nearing completion. Both represent the NEH's commitment to funding projects that use technology to explore the humanities and tell stories.



The Lower Eastside Girls Club: Girl/Hood Project

The Lower Eastside Girls Club will open a new planetarium and highlight Girl/Hood, an immersive history program, in their Center for Community starting fall 2013. Through Girl/Hood, the staff and girls will create a series of planetarium episodes that describe the lives of girls who lived in the Lower Eastside during five historical eras. The episodes will employ an innovative mix of archival materials and computer generated imagery. The first episode will focus on the lives of a shipbuilder's family who lived on the site in the mid-1800s. The NEH funded the design of a low cost production process that allowed the Club to create humanities content for planetariums. The production process is replicable, so organizations can adapt the project in the future to use planetariums to enhance humanities education.

Teaching Florida

To celebrate the 500th anniversary of Florida's founding in 1513, the Florida Humanities Council (one of the NEH's 56 state councils) launched TeachingFlorida.org. The website features articles, lesson plans, archives, and interactive elements for K-12 teachers to use when teaching Florida history (a state requirement). The first unit focuses on Florida's Spanish Colonial past and features articles on colonial St. Augustine, Florida's original Native American inhabitants, and black society in colonial Florida. Upcoming units will focus on The Civil War in Florida and World War II in Florida. TeachingFlorida.org will continue to grow in the years to come, focusing on topics related to Florida's history and culture, particularly those covered in the K-12 classroom. The Council welcomes the input of all Florida teachers as it develops this repository.

Conclusion

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has a long history of making the humanities accessible to children and teens across the country. NEH-funded programs like PRIME TIME Family Reading Time and National History Day demonstrate that children of all ages and backgrounds benefit from exposure to the humanities, which helps children become critical thinkers, adept readers, and clear writers. These programs bolster resources at local libraries, schools, and community centers while simultaneously emphasizing that including parents in early educational experiences builds stronger families and communities.

The projects showcased in this report are examples of how private organizations and individuals can develop engaging humanities programs for youth and create communities of support with relatively low levels of funding. Not only can your constituents become involved in many of the programs included in this report, but they can also create new, local versions of these programs. Please connect your constituents with the NEH or any of the organizations featured here to bring these educational opportunities to your community. The NEH is proud to support a diverse set of cultural centers and organizations, including NEH-funded state humanities councils, in an endeavor to engage youth in the humanities.



Design Credit — Daphne Kiplinger

The graphic design layout of this and the other 3 reports issued to Congress on the impact of NEH funding was designed by Daphne Kiplinger, a graduate student at Boston University's Center for Digital Imaging Arts in DC.

Photo Credits

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National History Day
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Idea Lab
Writing Hand: Photo credit Tim LaBarge
Students Sitting: Kim Nguyen

Together/Unidos: Photos Courtesy of the New York Humanities Council; Credit Melissa Maravell

Mission US: Photo Courtesy of Mission US website

About the NEH

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is an independent federal agency created in 1965. It is one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States.

Because democracy demands wisdom, NEH serves and strengthens our republic by promoting excellence in the humanities and conveying the lessons of history to all Americans. The Endowment accomplishes this mission by awarding grants for top-rated proposals examined by panels of independent, external reviewers.



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