Cornerstone Theater Company Education Programs

Some of Cornerstone’s past work with youth includes our Participatory Education Program, launched in 2005-06, in which we partnered with three schools in the predominantly Latino, working-class neighborhood of Lincoln Heights to create 3/7/11: A Lincoln Heights Tale. In the classroom, our artistic team collaborated with students in the 3rd, 7th and 11th grades on all aspects of the creative process, with group activities that fed into the creation of three short plays which focused on the youths’ experiences of their neighborhoods. The three plays were presented individually at the respective schools, and combined into one larger play that was shared with the larger community at Lincoln High School.

Cornerstone has worked in Compton serving teenagers (ages 11-19) in an after-school workshop, centered on the theme of justice. For the first ten weeks, most of whom enrolled did so as part of their parole. Cornerstone teaching artists acknowledged that once the first semester was over, and their paroles were served, participants may cease to attend. But more than half of the students returned for the second session, even bringing new peers with them.

Cornerstone’s Literature to Life® program staged productions based on books from core curriculum for students. Each performance included a pre- and post-show discussion and creative writing activities, as well as curriculum resource materials for teachers. Literature to Life® reached approximately 40,000 students and educators across Los Angeles County. The vast majority of audiences were from underserved, Title I schools, and for approximately 85% of students at each performance, Cornerstone programming was their very first experience with live theater.

Cornerstone Education Programs have been approved by the LAUSD Arts Education Branch and our study guide materials meet the California State Content Standards in Theater and Visual Arts for secondary school students.