



Implementation Plan

The Wrong Answer Project

This document serves as the official plan of implementation for the NCME Mission Fund Awarded project, *Wrong Answer: Examining Stakeholder Voices in High Stakes Testing*. There will be four phases to implementation. Each phase will have its respective processes. The researcher has commissioned a production assistant and stage manager to assist with the coordination of all implementation activities.

Phase 1

Script Development *(complete by 9/15)*

The researcher had rich conversations with a convenient sample of relatives, friends, students, and colleagues to develop the first script. He presented the script to an Honors Brown Paper Studio class in the Spring of 2019 to which then they dialogued and devised pieces of the script. The script was also workshopped with 10 Upward Bound students and staff of various races at the University of Massachusetts -Amherst this Summer 2019. The current script is in development to be finalized by the 15th of September 2019.

Contracts *(complete by 9/15)*

There will be a team of designers and personnel that will work together to complete the project. The team will include: a production assistant, director, stage manager, dramaturg, costume designer, lighting designer, scenic designer, videographer, and web designer. Each of these team members will have contracts drawn for the commission of their service. The researcher will be the acting producer, playwright, sound designer and choreographer.

Auditions *(complete by 9/30)*

The production team and researcher will set up a date to host auditions some time between 9/30 and 10/15/2019. The intervention date is set for December 6th and 7th. The cast will include 5 main characters and an ensemble of dancers and/or steppers. The total number of ensemble members will be determined by availability and the success of recruitment.

Rehearsals *(begin by 10/30)*

Rehearsal will begin by the 30th of October. Rehearsal schedules will be holistically determined based on the schedule of the director and cast members. The preference for rehearsal will be weekends.

IRB Application *(submit by 9/8)*

The project will be submitted to IRB with hopes of collecting data from the audience's consented and voluntary interaction with the theatrical performance and pre/post show environment. The IRB will be submitted for expedited review by the 8th of September.

Strategic Sampling *(begin by 9/30)*

There will be invitations sent to local schools to encourage the attendance of specifically marginalized groups. This iteration of the intervention focuses on African-American students and their experiences in testing. Though we expect attendance to include diverse racial and ethnic groups. There will be strategic marketing to encourage the attendance of black and brown students and professionals in the education and policy spheres. Publicity will begin the 30th of September.

Phase TwoRehearsals

Rehearsal will continue through December 5th. The week leading up to production involves Tech Week. This includes an intensive que to que mapping of all production elements (lights, sound, costume, props, scenic, acting, video).

Installations

There will be an array of installations that will happen in the New Africa House Studio at The University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Each installation contributes to the overall intervention experience. These installations include scenic design elements, costumes, lighting, sound and video. Throughout the rehearsal process commissioned designers will visit the space to consult with the director and researcher on the technical elements. The design team will meet at least monthly as a group and independently as necessary.

Videography

There will be video documentation of some rehearsals and meetings and the intervention experience. A videographer has been commissioned for this work. The film captured will contribute to an end product video documentary of *Wrong Answer*.

Video Acquisition

The short film by Firelight Media entitled “Children Left Behind” will be acquired for the use of the first part of the intervention. The researcher has been in conversation with advising producer Dr. Amy Stuart Wells of Teacher College in New York. While she has already shared a link to the film, a conversation still needs to be had concerning royalties and usage of the film for the intervention. This meeting will take place before the end of September, per Dr. Stuart Well’s availability.

Studio & Technology

The New Africa House Studio will be used for the intervention and rehearsals. The studio space includes light installment options, a full sound system, and projection capacities. There is a moveable stage with curtains. The studio seats 150 patrons.

Dialogue Facilitator Acquisition

There will be three trained facilitators in Inner Group Dialogue acquired for the intervention. The facilitators will be recruited from current graduate students or alumni of the Social Justice Education program at the University of Massachusetts – Amherst, College of Education.

Phase 3

Tech Week

Phase 3 of implementation will start with Tech Week. As mentioned above, the week leading up to production involves Tech Week. This includes an intensive que to que mapping of all production elements (lights, sound, costume, props, scenic, acting, video). This week will include full run throughs of the entire intervention from open to close in preparation for an air date on December 6th.

The Intervention

The intervention will consist of a multi-modal theatrical experience. The audience will enter a sterilized testing environment and will be requested to sit for a timed exam (“a survey on testing perceptions”). This survey will include a consent form for the use of data collected during the experience. Once they are told “pencils down”, the audience will be instructed to watch a 20-minute video (the film “Children Left Behind” mentioned above). After the film the audience will be presented the theater show “Wrong Answer” (the devised script mentioned above). The final piece of the experience will include elements of Brown Paper Studio. The audience will be encouraged to reflect on the experience thus far by writing on brown paper hanging from the walls with colored markers (sort of graffiti style). After a free writing session, audience members will be instructed to join 1 of 3 circles that will dialogue on the social issues that result from current testing practices and suggestions on how we can come to a democratic decision about best practices in testing that includes the voices of marginalized groups.

Phase 4

Dissemination

Phase 4 will include the dissemination of the findings from the intervention. This will include a formal report drafted for the NCME mission fund. Additionally, there will be a conference presentation on the findings at the 2020 NCME annual conference in San Francisco. The researcher plans to submit the work to other conferences and findings to major and minor publications.

Website *(developed by 2/1/2020)*

The ultimate goal is the replication and expansion of this work. A website will be created detailing the mission of this project (to examine stakeholder voices in high stakes testing) and findings thus far. This website will serve as a resource for spreading the word about the project to new potential implementation sites.