

Context for Learning

Gotham Professional Arts Academy

About the School

Gotham Professional Arts Academy is a Title One, progressive Consortium high school located in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. In place of regents exams students complete Performance Based Assessment Tasks. Gotham has specialized art tracks, which include Studio Art, Art Criticism and Theatre. The school is quite small and has less than a combined 200 students in all four grades. The student body population is 95% Black and Latinx individuals. The building is shared between two schools. Gotham is located on the 4th, 5th, and 6th floors of the building. The cafeteria and gym are shared. There is no auditorium.

About the Class

All sessions take place in the Theatre classroom, which is set up to depict a black box on the 5th floor. There is a riser to represent a small stage in the back of the room and there are chairs for all students. There are no desks. The room is also equipped with a smart board and a theatre books/plays bookshelf. Students have access to laptops, markers, highlighters, pencils, pens, headsets and other art materials. There are no lockers so students often place their belongings under their chairs. Since there is no auditorium, the theatre students often perform in outside venues. Grading is done on a 4-point system. The students are working on a scene study unit. Within the scene study unit there are several mini-units to prepare the students for their scene performances. The Tactics and Vocal Skills units outline on the website are examples of these mini-units.

About the Students

The Vocal Skills and Tactics Units were designed for the 10th grade students in the Theatre Track. There are 19 students in total: 14 females and 5 males. The 10th grade attends Theatre four times a week. Three of those sessions are for 45 mins and once a week they meet for 70 mins.

Six students have IEPs for learning disabilities. It is recommended that these student have extended time (time and a half), sentence starters, modeling, graphic organizers, repetition, redirection, verbal and visual prompts, chunking, visual aids, project based instruction, positive feedback, small group instruction, anchor charts, partial credit for late/incomplete work until can complete on time, vocabulary lists and teacher check ins.