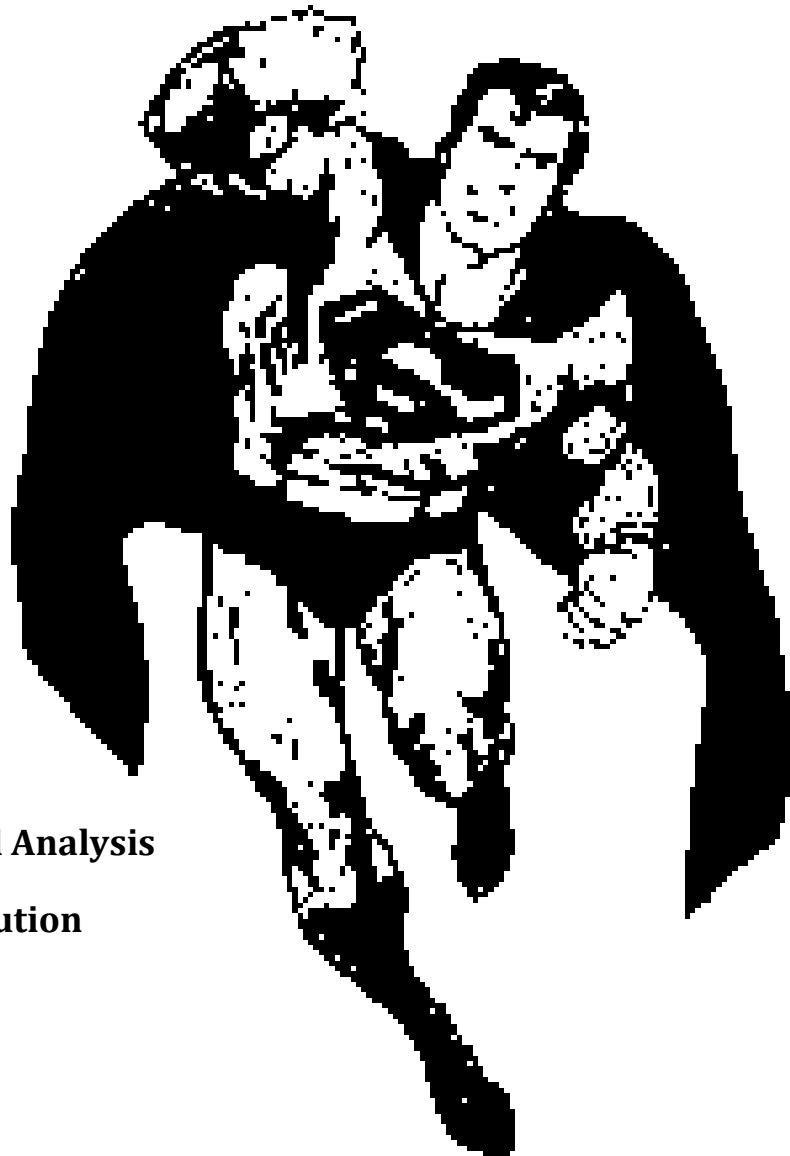


**National Postal Museum's
EdLab Summer Camp
July 8-12, 2013**

Summary Report



Office of Policy and Analysis

Smithsonian Institution

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OP&A staff members Sarah Block and Claire Eckert were responsible for the planning and implementing the evaluation, analyzing the results, and writing the final report. They were assisted by an excellent summer intern from Dartmouth University, Sean Connolly.

Introduction

In late June 2013, EdLab staff asked OP&A to evaluate its first summer camp that ran from July 8-12 at the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum (NPM). The summer camp was put on in conjunction with the EdLab + Capitol Hill Cluster Schools Model Classroom Youth Access Grant for the 2012-2013 school year. The summer camp sought to implement Mission-Based Learning (MBL) without the limitations of the classroom and build upon lessons learned during the school year Ed+ Capitol Hill Clusters program.

The evaluation of the summer camp focused on understanding two key areas:

- Participants' motivations for attending, interests in general, and experiences during the camp
- The effects of out-of-school EdLab experiences on the youth participants

The main questions for this evaluation included:

- What in-school limitations does this out-of-school model alleviate?
- What are the results of getting rid of these limitations?

The results of this study will help EdLab staff structure its future out-of-school programs.

Methodology

Members of the OP&A evaluation team were present during the summer camp. Data collection activities included:

- Pre-program interviews with the participants to gauge their motivations for attending, expectations for the week, and interests
- Observations of the week's activities
- Observations of the staff, mentors, and participants' behaviors and interactions with one another
- End-of-day debriefs with staff, mentors, and evaluators to discuss the day's events and activities for the next day. During the sessions, OP&A made suggestions for improvements which were incorporated during the remaining summer camp activities.
- End-of-program interviews with participants about their experiences

- End-of-program interviews with mentors about their experiences

Participants

There were six youth participants: one girl and five boys. Most were rising 6th graders-rising, and one was a rising 8th grader. The age range was 11-15.

Staff and mentors

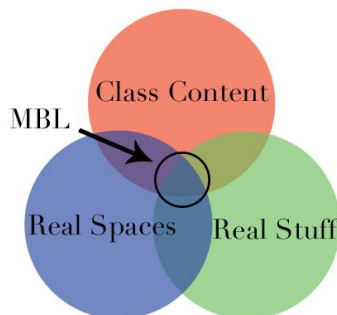
The summer camp was led by two NPM staff (EdLab coordinators) and three external people—a school teacher and previous EdLab participant, a student intern, and the founder and director of the Harry Potter Alliance (HPA), a non-profit inspired by ethics and stories from the Harry Potter series to create social change.

Each mentor served to test out a function; the teacher was to see how a teacher volunteer could be involved in an after-school program, the student mentor was to understand how students could fill the mentor role, and the HPA director was to see what kind of partnership EdLab and HPA could form.

Mission-based learning pedagogy

At the core of the EdLab program is the philosophy of pedagogy called “mission-based learning.” Online program literature describes mission-based learning in the following terms:

Mission-based learning brings classroom content to life by challenging students to use real stuff in museums and technology tools to investigate and solve problems that exist in the real spaces around them. Mission-based learning increases relevancy between subject matter and real life experiences of students, getting to the heart of the “why do we have to know this” question.



Findings

Motivations for participation

To recruit participants for the summer camp, EdLab presented information to the classes of EdLab teacher participants (either directly or through the teacher). Participants were required to fill out a form to enroll in the program. One question on the form was “Why are you interested in participating in this program?” The responses to this question ranged from enjoying the Harry Potter series to improving the community to using media tools and because it sounded fun.

The participants’ parents played a decisive role in their children’s participation, as they were the ones to sign them up. Participants mentioned in the pre-week interviews that it was their parents (mom or dad) who decided to enroll them. OP&A did not interview parents as a part of this study. However, we can assume that the summer camp may have been attractive to parents for two reasons—participation was free (apart from the cost of transportation), and it had the Smithsonian Institution name. EdLab staff learned that the 10am daily start time limited enrollment in the camp because parents had to be at work earlier than the drop off time.

Alleviating in-school limitations

In-school limitations and opportunities for alleviation

Over the 2012-2013 school year, EdLab staff ran the EdLab+Clusters program, whose purpose was to introduce EdLab’s mission-based learning (MBL) philosophy in a sustained way over the course of a whole academic year at the three schools of the Capitol Hill Cluster Schools (CHCS) group: Peabody Early Learning Center, Watkins Elementary, and Stuart-Hobson Middle School. OP&A evaluated this year-long program. Through this program, all participants involved (including EdLab staff, participating teachers and administrators, and the OP&A study team) realized the challenges of implementing MBL in schools, and particularly in D.C. public schools.

The summer camp sought to implement MBL without the limitations of the classroom and build upon lessons learned during the school year Ed+ Capitol Hill Clusters program. The study team asked EdLab staff to provide a list of limitations that they found from the Clusters program that they were hoping to alleviate through the summer camp. Below is a list of the limitations, followed by an opportunity, or a design of the camp intended to

alleviate the recognized limitations. Following each limitation and opportunity are the findings observed by the study team. It is important to note that because of the small sample size, these outcomes are not generalizable.

Expected findings

Limitation 1: School is curriculum-driven.

Teachers start with curriculum and then fit in creative teaching practices and use of technology. They rarely teach to support students' interests. Students are led toward an educational destination whether they like it or not.

Opportunity

Design a program not based on specific curriculum, but with opportunity to strengthen skills related to student achievement in the classroom. The idea is to have teacher-mentors available to review work and ideas, and help with campaigns, advocacy, historical precedents, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) application.

Findings

- The camp succeeded in being flexible to and driven by participants' interests. Each day's activities informed those of the subsequent day. For example, participants decided where to go on the field trips among a choice of several SI museums.
- OP&A's observations and interviews suggest that the youth strengthened their skills over the week. However, it is not possible to definitively say that skills were strengthened because there were no metrics to measure skills at the beginning and end of the week, only anecdotal information on comfort and familiarity with different skills. Skills developed through EdLab (like public speaking and communication) are not generally developed in middle school classes.
- Participants had access to a larger community and larger audience via the HPA network and SI staff and mentors. Staff and mentors reviewed the participants' work, offered advice and suggestions to participants, and contributed to their ideas.

Limitation 2: Technology use within the classroom is poorly executed.

The Cluster schools lacked hardware, with the exception of poorly maintained laptop carts. Technology was built into the teaching day as an add-on, meaning no teacher had any specific requirement to incorporate digital media tools to their teaching practice.

Opportunity

Provide space for participants to engage with digital media, as it relates to their community investigation. Supporting youth in investigating media allows for interest-driven exploration, both of content as well as media.

Findings

- The EdLab camp was a space for engagement with digital media. Laptops and tablets were available for the kids to use throughout the week. Technology was related to community investigation as a tool to collect community opinions as well as to connect with social justice activists associated with the Harry Potter Alliance. For example, the group interviewed several HPA members via Google Hangout.
- Participants did not use technology to research issues relevant to the community, e.g., for online topic searches.
- Participants did not use social media, mainly because most of the participants were too young (under 13) to have social media accounts.
- While participants appeared less familiar with social media sites (Facebook, etc.), they were very aware of YouTube. On the last day, participants chose videos from YouTube to watch as a group.
- The technology and WiFi were much more reliable within the NPM building, unlike in the D.C. Public Schools.

Limitation 3: Interdisciplinary teaching has become extremely difficult.

Teachers are only responsible for student learning as it relates to the content they specifically teach. Any layering of content to other classes is not testable, and therefore

optional.

Opportunity

EdLab's MBL is not tied to any one school subject. A summer camp would allow the participants to explore many different subjects in an environment that is non-subject.

Findings

- While some several subjects were covered such as art, social studies and language arts, this did not appear to be a focus of the summer camp program.

Unexpected Findings

Limitation 4: Large class sizes.

One in-school limitation that was not discussed by EdLab staff but came across as an issue that was greatly alleviated by the camp was that while school class sizes are generally large, the summer camp group size was very small.

Opportunity

Test out Mission-Based Learning in a small group setting.

Outcomes

- All participants, children and mentors expressed that the small group size was good for facilitating brainstorming, idea sharing, and thoughtful conversation.
- Excluding the OP&A evaluators, the ratio of youth to adult was 6:5. If OP&A evaluators are included, the ratio was often 6:7. One mentor said that having fewer kids "wasn't necessarily a good thing." There was enough physical space, equipment, and staff/mentors to accommodate more youth participants.

Limitation 5: Strong teacher/student divides.

Another in-school limitation is the traditional teacher-student roles.

Opportunity

EdLab can be an environment where the adult-child hierarchy is transformed into a partnership.

Outcomes

- The youth participants and adults were equal contributors to formulation of mission campaign.
- The student mentor (a high school graduate) worked closely with some of the more reticent and shy participants.

Effects on the participants

Participants appeared to enjoy the program and to be engaged with program activities. The study team observed that students were eager to participate and contribute. In post program interviews, all of the kids said that the camp was better than they expected. They all noted some kind of increase in skill, mostly pertaining to public speaking and communication. At the end of the week, participants were excited about what the group had accomplished, such as the creation of superheroes and a plan to make D.C. more fun, and what they were exposed to, such as the museums and Yards Park. Over half commented that they were excited to be part of something that was community focused and could potentially reach a large audience. Some participants mentioned how this program changed their perspective of Washington, D.C. and civic engagement.¹

The program mentors said the camp succeeded in giving participants' new social and tangible skills, such as learning to use Prezi, iPads, apps, and digital cameras; learning how to look at museums; and developing interpersonal and speaking skills. Mentors expressed their satisfaction with the way that the group—both adults and youth—developed and grew closer.

Caveat

OP&A's interviews and observations are not hard evidence for positive student outcomes, but they are suggestive. Rigorous outcome evaluations, especially those based on a controlled experimental model, are required before conclusions can be drawn about educational impact. More generally, we cannot equate participants' enthusiasm or

¹ For a more in-depth narrative of students' impressions, see pg. 14

enjoyment with educational impact; participants may find an activity deeply engaging even if it fails to provide any meaningful educational impact. While we cannot determine if the summer camp will have long-term impact on the youth, the study team did notice changes in behavior, knowledge, and attitude by the end of the week.

General Observations

Structure of the camp

The theme of the camp was improving participants' communities. The application form explained the camp as follows:

Make the world a better place! Spend five days with fellow middle schoolers brainstorming and developing a campaign to make your community a better place. Spend time testing out digital media tools and social networks, exploring Smithsonian museums for inspiration, and interviewing community members about issues that are important to YOU.

In conjunction with the community improvement theme, the content of the camp also revolved around superheroes. Participants created superhero characters in groups and individually, discussed the qualities of superheroes, and watched superhero movies.

Each day of the camp was divided into several activities that required different levels of collaboration among individuals. Depending on the activities, people worked together, in two groups (one group at each table), or independently. The locations of activities were split between the NPM and outside locations (including the National Air and Space Museum, Hirshhorn Art Museum, National Building Museum, Union Station, and Yards Park). The days were tightly scheduled but not to the point of exhaustion or chaos.

Group size

Participants and staff mentioned that the small size of the group made it feel like a family. None of the kids seemed intimidated by the adults (even though on the first morning the ratio of kids to adults was 6:8).

Participant-to-participant interactions

OP&A evaluators observed that peer-to-peer interactions—especially during team work activities—seemed more non-verbal and subdued. The adults guided most verbal discussions and usually the youths did not carry on these conversations among themselves once the adult disengaged. It is difficult to tell just how much quiet, non-verbal interaction was taking place between the participants. It was observed that the kids appeared to feel comfortable around one another, as evidenced by their willingness to share their ideas the majority of the time. There were some instances where sharing was withheld (e.g., some chose not to share their alter egos with the group), but that was not the norm.

The small group size was good for facilitating brainstorming and thoughtful conversation. The participants did not exhibit any outward signs of competitive or antagonistic feelings towards one another. One participant had a tendency to talk over or correct other participants, but this happened infrequently and seemed more about bringing attention to himself than undermining the other participants' ideas or actions.

Teamwork activities often became independent work for a common purpose. The EdLab leader moderated and directed the process. The age of the kids and their personality types may be reasons for this type of quiet and introverted collaboration. Also, many of the activities allowed for independent work and idea generation towards a common goal, e.g., writing down your ideas on a post-it note and then taping it to the wall to share it with everyone.

Participant-to-staff

EdLab staff had relationships with the kids before the summer camp; they had worked with the kids' teachers during the school year. All participants seemed relaxed and comfortable with them. The participants answered the EdLab staff's questions and appeared engaged. In the interviews, the kids thought that they were "nice," "fun," and "cool."

Participant-to-mentor

The participants seemed comfortable with the mentors. The school teacher and HPA director were excellent at building rapport with the participants from the get-go. The student mentor was quieter than his colleagues were and had less of a strong leadership role; however, he had excellent one-on-one rapport with some of the kids. He developed a relationship with one of the boys who was especially shy and was able to help pull this boy out of his shell.

The roles and responsibilities of EdLab staff, mentors and even OP&A staff were fluid and not clearly defined. This allowed for organic interactions and for the strengths of staff to be utilized. The lack of designated roles worked well for the small size of the group but may not work as well for a larger group.

Interest-driven exploration

Interest-driven exploration was strongly encouraged. Participants were also pushed to express themselves in different ways, e.g., drawing or illustrating ideas instead of writing them down. Exploration, experimentation, and freethinking were positively reinforced by the EdLab leaders through comments and by asking the participants what they would like to do. In interviews, participants expressed appreciation for being able to guide the direction of the week. This was one feature of the camp that was most different from in school activities.

On the first day of the week, while the participants were deciding the topic of their campaign, there were diverging interests. Some were interested in making D.C. more fun and others were interested in the environment. The participants seemed satisfied with focusing on the “fun” campaign and having one focus made sense for the size of the group. However, at the end of the week a few participants said they would have liked to explore their other interests.

Technology

The camp exposed participants to digital tools, platforms, and technological hardware. Throughout the camp, the participants had access to iPads and iPods with a variety of apps, and MacBook laptop computers. They appeared to already know how to use this hardware and were informally coached by EdLab staff on using a few of the apps. There were no group-wide lessons on using the technology. Participants were taught how to use the EdLab’s video camera to record interviews. Most of the participants appeared to have previous experience working with this technology. The participants were exposed to video conferencing, but they did not learn how to use it.

It appeared to the study team that some of the teamwork and peer-to-peer interaction was inhibited by technology. Kids were often using the iPads during downtime.

Strengthening skills

Participants had an opportunity to improve their presentation and communication skills. They conducted group interviews with invited guest from the HPA and with museum

visitors and went through several dry-runs of their presentation, and presented to the public on the final day of the camp.

The interviews were also an opportunity to develop critical thinking skills. Participants thought of problems and then what information they needed to find out to offer solutions. However, there was little emphasis on teaching participants how to look at gathered information and analyze it.

Interviews

Participants' impressions

OP&A conducted interviews with participants on the first and last days of the summer camp. Given the participants' ages and experiences, they were able to express how they felt but not necessarily articulate *why* they felt that way. It should be noted that this was likely the participants' first time being in an interview setting.

Going into the camp, a few participants had expectations for the week while most of the others did not. Of those who did, they thought that they would learn to solve problems, learn to change their community, or that it would be a reading camp (likely a result of the superhero theme and the involvement of the Harry Potter Alliance). Most were not aware of what the week's activities would be. At the end of the week, participants were excited about what the group had accomplished. One said that he had never been involved in something "so big" before, another that he were "happy to have made some progress with the campaign but would have made a petition or something else with more time."

OP&A was interested to see if and how participants could articulate the differences between school and EdLab's summer camp. Participants appreciated the flexibility of the camp, to the end that participants were able to guide the direction and activities of the week. Others mentioned that the smaller group facilitated teamwork, freer sharing of ideas, and better conversations.

During the exit interview, OP&A asked further questions about the participants' experiences with teamwork throughout the week. The participants enjoyed the opportunities to share ideas with others and one commented that the activities forced independent workers to work with others. Overall, the participants liked being together in the group; however, OP&A is hesitant to quantify the amount of real teamwork that was occurring over the week.

Participants were asked at the beginning of the week to name a few things that they were good at and something they would like to improve. While they were told they could include non-academic aspects, they generally only mentioned school subjects like math, reading, or art. At the end of the week when they were asked what skills they had gained or improved over the week, many commented that they had improved their public speaking or presenting skills. They also thought they were more observant and able to interview and think on the fly.

Some participants mentioned how this program changed their perspectives about D.C., for example, who the city is built for, whose needs it serves, and how to make it more fun. Others said they were inspired to share ideas and to observe, think about, and solve the problems in the world around them.

Favorite parts of the week included: interviewing, field trips, creating stories, developing superheroes and alter egos, lunches, one-minute speeches, and watching movies.

Participant ideas on how they would improve the camp include making it longer and being able to explore different interests.

Mentors' impressions

On Thursday afternoon, OP&A spoke with Emily Donahue, a teacher at a private school from Massachusetts. Emily has been involved with EdLab for several years. Emily is skilled at using MBL in her classroom. Part of the reason she was asked to be a mentor at the summer camp was to experiment with having a teacher volunteer help to run out of school EdLab programming. OP&A sought Emily's opinions of this out-of-school learning opportunity. Excerpts from the interview are included below with permission from the interviewee.

Throughout the week, Emily was an EdLab mentor. She connected well with the participants and asked thought provoking questions. Emily was also very helpful in leading kids in public speaking exercises and giving them feedback. She expressed her satisfaction with the camp:

I think it has been going very well. Especially how the team has developed in such a short amount of time. By the end of the first day they were really starting to get to know each other and I think that's because of the variety of activities they were engaged in. It's interesting because you go into the week with an idea but then it completely changes because it's directed by the participants. We have 11-13 yr. old participants and it's hard to see what they're going to see as a social issue that needs

to be addressed. So I really thought it was going to take a direction like homelessness or being greener and a big issue for them is not enough fun and spaces for them. As an adult that's something I've already lost sight of.

Given her extensive experience in the classroom, Emily was able to compare the summer camp to the implementation of MBL in school. OP&A asked her about the advantages of being outside of school. Emily identified two main areas:

The first is the resources of the museums and inspiration that's hard to recreate in a classroom. There's so much more of a spark you see in a student's eyes when they actually see the 3-D model. The second is that these programs aren't really restricted by standards and collecting data and assessment. We do collect data on the way that's observational and they're assessment piece really is the final presentation but to have a topic of social change doesn't really happen at the middle school level. A call to action is something that doesn't really ever happen because we have to know that they can multiply properly or recite back steps to the American Revolution. The building of cultural knowledge and American expectations for education does constrict a lot of chances for creativity and chances for young adults to go out and change their world.

Emily mentioned key things necessary to make MBL work in the classroom.

First, [teachers] need to let go of some structure. From my experience, some [teachers] are open and some are just happy the way it is. Also, you have to be okay with students coming up with something that is better than you could have thought of. You have to have that confidence that you can own that they are smarter than you are right now. Your principal has to be on board. I'm fortunate to have a principal that supports interdisciplinary and experimental ideas, but not all principals do. The tests are a really is a huge factor for the grades that have to take them; so much of the year is devoted to taking those tests. Those are barriers we have to get around.

Emily explained that it is easier for teachers to learn teaching methods like MBL earlier in their careers, when they are still moldable and less likely to be stuck to more traditional teaching approaches. She shared the idea of teaching a class on MBL at a teachers college and then have those teachers lead out-of-school EdLab programs to apply what they learn in class.

Emily gave ideas of how she thought this sort of camp could work as an after-school program.

My students' interests motivate them, so if you had a themed after-school program like a Lego program or even an engineering- focused one that partners with the museum or partnering with a different SI institution so if they're interested in science or pop culture so the American History Museum. I think that would help to get the right group of students. This is the right group because they are actively engaged and every challenge that's put forth it's not a burden. Not every student is like that. If it's something their parents stick them in as a daycare alternative you're not going to get the same response rate, but if it's something where they are motivated and interested than it would be successful.

In her opinion, teachers are not the right people to run an after-school program like EdLab because they are tired from teaching all day and use the after-school time to prepare for the next day. She suggested that pre-teachers or college students could take a course on how to teach MBL and then the next semester they get credit for doing it in a school.

On Friday afternoon, OP&A spoke with Andrew Slack, the Harry Potter Alliance Co-founder and Executive Director. Andrew was an EdLab mentor for the week, and he helped steer the camp's content and focus. Excerpts from the interview are included below with permission from the interviewee.

Andrew spoke about cultivating civic imagination as a goal of the week, which was expressed through the kids' mission and creation of the "Bureau of Re-Funification":

In terms of looking at my own goals [and the goals of the EdLab], we talked about civics and civic education and engagement. It requires a certain amount of civic imagination to be able to think outside the box. We need to tap into our civic imagination and get beyond our ordinary thinking. This week really accelerated civic imagination and allowed the kids and professionals at the Smithsonian and outside the Smithsonian to ask questions that are not normally asked.

Developing the participants' critical thinking, social, and technical skills were also aims of the program. Andrew felt that the camp succeeded in giving participants' new social and tangible skills, such as learning to use Prezi, iPads, apps, and digital cameras, learning how to look at museums; and developing interpersonal and speaking skills.

For Andrew, storytelling was an essential component, and learned skill, of the week's curriculum, which linked to the superhero theme:

Day after day, we looked at how to fix a problem and came up with solutions to those problems; that puts them into the role of hero. At the same time, we had a tremendous amount of creative imagination in the form of storytelling. [...] When you get to tell

the story of your own personal alter ego, you are developing skills not only in story telling but also in terms of how you see yourself in your personal and interpersonal life. When you tie that to civics, now you are beginning to see yourself as Spiderman and Batman protecting Gotham, or in this case D.C.

Andrew discussed EdLab's Mission-Based Learning (MBL) methods. He used an analogy from acting to explain why he thought MBL helps kids synthesize knowledge and gain real-world skills:

Democracy is not a passive act, it is an active act and we need to help kids get that—not just tell them that or show them that, but give them them the space where they can be in it. It relates to the way that the human brain works and Stanislavski's acting methods are a tremendous model for that. Stanislavski would talk about a bad actor as someone who gets up and plays an emotion. If the character is sad, you play sad. We all know what sad looks like, so you go through the motions and you are playing a stock sad, whereas Stanislavski said, "Focus on the intention, don't focus on the feeling. That is for your unconscious to worry about. Your unconscious will take care of the feelings. What you need to focus on is the intentions. You are the character, what do you want? What are your tactics to get what you want?" If you focus on the intention, spontaneously your unconscious is going to release emotions and the sadness will be more real.

Likewise, in school, if you are given a textbook with information—that is equivalent of bad acting, playing sad. By having a mission, you are setting an intention, just like good acting. The unconscious will automatically be working and you will automatically be learning, and synthesizing different things. MBL allows the mind to learn on its own. They are learning to synthesize knowledge, come up with and build arguments, collaborate, and honor the human experience.

Andrew was asked about what ages he felt were most appropriate for MBL. Although Andrew believed that the EdLab experience would benefit people of any age, he did think that the grade 6-9 age group had qualities that make it uniquely suited for MBL:

I think that is [an] amazing, ideal, and precipice age, because their biology is on the verge of a dramatic shift, which is already affecting their behaviors and ways of looking at the world. Grounding them now in the idea that they have agency to make change in the world [is important].

Andrew also felt that there is an ideal child/adult collaboration:

We have the tools and resources that the kids do not, but we are drawing on their imaginations, which we might not have. The week was incredible. [The kids] also have access to the Smithsonian and access to me, so they are talking to a much wider audience and they know that. That is an empowering thing. It is an ideal child/grownup collaboration.

During the camp, each child had lots of attention from EdLab staff and mentors. Andrew was asked how he envisioned expanding the program so that more kids could participate.

The disadvantage here is that it is only one week. We could have done this with a classroom of 20; it just would have been different.

He envisioned creating a website and social network for the “Bureau,” allowing more people to participate and contribute. However, one of the challenges of sustaining post-camp communication was that most of the campers were not allowed to be alone on the web or social media. Facebook and Twitter users must be 13, and many of the participants were 11 and 12. Because of this limitation, Andrew noted, “We are only scratching the surface here for getting them to grasp their ability to organize locally and virtually.”

Andrew noted that his approach to teaching is to act as an instigator, motivator, and co-creator:

When I was coaching the kids, I was a little bit more aggressive than some of the other adults in the room in terms of pushing them to heighten the stakes. That’s the way that I approach education, to be connected, fully connected, and then I am a collaborator with them. I feel that they are going to learn from that and take it on as their own. Whereas a teacher might have more of a lesson-plan and I think you need both approaches.

Conclusions

The EdLab summer camp was an experiment of using Mission-based Learning with youth outside of the classroom. This was the first time EdLab staff implemented MBL with youth in an out-of-school setting. The takeaway messages of the EdLab summer camp evaluation can be summed up as follows:

- Participants enjoyed the camp and found it to be a worthwhile way to spend a week of their summer. What was most enjoyable was the opportunity to go to new places (or go to places they had previously visited but look at those places through a different perspective), try activities (most notably interviews), and be part of a project that participants felt would help others. There appeared to be changes in knowledge and attitudes about both Mission-Based Learning and the mission focus – the “re-funification of Washington, D.C.” However, it cannot be determined if the experience will have a long-lasting impact on participants.
- Participants’ motivations for attending the camp were their interest in Harry Potter or reading or because they thought it would be fun.
- Participants said that they would be interested in participating in an after-school program run by EdLab, if they liked the theme and their schedules permitted. The participants’ attendance will be dependent on their parents’ willingness to sign them up.
- The out-of-school setting allowed for most in-school limitations to be alleviated. The activities were not dictated by curriculum but rather roughly outlined by EdLab staff and mostly directed by the interests of participants. Overall, technology was reliable throughout the week, with the exception of difficulties connecting to Google Hangout. The small group size facilitated good discussion and sharing of ideas. Adults and youth worked collaboratively. Because the content was fluid and determined by participants, there was not an apparent emphasis on making it interdisciplinary. There was not a strong adult-children hierarchy. There were no behavioral issues. End-of-day debriefs with program staff were useful for discussing solutions to observed or predicted challenges.
- It is unclear if participants’ involvement with EdLab, the Harry Potter Alliance or the campaign for the “Bureau of Re-funification” has or will continue.

Recommendations

OP&A recommends:

Program structure

- EdLab should experiment with offering different types of activities outside of the classroom. Programs for various age groups with diverse themes and lengths should be explored.
- If EdLab wants participants to understand the MBL approach, it would be beneficial for staff to make a brief presentation about MBL's purpose and key steps, as well as past mission solutions. Participants would then be more aware of their journey from identifying social problems to developing solutions.
- To improve chances of continued youth participants' involvement in EdLab, there should be a scheduled camp reunion or prepared online forum prior to the end of the camp (which the participants could sign up for at the beginning or during the program).

Peer to peer interactions

- To strengthen peer-to-peer interaction in future programs, the EdLab team may want to have more one-on-one activities without an adult facilitator. For example, the participants could team up and interview one another about a specific topic (e.g., "What are your ideas about how to make D.C. more fun?"), then each participant presents out to the group about what their teammate said.

Participant to staff

- The efforts to create non-hierarchical relationships between participants and adults were valuable and should be continued to encourage creative collaboration and create a safe space to share ideas.

Interest-driven exploration

- There were limited instances when the participants' ideas were not pursued. If participant-interest is to drive MBL, then a procedure should be developed for acknowledging all ideas, even if they are not immediately relevant or practical. To address more of the participants' interests, there could be devoted time to

individual interest-driven exploration through youth-staff guided research or brainstorm sessions.

Strengthening skills

- Although participants had varied skills and skill levels (i.e. writing, drawing, public speaking), the flexible format of the program allowed participants to utilize their stronger skills. If the program was longer, staff could make more of an effort to identify the participants' skills. With this knowledge, they could tailor the camp to strengthen existing skills and develop new ones by challenging participants to do things they are not necessarily good at. This could make the experience more valuable for participants.

Partnership with the Harry Potter Alliance

Andrew's participation in the Summer Camp was the beginning of an exploration of how the Harry Potter Alliance and EdLab can work together. The study team found that the three best places for collaboration would be:

- In creating hero-related missions
- Inspiring EdLab participants through exposure to HPA campaigns and HPA staff
- Giving EdLab participants access to the HPA's expansive social network
- For sharing participants' products on a large scale

Mentors recommend:

Recommendations for future direct implementation with participants

- Create an integrated map that weaves together the themes and topics of the week (e.g., the Hero's Journey and the kids' mission; and more integration of the personal story, the collective story, the story of what is going on in our world right now, and the mythological story)
- Create a feedback loop to help the kids connect the Batman and Spiderman movies to what they were doing with the city, and map it to the virtual world, where there is an online community
- Do more theater exercises to help participants with their presentation skills

- Have different track programs where you work with the same participant year after year or summer after summer. You can have different tracks for them to follow and they'll get priority if they've been through the previous track.
- After-school EdLab teachers should not be run by teachers, rather by "teachers in training."
- After-school programs should have a specific theme.

Recommendations for EdLab itself

- EdLab staff should do a TED talk about the MBL pedagogy
- Make teachers aware that you don't have to follow every single step for mission-based Learning to have an impact in the classroom. Choose an assessment you're not so psyched about and see how a mission could lead to a product that would serve as an assessment. Use a backwards design model where you think about an end product and how a mission could lead to participants getting to that goal. It may not work for every subject or lesson.
- It is easier for teachers to learn teaching methods like MBL earlier in their careers, when they are still moldable and less likely to be stuck to more traditional teaching approaches. Teach a class on MBL at a teachers college, and then have those teachers lead out-of-school EdLab programs to apply what they learn in class.

Appendix A: Description of Activities

Overview

The camp was held for five consecutive days, Monday, June 8 – Friday, June 12, 2013. Each day started at 10 am with the arrival of the youth participants and concluded around 3:00pm. EdLab staff, mentors, and evaluators met early each morning to discuss the day ahead and stayed late to debrief on the day and make plans for the following one.

The NPM's conference room located in its non-public office area was the program's "Nerve Center". The room had three large round tables with chairs, and plenty of floor and wall space where the kids could work and post material. The room was in a secure building, so each day one of the EdLab staff would escort the children (and sometimes the mentors) in and out of the space.

At noon each day, a catered lunch was served in the adjoining space just outside the Nerve Center. Everyone ate together while watching a superhero movie on a projected screen.

EdLab staff relied on an agenda. However, the activities and timing of activities often varied from the script. Overall, this did not appear to affect the quality of the program; instead the flexibility allowed the EdLab staff to tailor the week to the needs and interests of the participants and respond to external factors and circumstances. The kids, who did not have a copy of the agenda, would not have been aware of the schedule changes. Sometimes the kids were consulted, and they could choose what activities to do and what museums to visit.

Day 1 – Monday

After the kids arrived on the first morning, Reema and Jeff led the introductions. Andrew Slack talked about HPA and introduced the importance of superheroes and the concept of the Hero's Journey, which were to be major themes throughout the week. Andrew introduced the idea of creating a HPA chapter in D.C. and having the kids lead it. He also talked about civic engagement and activism, demonstrating how the HPA has created campaigns that have created change in the world, for example, protesting against the sale of chocolate produced with the child labor.

Next, each person² in the room introduced themselves, stating their name and favorite TV show, book series, and movie. This was a good exercise to break the ice and get to know each other better.

Some of the kids seemed sleepy after the introductions and presentations, so Emily led a "Shake Down" activity to boost everyone's energy levels. Activities like this were sprinkled throughout the week to keep the kids alert and to lighten the mood.

Building upon Andrew's speech about the power and significance of superheroes, the kids divided into two groups (three kids in each) to design their own unique superheroes. EdLab leaders moderated the discussions at each table to elicit more ideas and encourage

² One of the parents attended the first morning. He left shortly after the introductions.

participation. At one table, which was moderated by Emily, ideas included powers to swim underwater and save sea life. Emily asked some probing questions, and participation was equal among all the kids. One participant took meticulous notes on the group conversation, and another drew the character. Two thirds of the kids used iPads. It was observed that the iPad doodle app seemed somewhat distracting and not very useful. At one point, Andrew visited the table, listened to the story, and pushed some ideas further. The kids responded well to his questions and ideas.

At the second table, which was moderated by Andrew and Jonathan, some of the ideas for the qualities of the alter ego included caring and empathy. They decided that the “bad guy,” the superhero’s enemy, uses an eraser to erase love. Andrew had a strong influence on this table. The oldest participant (who was going into 9th grade) was a strong communicator, while other boys were more subdued. Andrew explained the idea of empathy and helped the kids to develop a love interest for the superhero. Jonathan helped develop the storyline as well. It was observed that Andrew pushed much of the creativity. He was consistently funneling new ideas into the conversation, which the kids at each group responded to. Moreover, with every new addition he was very good at praising the kids. The kids clearly responded to the encouragement and became even more confident.

Reema and Jeff designed an EdLab superhero (Captain EdLab, whose power is to give power to other people) and then walked from table-to-table, listening, asking questions, and providing input and praise. Jeff showed a table images from the Smithsonian collection on his iPad.

The kids responded well to the iPads. Over half were using them. They were used for a variety of tasks, including looking up an app to create a “superhero avatar” with simple drawings. Some were also drawing in sketchpads. It was observed that some of the quieter kids seemed disengaged, but the mentors were excellent at asking questions and drawing responses from them. There was no apparent tension within the groups. Some kids are more reserved and some are more dominant than others are, but every kid was active.

At table two, the alter ego was very imaginative and complex. Someone was told to take notes to help remember all of the details. However, by the time the kids presented to the group about their superhero—Joe Bob—and their villain—Jim Bob— much of the brainstormed details and ideas were lost or started to conflict with one another.

At this point in the week, there was more kid-to-adult interaction than peer-to-peer interaction. The participants did not seem to know each other very well—even though some came from the same school. In addition, during the first table’s presentation, the

second table was not listening; instead, they continued to work on their own presentation. This could suggest that the kids perceived the EdLab leaders to be the audience for their work, as opposed to their peers, and were therefore more concerned with the success of their own projects than listening to others.

Overall, this exercise was excellent at stimulating creativity, establishing relationships between the participants and the mentors, and building the kids' confidence, even if many of the ideas were lost along the way. The preferences and personalities of the kids also started to emerge.

After the groups presented on their superheroes, the kids voted between watching Spiderman or Batman during lunch. Batman won. While the movie was running, OP&A interviewed each participant individually in another room.

In the afternoon, the group walked to Union Station to generate ideas for their campaign, which they would develop throughout the work. First, Reema asked everyone to silently observe the environment around them. Then, they wrote down what problems or issues they could see. After they wrote down their observations, they went back to the Nerve Center to discuss their thoughts about the problems that they saw in D.C. The kids were directed to write or illustrate their ideas on a big sheet of paper that was attached to the wall. Staff and mentors participated as well. Some kids finished earlier than others. Participants who were finished moved on to the table and started to look at the books and use the iPads and iPods.

Some of the ideas that the group generated included:

- Smoking, people, pollution, littering, dirty
- Traffic
- Homelessness
- Not enough jobs
- Making connection to southwest, missing things to do
- City is designed for adults
- Too many people/tourists
- Smoke of fireworks
- Statutes don't reflect diversity
- Mayor should hire people to paint mailboxes/electric boxes
- Dichotomy of living in D.C. and political.
- Train system is bad
- No maps
- Bad public transport so more driving/gas prices

- Designed for working people and for people to make money
- Boring
- Government doesn't prioritize children and elderly

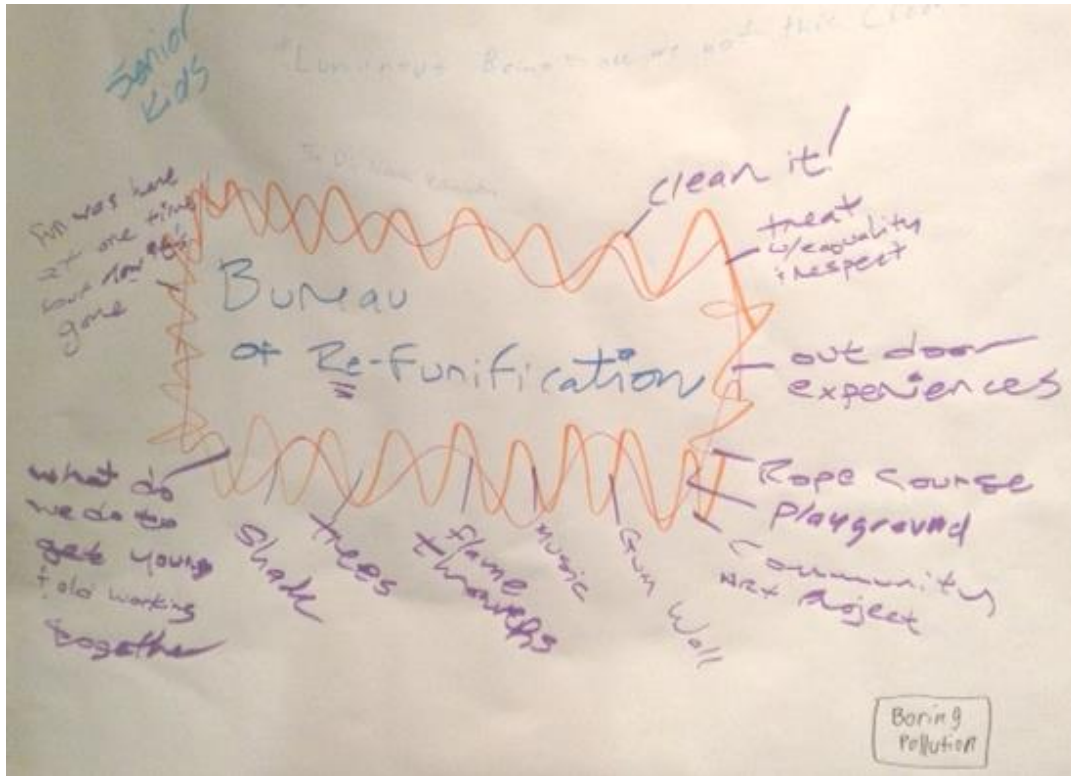
Reema explained the process of building a successful campaign (a.k.a. a mission); she said that over the course of the week, the kids would create their own campaign that addressed a social issue that they thought was very important. The adults in the group would guide the process, but the kids were the real leaders of the campaign. The kids were asked to write onto a sticky note what social issue that they would like to tackle. The sticky notes were posted on to the wall, and one of the leaders read them aloud.

A strong theme emerged: D.C. was boring and not designed with kids and old people in mind. The group discussed this and then voted to make this topic the center of their campaign (the runner up idea was pollution). Next, the group brainstormed a title for the initiative. First, each person wrote down their ideas, and then the names were voted on. This strategy allowed everyone to have a chance to come up with and share their own ideas.

Some of the ideas for names included:

- Excite D.C.
- What's fun got to do with it?
- Man vs. Child,
- Why so serious?
- The Bureau of Re-Funification

The Bureau of Re-Funification received the most votes and became the campaign title. Subsequent discussions took place about what it means to make it fun *again*. As if the “fun” had been taken away and it was the kids’ task to restore fun in the city.



Now that the group had determined that Union Station was not welcoming to kids, and they designed a Bureau of Re-Funification to address this issue. The kids were asked to solve the problem by answering, “What would make D.C. fun and more exciting?”

A slew of creative ideas were generated, such as adding outdoor small businesses, rope courses, benches, things to look at, such as colorful murals made by people, music, a sprinkler to run through, a playground, trees for shade, teenage volunteers to help old people cross the street, flame thrower to burn portraits of politicians that you don't like, etc.

Andrew told the group that he would post about the group’s campaign idea on the HPA forum to get feedback from the wider community.

The next step in the campaign was to visit museums to collect information and objects to help with their effort to make D.C. more fun. The list of options included:

- The Smithsonian Castle
- Hirschhorn
- Portrait Gallery/American Art
- Anacostia Community Museum
- Environmental Research Center

- National Postal Museum
- National Museum of American History
- National Museum of Natural History
- National Museum of American Indian
- National Air and Space Museum
- Freer/Sackler
- National Museum of African Art

The kids voted on which museums they wanted to visit on Day 2, and the Hirshhorn and NASM were chosen.

In addition to the campaign, the kids were asked to create their *own* personal alter ego. They could express their alter ego by writing about them in their notebooks, drawing them in their sketchpads, or using the iPads. (Later in the week, it became clear that some of the participants enthusiastically embraced this assignment and created wonderful and complex alter egos. Most of this work was done outside the camp hours.)

In the afternoon, OP&A noticed that the kids' attention was often divided. They would sometimes be playing with the iPads while others were talking; it was difficult to ascertain whether the iPads were distracting from or enhancing the flow of ideas. It was also unclear how much the kids understood about what was being asked of them or what was being discussed, as some of the conversations contained mature content and references.

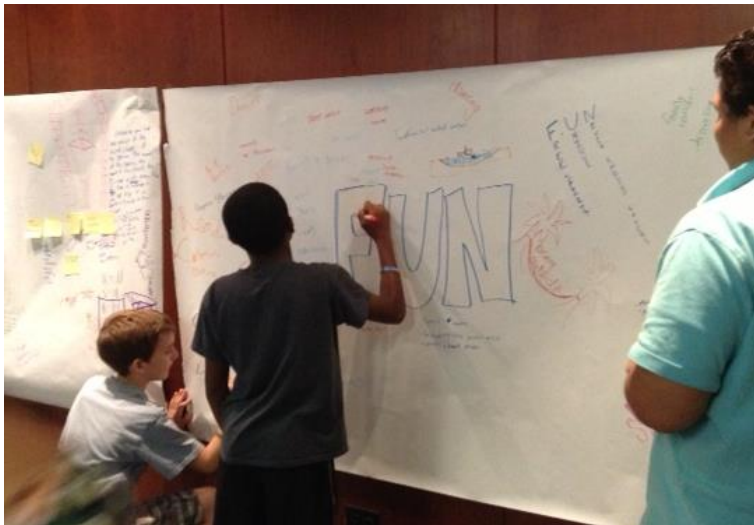
Once the kids had left for the day, the EdLab team of staff, mentors, and evaluators assessed the day's activities. There was consensus that the day had been successful and many interesting ideas had been generated. Everyone was excited about the idea of the "Bureau of Re-Funification" and the kids' decision to work towards making D.C. a more fun place to live, especially for young and old people. The team discussed the possible definitions and meanings of re-funification, and everyone agreed that it was interesting that the kids had created their own organization or Bureau. It was noted that there was inherent activism and civic engagement in the project. Andrew noted that in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, if a person's basic needs aren't met (e.g. food, shelter), then "fun" wasn't possible. He also mentioned the MIT Department of Play. Next, the discussion shifted to sharing the kids' ideas and efforts more broadly. Was there opportunity to invite Congress people and the public to "Bureau" events? Someone mentioned using social media to reach the wider community. Others made connections to the National Museum of Play, the role of city planners, and the potential to create "The Fun Deal" for the city, and things that were happening in other places.

Day 2 – Tuesday

On the second morning, while a video conference was being set up, the kids did some “superhero” yoga and worked on creating their own poses that demonstrated their super power. After yoga, the kids chatted with Matt Maggiasco, a wizard rock musician and an HPA member, using Google Hangout. Andrew moderated the discussion. Matt talked about his band, the Whomping Willows, and about how he would like to make where he lives more fun and vibrant. The group discussed how people could make a difference in their communities.

After the conversation with Matt, the group did a “one minute speech” activity, where each participant spoke for one minute about a random object they pulled out of a bag. Some of the mentors offered recommendations for improving their speaking skills. The leaders explained that everyone would be presenting to the public on Friday, so it was good to work on their public speaking skills now. It was later mentioned in the interviews that the kids found these types of activities were really helpful in building their public speaking skills.

Next, the kids continued to develop their campaign. First, they wrote down what they thought was fun on a large white piece of paper posted on the wall.



Both the adults and kids participated, and lots of different ideas were posted.

After the brainstorm, everyone left the Nerve Center to visit the NPM's exhibits. In the exhibit, one object was selected—an old carriage—for discussion. Two groups were created and each group had to construct a story, using the carriage as the object at the beginning or the end of their story.

The group returned to the Nerve Center to eat lunch and watch another installment of the Batman movie.

After lunch, the group visited the Hirshhorn. They began the visit by exploring the outside of the museum. They commented how the fountain and sculptures created a lively atmosphere. Reema explained the Hirshhorn bubble idea and the group thought that was fun and innovative. Once they entered the museum, the group started on the ground floor and discussed the Barbara Kruger exhibit. They also watched a video of parkour street performers. They then went upstairs to an area with couches and a large conference table, here they discussed what spaces are comfortable and designed for fun. A majority of the group had not previously visited this museum so they enjoyed the opportunity to see something new in their own city.

After the Hirshhorn, the group visited NASM, where they broke into two groups to explore and find what was fun in the museum. One group spent time visiting the *How Thing Fly* exhibition. Here they were able to explore the gallery on their own. Most of all, the group enjoyed all of the interactive exhibits that museum has to offer.

The group returned to the Nerve Center and Reema explained the activities for the next day. The adults and children brainstormed places to visit on Wednesday to conduct community interviews. These places included:

- National Building Museum
- National Postal Museum
- Yards Park
- National Mall
- Columbia Heights fountain

Once the kids left, the EdLab team of staff, mentors, and evaluators met to discuss the day's events and tomorrow's activities. The team brainstormed places for community interviews. The team decided that it would be a good idea to try to speak with community leaders at the sites. Each member drew on their own professional and personal connections to reach out to people in D.C. There was some difficulty thinking of places where the group could both hear from a community leader and speak to "ordinary"

people. We decided to go to the National Building Museum and Yards Park, both places that the kids had interest in visiting.

Day 3 – Wednesday

The third morning also began with superhero yoga. Everyone was asked to formulate a pose and to explain how to do it to the group, incorporating both public speaking and stretching. All the kids were eager participants and their morning drowsiness quickly evaporated. After 20 minutes of heroic posturing the kids were asked to take their seats to watch a “Crash Course” video in preparation for an online interview with one of its production assistants. This video focused on the creation of the constitution and lasted for about 10 minutes. The kids were attentive watchers and listeners. One participant was particularly excited by the episode. After the video’s conclusion, Reema and Andrew went about setting up the interview with Danica, the production assistant responsible for the animations, on Google Hangout. It took about 15 minutes to reach her due to some technical difficulties. In the meantime the kids took a few minutes to prepare questions to ask her.

Once she was finally able to get through, the kids were very straightforward with the interview. Andrew acted as a moderator, but he did not need to step in often. Danica began the interview with a description of who she is and what she does for the show. Kids then began to question her. Leo first asked her how she would make Indianapolis, the city where she lives, a more fun place. She responded candidly, saying that it requires fresh perspective and ideas to change things as small as neighborhoods or as large as cities. One participant asked her how Nerdfighters, an organization that she belongs to, raises money for the causes it supports. She said that much of the fundraising comes from Kiva, a micro loan website. Other questions ranged from “what do you do in your spare time?” to “what kind of education did you have to get your job?” The kids are anything but shy and seem to have really enjoyed the chat.

After the interview Jeff and Reema prompted the kids to come up with a list of locations that the group could travel to for their planned interviews in the community. Kids were encouraged to write where they wanted to go on a large piece of butcher paper referred to as the “parking lot.” Each participant went up and after their ideas were written down the group democratically decided where they wanted to go. They opted to go to the National Building Museum and Yard Park, which was a favorite of Jeff’s and heavily promoted by him. The leaders then prompted the kids to come up with a list of questions to ask the community members in these areas. Andrew was particularly adept at pushing the kids’

boundaries with questions. He consistently urged them to ask deeper, more insightful questions like “what is fun?” and “Who do you think the city was built for?” Once the list of questions was assembled the kids were directed to practice their interview skills with one another. They picked their own groups of three and were tasked with trying out each role in an interview situation. Subsequently, each group member had an opportunity to be the interviewer, the interviewee, and the recorder. This activity went on for 20 minutes and seemed to be enjoyed by all.

The group first visited the National Building Museum. They were met by Andrew, who is Reema’s friend who works at the museum. Andrew introduces himself and what he does at the museum. The kids interview Andrew using the questions they had put together. Their roles had not been planned out but the interview went smoothly. This was good practice for speaking to museum visitors.

Then the group split up into two and conducted interviews with people in the museums. One of the first people said they did not want to be videotaped and some others refused. This was a good lesson for the kids. There were several willing visitors, including a group of business men and women from Spain, a museum employee, and a head curator for the museum. Each kid was reluctant to be the interviewer and instead preferred to be the videographer. Despite this, they all did a good job asking the questions. Jeff helped in approaching visitors and explaining the project. This was helpful due to the time constraints and comfort level of the kids.

Next the group went to Yards Park. Everyone was impressed with the design of the park and agreed that it was a fun space because there is a lot of room to walk around, you can watch the water, etc. However, there were no people. The group talked about why this might be and then talked about what kinds of activities were missing for kids. Jeff asked the kids if there were any informal sports leagues (like adult kickball or bocce ball). They responded “no”. That is one idea they discussed pursuing for the Bureau of Re-Funification. The group went into the Potbelly’s nearby to interview people inside. They interviewed several customers and then left to go back to the Nerve Center. On the way back, Jeff gave examples of previous EdLab successes.³ Once there, the group worked on their alter egos and got ready to leave for the day.

³ It is unclear if the kids understood this. Perhaps this should be more formal to help students understand the possibilities of these campaigns.

Program staff and OP&A met to discuss the day's events and plan for the next day. We agreed that the group was meshing well. Reema expressed that she was a little concerned for the next day because it would be the day the group solidified their ideas and put together the presentation. She predicted that it would likely be the most difficult day. Staff shared ideas on what the final presentation could look like. We discussed the balance of the adults guiding the ideas yet allowing them to come organically from the kids. We also discussed how the group could stay in touch using different internet platforms. One challenge was identified—that the participants could not use many tools and platforms due to age restrictions. We talked about logistics to continue the project.

Day 4 – Thursday

The fourth morning started with superhero yoga. Andrew showed the group a video about HPA, starring Lauren Bird. Then, the group spoke with Lauren using Google Hangout. Lauren is HPA's digital content strategist (she makes video, online content, Facebook posts). Each participant was asked to think of a question for Lauren, and everyone had a chance to ask his or her question.

After their conversation with Lauren, participants had to pull a topic out of a bag and talk about that topic for one minute.

Andrew spoke to the group about how the Internet and having an online presence helps people turn the "Internet into a playground." He explained that there are many interesting online galleries and projects that are making connections among people. One person who is superb at using the Internet to make connections is Ze Frank. Andrew introduced the kids to Ze Frank by playing his Ted Talk.

Following the Ted Talk, the kids were given 10 minutes to think up their own wacky ideas for what the Bureau could do. The kids were told to write their ideas on sticky notes, and those notes were posted on the wall. Reema read the notes aloud and they were discussed.

Some ideas included:

- More dance parties
- Outdoor museums
- Mini zoo
- Mini wipeout stations
- Tons of people bring random foods and build a huge (disgusting) dish
- Musical staircase
- Public art projects

Andrew mentioned that he had posted about the Bureau of Re-Funification, and his network had written back to him in support of the campaign. His network had offered examples of other places in the world where people are doing creative things to make their neighborhoods and cities more fun.

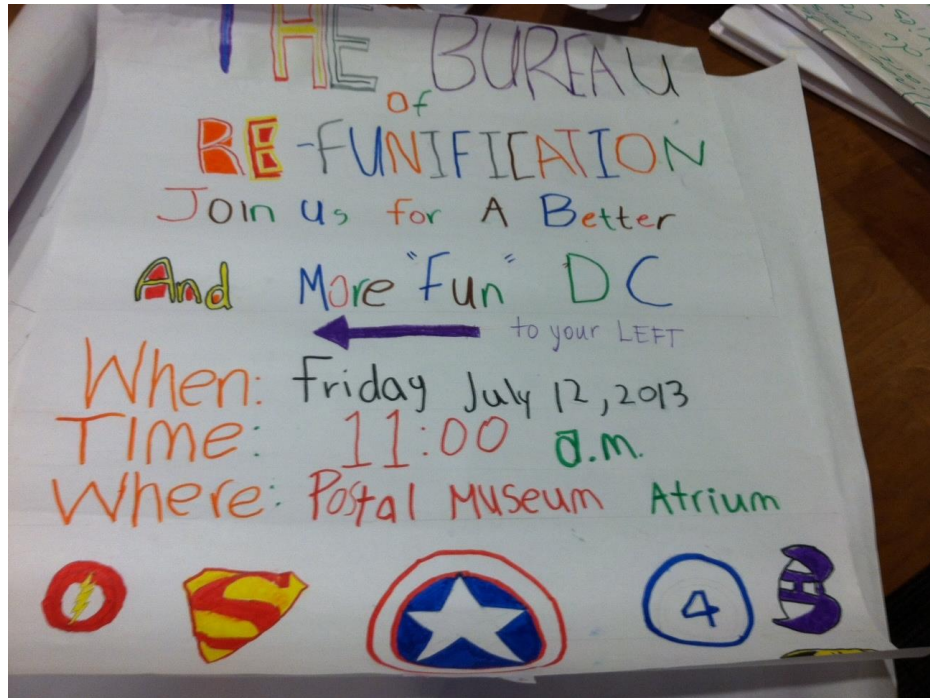
After lunch, the kids designed their big “campaign launch”, which would be presented in the NPM atrium on Friday to an audience of friends, family, NPM staff, and the public. The kids worked in two groups—one group created the presentation on Prezi and the second group designed posters to advertise the presentation.



The kids ran through the presentation, and the mentors offered feedback and suggestions.

Next, the kids had an opportunity to talk about their personal alter ego, which they had worked on individually and at home. Some of the participants shared their stories with the group, while some of others decide that they were not yet ready to share with the group.

Once the kids left for the day, the adults stayed to clean up and talk. One of the leaders thought this day had been more difficult than the others had been. The challenge was keeping the kids focused on the presentation and getting some of the participants to work collaboratively. Overall, everyone was excited about how the week was progressing.



Day 5 - Friday

Friday morning began with a dance party in the Nerve Center. Everyone was present and excited. Then, the group gathered in the NPM atrium to prepare for the presentation by practicing it a few times. The kids received coaching from Jeff, Andrew, Emily, and others. There were some problems with the microphones, so for the actual presentation everyone had to project their voices instead. Attendees included NPM staff, parents, and curious museum visitors. After the presentation, audience members asked questions and the kids did a fantastic job responding. Everyone seemed very pleased with the presentation. Audience members were encouraged to write what they thought was fun on a large piece of paper attached to the wall. People mingled for a bit after the presentation.



After the presentation, the team returned to the Nerve Center for lunch. While eating lunch they watched Spiderman. OP&A interviewed the kids individually in another room. The evaluators also interviewed Andrew Slack.

Once everyone was finished eating, the team went back to Union Station, this time with sidewalk chalk. All the kids and EdLab leaders were wearing capes as they drew on the cement and brick around Union Station. Groups of strangers stopped and watched. The EdLab leaders invited the bystanders to join in. A group of young adults who were visiting D.C. from all different countries accepted the offer. Some of them wrote the word “Love” in many different languages using the colored chalk. This was a positive experience for everyone; the kids felt that they were actively making D.C. a more fun and inclusive place.

Eventually, the sky became overcast and it began to rain. This added to the experience: it was a dramatic conclusion to the intervention, and it also reinforced the idea that the drawings were temporary—they would be washed away and more pictures could be drawn anew.



To escape the rain, the team headed back to the Nerve Center. Here, Reema led a discussion about what to do next, once the camp was over. Some of the options included coming back together in person as part of an after-school program. They could organize more fun activities similar to drawing with sidewalk chalk. Andrew suggested creating a new HPA chapter that could be the Bureau of Re-Funification's chapter.

Andrew noted that the media loves to report on stories that are connecting to things happening in other places and HPA chapters in different cities, states, and countries. There are examples of cool stuff happening around the world. People all over the place are making their cities more fun.

The team talked about different networks to use to stay in touch, such as Edmodo, which is a school version of Facebook.

Then, the group went to visit the future EdLab space in the National Postal Museum. Jeff explained that when they were designing the space, they interviewed people who worked in coffee shops. They learned that coffee shops are like “third places” to go to hang out that is not your home and is not your office or school. They designed it so that some of the space is like a classroom, with tables and chairs, and the back of the room will have couches and sofa chairs you can put together to work in groups. There will also be a “bar” area with stools. Reema asked the group if they would want to hang out there and all said “yes.” They also mentioned that there will be smart boards and dry erase boards. The participants commented that the space looked “awesome” and “super fun.” The participants were curious what the space would be used for when there was no camp in session.

The group said good-bye to one another and a group picture was taken.

The EdLab staff, mentors, and evaluators stayed to discuss the week. Overall, everyone was impressed with the breadth of what was accomplished over the five days. Everyone felt that the sidewalk chalk activity was a great way to end the week.

The group discussed some of the obstacles and difficulties of the program. Foremost in some people’s minds was how to keep the momentum generated over the week. Was there interest among the kids to move forward? Some wondered what follow-through would be possible. It was noted that the superhero theme was not integrated into the campaign and presentation. Instead the kids focused on making D.C. a fun place.

One actionable step was to connect everyone via Edmodo. Someone suggested that EdLab could host a pizza party with the participants. There were opportunities to apply for more grants. The organizers felt that there was potential to host the kids at NPM once a week after school.

The group discussed the skills that the kids appeared to have developed over the week, mainly confidence in public speaking and sharing ideas.