

## ***The Poet in the House Collaborative with Professor Gale Jackson***

**Coordinator:** Ms. Nana, ELA Teacher

### **What is *The Poet in the House Collaborative*?**

The *Poet in the House Collaborative* is an arts based education program that seeks to build critical thinking and writing skills through conversation, story telling, poetic exploration, word study/etymology, calligraphy and shared art making.

The Poet in the House Collaborative serves approximately 120 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders in both general and special education ELA classes.

### **Who is Professor Gale Jackson?**

Dr. Gale Jackson is a poet, storyteller, writer and teaching artist. She is author of the books *Put Your Hands on Your Hips*, *MeDea*, *Suite for Mozambique*, *Bridge Suite: Narrative Poems*, *A Khoisan Tale of Beginnings and Ends*, and, *We Stand Our Ground*, a collaborative work with Kimiko Hahn and Susan Sherman. She also co-edited *The Art Against Apartheid Anthology*. Her work appears in numerous anthologies and publications including *Callalou*, *African American Review*, *Artist and Influence*, and *Essence*. In addition to her writing practice, she is storyteller in residence at The Hayground School, professor on the faculty of the graduate program in Interdisciplinary Arts at Goddard College and poet in residence in several New York City Public Schools. She has received a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship for her work in Griot traditions, worked for many years in University, public and community education, and as a lecturer, performer, researcher and librarian.

### **What are the goals of *The Poet in the House Collaborative*?**

- To build critical thinking and writing skills in personal narrative, poetry, and expository writing
- To develop an appreciation for language arts in a myriad of social, historical, intellectual and cultural contexts
- To foster an understanding of the roles and responsibilities in a diverse learning community based on collaboration and conversation
- To create a forum that provides for student-centered inquiry and meets the needs of differentiation
- To provide professional development and peer mentoring for teachers

### **What are the students saying?**

- “The Poet in the House Collaborative is very important to me. Through Professor Jackson’s teachings, I learn to think more deeply about who I am and about the world around me. For example, I had never really thought about language before. I had only thought of it as the way people communicated with each other. Professor Jackson taught me that it is more than just that. She taught me that the roots of language go back to a time when everyone was connected and that somehow all languages are similar. I learn a lot from Professor Jackson’s lessons, and I admire her style of teaching and whenever she comes to teach, I try my best to make the most of that class because I know that in some way, this class will help me later in life.” –Louis Silverman

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- “I think the Poet in the House Collaborative is important because it gives us a chance to learn something we probably wouldn’t have learned otherwise in school.” –Victoria Williamson
- “The Poet in the House Collaborative is an important feature of our curriculum. Learning from a poet, writer, and storyteller helps us learn and express our creativity. The situations and thoughts that Gale Jackson presents us with are great for critical thinking, and they help us become more active. I believe this critical thinking let’s our creativity and imagination be free.” –Brave Hagar
- “The Poet in the House Collaborative with Professor Gale Jackson is important because it teaches me about the true meaning of words and history. For example, it was very informative when she helped us break down the word *question* and *calligraphy*. Also, the stories have a kind and mental meaning that teaches us good nature.” –Violet Bennett
- “I think the Poet in the House Collaborative is significant in school. This is because it gives students an opportunity to learn about various cultures that they had no familiarity with before. Gale Jackson discusses different philosophies from many different countries. We talk about language, poetry, and writing, not only from the U.S., but from ethnicities all over the world.” – Kenneth Van der Lande
- “The Poet in the House Collaborative with Professor Gale Jackson is important because she teaches us to be poetic. For example, she made us look at the moon every night to see something beautiful before going to sleep. Also, last year, she made us write a 12 syllable poetic sentence. Even the description was amazing!” –David Fonell
- “We should have another session with Professor Jackson because her stories and questions make you think further and deeper.” –Katya Samus