

ACTON HIGH SCHOOL

YEAR 9 NEWSLETTER

Newsletter Date: 20th October, 2011



MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

This has been a busy and exciting half-term for Acton High, and I have very much enjoyed the beginning of my time at the school. There are so many developments in a large school that I cannot discuss them all here, but I would like to mention how impressed I have been by the work being done to ensure that Y10 and Y11 students are well prepared for the exams that will take place in November, by the many activities involved in celebrating Black History month, by the way that our new Y7 students have settled into the school, by the innovative and effective use of Flexidays and other curriculum extension strategies, and by the enthusiasm of staff working to prepare for the launch of our Sixth Form in 2011. It is becoming increasingly clear to me that there are many things that make Acton High special. Next half-term, our main priorities will be to continue to focus on developing excellent questioning as a way to embed and accelerate learning for all students, on using a whole school approach to developing students' skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics, and on providing the mentoring, support and guidance that our Y10 and Y11 students will need as they approach the end of their compulsory schooling and begin to consider their options for the future. It promises to be an equally challenging and rewarding half-term, so I would ask all students and staff to enjoy their break and to come back refreshed on October 31st, ready for action.

PERFORMANCE POETRY



On Friday 14th November twenty two students from Year 9 were lucky enough to have a two hour workshop with Breis, a Nigerian Hip Hop Rap artist and writer who recited some of his rhymes and explained the inspiration behind them.

Students were encouraged to write their own poetry about the power of words and here is some of their work:

*My words have the power to bring out emotion,
My words dive like dolphins in the ocean,
Smile, laugh, shout and cry
My words come out and say a quick hello and bye bye.*

Well what else can I say

My words scream out hip hip hooray.

When I'm older I want to be like Beyonce,

I hope my words will find me a loving fiance'

I got a future, don't hate,

My words have the power to relate.

Relate, relate to what?

Oooo I think that boy is hot.

Okay, well dancing is my life,

My words are more powerful

Than a knife,

Taking a life is not right,

My words are like danger lurking in the night.

By Tilly Geddes-Power

My words are a power,

I could go on for hours,

About the impact of words,

Here right now.

So my power over you

Is greater than you think

I could make your confidence grow

Or your personality shrink,

A word, one word,

Is all that it takes,

A word from me,

And your solid mind turns to flakes.

But words can do good,

If I like you, touch wood,

I could inspire you, and should

Because I could.

By Finlay Perrigo

BLACK HISTORY MONTH ACTIVITIES

October in the UK has in recent decades, become synonymous with Black History Month. The purpose of the month is to highlight the significant role that Africa and its Diaspora has played in the world's civilization. To mark the event at Acton High School, we have organised an array of activities to recognise African cultures and reputable achievements. This included a week of assemblies for each year group to raise awareness of the African people's contribution to world history. This was led by Claud Steven, an Acton High Learning Mentor. We have had African drumming demonstrations and workshops for Year 7 and 8 and presentations by the Black History and Culture West London organisation on the 'Root to the Fruit' project to Year 9 and 10. The project members gave us an insight into the contributions and stories of the African and Caribbean community in the UK over the past 50 years. Year 11 has also enjoyed a Performance Poetry assembly and a group of 20 Year 9 took part in a Performance Poetry workshop based on the theme of surmounting obstacles to success. Throughout the month students have been given opportunities to take part in African and Caribbean inspired art workshops and cookery sessions.



CRIME THEATRE WORKSHOP

"Holloway Jones" is a play by Evan Placey, which was performed at Acton High by the Synergy Theatre group. It was created to educate young people about the dangers of anti social and criminal behaviour and was researched with ex-prisoners, KS3 & 4 students in London schools and young people in care.

The actors were a mixture of professional and ex-prisoner actors and the play was designed to tie in with the Year 9 PSHCE programme. The Year 9 students watched "Holloway Jones" and then this was followed by a theatre skills based workshop. This is what a student had to say:

The theatre show was based on the story of Holloway Jones. Holloway Jones is a young black girl who lived in care, her mum went to jail when Holloway was young.

Holloway Jones would visit her mum often and talk about what has happened in her life while her mum was in jail. Holloway Jones' favourite hobby was bike riding. She was very good at the sport. She dreamed of being an Olympic star and winning the gold medal at the 2012 games. This was the only thing that kept her going. She did not give up. She practised every day and her coach was proud of her. Then one day she was walking, when she met this young lad named Avery he tricked her in to believing that he loved her. He did this by giving everything to her.

Little did Holloway Jones know that this was the obstacle that was tripping her over and making her fail in life and her Olympic dream. Holloway Jones attitude towards her bike riding changed she would come late to training not try her hardest. One day Holloway Jones came late to training and that's when the coach exploded with rage and told her the truth. Holloway Jones ignored him and left to see Avery her and him spoke for a bit then he left. Next day Avery approached her and gave her a bag she asked him what was in it he replied don't worry just hold it for me , she said yes and took it way. Gem her bestfreind and only friend told her that there was armed robbery at her mums work shop and her cousin got stabbed in the neck but he survives. Coach called her the next day and told there's a man from the Olympic department and that he wanted to see her and that she had to come tomorrow. She didn't go to the practise but instead she went with Avery to rob something she got caught but Avery got away. They questioned her and she told them she`s not a snitch. They told her if she does not tell who she was with she will be going down for attempted robbery and that's about 4-7 years in prison.

Holloway Jones went home and thought about it. She went to check the bag that Avery gave to her and there she found a knife and other things and that's when it all added up. She told the police it was Avery and he got sent to prison. All her worries weren't over as Avery friends approached her and cussed her and said mean things and called her a snitch. It didn't break her down though as she thought about what to do and that's when she remembered she still had a chance at being an Olympic star. She went back to the coach and begged for her to be allowed back on the team and that's when Holloway Jones knew that she was back on track. She knew that she missed the 2012 games but she could make it to the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

The story fast forwards 4 years in time and that's where she meets her mum who came out of prison they reunite and become a family again.

Abdi Ali 9H