

PATANA NEWS

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Bangkok Patana School
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INDEPENDENT LEARNING IN SENIOR STUDIES

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Page 2

Also in this issue...

Unleashing Voices

Page 6

A Tip on Fast Fashion

Page 12

Community Engagement

Page 14

Tech Tips

Page 17

Finding My Sport

Page 20

Services Updates

Page 21

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SPOKEN WORD POETRY *Showcase* 2024

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Uniting Our Voices for Positive Change



UNLEASHING VOICES

Purnima Ghogar Ruanglertbutr, Secondary English Teacher & Extended Learning English ECA

Year 7 English Extended Learners create and perform poems inspired by Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, and Justice values (DEIJ) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as part of the Spoken Word Poetry Showcase project and production.

INSPIRING ACTION THROUGH WORDS: THE ROLE OF POETRY IN ADDRESSING GLOBAL CHALLENGES

As the spotlight falls on the stage, a question emerges from the silence: can this poem effect real change? With bated breath, each performer brings their unique perspectives, cadence, tone, rhythm, and metaphors, delivering powerful calls to action that aim to galvanise and ignite collective action. As they leave the stage, the audience is left with a reflection and realisation: yes, poetry can impact social awareness and personal growth, and they felt it deeply from the young and courageous writers.

The Spoken Word Showcase provides students with a platform to explore global issues, express their individualities confidently, and inspire others to join them in making a difference. As an English teacher and spoken word poet who facilitates the ECA, the showcase reflects my vision for using poetry as a tool for positive change, enabling

our students to explore their creative potential while understanding their rights and responsibilities in today's globalised world. Isn't it essential to empower students to use their voices for transformative progress at personal, local, and global levels? By integrating interdisciplinary learning through publishing and performing their work, along with critical engagement with the SDGs, students are equipped with the skills and mindset to unleash their voices for change.

THE BRIEF: FOSTERING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP THROUGH PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

Students were tasked with creating individually authored poetry collections, performing for a supportive audience, and contributing to a published poetry anthology. This year, each poem reflected a unique perspective on the theme 'Unity in Diversity' and served as a call to action. From fighting racism and empowering refugee voices to promoting gender equality, preserving biodiversity, and celebrating cultural diversity, these poems showcased their creativity and passion, uniting audiences and embodying responsible global citizenship. Through this project, students honed their writing, research, creativity, collaboration, and public speaking skills. But what steps did they take to perform with such bravery and conviction?



1. Interpreting The Theme: Unity in Diversity (Inquiry-based Learning)

To begin, we asked: What does it mean to embrace diversity and unity in today's world? How can poetry advocate for harmony? How do you envision a world where diversity is celebrated and differences are embraced? These questions sparked the vision for this year's showcase theme, 'Unity in Diversity.' Through inquiry-based lessons, students unravelled the intricacies of the theme, connecting it to personal experiences, values, and principles crucial for unity in a diverse community.

Armed with knowledge and inspiration, students researched significant days on the DEIJ Calendar and studied how communities worldwide promote unity. From International Women's Day to Human Rights Day, each occasion reminded them of the importance of inclusivity and equality, fuelling their passion for progress.

Ultimately, we defined 'Unity in Diversity' as celebrating and embracing differences while working together towards common global goals. In our diverse international school, this message resonates deeply, highlighting the pivotal role we play in championing respect and understanding amidst our individual differences.

2. Analysing Poems by Influential Poets and Songwriters (Critical and Analytical Skills)

Subsequently, students analysed various poetry forms, including shape, portrait, collage, and question-and-answer poems, to grasp how language techniques, symbols, motifs, form, and structure convey unity with clarity. They studied activist spoken word poets like Amanda Gorman, Benjamin Zephaniah and Maya Angelou. Music lyrics from humanitarian artists such as Bob Marley, Michael Jackson, and the Beatles also offered insights into effectively using language techniques to promote unity.

3. Crafting Authored Collections: Publication Design & Editing (Creative Thinking)

By exploring issues they feel passionate about, the Year 7s went on to plan and write their own poetry collections with attention to purpose, message, tone and techniques. They honed collaboration skills by providing constructive feedback to peers and showcased creativity in editing and designing their own publications, selecting cover designs, fonts, images, and layouts.

"I enjoyed planning and writing our own poetry collections because that was when we got to express what we thought 'Unity in Diversity' meant to us as individuals, and we could also see what 'Unity in Diversity' meant to others, and how they perceived it." Ying Ying Han, 7R

4. Applying Performance Techniques and Rehearsing (Public Speaking Skills)

Immersed in the art of spoken word, students learned and applied a variety of performance techniques, including gestures, pacing, intonation, articulation, voice projection, eye contact, and passionate delivery - each one a key to unlocking the potential of their poetic voices, enhancing their message clarity and emotional impact. Through intense, dedicated collaborative rehearsals and peer review, they refined their public speaking and presentation skills, gaining confidence in delivering powerful and engaging performances.

"I enjoyed the process of peer-reviewing our poems as it allowed us to explore a larger variety of poetic techniques from each other's poems, giving us constructive feedback that helps us improve our work." Ethan Choi, 7J

5. Celebrating Student Poetry Performances (Public Speaking Skills)

The project culminated in the students' outstanding performances at the Spoken Word Showcase, where each recited a poem from their own authored collection. Their celebration of diversity, embrace of differences, and stance against injustice left us inspired and proud, fostering hope, determination, and unity for positive change among parents, teachers, and peers alike. A big thank you to everyone who joined to show their support for the students, affirming the importance of their voices.

"I developed my public speaking and further improved my planning, communication, and collaboration skills. After much hard work, we are all thrilled to present our poems to all of you." Glenda Ho, 7B

EMPOWERING VOICES: CULTIVATING CHANGE-MAKERS

Innovative English teaching empowers students as active participants in shaping a better tomorrow through projects like the Spoken Word Poetry Showcase. Each year, this event focuses on a different theme, encouraging students to craft messages from diverse perspectives, whilst fostering a strong sense of camaraderie throughout the process. Next year, the showcase will be part of the new English Enrichment ECAs, extending its reach to Year 7-9 students.

"I plan on ensuring more people are aware of the negative impact of pollution, not just on animals but us humans too. It's never too late to make a change." Khongkwan Kim, 7B

"I hope I will have the chance to do something like this again. I really enjoyed doing this project; it helped me be brave enough to stand up on stage and perform something that I have been working on for a long time and feel really passionate about." Tian Suthiwongsunthorn, 7J

Explore Our Anthology: Unity in Diversity

Click the [link](#) to experience the transformative voices of our youth.

Watch Our Showcase: Uniting Voices for Change

Experience the captivating performances of our students as they take the stage to share their inspiring words.

