

Platanos College News

October 2017

History Month – Celebrating Diversity

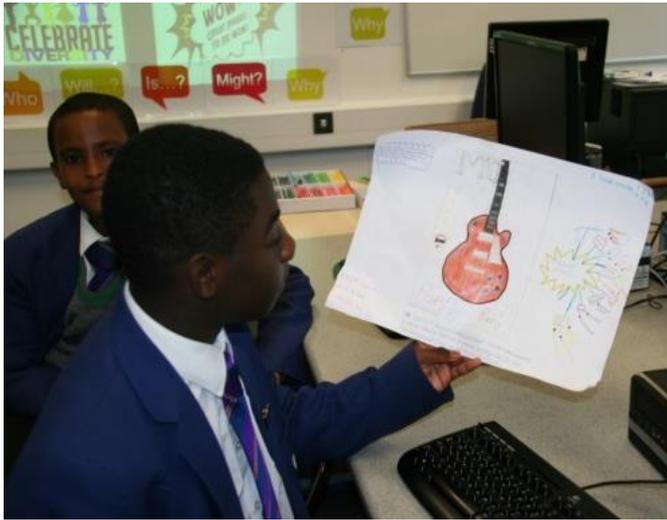
In October, students at Platanos College celebrated History Month. This was an exciting whole school project focused on diversity and multiculturalism through looking at historical events and people that have become part of the rich tapestry of Britain. This year the theme was ‘Celebrating Diversity’, with a particular focus on the influence of migration throughout history – a theme we feel is particularly important to London and our local community.

The aim of History Month was for students to understand and engage in the way that Britain has always been a country with waves of positive migration that has impacted on our society today.

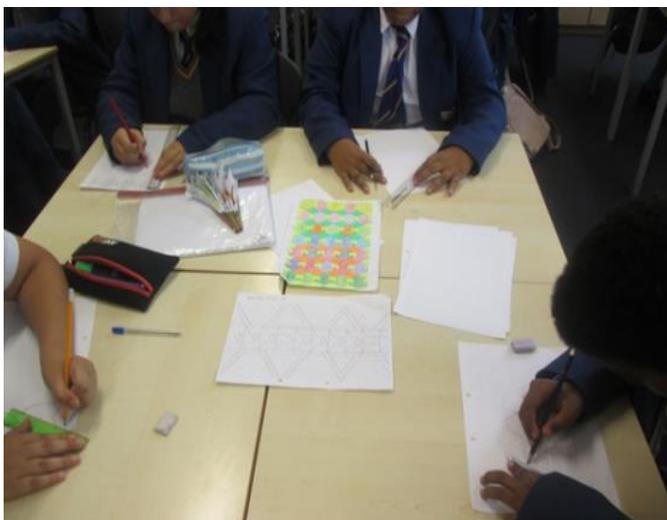
We kicked off the event through a whole school assembly. Students were given a short summary of Roman and Norman migration which began almost 2000 years ago. The Romans and Normans contributed to the English language as we know it today, as well as implementing a system of law and order which has had a long standing impact on British history. Drama students enhanced the assembly by making placards displaying views on migration. The John Agard poem ‘Checking Out Me History’ (read by Mr Whyte) also resonated with students who were encouraged to reflect on their own identity. One of our Year 9 Debate Mate students, Robert, bravely prepared and delivered his own speech on Celebrating Diversity to the whole school.



Over the next three weeks, students engaged in their understanding of diversity and migration through a range of activities. Each subject department planned and taught a lesson to Year 7, 8, and 9 students on the theme of Celebrating Diversity which also focused on the skills for each subject. For example, students in English studied the poem 'Presents From My Relatives In Pakistan' where they analysed the reflections of a girl torn between Pakistani and British culture. Technology and Art students studied designs originating from different continents of the world, while Music students studied genres with roots in other cultures.



In Maths, students created bright, tessellating patterns often associated with the art and culture of Islam. While in Science, students looked at the history of discovering atoms through migrant contributions. Students in PE delighted in the art of Bhangra dancing, while History students collaborated to make their own gallery charting the history of migration to Britain. Spanish students had a more bespoke theme based on the culture and history of Spanish speaking countries – a theme that ties in to their studies of GCSE Spanish.



All students had individual Year Group assemblies which focused on modern migration moments such as the arrival of the Empire Windrush to London from the Caribbean in 1948, Britain's entry into the European Union (then known as the EEC) in 1972, the Brixton Riots of 1981, and the recent Brexit decision last

year. This was followed up with a tutor-led activity and quiz which allowed students to reflect and discuss Celebrating Diversity in smaller groups.

Students were challenged to take part in more independent work through a competition identifying significant migrants to Britain. Individuals such as Mo Farah and Sadiq Khan proved to be inspiring role models for the students as they have succeeded in their respective fields of sport and politics. These role models have gained success through their own (or their family's) decision to migrate to Britain and have also contributed to British society through excelling in their field.

Furthermore, students were invited to independently research their own 'significant migrant to Britain' as part of a whole school competition. In addition to this, students were encouraged to develop independence through undertaking a range of CILPs (Creative Independent Learning Projects) to stretch their learning from History Month lessons. These higher level homework tasks were of a particularly high standard in the Drama department where students created a 'stage in a shoebox' based on their reflections of Celebrating Diversity and migration.

History Month Competition

Who is the most important person to migrate to the UK and make a difference?

 Ignatius Sancho, actor and writer, born 1729 on a slave ship	 Karl Marx, philosopher, born 1818, Germany	 Zara Hadid, Award winning architect, born 1950, Iraq
 Sigmund Freud, founder of psychoanalysis, born 1856, Austria	 William the Conqueror, founder of England, born 1028, France	 George Handel, Composer, born 1685 Germany
 Rita Ora, Singer, born 1990, Albania	 Mo Farah, Olympic runner, born 1983 Somalia	



The Mapping Platanos project proved to be the most challenging aspect of History Month. This was an ambitious task which aimed to pin each Platanos student's heritage on to a large world map. In undertaking this project, we hoped that students and staff would gain a greater understanding of the diverse nature of our school community and be able to map out our similarities and differences. This creative project was principally led by the Art Department. The map is due to be displayed in our reception area for the next few weeks, alongside some examples of outstanding work created by students for History Month within the different subject areas.



There is no doubt that History Month has proved to be a challenge as staff have had to weave the various strands of this collaborative project together. However, it has certainly had a positive impact on students who have engaged in linking diversity to individual subject areas. Students have also gained a greater insight into the positive impact of migration and how this has enriched British history for over two thousand years.

The range of photographs, student work, and the 'Mapping Platanos' map stand as testament to this vibrant and creative project until next year. We hope to build upon this success as we embark on designing next year's theme and look forward to showcasing the best pieces of work in December during our Key Stage Three Achievement Evening to which parents are invited.