



KINGSWORTH
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



WELCOME TO KINGSWORTH NEWS

Dear Parents,

This will be the last newsletter for the term as next week it is the two-week break. I am going to talk about the M.U.N. of which I am (to use the terminology) the Director, as some of you will already know. I have just come back from a 4-day trip in Haarlem with a group of 14 students, and I want to sing the praises of what M.U.N. is and what it encourages in the individual student.

When you are one of the Directors, you end up spending much of your time in the staff room, wandering around the various delegations which you can observe but in which you are not allowed to be involved. So you chat, exchange ideas and eventually get interested by the other directors' experiences and the schools/institutions they represent. I got into some extremely interesting discussions with directors from Turkey, England, Germany and Holland. Other countries present were various, but somehow we did not get enough time to connect, more for logistical reasons than any other.

The conversation we took up on the last day was about the changing nature of the teacher and the status of education. What was surprising for me was how in Turkey (like in Germany, England, Holland) teachers see on a daily basis how disinterested many students seem to be in the process of learning. Without going into the ins and outs of the conversation, one common feeling we all shared was how M.U.N. seems to inspire students out of this cocoon of indifference. For three full-on days the students engage in discussion, debate and presentation.

Each team represents a country and they adopt the country (in our case Ghana, Canada, Greece) as if they were the actual delegates of that country. Their objective is to work with other countries and get resolutions passed. All this within the set of rules of what is known as (parliamentary) 'procedure'. So why does this role-playing emulation of the real thing work? I think the answer lies in the word "real". The students see the inherent value of being a part of what we can label as the real world, the world that is often left behind in schools in a sort of *out-there* way.

And the skills? International relations, diplomacy, learning about the history, geography, religion and culture of the country, of the challenges they face, of economics, of science; it teaches you about debating, arguing, research and presenting your information cohesively and cogently. The theme was about global warming and how countries should and can react. All real cross-curricular stuff.

Furthermore, the M.U.N. can hone your presentation and persuasion skills as well as teach you how to influence people. It really is a great activity to take up. I would encourage all student from Year 11 up to take it up. And for the younger ones? To take up debating in the Debating Club, which we tried to set up but there were not enough takers. So, parents, please encourage your children in the lower years to take up debating in preparation for the M.U.N. - M.U.N. is here to stay!

My final point for today is from a Guardian article from Saturday's paper about children losing contact with nature. I am not going to make any point, just food for thought...The following part drew my attention:

A new edition of the Oxford Junior Dictionary was published in 2007 with a substantial group of words relating to nature – more than 50 – excised: they included acorn, adder, ash, beech, bluebell, buttercup, catkin, conker, cowslip and dandelion. Their replacements included terms from the digital world such as analogue, blog, broadband, bullet-point, celebrity, chatroom, cut-and-paste, MP3 player and voicemail, and despite protests from writers ranging from Richard Mabey and Robert Macfarlane to Margaret Atwood and Andrew Motion, when a new edition of the dictionary was published in 2012, the nature vocabulary was not restored.

Well, enjoy the break and I look forward to seeing you all back at the end of April.

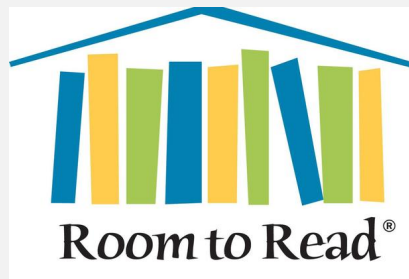
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Mr Stephen Jankowski

Head teacher

Read-a-thon 2017

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