

Bristol's Lit Legacies launch: Free GCSE resources in response to shocking lack of texts on diversity

Lit Legacies was launched with pride and compassion at Fairfield High School, marking a successful year's work by professionals to create a free scheme of work based around the play *Princess and the Hustler* by Chinonyerem Odimba, in response to the shocking lack of GCSE texts on diversity. Centred around Bristol, including the Bristol Bus Boycott in 1963, this beautifully crafted play articulates the experiences of black people living in the UK, with Lit Legacies offering a fresh set of resources and activities ready to be picked up and delivered to students.

Welcoming a stream of external guests including older members of the local community, who shared personal experiences of protesting and fighting for racial equality during the 60s, educational professionals and a lead examiner, Fairfield's Atrium was buzzing with rich history, emotion and a sense of privilege to be part of this special event. Even more humbling was the attendance of Barbara Dettering, one of the seven Saints of St Paul's, who features on the large mural dedicated to the saints in school's Atrium.

Lit Legacies' project team's wealth of experience, knowledge and culture consists of University of the West of England Senior Lecturers Amy Saleh and

Malcolm Richards, plus English teachers Cashan Campbell (Fairfield High School), Tanisha Hicks-Beresford (Bristol Cathedral Choir School) and DeMarco Ryans (St John The Baptist School). Spearheaded by Amy, the group came together to educate and expose the profound racism experienced in Britain through a unique and enchanted perspective, which contains many moments of resilience, joy and hope.

Amy Saleh explains: "Growing up, I was used to seeing white literature with no black characters, even if the whole of the class was black. I've always been concerned about the message this sends, but understood the resources were just not available. One of the best days of my life as an educator was the day the project team met up, looked at the play, unpicked the issues and put a plan into place.

"We recognised the importance of student voice in the creation of the resources to ensure culture and identity reflection. They were amazing! They had so many different questions and ideas which provoked rich conversations and dialogue, helping to shape the resources. Their honesty and meaningful feedback meant they weren't afraid to say when they didn't like something!"

Cashan Campbell, Assistant Vice Principal and English Teacher at Fairfield adds: "This has been a considerably rewarding and enriching experience for me. I grew up in Bristol, came to school at Fairfield and my beloved Nanny was one of the Seven Saints of St Paul's. Lit Legacies represents stories of global majority characters, perspectives and life experiences which we hope will encourage understanding, friendships and an opening for wider discussions."



▲ Special guests from the local community, who shared personal experience of protesting/fighting for racial equality
▼ L to R: Cashan Campbell, Amy Saleh & Tanisha Hicks-Beresford

