

At the Time to Listen launch, students from Rickards Lodge presented a verbatim theatre performance. The script was developed by the RSC using a corpus of material selected by TALE researchers.

Ibrahim (narrator) – Young people across the country were asked about arts education in our schools. Here are some of the things we said:

Sam - The creative subjects have given me independence, confidence in decision-making.

Sahar - I think arts subjects are about what you think rather than what you are told to think. In more academic subjects you are told, 'these are the facts, this is what you need to do'. The arts are more about you creating something new.

Megan - ...You have to manage your own projects. You have to be organised and work out what you need to do at home...

Simona - ...You are supported to do follow your instincts and as a result are more satisfied and motivated to do it.

Megan - In every other lesson you are sitting down. But with Shakespeare it's up on your feet. I feel more confident giving my ideas.

Natasha - Creative arts subjects teach you to work with others and get along with them no matter what. You get to see the world from other people's points of view.

Elisa - Instead of teachers just giving the answers, we are in it together. We are all trying to make a piece of theatre and we are all working towards it rather than just one person answering questions.

Simona - I am more able to make mistakes and learn from them rather than hate myself for it.

Daniella - Once you learn to be more open in drama you can be more open in other subjects and more open as a person...

Sahar - ...Not just open about your feelings and opinions but also being more open-minded to other people, seeing their strengths and not being threatened by their differences.

Natasha - If you do Drama GCSE and you go to an interview, you can actually look the interviewer in the eye and you can stand out from people who might not be as confident and look down at the floor.

Megan - *The biggest value of creative work for the students is working independently and solving problems and being given responsibility, because ultimately that is what life is about...*

Carina - ...*you're not going to get spoon fed all your life; you are given a job and you get a full list of what you have to do and the actions you have to do and you have to get on with it.*

Elisa - It allows you to be more experimental. In Drama, you have to try different ways of doing something until it works. That is a skill I've applied to other subjects, even academic lessons where you don't often do that.

Megan, Carina & Natasha - I used to be shy but now you can't stop me from talking.

Ibrahim (narrator) – But as well as these developing these important life-skills, we've also become something else...

Natasha - Once you start creating your own work, you become an artist.

Sam – The active approach allows you to become more independently creative. You have to come up with your performance and look at the text and really read between the lines.

Megan - I go to a gallery where they play music. I was told by a friend. I first went by myself. I was surprised. It was like a club night but there was art on display. It was packed with people. It's at the Tate.

Daniella - If I am given a text I will go home and try and get up and act it just so I can get a sense of how the character is moving. It's much more difficult to do that if you are just reading it and analysing the words. I mean you can learn a lot from the analysis of the text but it's easier once you have thought about how they move and emotionally react.

Carina - ...I felt I understood the text more this way. If you are just reading it - the language is so different it just goes in one ear and comes out the other. We were chosen to perform in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. When you do something like that, it sounds clichéd, but time stopped.

Natasha - A good piece of art gives you something. You leave having gained something from it.

Daniella - ...So you can go down different routes rather than stopping at just one.

Simona - Arts are our muse. They keep us alive.

Ibrahim (narrator) – Some of us suggested the arts subjects weren't as rigid as other subjects...

Natasha - In Maths you learn an equation...

Daniella - $1+1=2$

Carina - ...where as in art you are taught there's a million different answers...

Natasha - ...there's no right answer, no wrong answer.

Megan - In arts subjects there's no such thing as perfection. It's not in our dictionary because it cannot be achieved. It's interpretation. Everyone will have a different opinion and you have to take it on board and reflect upon it.

Carina - *I really hate the division between creative subjects and academic subjects because to me that doesn't exist.*

Ibrahim (narrator) – everyone agreed that the arts subjects helped us broaden our horizons...

Natasha - *Sometimes you take these children out to see a culture event and that can be a turning point for these students in terms of where they go in their life.*

Sahar - You learn about feminism, racism, attacks on race or ethnicity, class debates, in order to create a piece of drama.

Elisa - When I come across the attitude that art doesn't get you anywhere I think people have not really thought it through. Art is everywhere.

Sam - Everything we have is a form of art. It has been designed. It reflects everything of the time, politics, everything.

Daniella - I think it's more personal. In all the other lessons you have a formula you have to follow to get top marks, whilst in drama it's about your own interpretation...

Natasha - ...your own opinions...

Elisa - ...your own beliefs...

Daniella - ...and how you feel about something.

Ibrahim (narrator) – We also felt that arts teachers are a pretty special bunch that deserve recognition...

Daniella - In the school, the creative departments are encouraging. The teachers are all very passionate about the subject.

Carina - It's kind of strange when you realise that they are not just teachers but artists in their own right and you can see the work the teacher and it's not just the person who is teaching you but an artist.

Natasha - I am more comfortable with my drama teachers than any other teachers.

Elisa - *There are lots of schools where they have just got rid of the arts but our school hasn't done that and the arts are still a core part of what we do...*

Ibrahim (narrator) – But arts education doesn't stop at school. It has a much wider impact on our friends and families...

Carina - I never went to the theatre with my family. They weren't interested in Drama. So it's definitely been school for me because I had nothing before really.

Daniella - I know people who were involved in street life and being around negative people, they had nothing to do so joining drama clubs gets them off the streets.

Simona & Sahar - Arts and theatre are not big in my family. I'm setting a new trend.

Ibrahim (narrator) – But we felt that the arts are getting a tough time too...

Sam - At all the universities I'm looking at, they won't accept Art as an A-level. So it shows it's not just the school, it's ingrained in society.

Simona - *Students are getting messages from all over the place that doing arts subjects is wrong and that they need to take EBAC subjects. And that is linked to how schools are getting their funding and I think there is a huge push for the arts just to be extracurricular subjects.*

Sam - *I became convinced of the arts' purpose and of its value and its contribution to the lives of children when I came here. This is a working class school and the children need the performing, creative, and visual arts because without them they would be poorer and the institution would be poorer.*

Megan - Removing the arts from schools is neglecting the fact that we've always had arts.

Ibrahim (narrator) – But the one thing we overwhelmingly agreed on was the emotional impact the arts have on our lives...

Carina - Without a creative outlet I wouldn't be able to do as well in my academic subjects.

Sahar - Music is therapeutic. When you're feeling sad and depressed you can use music to alleviate the emotions you're going through.

Elisa - My way to escape from my learning difficulties is through the arts.

Sam - I believe the creative arts are fundamental to our teenage education, because it's a time of heightened emotions and you need to release them somehow.

Daniella - Without the art subjects you'd get a lot of people feeling unhappy because it's way to gain more confidence and more self esteem.

Sam - You can express your emotions through art.

Natasha -

"For me, the arts are the way of expressing humanity's culture throughout the years and how it's developed and changed. It expresses how we were, what we are now and where the future is going."