Centre: South Tyneside Libraries
Arts Award Good Practice Centre 2015-16

Context

South Tyneside Libraries has been delivering Arts Award for over a year and 63 young people have achieved Arts Award. Their delivery model is based around their core offer as a public library service using literature, creative writing and poetry as their main art forms.

South Tyneside Libraries work with a wide range of artists and authors to engage young people across a spectrum of ages and abilities. Some of the young people are already interested in literature and the arts whilst others are unaware that literature is considered an art form.

Approach

South Tyneside Libraries took a group of autistic children, aged 14 to 15 through Bronze Arts Award. The project lasted eight weeks and the young people got the opportunity to work with a wide range of artists and authors. The project was based around literature as a central art form and explored authors and ways of representing authors work using different mediums such as collage and dynamic drawing.

The project began with:

Part B, arts review: the group read *Being the Flag* a First World War short story by Celia Bryce, and shared their views about it in a discussion with the author. Celia also told them about her research, writing, getting published and how to create a good story. The session and the story became the basis for creative work in Part A, and Celia also helped the group write their own stories.

Part A, taking part: the group produced two pieces of original art using different techniques. The young people worked as a group to produce a collage representing the story, using different images from the story to build a visual representation.

Part C, arts inspiration: the young people each researched their favourite author and explained why they were an inspiration. They produced a poster or PowerPoint featuring key facts and interesting information, which they shared with the rest of the group.

Part D, arts skills share: the group shared what they had learned with the rest of the group using the app Memory Box. They outlined a session plan and script and then used the app to record how to produce a dynamic drawing. Their instructions were followed by the rest of the group who gave feedback on what they thought of the Memory Box presentation.

The young people evidenced their work in their portfolios mainly in a visual

format using photos and screen shots which they then annotated. Sheets were provided for each Part allowing the young people to reflect on their experiences. Authors, artists and the advisor all added eye witness accounts.

South Tyneside Libraries has been successful in securing a grant from Arts Council England to develop arts projects and will incorporate Arts Award into the relevant projects supported by that funding.

Impact

Arts Award has enabled the young people South Tyneside Libraries work with to see that art is all around them. For some young people Arts Award is probably going to be the only qualification they leave school with.
The young people from Jarrow School overcame major challenges. The boys really engaged with Arts Award to overcome their behaviour, communication and dexterity challenges as the sessions progressed.

By completing Arts Award the young people have gained skills in writing, collage, dynamic drawing, research and story writing. The group have enhanced their IT skills using computers and iPads for research.

Arts Award is now seen as part of their core offer and they will continue to offer it alongside many of the projects they already deliver.

Comments

'Raising achievement and promoting well-being are important objectives across the council and cultural activity is seen as playing an important role in a achieving these priorities. Senior management in Cultural Services are keen to promote and develop Arts Award as a strand of work that provides formal recognition for children and young people's participation in the arts.'
Richard Barber, Arts and Heritage Officer, South Tyneside Council

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