



Toronto
District
School
Board

Nelson Mandela Park Public School
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To Whom It May Concern:

Students from grade seven and eight from Nelson Mandela Park Public School participated in Raoul Juneja's (Deejay Ra) "Hip-Hop Literacy" presentation on December 13th, 2006. Nelson Mandela Park PS is a school located in Regent Park Community, which is the largest public housing community in Canada and is located in downtown Toronto. Students at the school come from a vast variety of cultures around the world and the school has a history of doing work around social justice issues, including anti-gang, anti-violence and anti-racism which were among the topics dealt with in Deejay Ra's program.

Prior to the event, Deejay Ra provided us with print and video information to prepare the students so that they would have the background knowledge necessary to get actively involved in the event. Specifically we learned about Stanley 'Tookie' Williams and how he changed his life from one of violence to preaching against gangs and urging students to get an education. Approximately 150 twelve and thirteen year old students were in attendance for a presentation that inspired students to identify issues that are very relevant to their lives.

In particular, the program included readings from a variety of sources including Stanley 'Tookie' Williams, Tupac Shakur, and Mac Maharaj. The program was multi-media with clips from videos and performances by Imaan Faith, hip-hop artist. The students were actively engaged in all parts of the performance and felt so comfortable with Deejay Ra that a few even went up to "perform" for their peers their own songs, raps and thoughts.

The work that was done that day with Deejay Ra was very easily integrated into our everyday curriculum and allowed the students to see how those who are in positions of power and/or influence are dealing with the very issues that their teachers speak about. The students left the presentation with a feeling of confidence and empowerment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sherri Gilbert".

Sherri Gilbert
Literacy Lead Teacher

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ed Malabre".

Ed Malabre
Principal