



ALLEZ-Y with the BULWELL ACADEMY

Academic year 2011 - 2012

The Bulwell Academy is a relatively new school formed from two schools in the Bulwell area, both of which had been under special measures. Mobility of the members of the local community is low and many young people have little opportunity to travel beyond their immediate environment. So motivating young people about the opportunities of language learning and learning about other cultures is a challenging task.

Discussions with their Director of Business and Enterprise, Alison Bingham, indicated an opportunity via Access2All funding to provide a special inspirational day for their Year 8 students. This provides funding to help raise aspirations and allows students to be taken off-site for a special event. The concept of 'Allez-y' was born and we were delighted to receive approval for the funding. Their Teaching and Learning Leader for MFL, Germina Jauzelon, selected 50 students for this special day out.

The purpose was not so much to promote French, as to use French as a vehicle for inspiring the students to grasp opportunities beyond the school gate. We decided that as many gifted sports people have come from challenging backgrounds, we would find an inspiring sports venue in which to hold the event and find an inspiring international sports personality to work with the students.

Hence the choice of the magnificent Trent Bridge Cricket ground conference suite as the venue, and the former international cricketer Darren Bicknell as our speaker.



The day started with an introductory talk by Darren, with his experiences from school, which allowed many of the students to identify with him. He also talked about his experiences in the international arena, and of the importance of cultural awareness as well as how he wished he had had paid more attention in language lessons! After a reminder of French numbers and some French cricketing vocabulary we moved down to the nets area, where Darren organised a game of Kwik Cricket in French for half the group whilst the other half went on a tour of the grounds. They then swapped over. Kwik Cricket proved to be the highlight of the day for many of them.

An activity followed in which they had to work out how to explain the game of cricket to a French teenager. We laid great emphasis on pronunciation, since many of our Business Language Champions have commented on the poor standard of pronunciation that they have noticed.

In the afternoon, we gave each team one of the cricketing countries, with some background cultural information and



challenged them to make a mascot costume for that country's cricket team, which had to reflect the culture of the nation. They then had to give a catwalk demonstration of their costume and make a small presentation to explain how they came up with the design. This activity again proved very popular with the students.

Student comments included:

- " I learnt that if you stick at your goal you can achieve it
- " I learnt that whatever you do in life, to never give up on yourself
- " I learnt how to work as a team and work with people who you don't know
- " I definitely learnt a lot of new French words and activities
- " I enjoyed designing the outfit because we all took part
- " I enjoyed playing cricket because I haven't played before
- " My favourite activity was the design because I want to be a fashion designer
- " I would like to do more trips like this
- " I would like to learn more about Bangladesh
- " I would like to watch a live cricket match



We would like to thank Darren Bicknell from the Belvoir Cricket Trust for his inspirational talk and work with the students.

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