

THE GLOBAL CITIZEN

March 2021



Our Rights Respecting School Newsletter

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR:

Welcome to the March edition of "The Global Citizen". It has been wonderful to have our classes full again as the children returned to school.

This month's newsletter is again a long one as we have a wonderful article from Shin. She has addressed the issue of representation in Disney movies in a thought-provoking manner. In fact, I would not be surprised to read an article like this in a professional newspaper as her authorial style is mature beyond her years.

As well as this, we have a book review by Edie. She has read a book called "No Ballet Shoes in Syria" which looks at a girl called Aya as she faces many challenges as a refugee in modern UK. Edie's review showcases how we should look at the individual and not their circumstances.

I hope you all have a lovely two week break.

Stay safe,
Miss McNamara

Women Matter in Music (Article 2 of the UNCRC and Article 8 of the UNCRC):

Since being back in school, Year 6 have been looking at a variety of female musicians and artists. They have been creating "music journals" to analyse the songs and think about how the music of certain artists make them think/feel. They have looked at a variety of women such as Nina Simone and Kate Bush.

They have also discussed why it is important to learn about female artists as women are still not represented as well in the music industry as men.

What female musicians can you name?



Coins and identity (Article 8 of the UNCRC):

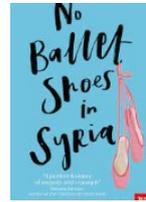


This week, in year 3, they have been looking at King Athelstan and how he used coins to show his identity as well as foster economic growth.

He had an image of himself on the coin as well as the title "Rex Tot Brit" which means King of all of Britain.

The children will be making their own Anglo-Saxon coins out of clay.

UNCRC Book of the Month:



No Ballet Shoes in Syria by Catherine Bruton — Reviewed by Edie

This book is important because it is about a refugee who comes over to England and the challenges she faces.

The reason her family decided to escape to the UK was due to the fact that there was a civil war in her country. They did it for fear of being killed in their home.

Through this book, I learnt how challenging it is to be a refugee. I felt sorry for the main character as she lost her dad when they were travelling across the sea. This showed how dangerous it can be to travel as a refugee. Lots of people were on one small boat, travelling across dangerous seas.

Aya (the main character) has problems when in England. She is worried people will judge her for being a refugee and for also wearing a headscarf. The book challenges these issues.

It was also interesting, for me, to learn more about what is happening in other countries.

Article 22 of the UNCRC is about children refugees.

A picture speaks a thousand words:



It has been over a year since the tragic wildfires in Australia.

Look at this image and think about the following questions:

Why do events like this happen?

Do you think humans have a responsibility to care for animals?

What Article of the UNCRC does this image relate to?

What Global Goal does this image relate to?

Raya: Disney's First South-Eastern Princess

Has enough progress been made towards diversifying Disney's Princesses?

By Shin, Year 6

Disney's latest movie, *Raya and the Last Dragon*, follows the story of a princess and her quest to save her world, as well as her bitter past with her nemesis and her struggle to trust others. As the film progresses, she faces several challenges and eventually accepts there's often no harm in believing others.

Many fans across the world were pleased with Disney, feeling that they were finally represented as a Disney Princess as the movie seems to be set in Southeast Asia. However, it has also stirred controversy among others – a debate as to whether Southeast Asians culture was truly appreciated in the film.



Raya and the Last Dragon showcases many aspects of tradition and culture; clothing, food, design, etc. Yet, despite it seeming clear that it is set in Southeast Asia, it causes confusion, specifically as to where it is set. Disney's genuine attempt at diversifying is wonderful, and I say this as a Southeast Asian myself, but I feel as if South Asians weren't properly represented and that all the countries were without their own individual identity. If someone unfamiliar with Southeast Culture were to watch this, it would be viewed how it shouldn't be viewed:



1. Raya wielded Filipino fighting sticks.
2. The voice actress was Vietnamese-American.
3. The co-writer was Malaysian.

On top of that, despite the movie's purpose to represent Southeast Asia, apart from Kelly Marie Tran (who was Raya), the majority of the voice cast was of Chinese or Korean descent – therefore leaning more towards East Asia. Yet in contrast, Disney's European Princess movies tend to be more specific. Pixar's *Brave* (Merida) is set in Scotland, *Beauty and the Beast* (Belle) in France and *Hercules* (Meg) in Greece. If one were to blend those three together, would it make sense? No, it wouldn't. Why? Because the cultures are different! So, why is it that countries have been merged in Asia? Is it because they're so similar that it's simply the same?

What Disney has done with *Raya and the Last Dragon* re-emphasises so many stereotypes, which is fuelling the problem with today's society. Growing up, I have been asked countless times if I am Chinese. When I answer no, I am asked if I am Japanese. When I say no to that as well, they are dumbfounded and confused. It is almost as if all the other countries (which very much do exist in Asia) are forgotten. It is almost as if people simply do not bother to mention other countries because they expect it to be the same as China or Japan. Of course, there is nothing wrong with coming from either of these countries but I do not come from them. There is a similar view of Africa – this continent is lumped together as one big country by many.



What I am explaining, is that not all Orientals are the same, and that their beautifully different and unique cultures are simply too wonderful to be squashed together or worse – ignored. I and many others thank Disney for this opportunity to have a Disney Princess from our side of the world, yet I still stand by my words. Hopefully they can take even more positive steps in the future.