



Culture to Classroom

Tabatah grew up in Germany in a Nigerian household, immersed in African traditions. Her family are proud of their identity, culture and roots.

As a young teenager, Tabatah moved to live with her father in Northamptonshire. Tabatah completed her school and A levels there, in a predominantly white area. Many of Tabatah's family were and are still living in London, who she is in regular contact with and has very close relationships with. Her happiest days in school were in the Art classroom. Diversity in education has moved on a lot since these days, but Tabatah feels that the school systems and policies should reflect the cultural and ethical realities of **every** student who attends the school. "I am a firm believer that schools should be focusing on adapting their diversity strategies in the classroom and around school in order to reflect the demographics of the students that represent them." We know that the system certainly advocates this.

Due to cultural demands, Tabatah often felt a pressure to engage with a career that didn't necessarily suit her. She now feels true to herself, her parents and family are proud of the early career teacher she is becoming and that she brings her culture to the classroom.

As shown in the accompanying images, Tabatah has engaged with young people in her placement schools by using artists of colour as role models who are successful at making a living. "I learned a lot about white artists at school. I try to use artists from a variety of backgrounds. I would recommend Fabric of Emancipation, in which eight artists explore the development of textiles through personal identity, cultural worth and what it means (or does not mean) to be liberated in America as an African-American. In addition the works of Emoury Douglas and Kara Walker who also explore and define diversity and culture within their own work. This is part of our professional responsibility as a teacher. I have recently worked with a group of Year 10s on a Black Lives Matter project. This makes me so excited about teaching."



Tabatah feels that being a person of colour can help inspire young artists to be successful in their field. “Children of my background can relate to me and the Arts. I understand the struggle to choose the subjects at school.”

A city girl at heart, Tabatah has secured a NQT position in London, where she can be close to her family and bring culture to her own Art classroom!