

The Open Classroom Newsletter

Founded in 2002 at ESSENCE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL and THE AFRICAN HERITAGE VILLAGE
KADUNA, NIGERIA August, 2016



The Reading Recital by Primary 3 Students of LEA Unguwar Rimi

The Spelling Bee Reinforces Literacy

Essence International School has a long and cordial sister school relationship with LEA Unguwar Rimi. This is the 11th year of the Spelling Bee which is hosted by Essence in cooperation with LEA U/Rimi. Students from primary 1 to 6 participate in the Bee and teachers from both schools are involved in training the students who have special reading, spelling and writing lessons. Much emphasis is placed on listening skills, pronunciation, and reading aloud with the proper inflection. They are also groomed to speak in front of an audience without getting nervous or losing their confidence.



LEA Unguwar Rimi Spelling Bee contestants were competing for these prizes and trophies.



**The Honourable Commissioner of Education, Kaduna State,
Professor Andrew Jonathan Nok making his opening remarks.**

We were privileged to have The Honorable Commissioner of Education for Kaduna State, Professor Andrew Johnathan Nok, as the special guest of honor. The LEA Unguwar Rimi students performed traditional dances and staged a “radio interview” as the opening entertainment. Everyone appreciated their talent and creativity.

It was surprising for most of the guests and the students to learn that the Honorable Commissioner was a former student of LEA Unguwar Rimi. He remembered the location of some of his classes and the names of some of his teachers. He was quite happy to note that the students have been engaged in the Spelling Bee for more that 11 years, and he encouraged them to be dedicated to learning and to be well behaved,



Her Excellency, The wife of the Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, Mrs. Ladi Bala Bantex presenting a prize to a winner of the Spelling Bee competition.



LEA Unguwan Rimi Students performing a traditional dance

Winners of The Spelling Bee

L.E.A Unguwan Rimi Primary 1 Spelling Bee Winners



2nd Position
Ishaq
Mohammed



1st Position
Zainab
Abdullahi



3rd Position
Rukayya
Abdulrahman

L.E.A Unguwan Rimi Primary 2 Spelling Bee Winners



2nd Position
Nazifi Abdullahi



1st Position
Safiya Sagir



3rd Position
Ibrahim Adamu

L.E.A Unguwan Rimi Primary 3 Spelling Bee Winners



2nd Position
Awwal Safiyanu



1st Position
Hassan
Mohammed



3rd Position
Khadija Musa



2nd Position
Maryam Ibrahim



1st Position
Ibrahim Usman



3rd Position
Isa Iliyasu

L.E.A Unguwan Rimi Primary 5 Spelling Bee Winners



2nd Position
Affan Ghali



1st Position
Humaira Musa



3rd Position
Ibrahim Abdulazeez

L.E.A Unguwan Rimi Primary 6 Spelling Bee Winners



2nd Position
Aisha Halilu



1st Position
Aisha Aliyu



3rd Position
Safiya Muktar



Her Excellency, The wife of the Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, Mrs. Ladi Bala Bantex and The Honourable Commissioner of Education, Professor Andrew Jonathan Nok.



Open Classroom members, Amina Zubairu Dabo, Rosalind Diane Ede, Hadiza Mohammed, and supporter Mal. Ali Joda at the table with prizes and trophies for participants and winners of the Spelling Bee

Feeding Program at Rugan Fulani



The Open Classroom has been engaged with Rugan Fulani since the inception of our organization in 2002. We were fortunate enough to meet and get to know the elderly "Ardo" who was the father and grandfather of most of the families. He wanted his children and grandchildren to have an education and to make good progress in life. The younger families expressed a desire to learn English and that is why we tried to set up a school right in the area where they live so that they could have access to regular lessons.

As time went by, we introduced many visitors to this Fulani community so that they could begin to make friends with others who wished to help them. Some of the young married men went to secondary schools in the area and have now graduated. They are speaking fairly good English and can communicate with others in their vicinity. We have tried to get the babies immunized against early childhood diseases, and the men have had anti-tetanus shots. Little by little they are beginning to see the value of taking the women to ante-natal and post-natal clinics at the area hospitals. Through it all they have kept their cattle rearing traditions, and this is as it should be. Yet they have now acquired a better understating of all Nigerian culture and this is also a positive development.

Primary 6 Students at THDFN Receive Graduation Prizes



Primary 6 graduating students of THDFN

The Open Classroom has a very valuable and time-honored relationship with THDFN (Taimako Human Development Foundation of Nigeria). Some of our children perform community service activities there and we normally hold a yearly Thanksgiving celebration (Turkey Day) where interesting games are played with the children after a few classroom lessons, followed up by a special take-away dinner with sweets.

At the end of the school year we try to encourage the primary 6 students to move forward toward secondary school. All of the graduating students are given special prizes from The Open Classroom. This year we were thrilled to see the primary 6 students wearing caps and gowns. They looked very studious and so proud to be graduating. We wish them the best of luck.



In Loving Memory of My Mother
Sometimes when I think of my mother I remember the children of THDFN with a little token from one generation to the next, because my mother loved her family and children.

Our Mission Is to Inspire the Youth

As we plan our community outreach programs, we need to invite the young people in school to join us cooperatively with enthusiasm, energy, and ideas, because we realize that they are the ones who will carry our initiatives forward into the future. Getting them to think about the difficulties that arise when people living in poverty do not have the resources or skills to realize their goals is the first

step. It is an awareness that we all have- because we see the inequities in society- but we tend to postpone or push aside opportunities to get involved. We want more of our young people to see the importance of their contributions in bringing inspiration to their peers in underserved communities. This is a critical aspect of nation building. Below are some pictures of Essence students playing with their friends at Rugan Fulani.



PLAYING FOOTBALL AT RUGAN FULANI



**SS3 Having a
Community FUN DAY
at
Rugan Fulani**



DANCING



SHARING



SHARING



SHARING

**SS3
HAVING A
COMMUNITY
FUN DAY
AT
RUGAN
FULANI**



SHARING



PLAYING MUSICAL CHAIRS



PLAYING MUSICAL CHAIRS

THIS IS A GAME THAT THE CHILDREN IN
RUGAN FULANI LEARNED THROUGH
THEIR FRIENDSHIP WITH THE CHILDREN
AT ESSENCE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

THE OPEN CLASSROOM

Who are we?

Educators, Administrators, Artists from the African Heritage Village in Kaduna, Nigeria. We are nationals of four countries: Nigeria, Ghana, Niger Republic, and the United States of America.

Our Goals:

- To reach as many students as possible with memorable, replicable lessons
- To offer incentives for learning which lend visibility and credibility to The Open Classroom
- To depict the African Child in a positive light, well cared for, healthy, well-nourished, and educated

Our Philosophy

We believe in the bright future of Africa. It is painful to witness the constant stream of negative news about the happenings on the continent. Although we acknowledge our problems and difficulties, we are working diligently to find solutions. It is our duty to reassure our children that positive actions also occur, that beneficial programs are being implemented, although they are rarely reported. We shall, therefore, strive to erase some of the negative blight and create an environment that they can believe in and be willing to sustain.

Our Objectives

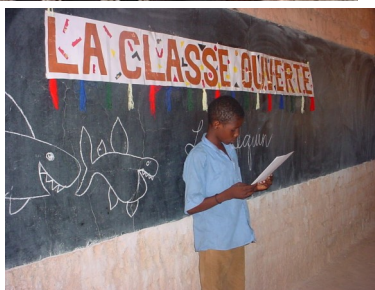
- To expand learning opportunities through practical learning activities designed to reinforce basic concepts in literacy and numeracy
- To establish a distance learning program at the early childhood and elementary school levels with a focus on the children of West Africa
- To provide an avenue for educational, historical, and cultural exchange between the children of Africa and their counterparts in other parts of the globe
- To produce descriptive documents of the children who participate in the project: their lives, dreams and aspirations



left: The Open Classroom in Kenya- Children in an orphanage in Nairobi complete an Open classroom portfolio post-



right: The Open Classroom in Zinder, Niger: Children completing a sewing project with Mrs. Ede.



left and right: The Open Classroom in Zinder, Niger: Children learning about sharks— The largest fish in the sea— a lesson taught by Mrs. D L Mohammed



Congratulations to the Chairman of our Board of Directors



His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhari

THE OPEN CLASSROOM, FOUNDED IN 2002

What We Need

Teaching materials for educating all of our children. These include:

- Computers and computer software (for designing educational materials)
- Tape recorders, cassette players, audio-visual equipment
- A bus for Outreach Projects
- School tables and chairs
- Library books, especially reading books
- Pencils, pens crayons, paints, world maps
- Rulers, sharpeners, erasers
- Food items for our feeding program
- Donations in cash and kind



Teaching in Zinder, Niger



THDFN Students with Fun Packs

Open Classroom Executives

Mrs. Dolores Lami Mohammed, CEO; Mrs. Nana-Aisha Abu-Ali, President; Mrs. Balaraba Garba, Vice-President; Mr. Kerchiri Seth, Treasurer; Mrs. Florence Osara, Financial Secretary; Mr. Kwame Donkor, Secretary; Mrs. Rosalind Diane Ede, Program Officer; Mr. Sani Roufai, Assistant Program Officer; Mr. Sidi Ahmad, Public Relations Officer



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