



VYBE's Zine for Change in Schools

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SNIPPETS
FROM THE
RESEARCH
EXPERIENCE



✧ Black ✧ Culture & History

From young our future is already decided—

Already confined within the refinements of a phallocentric, eurocentric box.

But within that same box, Henry Brown mailed himself to freedom.

Within that same box Elijah McCoy invented lubrication systems for engines

Within that same box, Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream so colossal that it utterly shattered the bounds of every box for black boys, and girls to come.

Remember black children,

Your Future is Limitless.

Poem by Taneia Hinkson-Belone

WHAT WE WANT



OUR
HISTORY



BLACK HISTORY IN SCHOOL & IN LIFE

In the Classroom

Learn about Black history throughout the year, not only during Black History Month.

Through Culture

Explore music, dance, food traditions, and celebrations that connect people to their culture.

Through People

Learn directly from family members, elders, teachers, and community members about their experiences.

Through Canadian History

Learn about the contributions and experiences of Black Canadians throughout Canada's history.

In Our Communities

Learn about the Black people, families, and communities that have shaped the places we live.

Through Stories

Read books and listen to stories written and shared by Black people from different backgrounds.

Through Creativity

Discover Black artists, musicians, writers, filmmakers, and creators and how they influence the world.

In Everyday Life

Recognize the ways Black culture, ideas, creativity, and achievements are part of everyday life around us.

SENSE OF BELONGING

oms visibility roots traditions



rejected



"I have Black friends so
I can't be racist"

"How r u not
athletic"

"Can I touch your
hair"

"Your pretty for
a black girl"

"Don't be so
sensitive"

"why do you talk
like that"

" ITS JUST A JOKE

"Can I say the
N-word"

"I wish I had
your hair"

"You're making it a
race thing,"

"YOUR BLACK, U
PROBABLY KNOW
THIS"

"U don't act
Black"

"where r u really
from"

"YOUR LUCKY U DON'T LOOK
THAT BLACK"

Microaggressions

"It's just a joke" does not erase the impact.
Repeated microaggressions can make Black
students feel stereotyped, excluded, and unheard.



"Is that your real hair?" As if I owe you an explanation.
As if my head is a history book you have the right to open, a mystery you deserve to solve. "Where does your real hair start?" "Where does it end?" "Do you take your braids out every night and put them back in again?"

Questions dressed up as curiosity, but tell me, would you ask everyone else to explain what grows from their head?

They call it a compliment. They say they're just curious.

But how many times must I explain myself before my hair is allowed to simply exist?

And somehow, I can never win.

Wear a wig, and suddenly I want to be white. Wear blonde, and apparently I'm ashamed of my roots. Straighten my hair, and I'm trying to escape who I am. But wear it naturally, and now it's too big, too wild, too much. Too unprofessional. Too distracting. Too different.

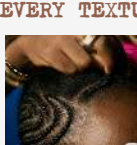
So tell me, which version of me would finally be enough?

They tell me I'm less Black when I change my hair, then make me feel less beautiful when I leave it as it grows.

They turn our hair into a test of identity, as if Blackness is something measured in inches of new growth, in curls, coils, and kinks, in how much of our roots the world can see.

But my Blackness is not a hairstyle. It is not a wig I can take off, or a braid I can undo, or a shade of blonde that makes me someone else. My hair is mine. And yet, somewhere along the way, some of us learned to look at our own crowns through eyes that never loved them. We learned to question our coils, to fight our textures, to compare our roots to somebody else's standard of beauty.





And I wonder how many little girls have looked in the mirror and wished their hair were different before they ever learned that there was nothing wrong with it.

How many have mistaken acceptance for the price of changing themselves? How many have been taught to call their natural beauty a problem to be solved? Because there is something heartbreaking about being taught to hate a part of yourself that you were born with.

But there is something beautiful, too, about learning to love it again. About choosing the afro. The braids. The locs. The twists. The wig. The blonde. The black. The natural. The changed. All of it. Because the freedom to choose should belong to us, not to the people watching us.

And maybe that is what I find so beautiful about Black hair.

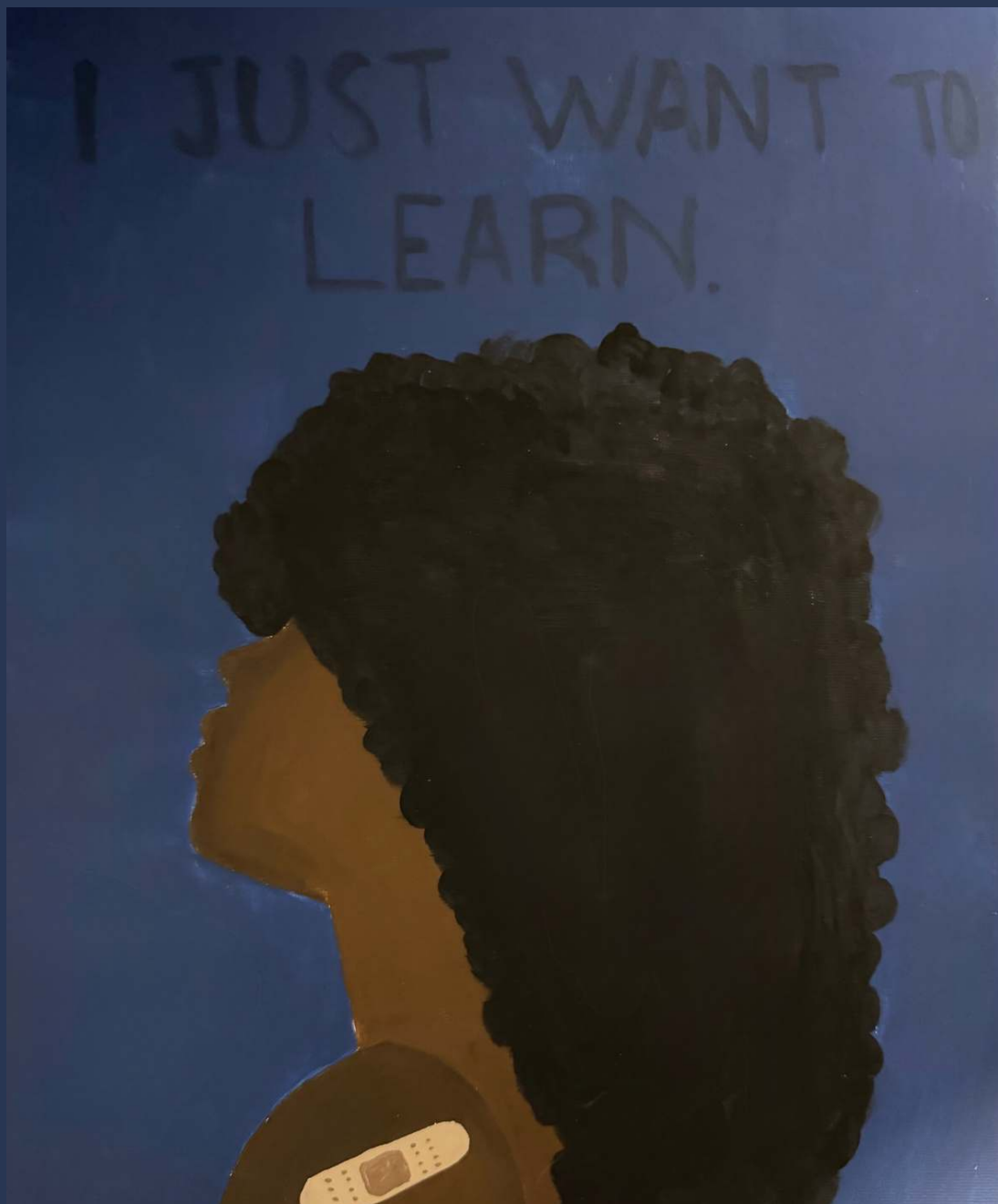
For something so often questioned, criticized, controlled, and asked to make itself smaller, it continues to grow. I think about the sun, about reaching toward the light, about growth that does not ask permission. And I find something symbolic in that. Because after everything, after every comment, every stare, every hand reaching without asking, every question that makes our existence feel like an explanation waiting to happen, we are still growing. Still creating. Still changing. Still choosing who we want to be.

Our hair does not need to grow in any particular direction to prove its worth. But I like to imagine that it reaches toward the sun because it knows it was never meant to live in the shadow of somebody else's definition of beautiful. Maybe our hair was never the problem. Maybe the problem was the world that kept asking it to justify its existence.

So the next time you see our crowns, you don't need to question them. You don't need to measure them, compare them, or decide what they say about us. Just let them be. Because our hair is not a debate. Our identity is not yours to measure. And our beauty is not yours to approve. Different styles. Same roots. Same pride. And we will keep growing.



Artwork by Taneia Hinkson-Belone



accepted
connected
valued
welcome
home

sense of belonging

BEING SEEN

your voice matters

Representation
recognition

heard
included
acknowledge
equality

I want to see
myself
represented

TEACH
THE CHILDREN
THE TRUTH

DIVERSE STORIES
DIVERSE VOICES
DIVERSE FUTURES

SOLUTIONS & CHANGES

Growth

change

diversity of staff and students

listen include represent educate support create safe spaces

Teacher support

Cultural education

Representation
recognition

heard
included
acknowledge
equality

I want to see
myself
represented

TEACH
THE CHILDREN
THE TRUTH

DIVERSE STORIES
DIVERSE VOICES
DIVERSE FUTURES

Positive school experiences

F.R.I.E.N.D.S

SPORTS

LEARNING

Multicultural Festival

IDENTITY

FEBRUARY
BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Culture
Heritage
Family
Language
Values
Experiences

PASSPORT

NEGATIVE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

excluded
stressed
judged
pressured
lonely

DEMEANING
SLIGHTS
INSULTS
MICROAGGRESSIONS
STOP RACISM
STEREOTYPES
INJUSTICE



We rarely see ourselves
represented among staff or in
the curriculum at school...
Where can Black students go
to find community when school
can be so isolating?



WHY THERE SHOULD BE MORE BLACK REPRESENTATION IN SCHOOL

1. Making everyone feel included: When Black students see their cultures, experiences, and histories represented in lessons and school activities, they may feel that they belong and that their identities are valued.

2. Fighting stereotypes and racism: Learning about different cultures and experiences can help students challenge stereotypes, understand one another, and treat people fairly.

3. Recognizing Black achievements: Black people have made important contributions to science, sports, literature, politics, music, and many other fields. Their achievements deserve to be recognized and taught.

Summary: More Black representation in schools is important because every student deserves to feel seen, respected, and included. It also helps all students understand different perspectives, learn about history more accurately, and build a school community where everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed.



**STUDENTS FOUND COPING
MECHANISMS SUCH AS
PLAYING SPORTS OR VIDEO
GAMES HELP FIND SUPPORT
ADMIST ADVERSITY**

JACKIE ROBINSON



**FOR ME JACKIE ROBINSON IS AN IMPORTANT PERSON
BECAUSE HE WAS ABLE TO STILL CHASE HIS GOALS
AND FIND SUPPORT ADMIST ADVERSITY AND STAND
STRONG**

People like Jackie Robinson are important because they made a change in sports admist the adversity, and since I likes sports I look up to them.

-KAEYAN AGADZI



AFRO



Diversity



Humanity

True comfort,
made right here at home.

positivity



INSPIRATION
IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Common GROUND

FUN



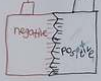
Teamwork

title - Positive school experiences

IMPACT



POSITIVE
EXPERIENCES
FAMILIARITY



make an impact



Negative
school
experiences



positive
school
experiences

ON 95



Our interpretation
throughout all the subjects that
black English gives us power
there are the future leaders
that change the educational
system

dreams
FESTIVALS

"There are some posters about how coily hair works. They taught me a few things I didn't know myself, like how I don't need to pick all the time [...] I didn't know that before."

-Clarence, Age 16

"Because I feel like it's very important to grow up around your community of people where you come from and when you don't have that, it makes you a little disconnected."

-Lauren, Age 16

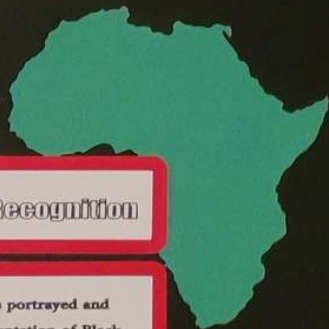
"I do think when [my school] try to just show [...] diversity and stuff like that, it's usually Black History month. [...] when they see Black History Month, they diversify the whole school instead of, like, really focusing about what Black History Month is."

-Victoria, Age 16



Representation & Recognition

refers to how Black culture is portrayed and expressed in school, the representation of Black people within the staff and student population, and the extent to which Black students are understood and supported within the school community.





OUR VOICE COUNTS



CREATE A LEGACY

GREAT

INFINITE

{our inspiration}

QUESTION

IDEAS

JUSTICE

CONFIDENTIAL

TREASURES

METHODOLOGY

EXPERIENCE

Now is the time to start listening

Now is the time to start listening.

results!

Growing

INNOVATION

Thought leadership

INNOVATION

Nurturing potential

COMMUNITY

NURTURING HEART, MIND AND SOUL

Works well independently or in a group

COMMUNITY WITHOUT BORDERS

these methods involve

creativity.

TRAINING AND NETWORKING

COLLECTION

recruit

SAFE ORGANIZATION

PRESENTATION

FINDINGS

CONCLUSION

BLACK

QUEBEC

EDUCATION

Institutional

Cutting-edge

RESEARCH

MADE IN QUEBEC

CANADA

THE SCIENCE

HOPE

The freedom to create

...the first step in the process of creating a new organization is to define the mission and vision of the organization. This is a critical step that sets the direction for the organization and provides a framework for the development of the organization's strategy and goals. The mission and vision statements should be clear, concise, and inspiring, and they should be communicated to all members of the organization. Once the mission and vision are defined, the next step is to develop a strategic plan that outlines the organization's goals and the actions that will be taken to achieve them. This plan should be based on a thorough analysis of the organization's internal and external environment, and it should be flexible enough to allow for changes as the organization grows and evolves. Finally, the organization must have a strong leadership team that is committed to the mission and vision and capable of implementing the strategic plan. This team should be composed of individuals with diverse backgrounds and perspectives, and they should work together to create a culture of innovation and collaboration. By following these steps, an organization can create a strong foundation for success and ensure that its voice is heard.

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PRESSION

MADE IN CANADA

WHO

IDENTITY

connecting

Explain:
• code-switching
• pressure
• growing up and being part of a community
• Occasional minority
• familiarity
• sports, studying, learning



Key: Why don't you see my value?

Who you are:
• Character traits
• Qualities
• Beliefs
• Ethnicity
• Hobbies
• Treasures
• Values
• Social roles
• Memories
• Continuity



my identity

Family

FOR CHANGE, FOR JUSTICE, FOR THE FIGHT

CELEBRATE!

My little brother is what makes me me (Liam, 15, Saint-Vincent High School)



Clever

"It gave me something to strive for"

"GUE THAT SCENE IN THE LION KING WHERE MUFASA TELLS SIMBA ABOUT THE ANTELOPE AND THE GRASS AND HOW WE'RE ALL CONNECTED IN THE GREAT CIRCLE OF LIFE."

"I'm one of the only Black people there. Cleaver is a word used to describe Black people."

Generations



YOUR VOICE COUNTS



TO PROTECT YOUR SKIN



"At my dance school, there's a lot more French kids. So, I have to speak French but that's also very challenging. Trying to understand the kids but make sure the kids understand me." (Bella, 15, Oakdale High School)

Differences:

- Interpretation of dance movement
- Amount of Black people
- Levels of French



"It's harder for my parents to get around than it is for me. I have to speak French." (Liam, 15, Saint-Vincent High School)

LES AMIS



BURIED

FINDING A WAY UP

