General

Reach Out Programme with Integrated Islamic School Kuantan 'TOEFL® Young Students Series GO English! Project'

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Saturday, 26 January- 79 primary school students from Integrated Islamic School, Kuantan were involved in the TOEFL® Young Students Series GO English! Project hosted by Educational Testing Service (ETS), the world's largest nonprofit educational measurement organization, and facilitated by English language instructors from Centre for Modern Languages and Human Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Pahang.

The IIS was invited by Eshia & Associates Sdn Bhd, the country representative of ETS, and has appointed Noor Azlinda ZainalAbidin, a Senior Language Teacher of Universiti Malaysia Pahang as coordinator to promote and encourage the teachers and students to participate in the TOEFL® Young Students Series GO English! Project'. Together with her team consisting of six other English instructors, this programme is also considered one of the initiatives of UMP's community service.

Now in its first year at IIS, the programme is aimed at inviting students to use their English communication skills and work together in small groups, be creative, and have fun. Based on topics like 'love the animals', 'love the nature', and 'love the community', students were encouraged to brainstorm and come up with ideas expressing what they would do to 'Make the World a Better Place' which is the theme for the GO English!projects this year.

With the guidance from UMP facilitators and IIS teachers, students were inspired to practice and improve their English language skills, use their imagination and take pride in creating amazing posters. Students will also receive special rewards for participating in this program, including promotional items, educational materials, a plaque and certificates of achievement once they turn in their project.

Ezani Amir, Managing Director of Eshia & Associates, the ETS country representative for Malaysia congratulated all that have worked hard on the GO English! projects.

He said that "Demonstrating their creativity, and having research skills, communication skills and teamwork skills at very young age shows the good dynamics provided by IIS, UMP, parents and the children. These are the skills required for the 21stcentury generation of workforce and entrepreneurs."

In one of the groups, Faznur Fadilla Md. Ali, 11, is seen encouraging her group members to think of how they can conduct a recycling project. The standard 5 student brought a lot of materials from home, complete with pictures from books and magazines, stickers, and other decorative stationaries she prepared earlier with the help from her parents for the purpose of completing this project.

In another group, Mohamad Farrel Dazeman bin Mohamad Fatasya, 11, said discussing about loving the nature could help to spark interest among students to learn new words.

“Personally, I am excited to be part of this project. Through the discussions and posters that we created, students like me can learn new words and ideas associated with nature such as we need to plant more trees and say no to illegal logging,” he said.

“The ‘TOEFL® Young Students Series GO English! Project’ features the involvement of 10 teachers from IIS and 7 facilitators from UMP to guide and assist students through communicative activities in English,” said Abdul Rahim bin M. Ali, the headmaster of IIS.

“This is an opportunity for students to realize the role of English and communication in conveying important messages to the world. This initiative also creates the opportunities needed to boost students’ motivation and confidence to use English.” he said.

Nor Diana Kassim, the owner of the IIS said “This programme is good for IIS students because it uses a different approach to brainstorm ideas. The poster-making activity encourages students as well as parents to be involved in this project”.

She also expressed her hope for this programme to be held annually in this school.“Even though this is just a one-day event, it is hoped that the interest generated can be sustained for a long time. The momentum can be kept through the classes held by teachers, too” said Nor Diana.

Written by Amy Zulaikha Mohd Ali from Centre for Modern Languages and Human Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Pahang.

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