

# Growing Up

A NEWSLETTER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

## Let's Talk About Exams



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# Let's Talk About

By Gbenga Awomodu

The word 'examination' sends fear down the spines of many students. Many young people become jittery whenever examinations are approaching but the more serious ones or the ones who have prepared well for the exam look eagerly towards it. This is not only applicable to the primary school children but also to the students in secondary and tertiary institutions.

What is examination? Why do so many students dread examinations? Why do some of them resort to examination malpractices? What constitutes examination malpractice? What steps does a student need to take to be confident when writing examinations and not be involved in examination malpractices? In this edition, we discuss the answers to these cogent questions and encourage young persons to embrace education and personal study.

## You Know What Exam is?

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, Examination can be defined as a formal written, spoken or practical test, especially at school or college, to see how much you know about a subject, or what you can do. It is also a set of questions or exercises evaluating skills or knowledge gained by





# out Exams

students or candidates. Basically for students, examination comes often after they have been instructed on some subjects in the class over a particular period of time.

Have you ever given a thought to the fact that you have learnt a lot as a result of going to school? Think about the different people you have met and the wonderful friends you have made. Now you can read and write and be quite creative. The overall effect of education on our lives is positive. We go to school to learn a whole lot of wonderful new things and great ideas. It is only logical that our teachers need to know how well we understand those concepts we have learnt and how well we can apply them. This is what tests and examinations are about- periodic assessment of your knowledge and understanding of things learnt at school.

Given this importance of examination, students and

applicants are ever ready to make the best out of examinations in a variety of ways. Some students start to prepare for exams as soon as classes commence and also burn the mid-night candles when exams are approaching. On the other hand, some students wait till exams are around the corner before they start a rush-hour approach. The results of the exams are supposed to show the difference between these sets of students, as normally, the lazy and indolent students should fail while the hardworking ones should excel, but yet a factor examination malpractice- can reverse this normal order.

## Examination Malpractice; The Widespread Danger

Quite a number of definitions exist for examination malpractice. Malpractice simply involves a deliberate act of wrongdoing, contrary to official examination rules, and is designed to place a candidate at an unfair advantage or disadvantage. It is a wrongful act that a student or a candidate has no right to do during examination; an improper and illegal activity during examination periods that a student engage in order to boost his/her performance.

According to Ike Onyechere of the Examination Ethics Project, "Most of the social maladies, including medical practice by incompetent Doctors, manufacture and sale of fake drugs by Pharmacists, collapse of buildings, massive fraud in banks, and miscarriage of justice are consequences of malpractice." Examination malpractice could take different forms and could be during the development, preparation, administration or marking of examinations scripts.

If during examination development and preparation, the content of the examination or any part of the examination is disclosed prior to taking the examination, this is being referred to as 'leakage'. If the students have access to the items or questions before taking the paper, this can be termed as malpractice. However, conventional test preparation, including practice on parallel type papers or on copies of old paper does not normally qualify as malpractice. The form of malpractice described above usually involves malpractice from one or more of the following: staff members of examination authorities, printers, proofreaders and messengers, personnel employed to develop the papers (setters), or to determine its suitability (moderators) and school administrators.

Exam malpractice may also take place during administration of the exam through impersonation; external assistance; smuggling of foreign materials; copying; collusion; intimidation; substitution of scripts; improper assignment and ghost centres. It can be in form

of impersonation, in which an individual who is not registered as a candidate takes the place of one who is registered. This usually involves collusion between school principals and examination supervisors. Frequently, it involves university students or teachers taking the test for monetary reward or as a favour for a girl friend or boy friend. Sometimes, young employees are coerced to take the examination. In rare cases, identical twin sisters and brothers write exams for each other.

External assistance involves individuals who are not examination candidates giving unauthorized assistance to candidates. This usually involves invigilators (exam room supervisors) dictating answers on the blackboard, circulating sheets of worked out answers during the course of the exam, or acting as couriers of materials into the examination centre. In some instances, external helpers have used papers, phones or broadcast answers.

Smuggling of foreign materials, perhaps the most common form of malpractice, relates to the introduction of unauthorized material (e.g. notebooks, "crib notes", charts, and answer booklets) into the examination hall. Materials are frequently smuggled in pants, shoes, hems, and bras, or information is written on some part of the body. Only candidates are usually involved in this act.

The reproduction of another candidate's work with or without permission, and unauthorized passing of information between candidates, usually by exchanging notes and scripts usually involves only the candidate, but can be facilitated by the supervisor by allowing inadequate spacing between desks.

It is no news that individual candidates and people seeking support for them have physically threatened examination officials, including supervisors and markers of papers. Candidates have also placed weapons in clear view of supervisors to intimidate them.

Another form of malpractice is the replacement of answer sheets handed out during the course of the exam with ones written outside the centre before, during or after the exam, usually by examination officials, invigilators and, sometimes, teachers working outside the examination room. Examination officials or local educational official can also deliberately place candidates in centres where candidates can complete the exam with the support of helpers and without supervision.

During marking of scripts, marks can be altered in order to inflate or deflate a candidate's original mark. This can be initiated by exam officials, candidates (making contact with the marker), or markers (making contact with the candidate). Deliberate enhancement of initial award and /or certificate was usually confined to examination officials in the past, but in more recent years, printers and candidates with high-level skills in technology have joined.

Every other form of disobedience to examination instructions is also a form of malpractice. When a student refuses to adhere to the instructions about the timing in

the examination room: time allotted to start a paper; time to move on to another section; and time to stop writing, he/she becomes involved in exam malpractices.

## Some Common Reasons For Examination Malpractice

**High Stakes Of The Exam:** Success in a public examination can have profound, immediate and long-term impacts on a candidate's life. In many developing countries, including Nigeria, examination success and secondary school graduation represent the sole avenue for poor students to secure a non-menial job. As a result, many parents are keen to resort to various corrupt tactics to ensure that their children "pass" public examination. In Nigeria, for example, most people see the university degree as a meal ticket and as such, they want their children to gain admission into the higher institutions by any means.

**Teacher And School Status:** In many instances, teacher and school reputations depend on the success of students in public examinations. This is particularly true where official, or, unofficial, rankings of schools are published. A school principal who wants to be voted the best principal may decide to achieve this through examination malpractice. A subject teacher may get exam questions and give solutions to his students so that he can produce the highest number of distinctions in the examination and be ranked as the best.

**Student Factors:** This is the part that concerns students. Some students are more prone to cheating than others. Some of the causes of examination malpractices among students will be stated in this write up.

**Quota Systems:** Quota systems are used to determine pass rates. Where students perceive that success is dependent on the number of allocated spaces by place of origin rather than on attaining a given level of performance, they may conclude that success is due to factors beyond their control. They may feel that success cannot be guaranteed by hard work and become poorly motivated. They may then consider malpractice as alternative because they are poorly prepared for the examination.

**Inadequate School Facilities And Teachers:** Textbook shortages, inadequate teacher training, teacher absence from work, teacher lacking subject matter competency, strikes and frequent school closures are common features of education in many developing countries. Parents and students may perceive conditions of learning to be so inadequate that they have little option, but to employ unfair means to increase the likelihood that the student will pass the examination.

**Inadequacies In The Public Examination:** Where the standard aimed for is too high or obscure, teachers and students may lose confidence in their abilities to master the material. In such instances, students may resort to smuggling materials such as textbooks and notes into the examination room.



**Location Of Examination Centres:** Remote centres tend to receive materials in advance, thus increasing the opportunity of gaining access to examination papers. They are less likely to be closely supervised by examination authorities than centres in urban areas.

**Low Salary Levels:** Salary levels of teachers, examination officials and examination supervisors are frequently below the poverty line. In such instances, bribes from parents may prove irresistible.

Most of these reasons are merely pseudo-genuine and can be worked on and eradicated by the stakeholders: the government, parents, teachers, examiners, and students alike. Most importantly, a good student must aim at passing examinations without being involved in any unlawful act during exam. He/she must be well prepared before the examination and write the exam as a principled, disciplined and law-abiding scholar. Only students who are not fully prepared compromise during examinations.

### **Why Do Students Cheat During Exams?**

One of the causes of cheating during examinations is laziness in regular, personal study. A student who does not take personal study seriously may keep on postponing what should be done or read at the moment. Such a student may end up not studying adequately before exams and is likely to be afraid of exams. A related cause is that of absence from classes and refusal to do assignments. The school authority employs teachers and organizes classes so that students can be properly taught. After classes, for the teacher to be convinced that you have fully understood what he/she has taught you, he/she gives you an assignment. When you do the assignments, you attempt more difficult questions than those done in class and if at all you get some wrong, the teacher assists in correcting your mistakes in the exercises he/she has given you as class work, homework and /or tests.

Sometimes, students just attend classes and do assignments but their refusal to revise class notes may pose a problem during exams. You cannot be too sure that you understand and remember everything you have been taught. There should be rigorous revision of all class notes, assignments, tests and other additional study materials just before the exam period. In addition to this, a good student should acquaint himself/herself with proper examination techniques. For example, many students fail or get below their expected grades in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) not because they are dull, but because they lack some fundamental techniques. Some just may not understand some terms and some, because of anxiety, fail to read the instructions carefully.

Another undoing of students is hatred for subjects and /or teachers. The hatred for a subject automatically translates to hatred for the teacher taking the subject and vice versa. Failure in a subject starts the very moment you

start developing hatred for that subject or the teacher taking it. You find out that your mind becomes shut against learning more about that particular subject. Many students fail Mathematics because, consciously or unconsciously, they have developed hatred for it. Whenever you find out that you are having difficulty with any subject, try to love the subject and teacher taking it and with time, you will see yourself improving.

Poor time management is also another underlying reason some students fear exams. Many students often mismanage their time. They spend valuable hours playing football and other games, visiting friends and playing when teachers are not in the class. A good part of these hours could have been channeled into personal study, doing homework, and revising school notes. Time is precious and time lost can never be regained.

Repeated failure could have psychological effects on a student. After failing consecutively, a student gradually begins to doubt that he/she can still excel. He becomes prone to compromising during examination. The Nov./Dec. WASSCE, popularly known as GCE parades a good number of such students. After writing the examination for usually over three consecutive years, they stop studying hard and resort to various forms of examination malpractice. Unfortunately, Parents do not help the situation. Often times, parents of such students threaten withdrawal of support from them. Parents lose their calm when they invest so much in a child, but the child continues to fail. Some could even go to the extent of starving the child. All these may make the child employ illegal means in passing the examination.

Lack of confidence in one's ability is yet another reason some students try to cut corners during examinations. Many times, a student studies very hard, but he/she still feels he/she does not know enough. He/she therefore starts looking for a way to bolster his/her shattered confidence. You must learn to believe in yourself and in your ability. Do away with fear, worry and anxiety.

One more reason student's compromise during exams is peer pressure. The friends you associate with tell a lot about you. If you "move" with the wrong set of friends, you are very likely to have some of their bad traits, but if you have friends who are well behaved and who abide by set rules, you are likely to have these good qualities. Many students engage in examination malpractice because among their friends, it is the "right thing" to do.

### **Why I must not be involved in Examination Malpractices.**

It is illegal: Examination malpractice in Nigeria is a criminal offence and is punishable by 21 years imprisonment.

Loss of integrity: When one disobeys the strict codes of examination, he/she loses the pride associated with

*(Contd on page 21)*

# POEMS



## EXAM MALPRACTICE

Exam malpractice- the task master  
That drives students wild  
Deceiving them into procrastinating.  
Instead of studying and preparing,  
They choose to have fun; rollicking and frolicking  
Round the hustle and bustle of city life,  
Not knowing that time waits for no one.

Exam malpractice- the punishable compromise  
Making you believe you know all  
And no need for review  
Only to discover on that awaited day  
That your confidence and intelligence are not enough  
And the only option left to you  
Is to rely on others' intelligence.  
By peeping and whispering  
But at the end of the day  
You are compensated with failure  
Or possibly a jail term if caught.

Exam malpractice- the evil  
Can be avoided and eradicated  
When we study hard and remain focused  
Lets put an end to this cancer  
That is eating deep into our educational system.

*By Helen Brown  
(Yabatech)*

## PROCRASTINATION

Across the sky sits the bird, looking solemn like a man  
in meditation  
its wings clasped together, its eyes shifty  
uncertain of wither to go, left it considers, right it  
hesitates  
pondering over the very emptiness of its actions  
neither flies up nor down, hangs it is on the balance  
not ready to make a-go, not ready to initiate a fly  
day creeps to night and night unfolds to day  
hangs it on the balance  
the sparrow passes by, the hawk flies, the kite sours  
and the eagle glides  
across the sky sits the bird looking solemn like a man in  
meditation  
its wings clasped together, its eyes shifty  
uncertain of wither to go.

*By Victor Bassey  
Ketu, Lagos*

## OH! WHAT A PITY

Our ancestors turn in their graves  
At the standard of education  
In a nation that calls herself the "Giant of Africa"  
The education sector is yet to intervene effectively  
To check this menace, called exam malpractice

Students talk of having access to the questions  
Even before the exam date  
And results are not released on time  
Teachers complain of inadequate support by parents and  
governments  
While JAMB is dissatisfied with the concentration level of  
students.

See the level of corruption and bribery  
By invigilators and candidates alike  
I wonder when the Ministry of Education  
Will discover new ideas and innovations  
On how to curb this malpractice.

I wonder when government will rise  
To provide adequate materials  
And provide improved conditions of service for teachers  
I wonder when the students will realize that  
Their future is in their hands.

Examination malpractices promote mediocrity  
They occur in our colleges, polytechnics and universities  
Who are the architects of the problem?  
Students, Teachers, Parents, Government  
Stop this! Before it is too late.

*By Precious Adenekan  
Lagos*

## THIS DIRTY HABIT

Exam malpractice never pays  
It tends to destroy set goals and future  
Just as hard drugs intoxicate and become addictive

Friends, don't contemplate cheating  
Because its consequences are grievous  
You may end up destroying yourself

With hard work, dedication and prayer  
Exam success becomes your portion  
Not even the skies can limit you.

*AREVORE.O.WILBERFORCE  
ORISHIGUN HIGH SCHOOL KETU.*



# PHOTO REPORT

## Student Nurses Trained In Human Sexuality And Adolescent Friendly Health Service

In order to provide a functional clinic site for exposure on adolescent sexual and reproductive health service provision for government and non-governmental service providers and programme implementers, AHI, in collaboration with The School of Nursing, Lagos University Teaching Hospital organized a training programme for the second year student nurses between April 24 - May 12, 2006 at the AHI Youth Centre, Lagos.

The training programmes which were in three batches aimed at equipping participants with the relevant skills on how to communicate with adolescents on sexuality and sexuality related problems as well as what adolescent-

friendly health service is all about.

The training featured group work, role-plays, case study management and sharing of true-life experiences. A total of sixty-three (63) student nurses attended the programme.

The pictures below capture the training





# Cartoon

HIS AMBITION WAS TO BECOME A LAWYER—TO BE CALLED TO THE BAR SOME DAY.



BUT THAT WAS NOT TO BE.



HE WAS CAUGHT CHEATING DURING THE UNIVERSITY MATRICULATION EXAM.

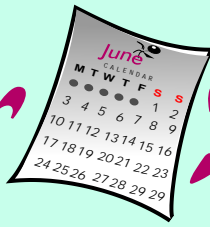


HE ENDED UP BEHIND BARS.





# Dear Diary



## Monday

My mum called me to her room and asked me to sit down. I sat down comfortably, wondering what was on her mind. She then sat opposite me and asked me how the party was the previous night. Even if I wanted to lie, my mum would not have believed me as a result of the horrific look on my face. That gave it all away! I couldn't utter a word. She smiled and told me to speak up while she was still calm before she got angry (as if I was not already in trouble). When I didn't speak up, she asked why I didn't tell her I had broken her plates, and why I didn't obtain permission from her to go to the party and finally why I had to sneak my clothes out of the house. I was awe struck. My mum knew everything. She knew about my recent escapade. Only God knows what is going to happen to me now. She sat staring at me, waiting for my response, but I couldn't speak. I felt as if my tongue had stuck to the roof of my mouth. She told me she was getting angry and impatient with me. I still didn't respond. At that point, she told me to leave her room and that I had between this day and Friday to come to her with the truth about what happened. I left her room afraid and wondering how she had found out about the party, the clothes and above all, the plates!

## Tuesday

I woke up at 5:45am, forty-five minutes before my usual wake up time. The only thing on my mind was "I'm in serious trouble". I still couldn't understand how my mum would have found out. I got out of bed and hastily prepared for school so I could leave before my mum would come down stairs and see me. I have not been able to look at her since yesterday. Thank God, the driver came early and off I went to school before I could see her. I couldn't concentrate in school and couldn't wait till break time to tell Olivia and Stephanie who I hope would help me out. The lunchroom was crowded as other girls and boys took seats and were talking about the party. I found Olivia and Stephanie at our usual corner. I told them about my mum's discoveries and made them see how much trouble I had gotten into. They told me to tell my mum and take whatever form of punishment she would mete out to me. So now I was on my own. They said it as if they had warned me earlier and I didn't take their advice. The school closed and I went home, wondering how I would tell her.

## Wednesday

This morning wasn't any better. I woke up feeling sick, throwing up everywhere and I was weak. Was it as a result of fear, or what? I didn't know. But that was what was most likely. I couldn't go to school. My mum took care of me and stayed at home with me that day to make sure I got better. I think I would have preferred if she had gone to work. She was in my room most of the day, making sure I was alright. That makes it all worse. She seems so nice and gave me anything I requested; just to see that I was okay- she didn't even mention the party incident. At a point, I began to cry, out of self-disappointment. She asked why I was crying. I just told her it was because I felt bad for keeping her at home instead of her being at work at that time. She told me to stop crying that work had been well taken care of.

## Thursday

Stephanie and Olivia were excited to see me. They had both called yesterday while I was asleep. They asked if I had told my mum. I told them I hadn't as a result of shame. The shame I would feel after telling my mum the truth; having deceived her; I, the so-called honest child; her trust in me; and the list continues. But I had to do it. The longer I delayed, the more I lost her respect. I had to tell her today. And apart from that, I just have till tomorrow to come out with the truth. It was the sound of the 'end of break' bell that brought me out of my deep thoughts. Meanwhile, an announcement was made today, that our prom night was to hold at the end of next term, so we were to start paying so that proper planning would be made for it. I thought to myself, with all the problems I have on my hands, how do I tell my mum about my prom night and the dress for the prom

night? Oh God Forgive me! I should have been reasonable. I have all these to worry about, and I also have a biology test tomorrow, which I have not read for.

## Friday

Finally the day is here. I still haven't told my mum, and I haven't prepared adequately for my test today. The test came, and I did what I could. I was sure of getting at least half of the overall score with the little reading I had done because the test was not as difficult as I thought it would be. My dad came home with the good news of his promotion today. Everyone was happy as if it was long over due. So I took advantage of the mood in the house, and didn't tell my mum anything. But I kept wondering how she found out. My dad bought some take-away food on his way home so we didn't have to cook. I didn't have to bear the shame of standing in the kitchen to cook with my mum who would just chat with me, keeping the conversation on neutral topics but not mentioning what I had to tell her. But at the same time, with the expectation that I would just open my mouth and tell her the truth. My dad who asked if I wasn't happy at the news interrupted my thoughts. I told him I was. He asked why I looked so troubled and I told him it was nothing, just that I had a tiring day

## Saturday

Today's been moving so fast; I've done all my chores and its lunchtime already. Mum's not home, so I'm doing it alone. After lunch I went to Stephanie's place and met Olivia there. We did our assignments together and chatted. They told me about another party which I turned down outrightly. I remembered I was in trouble, which I hadn't gotten out of so why would I want to put some more pepper in my pepper soup? I got home at about 6:30pm, made dinner, and put some things together for church on Sunday. Some of my cousins came over and left at about 10:00pm. Just when I was about going to bed my mum called me up to her room. After expressing her disappointment in me, for not being able to come out with the truth, after all the time she gave me, she then told me how she found out. She told me she'd seen some of the broken pieces of the plates under the cabinet beside which the plates broke. I didn't sweep them all because I was hasty and didn't want anyone to notice. She also told me that I left the broom and dustpan at the back of the house beside the trashcan where I disposed off the broken plates. She further confirmed that my class teacher who unknown to me, had seen me and my friends showing off clothes that we were going to wear to the party and had called her. On the day of the party my mum came back while I was away (supposedly at Olivia's house) asked Kaine of my whereabouts and then called Olivia's mum to confirm if I was there. She in turn told my mum I had gone to the party with Olivia and Stephanie and expressed surprise that I had not been given permission and yet attended the party. My mum went further to tell me that she saw me come in through the gate that night. So now after confronting me and I refused to come clean, she was going to punish me severely. She brought out cane and asked me to stretch out my hand. I was sluggish about it, as I knew my mum had a record in flogging. Her anger was rising and her patience was waning. Before I knew it, she was flogging me all over. I cried and screamed-----

## Sunday

I woke up from screaming "I am sorry mum" and Kaine whose room was next door ran to my room to see if I was o.k. She kept calling my name to get me out of my confused state that was when I realised it was all a dream. I got out of bed and prepared for church.



# NEWSREEL

## World Health Day Marked

Young people and secondary school students in and around Mainland/Kosofe Local Education District (LED) on April 7, 2006 trooped to the AHI Youth-Friendly Centre to mark the World Health Day. The event was commemorated to emphasize significant issues in public health that were of worldwide concern.

This year's celebration had as its theme, 'Working Together For Health' and the sub-theme, 'Living healthier lives'. A talk show titled, 'Youth involvement in promoting adolescent reproductive health' was held to mark the occasion. Young people were encouraged to brainstorm and come up with activities they could engage in to promote adolescent reproductive health.

Other highlights of the event included a drama presentation, song rendition, poem recitation and career counselling and guidance which were basically on professions in the healthcare sector such as Doctors, Nurses, Midwives, Pharmacists, Dentists, Surgeons etc. This was necessitated by shortages in the healthcare workforce throughout the world with the aim of encouraging them to explore and choose careers in the health sector to bridge this shortage.



Student giving a talk on healthy living

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## Networking Forum Brainstorms On S.R.H.R Issues



Networking forum members brainstorm

AHI, on April 28, 2006 played host to members of the Networking Forum, comprising non-governmental organizations, (NGOs), in the field of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Nigeria.

The quarterly meeting which was facilitated by Dr. O. A. Odiakosa, Chair, Board of Trustees, AHI, afforded forum members the opportunity to brainstorm and share information that will assist participants to improve their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights programming.

Highpoint of the meeting was a paper presentation titled, 'Sexuality Within Marriage: Between Health, Right and Duty' by Dr. Richmond Tiemoko, Director, Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre (A.R.S.R.C), a project of AHI. The lecture brought to fore issues relating to husbands'/wives' rights and duties as they affect marital relationships.

Furthermore, such issues as unlimited access to sexuality, love, submission, provision of shelter and security as they promote healthy sexuality within marriage were highlighted.

At the end, it was a consensus of the participants that men and families need to be sensitized to recognize that when a woman's rights are respected and affirmed, the family partners stand to benefit in various tangible ways including a mutually satisfying and pleasurable sexual relationship for the partner in the relationship.

Representatives of Campaign Against Unwanted Pregnancy (CAUP), Inter African Committee (IAC), Society for Women and AIDS in Africa, Nigeria (SWAAN), Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN), Community Life Project (CLP), Legal Research and Resource Development Centre (LRRDC) and AHI were present at the 38th edition of The Networking



Forum, which was established in 1997.

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Networking Forum, which was established in 1997.

## Capacity Building Seminar For Young People Held

Young people were kept informed and busy during the Vacation Seminar organized by AHI between April 19 and April 21, 2006.

The programme which was part of the capacity building process for the young people aimed at equipping adolescents with life skills, which would enable them deal with the challenges of growing up and increasing their understanding of pubertal changes.

The 3-day seminar was conducted in two batches. It also focused on reaching out to young people outside Somolu, Kosofe and Mainland Local Education District (LED). The participants learned various life-skills such as Decision-making/Goal Setting, Abstinence and Safer Sexual Skills, Assertiveness and Negotiation skills as well as information on HIV/AIDS/STIs, puberty, Values and Teenage Pregnancy.

The sessions also gave participants some insight into various aspects of communication and how they can enhance parent-child relationship.

More than thirty-nine (39) young people took part in the programme.



A cross-section of participants during the programme

## Poster Design And Cartoon Competition Held



Some of the winning entries

As a way of improving the reproductive health and well-being of young people, AHI on May 16, 2006 at the AHI Youth Centre organized a Poster design and Cartoon competition for in-school youth.

The youth Centre based programme which had as its theme, "Youth Promoting Positive Relationships" aimed at enhancing positive relationships among young people and

the society. It was also an avenue for young people to showcase their artistic/creative competences through poster designs and cartoons.

More than seventy-six entries were submitted and screened by a team of professional artists led by Mr. Emmanuel Ehinmero.

The participants drawn from secondary schools around the Kosofe and Mainland Local Education Districts (LED) had the opportunity to examine and exchange ideas on the artwork exhibited during the event.

At the end of the programme, Mr. Ekpo Christian of Birrel Avenue Senior High School with the Poster entry titled, "Promoting Positive Relationship" took the first position while Mr. Ugboyemi Samuel of Orishigun High School, Ketu won in the "Cartoon category".

Various prizes were also given to participants at the event.

(Contd on page 12)

(Contd from page 11)



## IN LOVING MEMORY OF THE DEPARTED SOULS

The 23rd Annual International AIDS Candlelight Memorial was on May 19, 2006 held at the AHI Youth Centre.

Tagged, "In Loving Memory", the event was designed to honour the memory of those who died of AIDS and to show support for those living with the virus. It also aimed at creating awareness on the prevalence of the disease as well as mobilizing community involvement in the fight against the scourge.

Highlights of the event included an educative session on the mode of transmission of AHI, prevention and the need to

fight against stigmatization and discrimination against PLWHA, song rendition, drama presentation, poetry, riddles and jokes all aimed at sensitizing young people on the evil of stigmatization and discrimination.

More than one hundred young people who took part in the commemoration stood with lit candles to observe a minute's silence in memory of the departed souls.

## Children Mark Their Day In Style

It was a special day for children on May 27, 2006 as they trooped to the Multi-purpose Hall, AHI to mark the Children's Day.

The event, tagged, "Leaders of Tomorrow" was fun-filled as discussion, drama presentation, song rendition and question and answer sessions were incorporated into the programme of event.

The Tongue Edutainment and Charity Harpers (T.E.A.C.H), an organization formed with special interest in charity presented a drama titled, "FOOTPRINT". It focused on HIV/AIDS and young people were provided an opportunity to acquire knowledge on the dangers of indulging in pre-marital sex.

Highlight of the event was a participatory discussion on how adolescents can sharpen their leadership skills as the sessions also gave them the opportunity to learn about societal expectations as the "leaders of tomorrow".

At the end of the programme, most young people expressed their delight for being part of the celebration.

## PROPOSAL WRITING COURSE FOR NGOS CONDUCTED



Dr. Uwem Esiet (AHI) presenting a certificate of participation to one of the participants

A H I ' s mandate to increase the number of NGOs with a capacity to provide life enhancing information and services to young people was

given a boost with the successful completion of the proposal writing course for NGOs held May 22-26, 2006 at the AHI Training Hall.

The course aimed at providing participants with the opportunity to build their knowledge and skills in articulating the key components of a fundable proposal as well as mapping and identifying the major sources of funding to achieve their

project/organizational mandate.

The five-day programme also focused on how participants could secure financial support from the sources that match their needs and at the end of the course, participants were able to develop the outline of a fundable project proposal; generate a list of potential funders and funding sources; develop a feasible fundraising plan to achieve their funding target.

Most of the participants drawn from sixteen (16) NGOs across the country expressed satisfaction with the organization of the programme as well as with the technical depth of the course facilitators. They unanimously called on AHI to be organizing such laudable programmes on a more frequent basis.

Certificates were issued to participants at the end of the programme.





# PERSONAL HYGIENE AND ADOLESCENTS

## WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT PIMPLES

Pimples are a normal part of adolescence, and unfortunately, there is no way to avoid them altogether. Nor are there any miracle cures for acne. However, there are a few things you can do to take care of your skin that may help.

Keeping your skin clean is very important, especially if you live in hot, dusty or humid places. You can use a bathing soap and warm water to gently wash areas where your skin is oily your face, neck, shoulders, back, and upper chest. Washing these places at least once a day will help remove the oil from the surface of the skin and keep your pores clean and open.

Do not wash your skin too much or use strong, harsh soaps because they can irritate your skin and make pimples worse. Never use strong laundry soaps, detergents or bleach, as these will damage your skin. You should also try to make sure that any oils that you put in your hair do not get on your face because these oils and hair tonic can also block the pores in your skin. Lastly, be careful about using face creams and skin lighteners. Even though the packaging may promise to give you clear, beautiful skin, some creams may actually make things worse. In addition, many skin lighteners contain substances that are very unhealthy.

Although it may be tempting at times, it is not a good idea to squeeze or pick at them. If you do this, the pus can spread the infection to other pores. You can also get permanent scars.

Pimples are a nuisance. They can be painful and sore, and they can be embarrassing at times. But, they are a normal part of adolescence. A lot of teenagers feel as though they are the only person with bad skin problems, but that is mainly because they don't notice that their peers have them too. Your pimples are much more noticeable to you than they are to anyone else. You may think that everyone is staring at them, seeing only bad skin and not you. But this is not true. Other people have many other things to think about and what they really notice is who you are not what your skin looks like.

Take courage and don't let a few pimples depress you! You will not have them forever.

## HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR TONGUE

The tongue is a vital organ of the human body found in the mouth. It is the sense organ of taste that distinguishes the different kinds of food or anything that passes

through the mouth. As soon as anything gets to the tongue, it will transmit the message to the brain concerning the taste, which can be sweet or sour. It also aids in talking and chewing. It can be irritated by certain types of toothpaste, excessive use of alcohol and tobacco. It can be cared for in the following ways:

- Always brush the tongue whenever you brush your teeth. This helps to keep it free from leftover residues of food. It also keeps your breath fresh.
- Mouth breathing should be avoided as much as possible, particularly during sleep. This might make the tongue to become dried out and cracked.
- Alcohol, tobacco, spices and hot irritating drinks should be avoided.
- In case of swelling and inflammation, use mouthwash to gargle three to four times daily to reduce swelling and inflammation of the tongue.
- Broken teeth should be repaired or removed and ill-fitting dentures replaced so as not to injure the tongue.
- Ensure that you eat balanced diet that is rich in vitamins, calcium and iron.

## References:

1. *You, Your Life, Your Dreams*. A book for Adolescents, by Catherine Watson and Ellen Brazier.
2. *Basic Health Hand Book* edited, by Mairo Bello

“Other people have many other things to think about and what they really notice is who you are not what your skin looks like.”



## *True Life Story*

# Oh! What A Life!

**M**y name is Christopher (Jnr.) but my family and friends popularly call me Chris Junior. I grew up in the Eastern part of Nigeria, the first child in a family of four- my father, mother and younger brother. I was brought up in a very strict home and as a devoted Anglican, it was mandatory to attend church activities regularly. My dad was a Biochemistry lecturer in the state university and my mum was a teacher in the community school.

Due to their educational disposition, they made sure we were adequately provided for while in school. After the compulsory school lesson, I used to attend two other tutorial classes. I never had time for play or visit except on rare occasion when the whole family would visit our grandparents.

To impress them, I made sure I maintained the first position in class, which I did throughout my primary education. As a result, they never ceased to be proud of me and my mum used to boast about my intelligence. I took the state and federal examination and came out in flying colours.

After my primary education, my dad decided to send me to a boarding school for my secondary education but my mum was not comfortable with the idea. Her reason was that she wanted to keep a close eye on my growth in every ramification: academically, physically, psychologically and spiritually. She wanted to know the friends I keep, the books I read and the things I do, but my dad told her I'd be fine since he had a friend who would take care of me in the school. It took a long time before she was convinced.

Prior to the day of my departure, my parents warned and advised me against anti-social activities and misconduct. They reminded me of my dream to become a Lawyer, which they strongly supported and promised to provide the necessary assistance to get me there. They told me to always call to inform them if I had any problem. It was a sad departure for me as I hurled my bag and luggage into the car while my kid brother held unto my trousers crying.

Life in the boarding school was a different ball game all together. I was used to my mum washing and ironing my clothes, arranging my books and doing all the necessary

things for me, but there in the boarding school, I was faced with the task of doing those things myself in addition to running errands for the senior students for fear of being punished. The tasks were too enormous for me and these somehow affected my first year result. My parents were obviously disappointed and my mum suggested I returned home to start day school but my dad was adamant.

With my dad's decision to remain, I needed to cope with the challenges; I needed to pass well and ultimately become a Lawyer. I discovered that some students were having it "easy" in school, they were not being sent here and there by senior students. I really needed to have such opportunities to enable me concentrate on my studies. I intimated one of my friends, Richard, one of the boys who wasn't running errands for the senior students. He told me that the secret was in getting a "school father" and advised me to get one for myself. Thereafter, I started looking out for someone who would protect me in school but I had no courage to walk up to anyone. As God or fate would have it, I got one. You want to know how?

One day, I went to the school library to read. After frantic effort to get a place to sit, I saw an unoccupied chair. On getting there, I saw books on the table, but decided to move the books to one side and I sat down to read. About twenty minutes later, a huge guy came along and ordered me to get up because he vacated the seat to attend to something. I pretended to be so engrossed with my books, so I did not bulge. Suddenly, he dragged me off my feet by the collar of my shirt and before I could say Jack Robinson, he hit me hard on the face. He held my neck tight and I nearly died of suffocation before the library staff came to my rescue. I gasped for some minutes after which I left.

Later that day, I found out that the guy's name was Bode; one of the school's influential thugs and Richard persuaded me to consider him as my school father. I went to apologize to him and we became friends. Bode was always asking for my provisions and my pocket money and I was giving him in order to get his assistance. He introduced me to his friends and with time, I was attending night parties with them. I skipped classes and

*(Contd on page 22)*





# Dear Aunty

The "Dear Aunty" column treats questions young people ask about their reproductive and sexual health concerns. You too can write in and let us know what your concerns are. You are assured of confidentiality, as your real names will not be published. Send your questions to: The Editor, Growing Up Newsletter (Dear Aunty Column), Action Health Incorporated, 17 Lawal Street, Off Oweh Street, Jibowu, P.O. Box 803, Sabo, Yaba, Lagos.

**Q**

If I find myself in an examination hall where all others are cheating, what am I supposed to do?

**A**

Answer: I really appreciate your concern about being the only one in an examination hall where cheating is the order of the day. I understand that it might be a bit disturbing since you will feel cheated and tend to think others could score higher marks than you. This fear is not always confirmed because if you have really prepared well, you can excel in the exams whether or not others are cheating. You are advised to keep to your work in order to distinguish it from the works of others who are cheating. You sure do not want to be caught cheating along with others and you also want to keep your personal values, even under negative pressure. You can't afford to join the rest to do the wrong thing.

**Q**

Can I at least teach a friend in the examination hall?

**A**

You are only free to teach your friend any subject that he/she finds difficult before you both get into the examination hall. One of the rules of the examination requires that you and others do independent work that will show how much you have learnt. Hence, you are not allowed to teach your friend neither is your friend allowed to teach you during examination. It will not be fair on others who obey the rules. More importantly, good friends should have respect for each other's values; so, your friend should remain your friend if you can explain your values as regards exam practices.

**Q**

Why do I have to obey examination rules?

**A**

Exam rules are made for students to obey. There are many reasons why examination rules should be obeyed. The rules are made in order to ensure that students write the exams under similar conditions and to help you to be sure that you have actually learnt. It is also good for you to remember that the rules make the examination. For instance, if there are no such rules as time limit and other instructions, examinations will not be distinguished from other assessments in which you are allowed to take as much time and make further researches. It could as well be a take-home assignment!

**Q**

What are the ways of preventing unwanted pregnancy?

**A**

Unwanted pregnancy can be prevented through the following ways:-

Abstinence- this is staying away from sexual intercourse.

Barrier methods that include proper use of male and female condom, diaphragm, cervical cap/sponge, intra- uterine contraceptive devices, and the use of hormonal preparations such as oral contraceptive pills, emergency pills, injectables and Norplant.

Spermicides - vaginal foaming tablets, vagina foams

Natural family planning method- Rhythm method, Basal Temperature method.

If one wants to use any of the methods, one has to contact a registered family planning clinic to assess the body for the type that is suitable.

For more information, contact, Action Health Incorporated Youth Clinic at 17 Lawal Street, Off Oweh Street, Jibowu, Lagos or call the Health Provider on 01 7743745.

**Q**

What is the meaning of VVF?

**A**

V. V.F. is an abbreviation for Vesico Vaginal Fistula. It is a medical term that is used to describe an abnormal connection between the upper part of the vaginal wall and the base of the bladder. It is one of the complications of prolonged labour. The bladder is the organ that stores urine before it is voided out of the body and it is close to the vaginal wall. In a situation where the birth canal is not wide enough to allow for the easy passage of the baby (as it is common in teenage pregnancy), the head of the baby rubs vigorously on the tissue of the vaginal wall and the pelvic bone. The friction causes the tissues to get weak and to rupture. This condition is further compounded when the bladder is distended with urine.

So with this break in the wall, the bladder cannot keep the urine, and urine trickles out of the vagina without any control. This makes the body to ooze out unpleasant odour and the person who has V.V.F becomes a social misfit because people cannot stand the pungent odour of the urine. Most affected by this are very young girls that have been forced into early marriages.

(Contd on page 16)

**Q**

Can putting money in the brassier cause breast cancer?

**A**

Putting money in the brassier cannot cause breast cancer, but all the same it is not advisable to put money in the brassiere because it is not hygienic to store money that has passed through many hands into such an intimate part of the body. Moreover, it makes the money especially paper notes to get crumpled.

The ideal way to keep money is to put it in your pocket, purse/wallet or bag. The way one handles money shows how neat and dignified one is.

**Q**

Why can't a woman be the head of the family?

**A**

There is no biological reason that prevents a woman from being the head of the family.

The role of the head of the family is a gender role that is ascribed by the society. In many societies, these are ascribed to men.

Women can perform the task if given the same opportunities, like men.

In many countries of the world and families, women have contributed meaningfully to the growth and development of the families and countries e.g. Indira Gandhi of India, Margaret Thatcher of United Kingdom, Queen Elizabeth of England, Cecilia Ibru of Oceanic Bank, and Dr. Ngozi Okonjo - Iweala, the Finance Minister, Dr. Elizabeth Johnson Sirleaf, the President of Liberia etc.

Some women do not only uplift their family names, they also contribute to the development of humanity like the Late Mother Theresa of India, Late Princess Diana of Wales (Daughter in-law to the Queen of England).

With all these women and uncountable number of mothers

that are working day and night to keep their homes, who says women need any label before they are known and addressed as the head of the family?

**Q**

What is window period?

**A**

The window period is the time when one is exposed to human immune deficiency virus (HIV) while the body at the same produces antibodies. The outcome of HIV screening test during the window period may give a false or negative result as confirmation of a positive result depends on the presence of HIV antibody in the blood.

**Q**

Why do some girls miss their period for one or more months?

**A**

When a young girl reaches puberty and begins to menstruate, her menstrual cycle is expected to be between 21 days and 35 days if she has a regular cycle. In some instances, the young girl menstruates every month but some girls may not have a regular cycle until 2-3 years of starting their menstruation. The reasons for this may be because they have not established a regular pattern. Some may miss their period because of illness, emotional stress like preparing for an examination, mental torture, change of environment, or pregnancy in case of sexually active person or without any cause. If it happens in a non-sexually active young girl, there should not be any cause for anxiety, but if a sexually active young girl misses her period, she should go for medical attention. Also, if the missed period in a non-sexually active person extends for more than three months, she should consult a health provider for hormonal review.

## Basic Skills For Adolescents

### Passing Exams With Ease

There is no magic recipe for passing exams, apart from studying... and following these rules!

Preparing for an exam:

It is important for you to get the syllabus as well as the past question papers for your subjects. The following techniques will also help:

- The best study technique is to start studying for an exam on the first day of class, in order to understand all of the relevant material before the exam.
- Keep a positive attitude, focusing on what you know instead of worrying about what you don't know.
- Summarize your course notes and prepare an outline

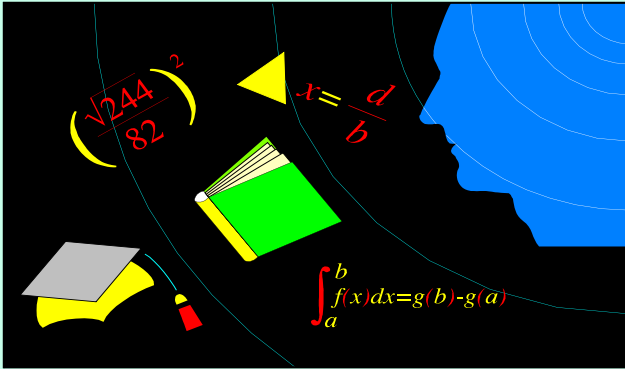
containing all the important elements.

- Use well-known memorization techniques, such as repetition, idea association or acrostics (using the first letters of a series of items to be memorized to build a word).
- The evening before the exam, relax and, most important, get a good night's sleep.
- On the morning of the exam, get up early and have a good, light breakfast. Avoid coffee, especially if you are tired and stressed.
- On the morning of the exam, it is too late to study! Just read over and review your notes and outlines.

During the exam:

- To avoid extra stress, arrive at the exam room no more than five or ten minutes in advance.





- Before starting the exam, take the time to read all the instructions.
- Take the time to read each question all the way through before you start answering. Underline the key words that will guide your answer (describe, list, explain, demonstrate, criticize, compare, analyze, etc.).
- Start by answering the questions to which you know the answer, and then move on to the others.
- Don't panic. If you draw a blank or don't know the answer to a given question, move on to the next one.
- If the time allotted for answering seems too short to you, pay more attention to those questions that are worth more points. Avoid at all costs spending a lot of time on a question that is worth only 2% of the total mark, while neglecting another that counts for more than 20%.
- Take a few minutes to review your answers before handing them in. At this point, don't change your answer unless you are absolutely certain about it. When in doubt, leave your original answer.

Bear in mind that exams measure your knowledge about a given subject at a given point in time, not your personal value as an individual!

Reference:

[www.desjardins.com/en/particuliers/clienteles/ados/avenir/trucs/examens.jsp](http://www.desjardins.com/en/particuliers/clienteles/ados/avenir/trucs/examens.jsp)

## 10 Steps To Get Better Grades In School: What Parents Can Do To Assist Their Children

Few things are more important to parents than their children's education. This article has specific tips for parents wanting to help their children succeed in school.

### 1. Develop a Schedule.

Many families today are incredibly busy. In the rush to meet all the demands upon each family member from school, work, sports, arts and socializing- school sometimes gets crowded to the rear. One way to prevent that from happening is to develop a firm but flexible schedule- allowing sufficient time to meet each of the essentials.

### 2. Don't overextend.

Many times, when a family begins creating a schedule, it becomes clear that there are simply too many activities to fit. School success may require being a little less involved in extracurricular activities. It may also mean that parents find they have to cut a few of the extras out of their lives, too.

### 3. Get plenty of rest.

Many students simply do not get enough sleep. Eight hours is actually the minimum number of hours a child should sleep each night. It is best to get more sleep and don't count on weekends to "catch up" on missed sleep. It simply doesn't work that way. Adequate sleep is needed for each day to ensure

optimal school performance.

### 4. Eat right.

Poor nutrition and skipped meals lead to the same feelings of exhaustion and weakness that come from lack of sleep. Schedule in meals that include a good breakfast and minimal fast food. Make sure there are plenty of healthful snacks available for after school- like fruit, raw veggies, cheese and pop corn. And watch that soda consumption, too much sugar can make you feel sluggish.

### 5. Stay well stocked.

Purchase good school supplies and keep them in stock. Nothing is more frustrating than discovering you are out of glue or your markers are all dried up, just as you are beginning the project that is due tomorrow.

### 6. Make homework a priority.

Skipped homework can shipwreck an otherwise excellent grade average. Be certain to allot sufficient time for homework to be completed in a distraction-free atmosphere. Preferably the time should be after the student has had a chance to unwind from school yet still early enough to feel fresh and alert.

### 7. Lavish praise especially when your child is struggling in a particular subject.

Be certain he knows that many people struggle in that subject; it does not mean he is stupid. Praise each success as he progresses no matter how small. Offer help or even tutoring if needed, but don't force help if your child prefers to work independently. Sometimes the goals that are met after a tough fight are the most enjoyable.

### 8. Keep communication open.

Take time everyday to listen to your child. Be certain every conversation is not dominated by you. Let your child tell his experiences at school, with his teacher and with other students, then if problems arise, you have a better understanding of the circumstances that may have led up to them.

### 9. Keep expectations realistic.

It is good to expect your child to do well in school- to be polite and to complete assignments neatly and on time- but do not expect every assignment to net an A. Keep goals reachable to avoid frustration and poor self-image.

### 10. Be honest.

Many children naturally want to do as well as their parents- or better! So, when you reminisce about your own school days, be certain to tell about your failures as well as your successes.

*Culled from 'The Adviser', Vol. 1 No 12; A publication of The Guardian Newspapers Ltd.*



# Youth Skills Development Programme

The Youth Skills Development Programme was initiated by ACTION HEALTH INCORPORATED to afford young school leavers awaiting admission into institutions of higher learning, the opportunity to work within the organization and acquire skills in the following areas:



- ✧ Micro-computer Operations
- ✧ Office Administration
- ✧ Public Speaking
- ✧ Community Development Activities
- ✧ Personal Health Management
- ✧ Self-Organization & Time Management

Participation on the programme will have an opportunity to work for one year by the end of which, they will be more equipped to plan and take charge of their lives. Certificates will also be issued to successful participants at the end of the programme.

## REQUIREMENTS

- ★ Applicants should be between 16 - 19 years
  - ★ Should have passed their SSCE with a minimum of five (5) credits including Mathematics and English Language.
  - ★ Must demonstrate creativity and ability to use their initiative
  - ★ Must be committed to working full-time from November 2006 - November 2007
  - ★ Membership of the Health and Life Planning club while in Secondary school will be an advantage
- ★ To apply, write "Youth Assistant" on the top left corner of the envelope and attach photocopies of your credentials, a letter of reference from your school principal and submit your application on or before 30th October, 2006

### SEND YOUR APPLICATION TO:

The Executive Director  
Action Health Incorporated  
17 Lawal Street Off Oweh Street  
Jibowu, Lagos.  
P. O. Box 803, Yaba, Lagos.

...Do not miss  
this one in a million  
opportunity!





# Career Guide

## DO YOU WANT TO BE A HISTORIAN?

History is the study of past civilizations and problems used to promote insight and understanding of the problems of today, preserve our great cultural heritage, and enrich our appreciation of man and his world. History broadens our perspective and allows us to discover the essential elements of human existence. As such, history prepares students for careers in government service, law, teaching, business, advertising, historical editing, and related areas.

### THE JOB

Historians practice in a range of professional fields. Appreciation of the relevance of history to human society has always remained strong, reflecting the need to record and interpret the past, provide a context for understanding the present and even guide future planning. Professional historians work in the traditional field of education, in government bodies and museums, in areas of legal research, on heritage and planning studies, and on corporate and local histories. They are also called on to advice-allied professionals who range from Archaeologists to Town Planners and Valuers.

### TRAINING

The practice of history is a professional skill. It means having training and experience in critically assessing the evidence and events of the past and placing them in context. Good research and communication skills are essential.

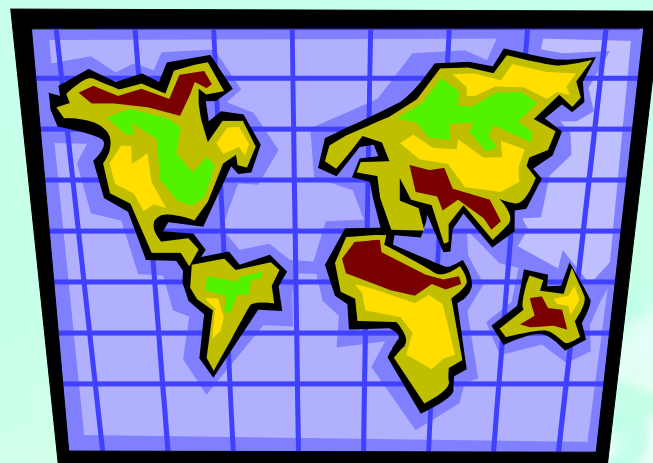
Professional historians are quite different from history enthusiasts who, usually as a hobby, can be found researching subjects such as local history, family history and transport history. Such enthusiasts are often very good at collecting and sorting information but do not have the professional skills and background knowledge to interpret that information and place it in historical context. The difference is similar to that between a qualified medical practitioner and someone having knowledge of first aid. To become a professional historian you need qualifications.

The basic qualification for a professional historian is an honors degree or equivalent in the discipline of history from an appropriate tertiary institution.

At tertiary level undergraduate students can study various fields of history. After completion of the first tertiary qualification, it is possible to acquire further professional and practices skills through study. That study is usually oriented towards either research or work practices. When the emphasis is on research, a specific topic is usually researched and written up as an honors dissertation. Post graduate research (a Masters or Doctorate degree) can then extend the historian's skills in research, analysis and writing through the preparation of a thesis on a selected topic. When the emphasis is on work practices, a post graduate qualification in public or applied history will refine the historian's skills for use in specific professional fields such as museums, heritage, radio, film and television and interactive multimedia design. For teaching in secondary schools an educational qualification such as a degree or diploma required.

### PROSPECTS

As with the rest of the workforce, historians work either as employees in an organisation, as contractors, or as consultants. Tertiary teachings is still a significant, but diminishing field of employment for historians but opportunities also arise in government bodies, museums, archives, in heritage practice and elsewhere. Such positions are advertised in the press. State and territory professional historians association also publicize employment opportunities for their members.



*(Contd on page 20)*

(Contd from page 19)

Consulting work requires good business skills in order to be economically viable, but it is a growing field as organizations increasingly replace staff with consultants. Successful consultants must undertake business and financial planning balance their work commitments and prepare tenders for contracts (which, again, are advertised in the press and publicized by state territory Professional Historian Association (PHAs). The state and territory PHAs provide their members with guidance and support, which includes publishing registers of their members, providing employment services and giving advice on fees and contracts.

Joining your state or territory PHA after graduation from your history course will give you access to advice and professional information and, most importantly, professional accreditation for your qualifications.

## Skills and Personal Qualities

- Accuracy
- Attention to details
- Communication skills
- Confidence
- Computer skills
- Curiosity
- Interest in history
- Patience

References:

[www.historians.org.au/career](http://www.historians.org.au/career)

[www.ub-careers.buffalo.edu/cdo/history](http://www.ub-careers.buffalo.edu/cdo/history)

## Profile Of A Role Model

(Professor Sola Akinrinade)



Professor Sola Akinrinade is one of the fast achievers in the line of academics in Nigeria. This dynamic, ever hardworking professor got his first degree in History from the department of History, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife at the age of 22. He got his Masters degree at the age of 29 and became a professor in 1999 when he was just 40!

He was born on September 27, 1959 as an indigene of Ife North Local Government Area of Osun State; a South Western region in Nigeria. He attended Oshogbo Grammar School between 1971 and 1975; Ibadan Boys High School between 1975 and 1976; The Polytechnic, Ibadan between 1976 and 1977. He proceeded to University of Ife, Ile-Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife), where he bagged a First Class honours degree in History, 1981, and later got his Masters in 1984. He got his Doctorate degree (Ph.D.) in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London in 1988. This Professor of History is now a lecturer at the department of History, Faculty of Arts, Obafemi

Awolowo University. He is also the Dean of the Faculty of Arts in the same institution.

You might not appreciate the significance of Professor Akinrinade's achievements until you find out that he had to struggle through the rough and rugged parts of life to arrive at his destination. According to him, he had poor mentoring especially at his secondary school level. Like many young people at that age, he would have lost focus and stopped pursuing his goals and life ambition, but he never did. He rather faced this challenge and devised a means of forging ahead. At that very trying time, when there was nobody to put him through, he created a role model for himself and got all the inspiration needed.

According to him, his role model, Dr. Timothy Akinola Aguda, an eminent jurist was "evidently a hardworking man who was never satisfied with mediocrity and never rested on his past achievements but kept moving on to higher heights... Was a highly principled man, who kept making impact on national



issues well after what many consider retirement age” From his role model, Professor says he was able to learn to “believe that heights were meant to be reached, mountains were meant to be conquered and not to be seen as immovable obstacles” This really helped him to get to where he is today one of the youngest professors in the country.

Apart from creating a role model for himself, Professor has a driving force, which he keeps so religiously. In highlighting the driving force, he says “ to be the best in whatever I do; to impact my generation to the best of my God-given ability; and to make a qualitative difference in whatever position I occupy”

When encouraging young people, who will like to become Historians, he says “Equip yourself with the necessary tools for the profession; learn to acquire new skills that will give you an edge over your contemporaries. Make it your target to be the best in your field and don't put the search for money ahead of acquiring the necessary skills and experience. Be creative. Add value to your degrees” For those who might be concern about the prospects for Historians, Professor is of the opinion that opportunities abound in the society for young people who are

interested in studying History “A graduate of history can work in the public service and in the private sector. As an academic, the sky is the limit if you are ready to put in the best at whatever you do” says Prof.

Professor Akinrinade is not just a Historian with a difference, but also one who has great interest in the well being of young people. He has eleven books and forty-two articles and monographs to his credit.

In his general advice to individuals, he concludes, “the individual needs to have focus for his or her life and not be swayed by environmental influences. Many young people have lost direction because they want to be what other people are, not necessarily what they themselves can be either by ability or by interest. Set a focus, have a goal and everything will work to cooperate with you to achieve your goal”.

Professor Akinrinade is happily married to Rita Nkechi and they have two children, an eleven year-old boy, Oluwalayomi Akinola, and a nine year-old girl, Odunayo Ifeoma.

(Contd from page 5)

## Let's talk about exams

achievement of success.

**Cancellation of subject results:** Most times the result of the particular subjects in which the candidates are suspected to have been involved in examination malpractices is cancelled.

**Cancellation of whole result:** The whole results of a candidate, or even the whole examination center, are sometimes cancelled when it is noticed that there was perpetration of examination malpractices.

**Loss of self-confidence:** When a student engages in examination malpractice, he/she loses academic confidence; he will no longer be confident to defend his/her results when there is a need for it.

**Fall in academic standard:** A student who engages in examination malpractices will consequently not be able to strive to attain the required academic standard. The belief that an examination malpractice is the way to success in exams will make such student become indolent. When such a student gets to a higher level of education, it becomes difficult to cope.

**Loss of confidence in Exam Bodies:** When examination malpractices become the usual practice, the examination bodies lose credibility with students, parents, professional bodies, educational institutions in and out of the country, and the essence of examination becomes forfeited.

**SUCCEED THE RIGHT WAY, IN SPITE OF ALL ODDS**

Examination malpractice may be so rampant and tempting, but you can still pass your exams without engaging in any form of malpractice. The first thing you have to do is to prepare well beforehand. Proper preparation prevents poor performance. At the beginning of the term, you should know that you would

be writing exams at the end of the term. Start preparing from the beginning. Equip yourself with the necessary materials such as syllabus, textbooks and past question papers. Also design your study period and keep to this.

You have to imbibe some personal principles such as integrity and honesty. Moral principles help guide against malpractice. You must also have a positive mental attitude. What you feel about yourself and your ability goes a long way in determining what you eventually achieve. Write your exams with confidence.

Proper time allocation/ management is very important. Do not spend too much time on a particular section of the examination. Read all questions and select the most familiar and comfortable questions. Start with the easiest ones. Remember that the time allowed includes the time for reading the paper and preparing answers. Do not forget to always read and abide by the rules of the examination. Many students have not passed the UME just because they failed to shade the option type.

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## Oh! What A Life

with Bode's help, my tasks were assigned to some of the "weak boys" in the school to do. I became a "big boy" among my friends and got accepted by the bigger boys in the school. My lifestyle changed, I started demanding more money from home to meet up with the trend while my parents reminded me of getting good grades as well.

At the end of the session, the result came out and I failed woefully. Bode told me not to worry that he would handle it. He went to a business centre to falsify a result, which I gave to my parents and they were very proud of me once again- their soon to become a lawyer son. They gave me every other thing I demanded till I finished from school and I was falsifying my results just to meet their expectations. In my final year in school, my parents wanted me to write the UME, which I did but scored low, too low to be considered in any tertiary institution to study the course of my dream- Law.

After my secondary education, I wrote another UME and I also got below the cut-off mark for the course.

My parents were getting impatient and needed to send me to a tertiary institution. My dad suggested that I attend two or more private lessons and get serious with my studies instead of visiting friends. Meanwhile, I had got used to being lazy and still finding an easier way to success, so, I turned to Bode. I explained the "admission palaver" to him and he seemed to know what to do. He told me to collect money for tutorials from my parents and pretend to study

hard till after the examination. With the money, he got me registered in a special center and got a "mercenary" to write the exam for me, unknown to my parents. The result was outstanding.

Unfortunately, the institution I specified in my form required that students to be admitted into the Law Faculty must compulsorily write Literature in-English as one of the four subjects in UME. I got to know this very late (as I was not careful in checking the requirements in the brochure before making the choice) and could no longer get a form for change of institution. My parents tried all they could to get me admitted into another institution- money, connection, position, family ties etc all to no avail. Meanwhile, Bode had gotten admission into another university to study Mechanical Engineering. Hearing that, I decided to be serious with my studies. I had to write

another examination, my parents bought the UME form for me again.

On the day of the examination, I wore a jacket with many pockets in order to hide my "micro chips". Earlier that day, I went to the tutorial centre where I got some "micro chips" which I wistfully distributed into different pockets of my jacket. Although, I was late for the exam which raised a suspicious look from the invigilator but I quickly put up an innocent face. As soon as I sat down I started "dubbing" from the 'micro chips' and I was caught and warned by the invigilator. He asked me to move out of my seat to the front of the hall. As soon as he left, I removed another one and started dubbing because time was against me and unfortunately for me, I was caught once again.

Just then, some Policemen and Pressmen marched into the school premises to signal the arrival of the JAMB Registrar-Prof. Salim Bello who apparently was visiting

centers to see how the exercise was going.

Entering the hall, he asked what I had done and the invigilator told him. The Prof. called two other invigilators and instructed them to search me. I struggled with them but they eventually found the "micro chips" on me. I was arrested and whisked away by the Police. My parents were contacted and they rushed down immediately to the police station.

They felt greatly disappointed; they couldn't believe what they saw and heard. Their

brilliant son, the Lawyer to be,

their pride...The shame was to be elaborated when later that day, the other culprits and I were shown on the National TV. I prayed that it would end like a dream so I could retrace my steps, but no. We were summoned to court for the law to prevail! There was no winning the case, the evidence was glaring. My parents tried their best to get me out of the problem, it didn't work. I got the judgment, twenty-one years imprisonment. I thought of everything: my dream; family name; my younger brother... Will I still be a Lawyer? Will I ever be called to BAR, behind these bars? I thought of Bode too. He was caught cheating during his first semester examination and earlier convicted. If I had known, I would have faced my studies seriously and rejected this negative influence in my life.

*We were summoned to court for the law to prevail! There was no winning the case, the evidence was glaring. My parents tried their best to get me out of the problem, it didn't work. I got the judgment, twenty-one years imprisonment.*



# Resources

The materials listed here are resources on adolescent development. Although AHI does not distribute any of these materials, they are available for use within our reference library at the AHI Youth Centre located at 17 Lawal Street, Off Oweh Street, Jibowu, Lagos.

## BOOKS

### "FROM DESPAIR TO SUCCESS"

By Femi Ajayi

This book is an autobiography. It is a chronicle of real life situations; of poverty and struggle for survival; a story of hope and courage. It is a story of challenges; of hard work and perseverance. It is a story that shows that you don't have to be born with a silver spoon to succeed.

Chapters 4-5 deal exclusively with his educational constraints: How his uncle never believed in the value of education and so never bothered about his education and how he had to sell firewood and make baskets in order to buy food and enroll in school. It goes on to elaborate on how he never had school uniforms or books.

Again, he had to be trekking 10km everyday to school since the school was in another village and he had no money. (Aiyede Community School, Ekiti).

It is a story of how he finally completed his primary education and came to Lagos in search of a job.

The book narrates how he got a job as house help and had to combine that with evening lessons until he finally took the GCE, which he passed in flying colours.

This is the story of a man who was a nobody but through hard work and perseverance, became a somebody and this book is highly recommended to everybody who wants to succeed in life as it will motivate us to work harder and achieve success at the end.

### "THE MAKING OF A SUCCESSFUL YOUTH"

By W.F. Kumuyi.

The book tries to inspire every youth to aspire towards greatness and at the same time, set out proven principles for achieving one's dreams.

The book is divided into four parts to involve the reader in practical ways of learning the principles of successful achievement. Part one, titled, 'My Dream' is to inspire youths with the vision and importance of dreams. Part two, 'Ingredients

of Success', deals with the basic essentials for successful achievement. Part three; 'Success Skills' exposes readers to the necessary skills to be acquired in order to realize one's dream. While the final part, 'You Too Can Succeed' challenges reader to know that success is possible in the reader.

### THEIR TOMORROW TODAY: A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO COPING WITH ADOLESCENCE.

By Fola Richie-Adewusi.

This book provides relevant information and advice for both parents and the adolescents on how to create healthy and responsible adults of tomorrow from the adolescents of today.

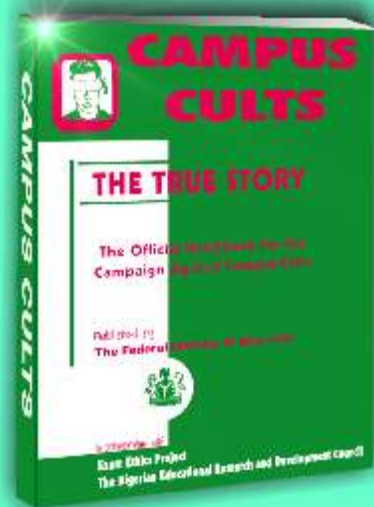
It also gives information on who the adolescents are, their physiological and emotional development and the influence of the family, peers, media and the society at large on their development.

### "CAMPUS CULTS"

By The Federal Ministry of Education and Exam Ethics Project.

This is a remarkable book that strips away myths; fantasies; and cloaks of mystery and secrecy and lay bare the stark realities of

secret cults in educational institutions. It outlines in graphic details the modus operandi of campus cults including strategies of recruitment and rites of initiation. In page after page, this important book provides evidence of the dangers of campus cults to students, parents, staff, institutions and the nation. It adduces good reasons why discerning students, who hope to make a success of their lives, should stay away from campus cults.



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