

Rigour

the quality of being extremely thorough
and careful.

Rigour

Ethos of Learning

“Find your passion and the rigour
will naturally flow!”

Alex Wallace , Deputy Headmaster

I got home last night just in time for the kids’ dinner. (I had hoped I’d missed it but they must have been running late!) Once feeding time at the zoo was over, we traipsed upstairs for bathtime. Once all the bath water was on the bathroom floor we had no choice but to end bathtime. Teeth brushing, reading and then into bed! Then follows a series of high fives between my wife and I as we celebrate the success of the bedtime routine. Exhausted, but bouyed by our accomplishment we head downstairs for paper, scissors, stone to decide who will cook our dinner!

We then both open our laptops and start work. My wife is also a Deputy Headteacher, which makes for some interesting discussions (she is normally right). We are both lucky in that we love our jobs so working long hours is never something either of us complain about, plus the fact we have long holidays which we are very fortunate to share as a family. During recent weeks we have had the in-laws to stay for a month or so as they are between houses. It went surprisingly well, but they simply could not understand how hard we worked. Teaching does require a huge amount of hard work and dedication but it also needs a great deal of academic rigour. Rigour must be very hard to deliver if you are not passionate about what you are doing.

I must confess in recent weeks my wife has started to sneak into the lounge at about 9pm. I am now fully aware this is the lure of “Love Island”. I will occasionally pop in to compare my tan with those of the contestants! Having watched snippets I am not sure there is a huge depth of character on display (this may be unfair given my glimpses of the programme).

One of the programmes I quite enjoy watching at the moment is Top Gear, I find it very amusing and I was recently reading an article about the making of the programme and I could not believe the huge amount of work that goes on behind the scenes to make the programme a success. The attention to detail, the careful planning, the rigour is amazing and no doubt a key part of the success to the programme.

Often depth, tenacity and rigour are crucial to succeed in life. Those students who often have the greatest success at Oxbridge have a real passion and depth in their understanding of their subject. These students have researched and read up on their chosen areas of study. However, this rigour will not come easy unless you have the passion and motivation for your chosen subject.

So how do you get the desire to be rigorous? Find that key interest. Maybe it will occur through an inspiring trip to a museum, or a visit to a new country or perhaps an amazing meal. Maybe a TV programme, TED talk, friend or possibly, just possibly your parents or even worse a teacher might provide that spark to allow the rigour in your chosen topic to feel natural and not a chore. When you have it, embrace it, immerse yourself in it and then find a job based on it and you’ll never have to work!

A final thought...



For my sins I am Spurs supporter. We are not the best side in the world and until the summer transfer window we had not spent any money on players for two years and yet we have competed with the best. A key reason was because we had a good manager who really understood and researched his opponents (rigour). He inspired his team to work harder (along with Liverpool) than any other Premiership side. But he also delved deeper into his own team, he knew them all

really well. He knew what made them tick, he knew what they liked and disliked, and crucially what they responded to best. Sadly, this season it has fallen apart, maybe it was due to a change in personnel in the team, maybe he had run out of steam. We now have José at the helm, goodness knows what will happen now. Apparently, he already has the Tottenham duvet! Encourage your son to find that passion and then jump into it with both feet!

For further information on the Ethos of Learning please refer to the RGS website: www.rqshw.com or Alex Wallace, Deputy Headmaster, arw@rqshw.com