

# POWER OF HAIR

JANUARY 2025



PANTENE



## IMPACT REPORT POWER OF HAIR PROGRAMME



NURTURING A NEW CREATIVE GENERATION



## CELEBRATING DIVERSITY, IDENTITY AND PROMOTING CONFIDENCE

Power of Hair is an educational programme created by the Ideas Foundation, in partnership with Pantene. The programme was designed to tackle issues of Afro textured hair discrimination and promote hair confidence while equipping students with essential skills such as teamwork, self-expression, and critical thinking, fostering an environment of inclusion and understanding. Through a series of innovative and immersive workshops, along with curriculum-aligned resources, the campaign has made a lasting impact on thousands of students, educators, and communities across the UK.

The Ideas Foundation commissioned creatives to look at the subject of identity and hair discrimination using creativity and employer engagement. Young people worked alongside industry professionals and leading poets, photographers, artists and other creatives to explore this emotive and topical issue through workshops that were designed to get young people thinking and developing their creative skills. By celebrating diversity and identity, it empowered young people to take pride in their cultural heritage and equipped them to challenge biases both within and beyond the school environment.

Research has shown that hair discrimination remains a significant issue in schools and workplaces. According to the World Afro Day Report (2020), 46% of Black and mixed-heritage children in the UK have faced hair discrimination in school settings, often rooted in cultural stereotypes and a lack of understanding of Afro-textured hair. This programme aligns with recommendations from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), which advocates for policies addressing racial and cultural discrimination, particularly in education, to create a more inclusive learning environment.



**“We have worked with the Ideas Foundation on the Pantene Power of Hair Schools Programme for the past three years. This programme has been delivered across the country, with a focus on less advantaged communities, to build confidence in hair and identity through creativity activities. The activities have all been delivered to schedule and to a high quality with appropriate safeguarding procedures in place and with talented and knowledgeable facilitators. The IF team have also developed a range of curriculum materials to support schools to deliver workshops on a self-serve basis.**

Feedback from participating schools and the young people who have taken part in these creative enrichment workshops has been exceedingly positive and having attended some of the workshops myself, we have seen first-hand the impact that has been driven in terms of building confidence and inspiring the future generation.

We have found working with the Ideas Foundation to be inspiring, collaborative and a true partnership.”

— ESTHER GOOLD, SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER - P&G BEAUTY NORTHERN EUROPE

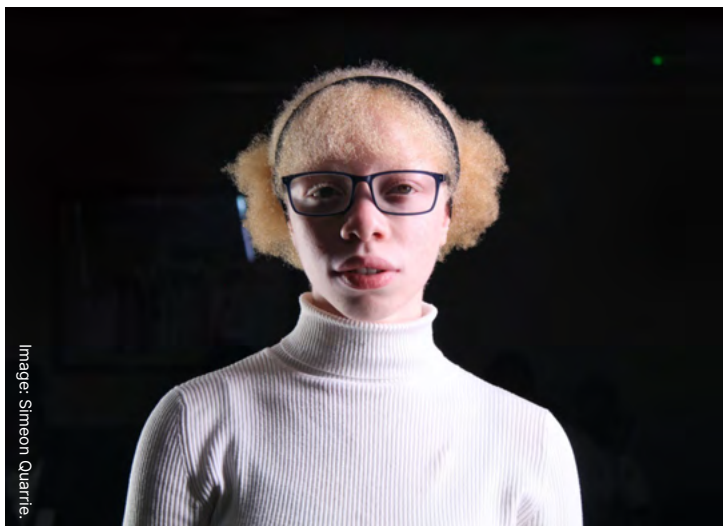


Image: Simeon Quarrie.







"It has been such a wonderful experience to have Adisa facilitate the Pantene Hair Discrimination Workshops at Cockshut Hill School this year. Delivered through his appetite and skill of poetry, our learners have been left in admiration and felt inspired. Adisa brings an extent of passion and performance to the workshops which allows learners to overcome their own challenges and be inclusive."

— MICHELLE TURTON, CAREERS LEADER, COCKSHUT HILL SCHOOL



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

### 1. Widespread Reach

- Engaged 9,271 young people in 258 workshops across the UK.
- Partnered with 154 schools across the UK, many of whom invited us back for workshops each year.
- **Workshops Delivered:** Facilitated 258 engaging workshops across the UK, enabling diverse communities to benefit from the programme.
- **Facilitators:** Collaborated with 14 skilled facilitators, each bringing a unique blend of expertise in education, creativity, lived experience and cultural representation.

### 2. Engaging Workshop Themes

- Explored identity and Afro hair discrimination through poetry, drama, brand experiences, campaign briefs, science, art, photography, digital storytelling, and games design.
- Designed workshops to inspire creativity and equip students with skills like teamwork, confidence-building, and critical thinking.

### 3. Accessible Educational Materials

- Tested and refined materials with over 1,400 students to ensure effectiveness.
- We co-developed materials with the Primary Science Teaching Trust and the National Association for Teaching of English to ensure the materials support the curriculum.
- Developed free downloadable lesson plans for seamless curriculum integration across STEM, English, Art, Drama, Humanities, Business Studies and more.



"The year 5 and 6 pupils thoroughly enjoyed the workshop with Adisa. He challenged their way of thinking about cultural identity and heritage, encouraging them to produce some really thoughtful, high-quality poetry. The workshop enhanced both our poetry curriculum and our PSHE curriculum, with a focus on diversity and inclusion. It was also great fun!"

— GLENN DUGGAN-SEVILLE, HEADTEACHER, INKBERROW PRIMARY SCHOOL



Image: Michael Cockerham

### The workshops

The workshops covered a wide range of disciplines, including:

- **Poetry and Drama:** Encouraging self-expression and storytelling to explore identity and cultural heritage. Exploring how words can be used to challenge or reinforce stereotypes.
- **Art and Photography:** Using photography and mixed media art to challenge stereotypes and celebrate Afro hair.
- **Science and Humanities:** Linking discussions of hair texture and hair history to increase awareness of identity and discrimination.
- **Campaign and brand experience design:** using a professional brief to encourage students to consider different audiences, messaging and platforms to raise awareness of hair identity.
- **Digital Storytelling and Games Design:** Encouraging students to storyboard games that can be used to raise awareness of different hair types, representation and discrimination.

"The pupils really had their eyes opened in regards to microaggressions around hair- it wasn't something they were conscious of. They very much enjoyed creating artwork incorporating different types of hair from their own and it was pleasing to hear pupils celebrating hair and hairstyles from different cultures. This was a fantastic workshop, which combined science, art and social conscience in a fun and informative way."

— PHILIP BUTLER, TEACHER, TREROBART PRIMARY SCHOOL



“Very fun, interesting, amazing.  
Learnt many new things.”

— STUDENT, FEATHERSTONE HIGH SCHOOL

“It made me understand why  
hair is important.”

— STUDENT, FEATHERSTONE HIGH SCHOOL

## BRINGING CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS INTO THE CLASSROOM

“It’s who you meet”. Research by Dr Antony Mann, Director of Research and Policy, Education and Employers Taskforce, has demonstrated the value of employer encounters in improving the life chances of young people. We know from this research that bringing creative professionals into the classroom can be transformational.

The Power of Hair programme provided students with the opportunity to learn from and be inspired by professionals who use creativity in their careers. By collaborating with creatives and other industry professionals, the workshops were designed to inspire creativity and provoke thoughtful discussions. By fostering connections with professionals, the workshops gave students a glimpse of how creativity can be used to address social issues, celebrate cultural identity and provide a means of self-expression and a voice for social action.

Our professional creatives brought real-world insights and expertise to the classroom, enriching the learning experience and connecting students with new career pathways. Together, they explored identity and Afro hair discrimination through poetry, drama, brand experiences, campaign briefs, science, art, photography, digital storytelling, and games design. This creative approach also equipped students with teamwork, confidence-building, and critical thinking skills.

This multifaceted approach ensured that the programme was not only educational but also deeply engaging and memorable for students.

Creative professionals also acted as mentors, helping students discover their own talents and ambitions while exposing them to potential careers in the creative industries. This approach aligns with the Creative Industries Federation’s findings that integrating creativity into education not only enhances learning but also fosters essential skills for the future workforce.

As part of the programme, two workshops were attended by high-profile P&G influencers, creating a unique and memorable experience for the students. At Heston Community School, Clara Amfo joined the workshop and shared her personal hair story, fostering pride and belonging among students. At Cockshut Hill School, Vee Kathivu inspired students with her journey with Afro-textured hair. Both influencers actively participated in poetry workshops, offering support and encouragement. Their presence created a safe and empowering environment, motivating students to express their experiences and producing powerful, emotive pieces. The involvement of influencers elevated the profile of the workshops and demonstrated the importance of representation and storytelling in fostering understanding and pride. By sharing their journeys, Clara Amfo and Vee Kathivu not only inspired

students but also reinforced the programme’s core values of celebrating diversity and promoting confidence.

### Facilitators with Lived Experience

A cornerstone of the Power of Hair programme’s success was the involvement of facilitators with lived experience of Afro textured hair discrimination. Facilitators such as Toni Peters, Ella Otomewo and Adisa the Verbaliser brought personal stories, authenticity, relatability, and a deep understanding of the issues at hand, making the workshops more impactful and resonant for students. By sharing their experiences, our facilitators helped to bridge the gap between abstract concepts like microaggressions and the real-world impact of discrimination.

Their contributions included:

- **Personal Narratives:** Facilitators shared their journeys, providing students with relatable role models and fostering a safe space for open dialogue. For example, Kulvinder has talked about her struggles with hair loss, Adisa has talked about the importance of hair in his family, and Toni has shared how her hair has impacted on her identity.
- **Cultural Insights:** Their unique perspectives enriched discussions around identity and representation, helping students appreciate the diversity within Afro textured hair experiences and the historical reasons that hair has had so much significance for people of colour.
- **Empathy Building:** By addressing stereotypes and biases directly, facilitators inspired empathy and understanding among participants, encouraging them to challenge discriminatory attitudes in their own lives.

The inclusion of facilitators with lived experience ensured that the programme remained grounded, authentic, and impactful, giving students confidence to share their own personal experiences and challenges.







## IMPACT ON STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS

### 1. Skills Development

- Students developed creative and essential skills, including teamwork, critical thinking, and self-expression. Students also learned industry related skills such as photography and brand experience.
- Increased awareness of societal issues like microaggressions, bullying and discrimination.
- Many of the workshops were aligned with the curriculum so students gained skills in writing, performance, science inquiry, photography and marketing.

### 2. Student Engagement

- Students reported heightened confidence and pride in their identity.
- Workshops provided opportunities for students to engage with creative professionals and think differently about themselves and their future.

### 3. Educator Feedback

- Teachers observed increased student engagement and interest in critical topics like microaggressions and cultural representation.
- Workshops sparked meaningful discussions and inspired both students and staff.

**92%** of young people said the workshop made them feel more confident

**100%** said they understand more about hair discrimination and microaggressions than they did before the workshop

**85%** said they would feel more comfortable speaking to a teacher if they saw a classmate experience discrimination or microaggressions

**91%** said learning about hair types and what makes us different is important

**100%** would recommend the workshops to a friend

**100%** of teachers would recommend the workshops

“Fun, interactive, I learned new things and gained a new perspective of games design. I found out jobs I didn’t know existed. It was useful thinking about the meaning of identity and how it is different for everyone.”

– STUDENT, BSIX

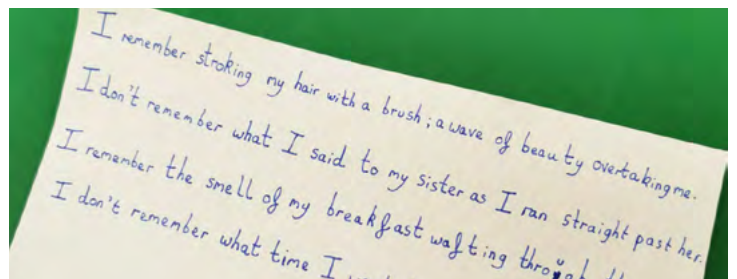
“It helped to increase our confidence and team working and it made us speak up about different subjects.”

– STUDENT, FEATHERSTONE HIGH SCHOOL



“Our year 5 children were privileged to have a visit from Adisa, delivering ‘the Power of Hair’ workshop. The workshop focused on the crucial role our hair plays on our identity. The children were thoroughly engaged throughout and enjoyed sharing their positive and negative feelings. By the end of the workshop all children had created a beautiful poem to represent their feelings about their hair.”

– DAVID BARKER, PRINCIPAL, THE OAKLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL



“Thank you so much for organising the #Powerofhair workshop. I have had such positive feedback from both staff and students. Please pass on our hanks to Toni for facilitating an engaging and impactful session.”

– LEE HARPER, SENIOR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, THE RUTH GORSE ACADEMY





"The thing I enjoyed most is that Adisa made us open up to others."

— STUDENT, COCKSHUT HILL SCHOOL

## STUDENT IMPACT

The Power of Hair programme successfully engaged young people across Wales, England, and Scotland, reaching both urban and rural areas. These locations presented distinct challenges and opportunities. In areas with few people of African and Afro Caribbean heritage, the workshops provided a valuable opportunity for students to explore race and cultural diversity, delving into topics that were less familiar to them. Meanwhile, in more diverse urban areas, the programme celebrated the heritage and identity of those with Afro textured hair, reinforcing positive representation and fostering pride and self-confidence.

The programme's adaptability ensured its relevance in all settings. Students with Afro textured hair felt seen, valued, and celebrated, while their peers' gained insights into different cultural experiences and the importance of inclusion. Feedback consistently highlighted the positive reception and the programme's role in sparking thought-provoking discussions, even in areas where awareness of Afro textured hair issues was previously limited.

Facilitators reported that students were highly engaged, eager to learn, and willing to reflect on their own assumptions. This adaptability across diverse contexts highlights the universal importance of addressing issues of identity, representation, and inclusion within education.

Students who participated in the Power of Hair programme developed a range of creative and life skills that will support them in their academic and personal lives. Many demonstrated growth in areas such as teamwork, critical thinking, and self-expression. Through engaging workshops, students also gained an increased awareness of societal issues, including microaggressions and hair discrimination, which allowed them to reflect on their own experiences and those of others.

The workshops also had a positive impact on student engagement and confidence. Students reported feeling more pride in their identity and a heightened sense of self-confidence because of the programme. By offering opportunities to engage with professionals from creative industries, the workshops exposed students to new career possibilities and encouraged them to think differently about themselves and their futures. For many, these sessions provided opportunities to connect with role models who inspired them to pursue their passions and embrace

"It changed my deep perspective of how I look at all kinds of hair. I enjoyed telling stories about my hair experiences and letting others share my relationship with my hair."

— STUDENT, FEATHERSTONE HIGH SCHOOL

"Going to these underserved communities, I often found that the ratio of black students to white students in classrooms was extremely low. I often noticed that black students in particular gained a sense of validation from my presence alone. Then speaking about Afro hair texture made them feel much more empowered. In different instances I've had students tell me they 'feel seen', 'it's nice to be understood' and other comments, that they won't particularly share in feedback forms. I appreciate that black students form a minority in most outer London schools, but from my very first experience at Hockerill till my most recent at Our Lady & St Paul's in Manchester, I've seen the faces of young black girls in particular, light up when they see me facilitating this particular session. This relatability, along with the topic of afro hair discrimination empowers them."

— TONI PETERS, FACILITATOR, IDEAS FOUNDATION

"A workshop that makes you understand, love and be amazed of hair in general."

— STUDENT, FEATHERSTONE HIGH SCHOOL

"The workshop was really helpful as it helped me develop teamwork skills and also communication skills and I was able to be really creative within my team."

— STUDENT, BSIX



"The most useful part of the workshop was being able to express myself."

— STUDENT, ST KENTIGERNS ACADEMY

"It makes me feel like everyone is special."

— STUDENT, PENDERVYN PRIMARY





## EDUCATOR IMPACT

Teachers are key to bringing creativity into the classroom. They devote their time, navigate through schedules, persuade colleagues, break down subject barriers and make it possible to bring projects like the Power of Hair into their classrooms. In doing this, they enable creative and memorable experiences for their students.

Teachers have shared the impact of the Power of Hair programme internally and externally through social media posts, articles in school newsletters and in press releases. Many schools invited us back year upon year due to the impact of the workshops and important discussions.

The programme has supported the Gatsby benchmarks in several ways – aligning the curriculum with careers, bringing creative professionals into the classrooms and through informal advice and guidance. The programme has also been designed to align with the Skillsbuilder range of life skills.

Feedback from educators underscored the programme's success in sparking meaningful discussions around critical topics such as microaggressions, cultural representation, and inclusion. They also reported increased empathy towards each other because of the programme. Teachers observed a noticeable increase in student engagement, with many students expressing interest in exploring issues related to identity and culture. The workshops not only benefited students but also inspired staff to think more deeply about how to create inclusive environments that celebrate diversity, and the impact of uniform codes.

The resources provided also enabled teachers to continue to offer the workshops to other groups, therefore providing an opportunity to embed discussions of identity and discrimination into broader curricular areas.

**“The Power of Hair workshops with Adisa have been a fantastic opportunity for young people to positively explore how identities are shaped by our hair and how we choose to style it. Exploring this issue through poetry also encourages students to unleash their creativity and produce outstanding poems, debunking the myth that poetry is elitist and difficult.”**

– ANDREW WEBB, FEATHERSTONE HIGH SCHOOL

**“The workshop has been incredible! This is exactly what our children need. Adisa has managed to teach them so many literary skills in under an hour and has given them a place to be proud of their identity.”**

– HANA SHAH, TEACHER, EASTBURY COMMUNITY PRIMARY

**“The Pantene poetry project inspired the children to think about their hair in a whole new way. It helped them to feel a sense of belonging and Ella inspired them to create some fantastic poetry associated with their hair.”**

– MR PICKARD, YEAR 6 TEACHER, ST GREGORY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



**“The workshop was fantastic. The girls – of mixed ability and ethnicity- were all engaged and very vocal. Adisa has a fantastic way of getting them to have fun whilst thinking deeply about such serious issues. I thoroughly enjoyed being a spectator.”**

– TEACHER, THE SACRED HEART LANGUAGE COLLEGE







Image: Michael Cockerham

## LONG-TERM IMPACT

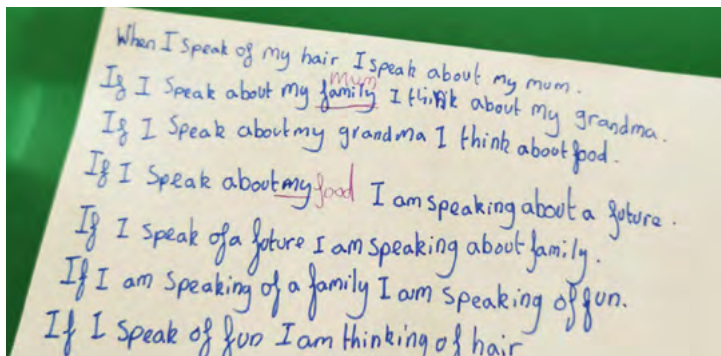
- Empowered students to challenge stereotypes, celebrate diversity and recognise the beauty and individuality of their own hair.
- Embedded the importance of cultural understanding and anti-discrimination in the curriculum.
- Created a sustainable impact with resources accessible to schools and colleges nationwide, ensuring the programme's legacy continues beyond the initial three years. The materials were also shared internationally at the US Science Conference in Alabama.

**Extension and Broader Focus for the Next Phase** The success of the Power of Hair programme has led to its extension for an additional two years. Pantene has broadened the programme's focus to explore culture and identity on a larger scale while maintaining its commitment to promoting hair confidence.

### The extended initiative will:

- **Expand Curriculum Themes:** Delve deeper into cultural representation, personal identity, and social inclusion, allowing students to explore the intersections of race, mental health, personality and self-expression.
- **Introduce New Creative Opportunities:** Collaborate with additional industry professionals from diverse fields.
- **Provide opportunities** to align with the curriculum and assessment review.
- **Measure Long-Term Impact:** Implement comprehensive evaluation tools to assess the sustained influence of the programme on student attitudes, school environments, and community awareness.

This new phase reaffirms Pantene and Ideas Foundation's dedication to inspiring the next generation to embrace diversity, challenge stereotypes, and celebrate their unique identities.



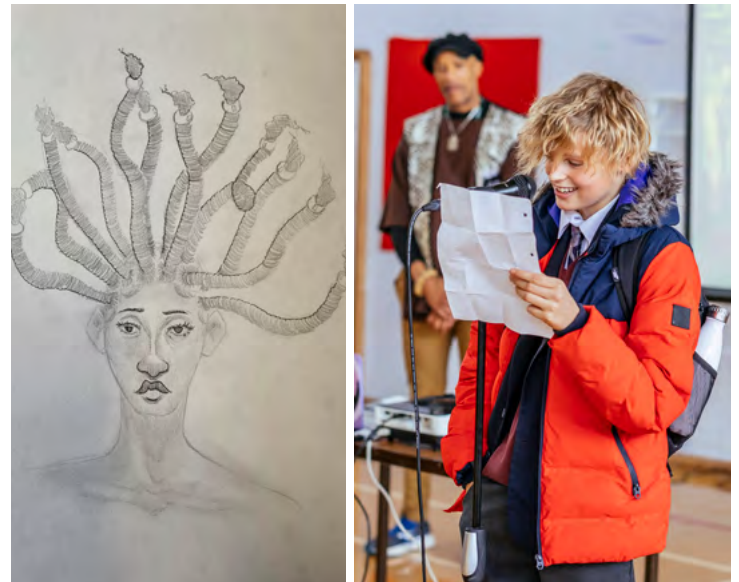
Global Academy has enjoyed being host to Pantene, Ideas Foundation, and OnePointFive for the past several years, igniting inspiration among our students. The influence on our students has been remarkable, as they've not only honed their creativity and communication skills but have also blossomed into more engaged citizens too with the power of hair. We can't wait to host the workshop again.

– JONATHAN JACOB, DIRECTOR OF SPECIALISM, GLOBAL ACADEMY



"Interesting and useful with important information teaching us to love our hair."

– STUDENT, FEATHERSTONE HIGH SCHOOL







## CONCLUSION

The Power of Hair programme has proven to be an impactful way to address sensitive issues surrounding Afro textured hair representation and discrimination. By engaging **over 9,000 students** and over **150 schools**, it has fostered a deeper understanding of identity, diversity, and inclusion. The involvement of creative professionals, coupled with the development of accessible educational materials, has ensured the programme's legacy.

The positive and open approach of Pantene staff such as Esther Gould, Amy Williams, Chiara Sartorelli and Maeve Leonard and the continuity of support has made such a positive difference to the programme.

By equipping young people with the confidence and skills to challenge stereotypes and celebrate diversity, the Power of Hair initiative has been an excellent example of how industry and charity can work together to make a positive difference in young people's lives.

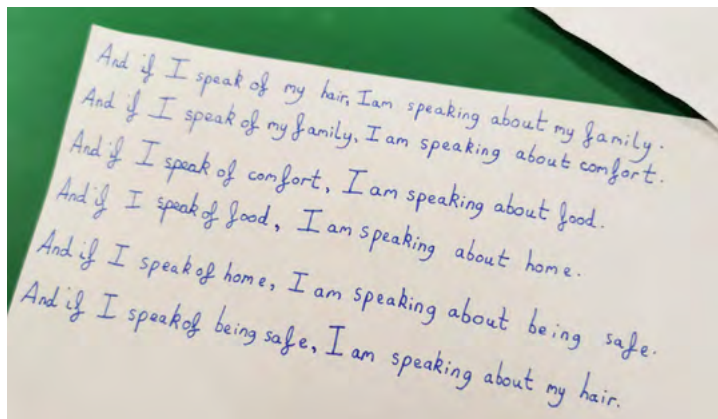
**"Interesting and useful with important information teaching us to love our hair."**

– STUDENT, FEATHERSTONE HIGH SCHOOL



**"It was very moving, powerful and eye opening"**

– STUDENT, COCKSHUT HILL SCHOOL



"We were thrilled to host the Ideas Foundation at our Teesside University London campus. 70 local students from BSix College in Hackney took part in creative workshops looking at "The Power of Hair" as a theme. It was incredible to see the enthusiasm, ideas and presentations the young people produced, and the facilitators were brilliant and inspiring. We look forward to working with the Ideas Foundation again in the future".

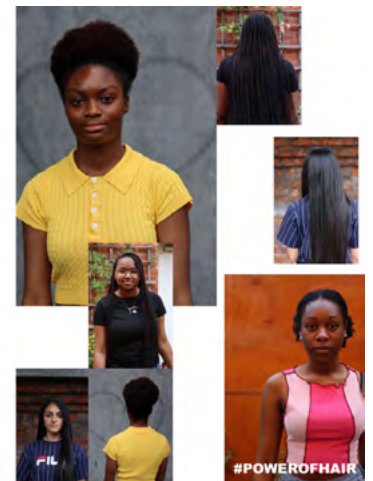
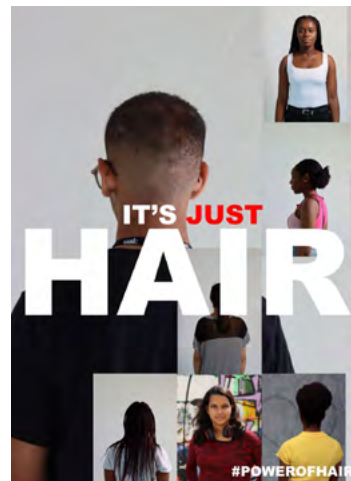
– KATHRYN ELLIOTT, TEESIDE UNIVERSITY, EAST LONDON CAMPUS



Stealing Beauty, images taken by students at Canon photography workshop.



My Hair My Crown, images taken by students at Canon photography workshop.



It's Just Hair, images taken by students at Canon photography workshop.