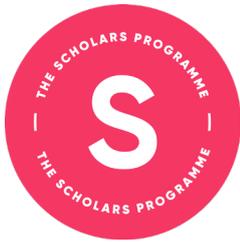


The Brilliant Club Case Study



Tutor Name:
Emily Hansen

PhD Research Area:
Education in Early Modern
England

PhD University:
University of York

Tutor since: 2018

Brilliant Club Programme:
The Scholars Programme



Which schools have you taught at?

Northallerton School, Graham School (Scarborough), Ryedale School.

What is the name of your Scholars Programme course?

'Going to School in Early Modern England c. 1500-c. 1650'.

What made you want to apply to be a Scholars Programme tutor?

I had worked with a widening participation charity before, and had found it very rewarding to encourage pupils to take on a challenging assignment and give them a greater sense that they could be successful at university. The idea of gaining experience teaching in a new environment (not just a university) was also quite appealing. I also thought it was extremely unfair that students should think that university was not for them purely based on their school or their socio-economic background – I think that higher education should be encouraged for anyone who wants to pursue it, and was fully on board with what the Brilliant Club and the Scholars Programme were aiming to do.

What has been the most rewarding moment of your Scholars Programme placements so far?

The most rewarding moment was when I gave the students their feedback on their final assignments, and could see their reactions to how well they had done, and how proud they were of their achievement. There were other rewarding moments too, though: when they said they had enjoyed the course in our last tutorial, and when they talked about their experience with the Scholar's Programme at graduation, and read a bit of their final assignments, I was also extremely proud of them. I also had a few tutorials where students who I thought seemed uninterested in the course willingly participated in the discussions and had some good contributions to make.



The Brilliant Club Case Study



Tell me about being a Scholars Programme tutor. How has it helped in your development as a research student?

It has definitely helped me develop my teaching skills: I think it is important to be able to explain my research to different audiences (university students, the public, school-age pupils) and to engage with non-academic audiences, so the Scholars Programme has been helpful in that regard.



What have you gained from being part of The Scholars Programme community of researchers?

I have learned a lot about the education system in England and the disparity in higher education progression which the Brilliant Club is trying to remedy, which (ironically for an education historian) I did not know about before. I have also become more confident in my teaching abilities, having to adapt to a new audience and rise to the potential challenges involved in teaching in a school.

How has The Scholars Programme affected the way you approach undergraduate teaching?

Teaching undergraduates and KS4 students are two very different experiences, but they both have some things in common, one of which is the fact that even if your research makes perfect sense to you, you still need to make it accessible to your students. I've had to build in more time for questions and explaining context for my Scholars Programme students, and have found that my undergraduates actually appreciate this as well when approaching unfamiliar material. Both audiences also really benefit from encouragement and not feeling 'put on the spot' to speak, something that my Scholars Programme teaching has made me more mindful of while teaching my undergrads.

How do you think you have made a difference to pupils as a Scholars Programme tutor?

I've hopefully de-mystified university a little bit, so that if they decide to carry on to university, it will be an easier adjustment for them. I also think I have encouraged both those who are already working to a high standard and those who were not that keen on academic work to recognise their potential, aim high, and challenge themselves. They may retain some information about early modern grammar schools, but I think the really important thing is that they will have gained some practise in approaching an unfamiliar subject and finding evidence to support their own views on that subject, and also that they will have gained more confidence in their academic abilities.

Do you have any advice for someone looking to apply to work as a tutor?

I would highly recommend applying to be a Scholars Programme tutor. I also think, in terms of how the students benefit from the programme, that it's not just about the actual information that you teach the students (so, don't worry if you have a really niche/complicated research topic), but just as much about exposing them to what university-level learning is like, and getting them to see that they can succeed at work which is considerably more challenging than their school work. The content of your course is important, but just as, if not more, important is to try and instil general academic skills, which they can apply to their current school work and to university, should they decide to go there; their work with you is their practise for potentially attending university someday.

To find out more about how you could become a Scholars Programme tutor, please visit our website at www.thebrilliantclub.org