



The Award at British International School, Riyadh

The Award was introduced at BISR in the Spring Term 2007 by Julian Cottenden, Head of the Secondary School. The first cohort of 38 enthusiastic Bronze award participants came from Years 9-11 (aged 14 to 16). The range of activities undertaken included badminton, basketball, learning to climb the rock wall in the gym (and helping younger students to learn), public speaking, helping with the Cubs and Primary football clubs, giving service to a clinic in the community, and raising money for a variety of good causes.

At Bronze level, the Adventurous Journey requires an expedition of two days and one night. As Einstein said, time is relative - it's amazing how long one night can seem when you are over 35 and supervising a large group of excited young people away from home! Thirty students and eight members of staff undertook 18 km of walking over two days in the challenging heat of the desert. For some students, this was their first ever experience of serious walking and they learned a great deal about how much to carry and how much to leave at home! There was an optional night walk up a craggy hill by moon and starlight, to see how much the human eye can adapt to conditions of natural darkness. They also discovered a lot about team work, walking in groups, keeping up each others spirits during 6 hours of walking a day in an unfamiliar environment, cooking and sharing the food they had planned and brought. There was a range of imaginative culinary solutions including the essential marshmallows toasted over a camp fire. There was also a range of imaginative solutions to ablution needs!

Fourteen of the first cohort have now received their Bronze awards whilst others are working towards completion. Some will continue their self-development by progressing to the Silver award while some have moved on to other schools and countries.

Since September, a new group of participants have signed up for the Bronze and Silver levels of the award; there are currently 44 BISR students who have taken up the challenge of personal growth, setting themselves goals and striving to achieve them. As one of our Bronze holders says "It made me see what I could achieve if I put my mind to it."

As we look ahead to another year of extending our horizons, we thank the RGBB for their generous donation of SR 7500 which will allow us to buy lightweight expedition tents, large capacity rucksacks, climbing harnesses, helmets and new holds for the climbing wall, and canoe spray decks which will further enhance the experience of Award participants.

