

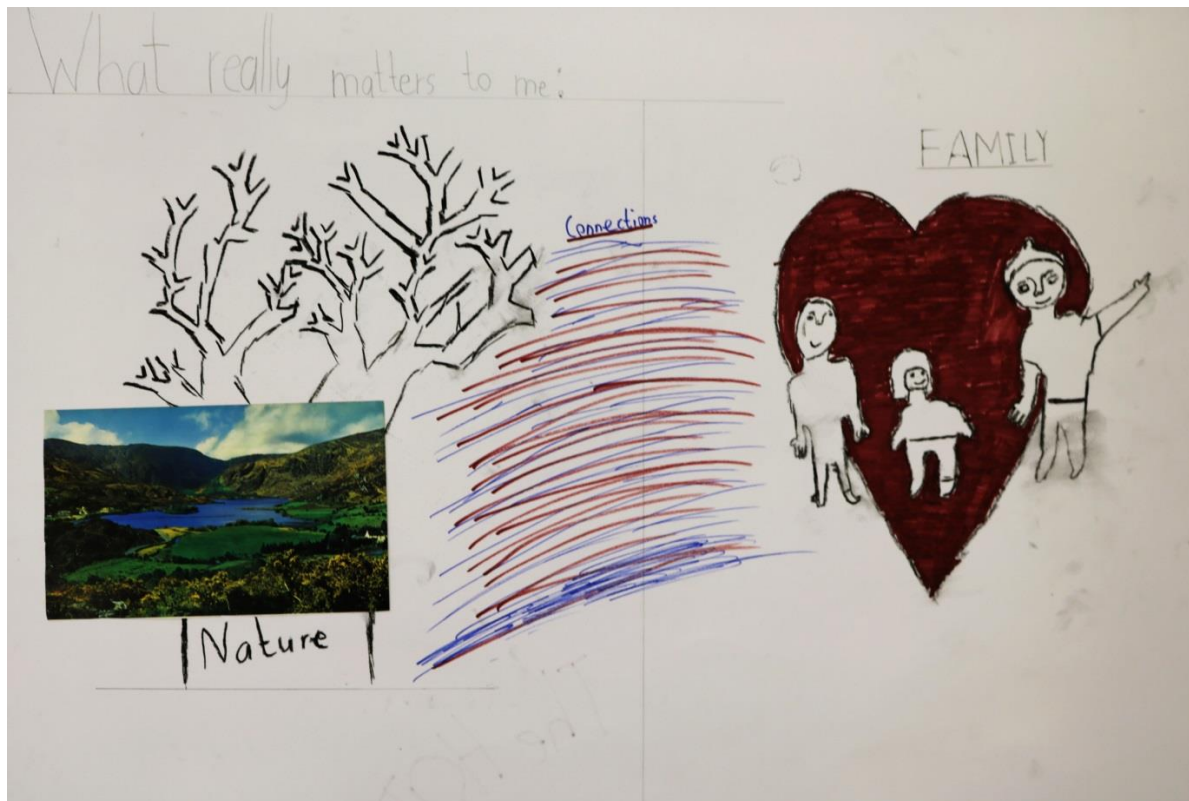
In the Making: Negotiating Identity Formation in Cloetesville
Blind Contour Drawing
Charcoal on newsprint

This activity the young men had to draw portraits of each other using a line without looking at their drawings means without looking at their paper while drawing. They had to sit in pairs across from one another and draw each other for a few minutes and shift to the next person available once time was up. The intention of the exercise was to get them to draw by observation, without being too invested in the final product. The idea was to concentrate what they see as they draw. I thought it would be fun, but instead it frustrated the young men to do drawings under these constraints. They wanted the opportunity to draw in their usual manner. In retrospect I should have switched course and granted them that opportunity. I learnt that this is not an activity to initiate people into drawing. The concept was too complex for them to understand, so to a large degree the students looked at their drawing, commenting that they draw much better when they are allowed to look at their page. This was a learning experience for me. Two of the participants began to grasp the concept and produced drawings that were evidently blind contour drawings. The image above is an example of this.



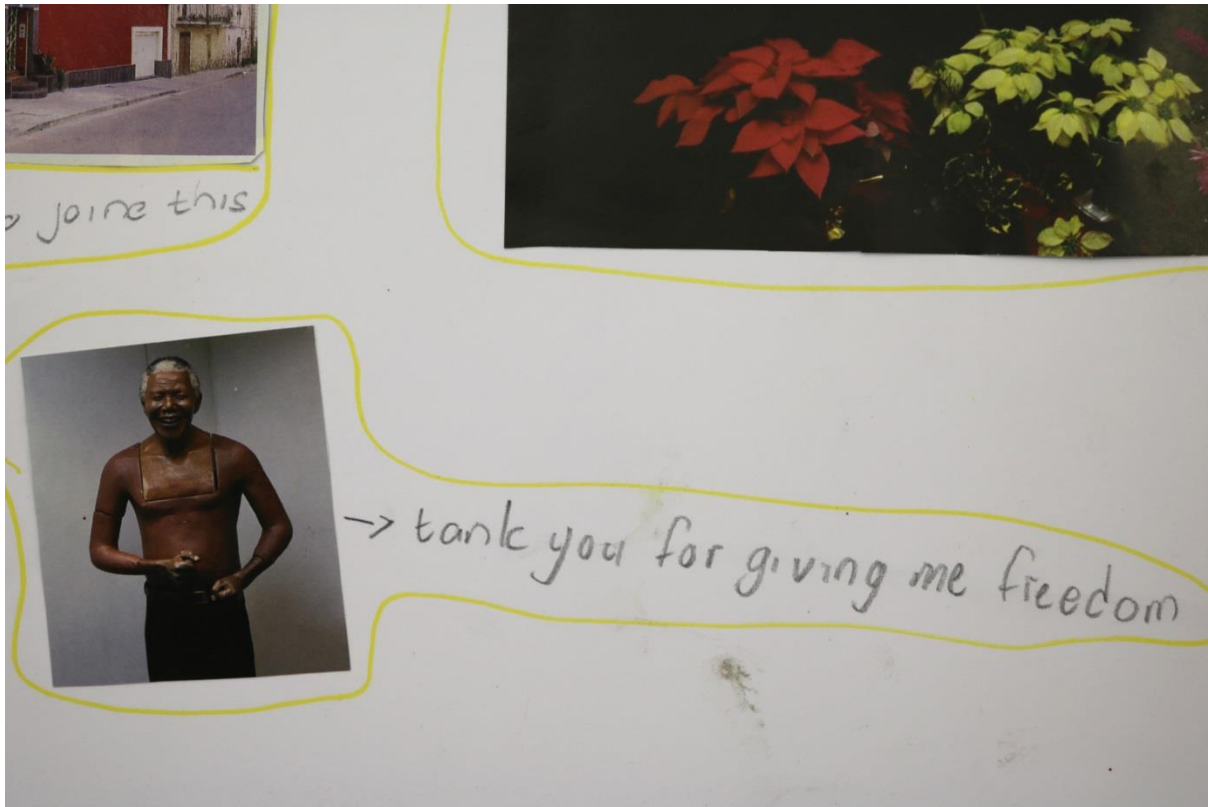
In the Making: Negotiating Identity Formation in Cloetesville
Name Design
Acrylic printed on T-shirt

The young men were asked to think deeply about where and how they choose to write their names on the page for the compositions. If the individual chooses to write their name in the centre of the page or in the corner, the individual is communicating differently. They were also encouraged to think about the size you which to draw their name. They could use the entire space or a small piece of the sheet, but where reminded that they are communicating a message about who they are. Colour was also a choice in which to communicate through. What does bright red say vs. pale blue? Many use them used this initial sketch as planning for their first screen prints, as depicted above.



In the Making: Negotiating Identity Formation in Cloetesville
What really matters?
Collage

When asked to communicate with drawings and images individually, "What really matters", most participants drew about the love they have for family, friends, music and nature. In the image above the young man drew and shared with the group his conviction of the importance of nature and family, expressing that how we treat both aspects of life is connected by respect for life.

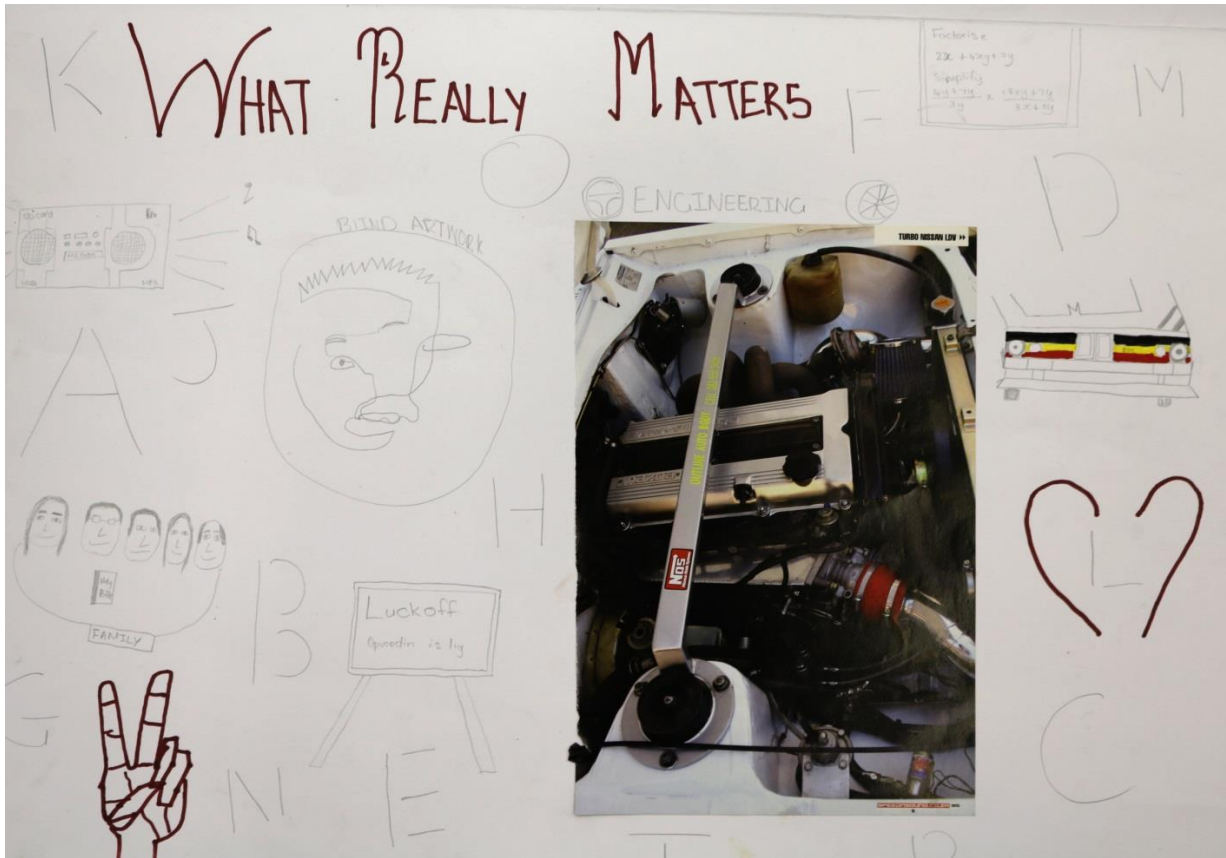


In the Making: Negotiating Identity Formation in Cloetesville

What really matters

Collage

One student pointed out the importance of being thankful for our freedom. This kind of selection can facilitate conversation about history, and a conversation regarding the celebration, exercise and responsibility that comes with freedom.



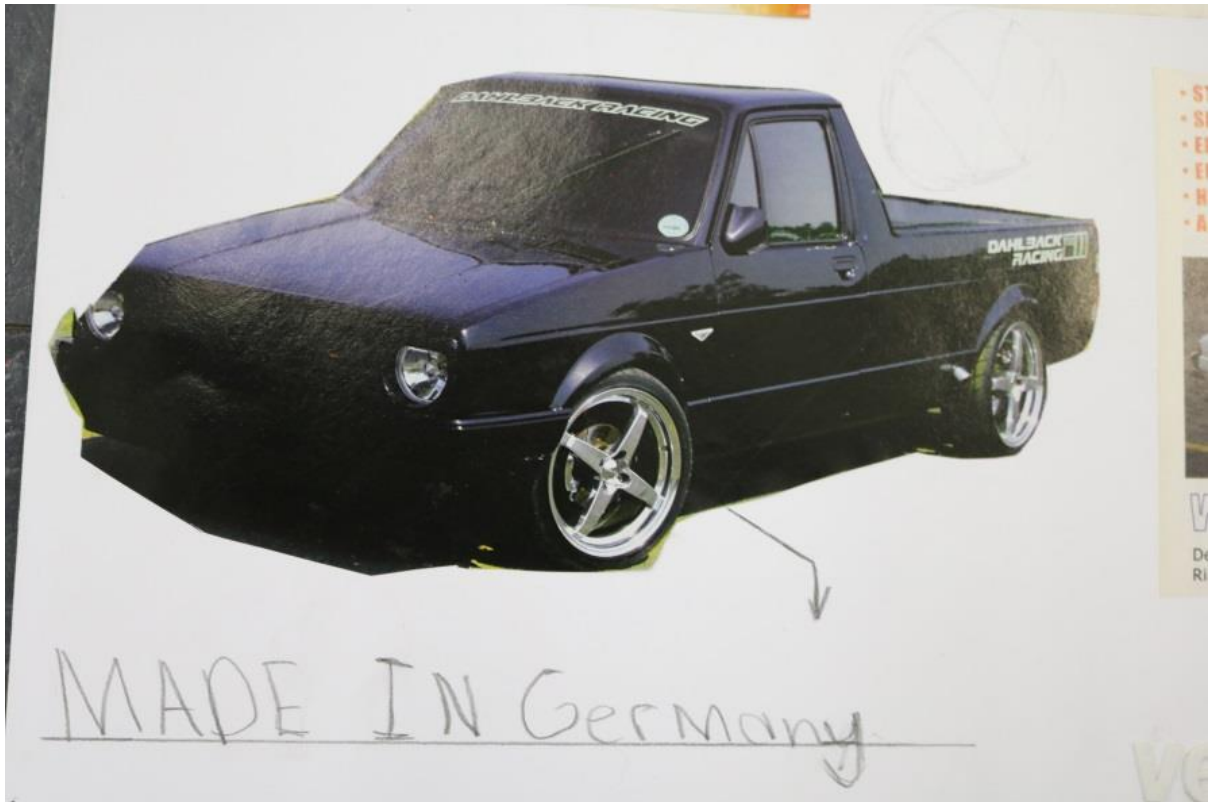
In the Making: Negotiating Identity Formation in Cloetesville
 What really matters: My Future?
 Collage

The student above drew and told the group about his passion for cars, and goal to become a engineer. He said that learning is very important to him, that's why he drew his school sign, and slogan, which translate to "Education is light". Under the bracket of the importance of learning, he includes a blind contour portrait, which he learnt how to do the day before. Other aspects which are of equal significance to him is unity in the family and following the lessons of the Bible. He also includes some mathematic equations, and told the class that maths is important for his future.



In the Making: Negotiating Identity Formation in Cloetesville
What really matters
Collage

All participants articulated a sense of belonging to and respect for their favourite sports team and school. They expressed this by drawing their team badge, as seen in the drawing above.

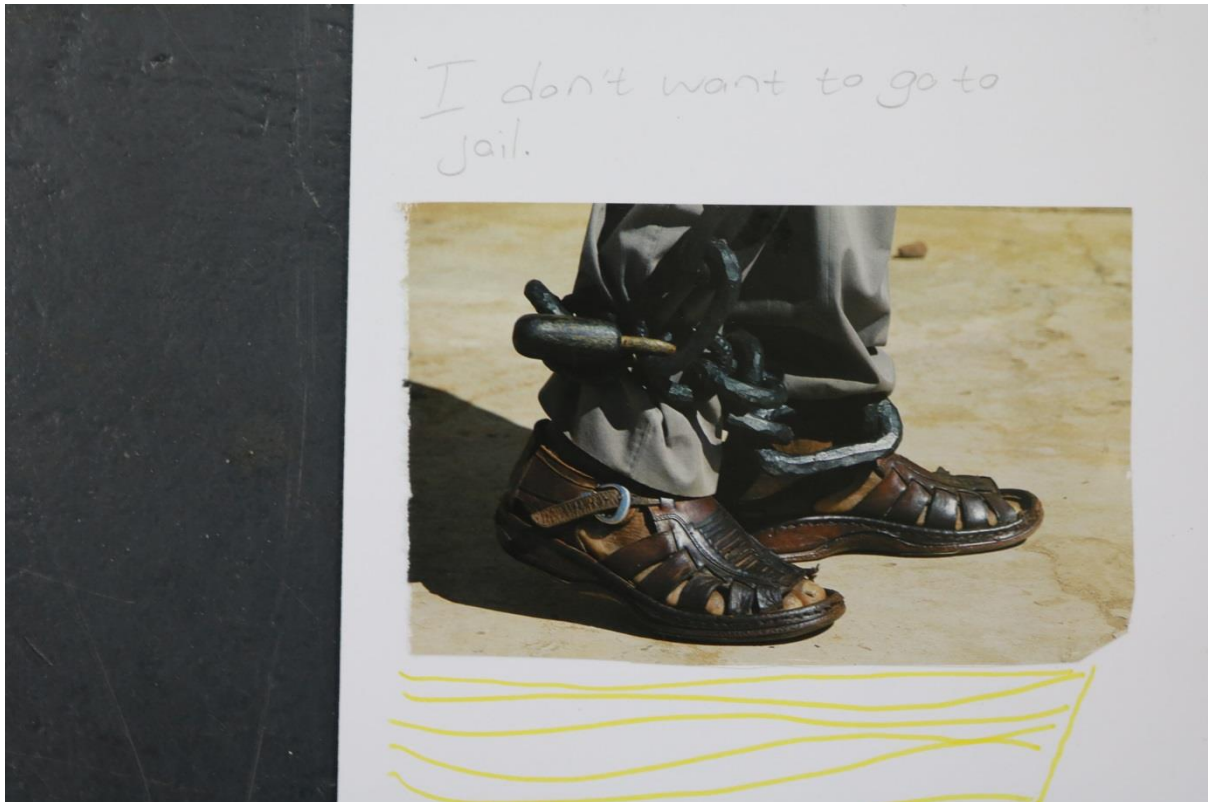


In the Making: Negotiating Identity Formation in Cloetesville

What really matters: My Future?

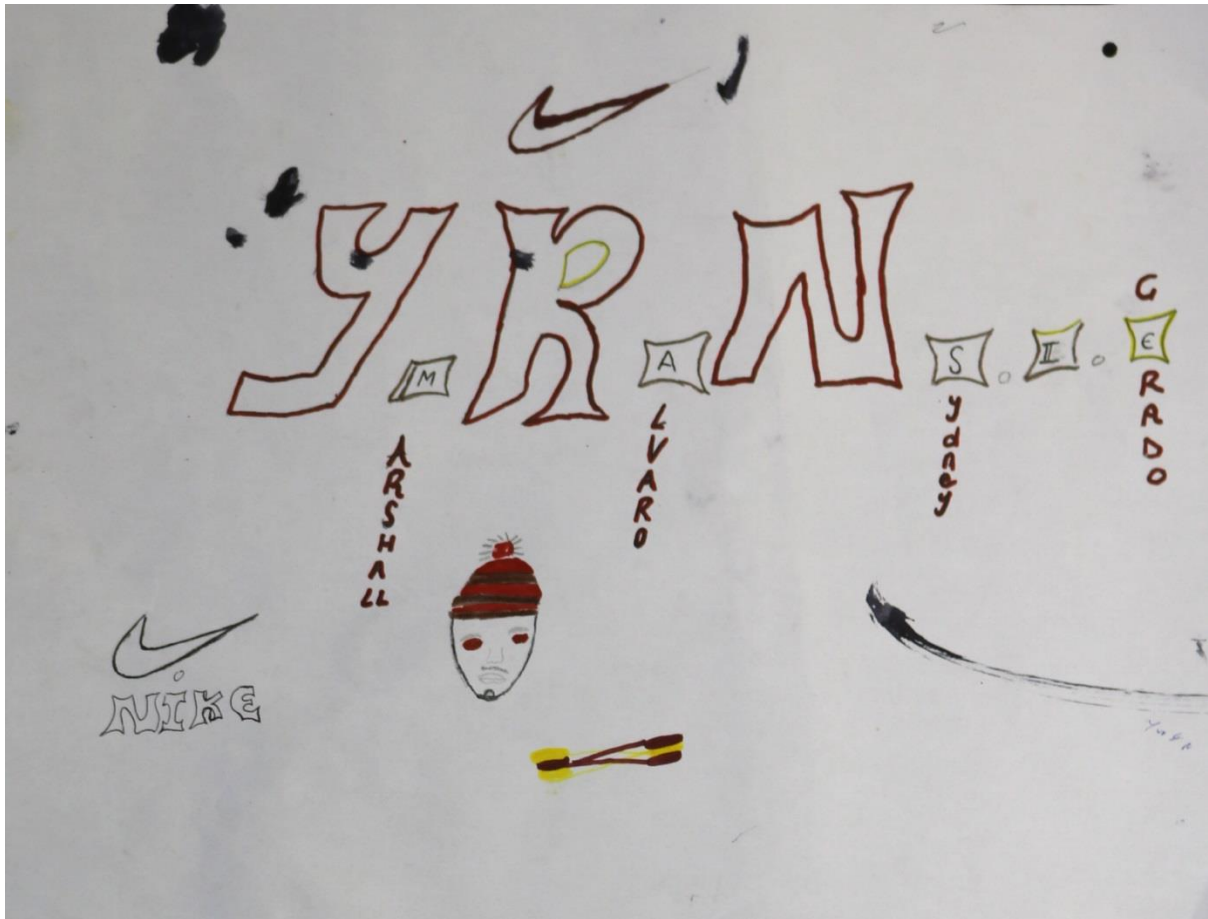
Collage

Considering and visualising the future one participant who added the image and text (see above) to his collage, told the group that he dreams to go to Germany, because many good cars come from Germany.



In the Making: Negotiating Identity Formation in Cloetesville
What really matters: My Future?
Collage

Most participants expressed aspirations for the future that included owning property, such as expensive cars, a big house and jewellery. When asked to think about the future and add it to their collage, the responses varied. Some drew about their dreams such as to travel as in the previous case, others to finish school, to go to university, to become a professional football player and one student expressed that he does not want to go to jail.



In the Making: Negotiating Identity Formation in Cloetesville
T-shirt planning sketches
Markers on cartridge

In the image above was one of the proposed designs for the final T-shirt design to be screen printed. Given the space to create individual and collective works of art for and about themselves, the participants decided that the best way to do so was through appropriating the symbols and logos of their favourite brands, sports teams, music icons. When asked why they chose these kinds of representations they expressed excitement at the thought of acquiring and associating themselves with these brands as a symbol of success in life. The abbreviation Y.R.N which stands Young Rich Nations was inspired by “Young Rich Niggas” a mix tape by their favourite rapper Migos. Here the abbreviation and Nike sign is combined with the members of the group name. At this point there was disagreement about whether Y.R.N. should be so prominent in the design. Three of the young men drawing were satisfied with the design, while the other 4 wanted to do something more original. The drawing of the face with the red and brown cap, was an element that one of the men drew in the first activity.



In the Making: Negotiating Identity Formation in Cloeteville
Final Collective T-shirt Design
Collage

Their name the “Vesace Boys” was inspired by a song by a popular American rapper, Migos and so was their slogan, which they included as an abbreviation printed under their collective name. The group played the song throughout the workshop. The number 7 was decided upon as a unifying marker of the fact that there are 7 members of the group. One question asked about the T-shirt from an older man who lives in Cloeteville, was a whether the number had anything to do with the numbers gang, the 27s. The group assured him, that it had nothing to do with gangs. Other aspects such as the red and yellow lightning bolts filling in the background behind the 7 was unanimously agreed upon, which was drawn from one participants designs from the previous drawing identity exercises.