

I AM HENRY FINCH



Alexis Deacon illustrated by Viviane Schwarz

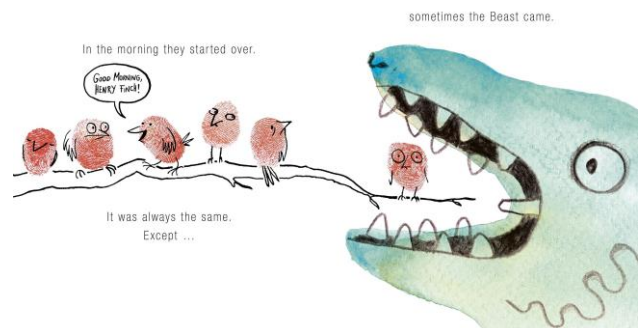
“I’m a young reader, artist and thinker from Beit Foreek ... I’m Henry Finch Indeed!”

A story about a bird that inspired the young children at Beit Foreek’s library

Some libraries provide children with more than just reading materials. One such library is Beit Foreek library, which is designed to stimulate young imaginations and foster engagement with books. This library plays a vital role not only in educating children, but also in getting them excited about books. Beit Foreek library has been a special place for children especially after the establishment of an animation center that is considered an inspiration and model for libraries throughout Palestine.

Beit Foreek library has been serving as a community of young readers, artists and thinkers, who are eager to learn new skills. In 2016, the library kids produced their first major animated movie which they gave the title of “Birds”. According to Yan Casper, an animation teacher, “These children succeeded in producing their first animated movie because they believe in themselves. The children recognize their own powers and ability to make a difference.”

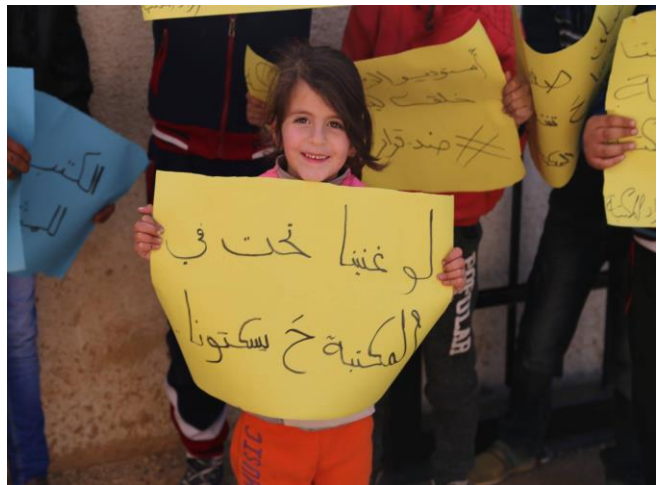
Beit Fureek library has been a very special place for these kids until the municipality decided to relocate it. The children were devastated and they felt a strong need to save their precious library and to save their own free space, and here comes “Henry Finch” to their rescue. Henry is a small bird who breaks away from the flock and inspires others to do the same. The small little bird was following a fixed daily routine, like the rest of birds. Henry flies with the rest of the birds and



struggles to avoid the beast that interrupts their daily routine. The only thing that could change the bird's routine was when the beast eats one or more of them. After that, the flock would shout about the Beast and fly higher in the tree. Then something different happened. One day, Henry Finch, wakes up realizing there was more to life. The bird discovered that it should step out of the norm and do something different. He comes across some challenges, gets attacked by the beast and finds himself in the beast's tummy.

Despite being inside the beast's tummy, Henry didn't lose hope. Instead, he manages to escape by controlling the beast thoughts.

Henry Finch, the loveable little bird, inspired Beit Foreek's children. The story helped the children understand the concepts of individualism, freedom and choice. Henry Finch is a story book and inspirational tale of courage and how everyone can make a difference. Beit Foreek kids found the book full of important messages about self-esteem and a light of hope that inspired them to go and negotiate the decision of moving their library with the head of the municipality who is the real beast in their eyes. The children decided that they can be Henry Finch and change the head of the municipality thoughts. The kids tried negotiating the new decision, they tried protesting and they will succeed at the end. They already succeeded in exploring their identity, individuality, bravery and self-awareness. They succeeded in proving that they can make a difference and in discovering the strength within them.



The kids believed that using thumbprints as the Finches was a fascinating choice and that inspired them more and made them feel that they are the prints and the change they want to see. The thumbprints presented their identity that they will fight for till the end.



It's worth mentioning that Beit Foreek library is one 80 children libraries all over the West Bank and Gaza that Tamer institute for community Education is supporting. Tamer Institute partnership with the community libraries goes back to 1996. Since that date, Tamer have determinedly chosen to invest in those libraries by constantly provide them with quality children books and enhance the capacities of the people working in those libraries. These 80 libraries are currently engaged in regular monthly book discussions that are held with the libraries' young members, parents, and educators. Book discussions are done with close monitoring and guidance of some children books writers, scholars and experts from the circle of friends and associates of Tamer.

It's well clear that Tamer Institute could not have successfully implemented this without the generous support of Book Aid International -UK that continues to provide the Institute with quality children literature books to be distributed to the libraries that Tamer works with in Palestine.