



**Address by Dr. Shelly-Anne Lalchan, Integrity Commissioner  
At the launch of the 2014 Do Right Champions  
Queen's Hall, St. Ann's  
September 25<sup>th</sup> 2014.**

**SALUTATION:**

Distinguished representatives of the Tobago House of Assembly, the Ministry of Education, principles, teachers, parents, and of course, students of our Primary and Secondary schools who are our very special guests today....

It is a pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the Integrity Commission of Trinidad and Tobago.

I am honoured to be here with you this morning to introduce to you to the exciting competition we have conjured this year.

The Commission is mandated to educate on Integrity but more importantly we believe it is our responsibility. *The Do Right Champions* competition was tremendously successful last year. It was the realization of our children's talent and passion that has propelled the team's enthusiasm and motivation to deliver this year's competition.

The 2014 competition fosters 'The Integrated and Language Arts' teaching concepts. It is sponsored by the Integrity Commission in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and The Division of Education, Youth Affairs and Sport of the Tobago House of Assembly.

During the following weeks, teachers will be invited to participate in workshops where guidelines for our competition in the Visual and Performing Arts, in addition to the Language Arts, will be outlined. We look forward to you in your numbers.

My dear teachers, it is pivotal that you recognise the power that you wield. Students look to you for guidance, support and encouragement. When one considers that kids spend 7hrs in school, approximately 50% of their waking time, the role of educators becomes distinctly clear. You have the power to change the course of a child's life by acts of kindness, generosity, sincerity, objectivity, honesty and maturity. Children of every description are all astute enough to recognise and appreciate all of the above. Let us not disappoint them.

Often the focus is academic, however, The Language Arts are important both for the child's development and society at large. Children have a natural love for and affinity to the arts because it is fun. The benefits however are critical to the panoramic development of a child. The arts foster visual and motor skills, language development, decision making process, critical analysis, cultural appreciation and collaboration. All of these qualities have been proven to correlate with improved academic performance, so really there is no excuse.

Pablo Picasso, the infamous painter, observed that "every child is an artist." The challenge is how to remain an artist. The Arts in Trinidad and Tobago, as in the rest of the world, are continually evolving, exhibiting our ability to think, symbolize, intuit and express ourselves through dance, music, theatre and the visual arts. It is how civilisation is recorded and defined.

Through the Do Right Champions in The Integrated and Language Arts we hope to nurture the creativity and knowledge of our students with Integrity being the propelling force. More so, we at The Integrity Commission embrace the responsibility of collaborating with the Ministry of Education and the Tobago House of Assembly. Please allow us to express our enthusiasm towards all those who have partnered with us and continue to support our goals.

Teachers, it is you who will determine participation so encourage and support the kids. It is important; and they will adore you for your dedication and your time. These are the things that comprise our fond school memories. Respect the kids and they in turn will respect you.

Finally, kids, it is important that you look outside of your bubble, have a perspective, open your eyes and see the world around you. Investigate, enquire, deliberate, debate, have an opinion, have a perspective, think and contemplate. This is how you become the best of you. This is how you become intelligent, informed and analytical and thereby able to understand and acquire the necessary skills to succeed and excel.

Ladies and Gentlemen, boys and girls, let us together formally launch the 2014 Do Right Champions in The Integrated and Language Arts and it is I who challenge you to become a part of our exciting competition. Let us all put the 'i' in Integrity.

September 25th 2014