

Arrested clock-making teen invited to White House

20th September, 2015



The Texas high school student who was arrested because of a clock he made for school has been invited to the White House by U.S. President Barack Obama. Ahmed Mohamed, 14, was led away in handcuffs after his school alerted police that he had brought a homemade bomb to school. He was detained for several hours before authorities realized that what Ahmed had made was just a clock. Within hours of his being released, Ahmed's story went viral. The hashtag IStandWithAhmed has been retweeted hundreds of thousands of times. President Obama tweeted: "Cool clock, Ahmed. Want to bring it to the White House? We should inspire more kids like you to like science. It's what makes America great."

Ahmed's arrest has once again put the spotlight in the USA on the issue of Islamophobia and of how Muslims are perceived and treated. Ahmed said that because of his religion, other kids at school called him 'bomb maker' and 'terrorist'. He said the police interrogation made him feel as though he had done something wrong. He said: "I felt like I was a criminal. I felt like I was a terrorist." To add insult to injury, his school suspended him for three days. Ahmed has caught the attention of Silicon Valley heavyweights. Twitter offered him an internship and Google invited him to a science fair and to their campus. Facebook creator Mark Zuckerberg said: "The future belongs to people like Ahmed."

Sources: DallasNews.com / CNN Philippines / The Guardian

Writing

We should inspire more kids to like science. What are the pros and cons of this?

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

student / arrested / handcuffs / questioned / authorities / viral / inspire / science / spotlight / Islamophobia / perceived / done something wrong / add insult to injury

True / False

- The high school student went to school in Washington D.C. T / F
- Ahmed was taken away in handcuffs by the police. T / F
- Ahmed had to spend more than one hour in police custody. T / F
- President Obama said more kids should take up science. T / F
- The article said this story takes the spotlight off of Islamophobia. T / F
- Ahmed said he is shocked because no one called him names at school. T / F
- Ahmed's school suspended him for three days because of his clock. T / F
- Mark Zuckerberg said the future belongs to Facebook. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. invited | a. understood |
| 2. alerted | b. thought of |
| 3. detained | c. asked |
| 4. realised | d. provided |
| 5. inspire | e. warned |
| 6. spotlight | f. make things worse |
| 7. perceived | g. motivate |
| 8. interrogation | h. held |
| 9. add insult to injury | i. focus |
| 10. offered | j. questioning |

Discussion – Student A

- How can we reduce Islamophobia and other racist beliefs?
- How much is the press responsible for promoting negative stereotypes?
- What should happen to kids who call other kids terrorists?
- What racial tensions are there in your country?
- Will we all live together peacefully some day?
- How will Ahmed's life be different from now?
- What else do you know about this story?
- What questions would you like to ask Ahmed?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. led away in | a. perceived and treated |
| 2. He was detained | b. makes America great |
| 3. Ahmed's story went | c. injury |
| 4. We should inspire | d. viral |
| 5. It's what | e. of Silicon Valley |
| 6. how Muslims are | f. handcuffs |
| 7. police | g. more kids |
| 8. To add insult to | h. to people like Ahmed |
| 9. caught the attention | i. interrogation |
| 10. The future belongs | j. for several hours |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Would a white boy have been arrested if he had made a clock?
- What do you think of President Obama's invitation?
- What do you think of the action of the police?
- Did the school overreact or were their actions because of the current climate regarding security?
- How would you feel if Ahmed was your son?
- What should the authorities say to Ahmed?
- What advice do you have for Ahmed?

Spelling

- streared because of a clock
- led away in adfsnhcuf
- aendedit for several hours
- before ruithositae realised
- Within hours of his being edrelaes
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- the issue of pohmIaibaslo
- how Muslims are edivreepc
- police trniatgoeroni
- his school dsuesndpe him
- offered him an htniiprnes

Answers – Synonym Match

1. c	2. e	3. h	4. a	5. g
6. i	7. b	8. j	9. f	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Save the environment

You think saving the environment is the thing kids should most aspire to. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): treating others equally, starting a business or rejecting war.

Role B – Treat others equally

You think treating others equally is the thing kids should most aspire to. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): saving the environment, starting a business or rejecting war.

Role C – Start a business

You think starting a business is the thing kids should most aspire to. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): treating others equally, saving the environment or rejecting war.

Role D – Reject war

You think rejecting war is the thing kids should most aspire to. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): treating others equally, starting a business or saving the environment.

Speaking – Inspire

Rank these with your partner. Put the things we must inspire our goods to do most at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| • reject war | • save the environment |
| • start a business | • study computer science |
| • give to charity | • raise a family |
| • forgive | • treat others equally |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.