

ASSOCIATE

## MIKEY MARKHAM

*“The moment you realise you’re an individual is the moment you’ll be set free”*

Sometimes it takes a dyslexic school failure with a gift for spoken-word poetry to show us how education can be better for all children, especially those at risk of becoming disengaged themselves.

Which is where inspirational spoken-word poet Mikey Markham – AKA **Rhythmical Mike** - comes in.

First introduced to us by Associate Martin Illingworth, Mikey has a profound effect on the young people and their teachers when he works with them. In his emotionally charged but understated way, he not only demonstrates the power of spoken-word poetry to bring literacy to life in the classroom, but also the power of the human spirit to survive despite a system that seems ready to discard so many young people for not ‘fitting in’.

After dropping out of school in his final years, Mikey went on to discover he had a talent not only for writing honest, heartfelt, gritty and witty poetry but also for performing it in front of a

whole range of audiences. Since then he has performed at many high-profile festivals around the country and shared the stage with artists such as Russell Brand, Rizzle Kicks, Hollie McNish and Akala.

In his work with schools both alongside Martin Illingworth and in his own right, we are finding teachers and their students to be both moved by Mikey’s performance and his poetry but also inspired. For the teachers, Mike inspires them to work even harder to find what it is that will engage the disengaged and bring out their talent; in the young people themselves, he is an inspiration who is able to demonstrate that everyone has something to offer if only they stick at it, find out what it is that makes them tick – then go for it.

As well as his increasing work in schools nationwide, Mikey also runs poetry workshops and recitals for youth centres, charities, rehabilitation organisations, universities and sports clubs and, in 2017, spoke at The Telegraph Festival of Education.



*“What does success look like? Being happy, she replied” - What Is Beauty At School? A poem by Rhythmical Mike*

Mikey is currently available for booking at a special rate in partnership with Associate Martin Illingworth.

### Feedback from recent events:

*“Heartfelt and honest, Rhythmical Mike’s poetry has a profound ability to inspire and motivate all those who have the chance to listen to his words...”*

*“Mikey is the living embodiment of the adage to ‘speak quietly but carry a large stick’. With a quiet resolution, he cleverly puts into soft words strong stories of love, life and death to create spoken-word poetry with which he assaults the heart of his mesmerised audience.”*

Mikey has been with Independent Thinking since 2017.

All Independent Thinking Associates are DBS checked.

See our website:  
[www.independentthinking.co.uk](http://www.independentthinking.co.uk)  
for more information.