

A Day in a Patang Classroom

We created *Patang* with the vision of integrating the students from economically weaker sections in their classes. We do this by running after school learning centres that help their academic and social progress. However, we did not want the students to feel bored and exhausted. Hence, we started to answer the question – How do we keep students engaged, who would come to our after-school classes after a long day at school? The answer was to keep the classes interesting so that the students enjoy and learn at the same time.

We observed a lesson in Grade 3 that was both energizing and helped accelerate the students' learning. While

teaching Prepositions, Ms. Mohan chose difficult words for making sentences that the students can use in their day-to-day life. For example, “Sagar knocked at the door”, “The teacher asked us not to indulge **in** fighting” and “I acted **upon** the teacher’s request”. They enacted each



of these sentences through role-play. According to the teacher this would help increase confidence of the students.

Even though some of these activities may pose difficulty since the class can go haywire, the retention of concepts as assessed in the following classes was much higher than those lessons, which were taught through the regular lecture mode. It also succeeds in engaging the students. Activity based learning is also effective in channelizing the energy of hyperactive students and getting them to focus on the lesson.

As part of the project, we also focus on building life-skills of children and helping them



develop values. Moving on from prepositions, Ms. Mohan shared a short story about a father and his son with the class.

The son had two apples and his father asked for one. After asking

his father to wait, the son started eating both the apples. At this point, the teacher asked her class about the probable response of the father. The students answered that he must have been upset at his son's behaviour and might have hit him. The conclusion however, was starkly different. *The son tasted both the apples and handed the sweeter one over to his father.* Through narrating instances like these, Ms. Mohan helps the students think critically, while at the same time building their values.

Ms. Mohan's lesson is exemplar of our efforts towards holistic personality development of *Patang* students. We focus on academic progress and personality development without taking the light-heartedness away.