



Gramin Shiksha Kendra

## Kaleidoscope

(A publication from Gramin Shiksha Kendra)



Kaleidoscope is a document of reflections/narratives in the field of education, where an attempt has been put up of the insights and experiences of the authors. The authors were engaged in the Uday school practices and have taught at Uday Community Schools for a year (2017-18).

**Ekta Dhankher:** Ekta has a post-graduate degree in Education, from Azim Premji University. Her day never starts until she carries a Jotbook and a colored pen, because narratives are central to her life.

**Amruta Beluse:** Amruta has a post-graduate degree in MSW, from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. She is an avid learner. Her interests are in understanding childhood and socio-economic development of children.

**Sarojini Oram:** Sarojini has a post-graduate degree in Rural Management, from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Tuljapur. Her interests involve understanding the educational context in tribal, rural and urban setups.

The authors feel that such experiences have given them a shape to their personality and help them grow professionally. This also might be a reference manual for others who are or will be in similar situations. During the whole year (2017-18), they tried and looked at objects from different angles. Here, they have penned down their thoughts, feelings and what they have been doing inside the school and with the children.

This process of sharing can be extended with the reader's ideas to bridge the gap. We welcome your feedback and criticism.

## Contents

**By: Ekta Dhankher**

**From Student to Teacher**

**A balanced approach to language teaching and learning**

**The answers have to come from them**

**Outdoor Education**

**When a child enters the school gate**

**We can do it ourselves**

**More than the teacher's signature**

**Little things**

**Enduring value**

**अनोखा बस्ता**

**By: Amruta Beluse**

**Accumulating and enforcing in own way**

**Learning by experiencing**

**Empathy**

**School as a family**

**Experiential learning**

**An inventive mango tree**

**When a child enters a classroom**

**Peer's support**

**By: Sarojini Oram**

**Multi-grade Multi-level learning**

**Classroom Management**

**Pedagogy (Initial Phase)**

## From Student to Teacher:



My vibrant student life at Azim Premji University was a rich blend of theory and practice. Theory gave a holistic viewpoint and practices gave a lens to see the world differently i.e. applying theory on the ground. So before entering inside the school premises and especially in the classroom as a novice teacher, one thing that I was always convinced of is that I always believed that each child is capable of learning, even if it may take a little extra time. I always tried being on the lookout to learn new ways of understanding children.

After two months of induction during summer, I started taking English classes in the Upper Primary Section Independently. My first 15 days in the school as a language teacher are worth remembering. I had thought of all the wonderful things that I would be teaching but on the first day, I realised this is not at all possible at that particular time. It was really a tough deal for me. Whenever I entered my class to teach I noticed that the students passed comments to their partners sitting alongside them, then another and then another one. I realised that it was me and my teaching which was doing it. There were some children who were also caught up in their own world. This would still happen if I tried to engage in a normal conversation.

Getting emotional would definitely have made the matter worse and I thought this needs to be dealt with a high degree of maturity. I started off on this embarking journey with a spirit of dialogue among the students. The process of open discussion (formal and informal) with the children was of great use. I utilised this on different occasions such as during the assembly, break-time, play-time and other activities of the school routine. There was a time when I even had started taking extra-classes after school hours. Throughout this whole process, I spent enormous time with children in building familiarity with one another. And then I recapitulated teaching of the subject from previous classes learnt by the students so far. This literally helped me in shaping my performance in the class, the student's behaviour and the thrust to evolve and change. There was always something or the other that required urgent attention but I always worked with calmness, patience and sensitivity. My journey so far has been a series of small lessons which helped me to become a better human being.

While I was gearing through all this, the close cooperation of school and the staff genuinely helped me. Despite all the hardships, the staff community left me to do what I was good at. There was always a presence of culture which encouraged me to reflect and increase my independence. They helped me in bridging the gap between theory and practice.

This initial teaching education was surely an intensive practice period for me. The language class gave me an opportunity to work with children in a highly flexible, creative and enjoyable medium. I realised that classroom order improves not only practices like curriculum, lesson plans but with lots of little ones. We should always not go to a school as a subject matter expert (though I was not one) as it becomes difficult with the children. This is because we would be learning something different with the children that

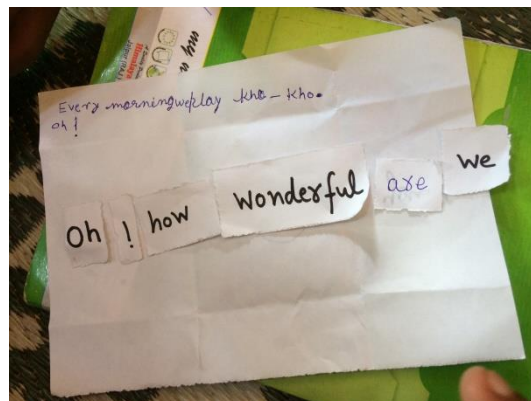
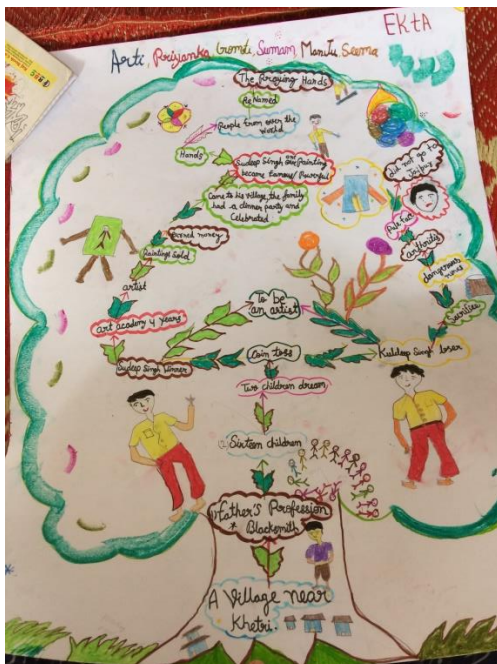
sometimes the expertise takes a back-seat. I wish I continue with teaching in the coming times.

### **A balanced approach to language teaching and learning:**

I elected to teach English in Upper Primary classes. It was my first ever experience of working with children with no expertise in hand but ample amount of perspectives and pedagogical ideas. English in the school is third language after mother tongue (Dhundhaadi) and Hindi. I was happy, excited but little concerned. In my early days in school when I started to teach, the different faces in the classroom were asking me why I wanted to teach them this subject. I was struggling to bring the confidence in me and then on children. I thought I have started off with something which was amiss. Mostly the children could read the text but with a smaller amount of comprehension. Here I had to cater to a mixed group of children, which required proper planning. Initially, I went to a class with a common lesson plan for the whole class and I had to face a different kind of problems. But gradually after knowing the children my planning mostly involved how does a child learn rather than thinking how to teach a child. I spent my after school hours in learning to improve. Every day I learned a new aspect of dealing with the children and enhancing the teaching- learning process. On the other hand, I was not afraid of incorporating the various approaches in my own teaching style that with what I struggled was of converting a pedagogical idea into a successful interaction. I am interested in theatre which paved the way for an effective delivery. My extensive use of body language proved to be helpful in language classes. And through this, I realised that a language has to go in before it can come out from the expected audience. I also realised that a textbook is merely a tool for getting the process of learning to grow. I also realised that textbook cannot provide all the materials which is necessary to make children's life enjoyable and worthwhile. The rest must come from teachers own resourcefulness. Keeping in mind all the students I

taught the students with a positive understanding of multilingualism. Each lesson in the textbook is just a pointer to a theme, thought or idea. I redesigned the textbook lessons as a teaching material. This was mainly done to address the different interest groups and to grab the attention of the children who had not reached the class level. A number of post-reading activities, Role-plays, games, group discussions, video screening, picture stories and many such fun assignments enabled me to get children's attention and their interest in learning.

Throughout all this, the earlier difficulties gave a way to confidence. The children gradually became comfortable with voicing their thoughts. I managed to create a right English learning atmosphere. A thought which still revolves around me and during my teaching period is that who is the real educator? I or the children.





**The answers have to come from them:**

One day when I entered the classroom, I saw a group of students scrawling something on the wall. I was curious to know as to what they are doing. After a couple of minutes, they showed me a piece written on the wall which said: "I am garbage corner". It is that small commonplace of the classroom where a dustbin is kept and used to dump regular junks. I was happy the way they had expressed that. I did not tell them as what they are supposed to do but allowed them and their different interpretations to reflect. I wanted to talk more about this before I made my own inferences. I wanted to know the part of their thinking process.

Me: "I am garbage corner" Who is "I" here?

Children: The wall.

Me: But, can the wall speak?

Children: No

Me: Then? Why have you mentioned "I" in your sentence?

Children: No Answer.

Me: Accha, Tell me; is the wall a living thing or a non-living thing?

Children: Non-Living thing.

Me: Why is it non-living?

Children: Because, it cannot feel, speak and therefore do not have any characteristics of life.

A child from the group interrupts and says: "ऐसे तो dustbin भी नहीं बोल सकता | तो उसपे "Use Me" क्यूँ लिखा होता है |

I would still not say that the sentence was grammatically wrong. In fact, what I could see in children was their friendliness and contentment with the environment where they were least bothered by others reaction. On that day I contemplated that it is not only my responsibility of educating them but it is a mutual process, where a teacher and children are both in the stream of learning. Where I gave a large part of myself yet received a lot more than I gave. This is one of an instance of a language expression that builds up the power of analytical and imaginative thinking. More than a medium of expression, we provide children the space to think, argue, conceptualise.

### **Outdoor Education:**

A girl sits under a tree during the physical education period, while the others play football in the ground. I saw her writing some notes and cheering the classmates. She has taken the role of a scorer. I was watching this from a distance. A while later, I went close to her and sat alongside.

I asked her that why are you sitting here. She said that I have fever. I told my classmates that I wanted to stay back in the classroom, but all of them wanted me to have a role in the play. So I chose to be a scorer.

When we talk about sports, we say that we even provide inclusiveness. I related this role of the girl chosen by her but provided by her classmates as with teamwork, the enduring relationship and dealing with emotions. While they all wanted the girl to be part of the team they even ensured about her illness. For me more than outdoor sports it was an outdoor education, where the girl got an opportunity to play and children negotiated with their roles so as to perform on the ground.

**When a child enters the school gate:**



A child's immediate environment before coming to a school is their home and the people around them. When she/he enters the school, there is a change in the whole structure. This includes the space available in the school and the less familiar people around them. Due to all this when a child enters the school her/his self-perception in relation to the others is different.

In Uday schools, the whole idea is to create experiences of joyful nature, interactive and self-paced particularly at this age and generate excitement. There are enormous objects which are looked by adults as very ordinary but

they keep the child alive filled with excitement and interest. The influence of such things may be indirect but it is great. After home, for the child, the whole world revolves around the school environment because the child spends maximum time there. We try to make the school life of a child truly enjoyable without any structured compulsion for learning anything particular. Initially, the teachers do not put emphasis on what they want to teach to a child but understand how does a child want to feel and for this; the teacher tries to make most of the world around the child. I personally have seen that such exposures decreases absenteeism, student drop out and augments learning in the later years. Providing a favourable child-friendly environment, encouraging the child to talk and express their feelings and ideas about a wide range of experiences, giving them the space to study the school surroundings and the objects around them autonomously, adds as a shaping influence on the child's social behaviour and personality. The free and fearless environment in school starts giving the child a space to enjoy their time in the school.

They are basically the explorers. They study objects and their relationship, places inside the school premises, in the classroom, one will even find them standing at a distance and selecting one of the hundred things that they see around. In all this process, there is hardly anything that we teach a child but create conditions for her/him. Throughout this, the most approachable person who will always be found having a dialogue with the child is the school team leader. He does not appear to be impressive or formidable in any way but just like an adult moving around the school. He listens to the child, allows her/him to say the whole thing and control his desires to contradict. In such a way you will always find the child conveying a lot of things excitedly.

While the teachers are busy taking care of the other students, the team leader facilitates dialogue, shares insights with the teachers who are unknown and unaware of the things which they have missed out.

Gradually, after a lot of exposure and understanding, a child starts demanding. This demand could be of extended conversations, storytelling, book reading, learning materials, opportunities to write, toys or any immediate available resource. This is how a child encounters and masters a lot of things and takes the next leap. I feel this is an integral part of our education value chain and hence the classroom is not a confined space but extends to everywhere from the gates of the school.

**We can do it ourselves:**



One afternoon, two bright and happy faces come to me and demonstrated that they have made a mobile phone with the use of clay. They were holding thick phones made out of clay in their hands. Even when the finished product was ready, they clung to it, smoothed their fingers over the surface for inspection. The phone had a small hole in its corner covered with a glass which when illustrated by the children was a camera and was decorated with a flower for an outward appearance. They seemed happy about the object they had made with the clay but were more excited to express the process by which they had made and the motto behind it. The way these children had used an everyday material in creating the artefact was very lively. A while later they came again to me and said that they have created a story. The story was about a sister and a brother, who were living in different places and having a conversation on phone, as what they will be doing on Diwali holidays. The natural in them came fourth.

Art is one of the co-curricular areas which is strengthened and practised in the Uday schools. We provide different forms of art such as drawing, dance, drama, clay art and carpentry on the basis of availability of resources. These art forms are not dealt superficially but rather have structured curriculum, design and planning.

I was always interested in knowing how clay art is an essential element, so I observed the functional nature of the activity very closely. As soon as it's a clay time for the children, they immediately begin to mould and shape it .Each and every child is involved in gathering the ideas and information to create objects, resulting in co-operative work. There is total freedom and hence the internal autonomy and self-initiative of the children are at work in almost everything they do. I have witnessed children experiencing the texture and feel of the clay. As they handle it, poke it, pinch it, twist it and roll it they develop their motor skills. I have seen children inspecting the clay's surface, the colour and the sound it makes when it's wet. The clay allows

the child to repair mistakes and not be afraid to make them again. They repair, they decorate their own piece. More importantly, they learn something that is very important i.e. they will be seen putting the same effort that the potter does. I am not sure whether every child develops a sense of aesthetics for their creations, but the power they use to express their feelings and emotions with honesty in itself is ground-breaking.

### **More than the teacher's signature:**

In my initial days at school, I saw that a teacher is engrossed in a document for quite a long time. The teacher was clung to a file which had some papers in it. He went to a child along with the document. I wanted to know what is happening. I went close by. The teacher and student started having a discussion on a worksheet. I saw that there were some spelling errors in the worksheet. The teacher instead of spotting the mistake or encircling them or underlining invited the child to identify the mistake. Here, the teacher involved the child in spotting the error and helped her to look at her own work. I contemplated that how this practice is an important part of learning network which emphasised on the personal growth. Even I had a portfolio during my school time, but that was more rote-based and had a little focus on understanding. I always felt that such assessments are completely inadequate and only easier to build scores.

The student's portfolio was not something new for me, but the idea behind it in Uday schools surely was. I spoke with the teacher and he shared some powerful objectives of the document: it helps the students develop and helps the teachers understand their teaching strategies for the contribution of student development. Through this, we try and understand how much a child has learnt. I then took some more time in understanding the portfolios and saw that the teacher not only corrects but writes something expressive to

the child's work. More than a mechanical exercise it was a dialogue with the child.

During my teaching period, I realised that the design and frequency of this kind of assessment adhered to the basic purpose of student development. Even I had started to reflect and evaluate the children's capabilities. I had also started giving them their ownership of learning. This continuous process helped in taking the student into confidence and created a non-threatening environment for their development. Over the time I also realised that when we do not see the development of the child as a whole then we do not consider the need to work on all the skills and feel that some of the skills such as physical and behavioural attitudes can be developed automatically over the time. Such a deconstructive approach creates an academic gap and impacts the process negatively.

I felt that regardless of the grades or comments given we make the children realise that they are precious, valuable and wonderful person.

#### **Little Things:**

- (i) It was time to go home one afternoon. As everyone put on their footwear's and were leaving, a boy was still searching for the one. After some time he found his slippers which were split from the front. I was watching him from a distance. He looked around. He was searching for something. A minute later I saw that he was tying a string on the opening of the pairs. He tied the string in such a way that he could hold it while he could walk with its support. I was amazed at how imaginative he was. After all this, he looked at all the details of his work and started to walk by holding the string from both the hands. The construction appeared like a puppet, where the string was governed by the child. When



the child started to walk, after a short interval the string loosed from the opening of slippers. He tied it again and started to walk. The string loosened again, then again and again. This became an added challenge for the child. But the child was unsteady. He kept loosening the string and tying the same till the time he reached his home which was around 1 km from the school. Unlike other days this afternoon was an eye-opener for me.

One will always find this child engrossed in something or the other and mostly with the broken objects. I have found him touching, feeling, breaking, re-making many objects. Some simple habits like: turning off the leaking water tap, watering the plants after school hours and many such little yet lit instances. At times he is also found doing private commentary which helps him in carrying on with the activity for a greater length of time. This is how he locates little things around the school and explores the relationship between the objects.

- (ii) This same child enters the library one afternoon after school hours, holding a tiny pencil and selects one big book from many. He opens the book and starts encircling the page numbers. This may sound very common but I relate this to the flexibility and control of the hand and finger movement. Seeing all this I carefully, observed that he was turning pages without spoiling the corners. This is a matter to think of because such tiny things play a huge role in the natural progression. Also, such little things make a contribution towards developing in children the perception of the book as a respectable resource for learning. All this may appear very non-educational but it is so important in the education process

because of critical approach enabled by the children in the school environment.

**Enduring value:**



I glimpsed of a beautiful sight on a cold misty winter. A little girl was filling water in a ripped football. I wanted to know her intention of doing this. She highlighted: दीदी पानी खत्म हो गया और सबको प्यास लगी है | I exclaimed in mind, what a capability in taking decisions and problem-solving. This is how in Uday schools we connect the curricular objects with social values; which is a major component of our school culture.

अनोखा बस्ता:



बच्चा : दीदी मुझे पेंसिल मिलेगी ?

दीदी : हाँ. यह लो |

(बच्चा अपने बसते में से किताब निकालता है, मेरी नज़र उसके बसते पर जाती है जिसमें स्टील का गिलास भी है )

दीदी : यह गिलास किसका है ?

बच्चा : हमारा

दीदी : कसिने रखा आपके बसते में ?

बच्चा : मैंने |

दीदी : वो क्यूँ ?

बच्चा : मेरी बहन है न |

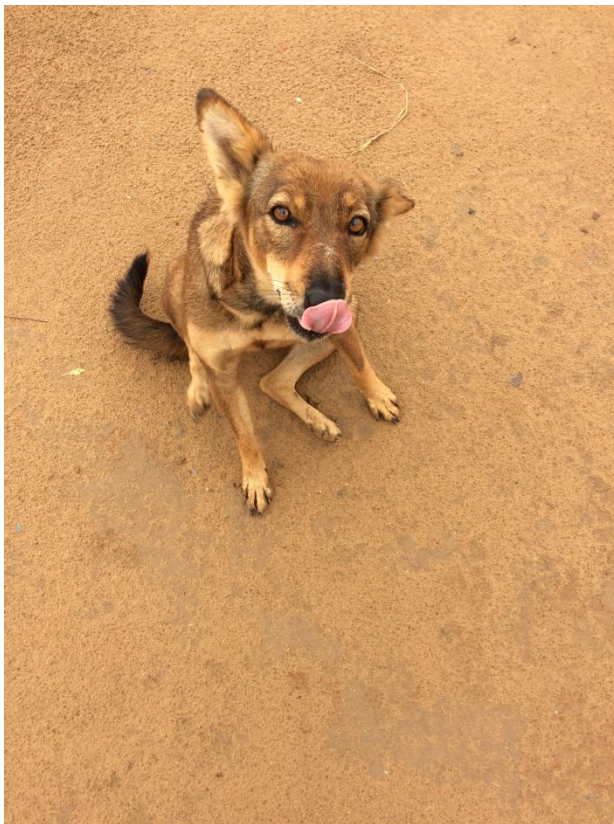
दीदी : हाँ |

बच्चा : वो जब नल से पानी पीती है तो आधा पानी गिरता रहता है और उसकी प्यास भी नहीं जाती, तो मैं गिलास में भर के उसको पानी पिला देता हूँ |

दीदी : Dumbstruck.

### **Moolie the dog:**

Moolie is one of the four adult dogs who proudly call Uday schools their home. She sticks to a strict schedule of sleeping through classes during the day but keeps an eye at the recess.



## Inside the classroom

### 1. Accumulating and Reinforcing in own way

Nowadays, 'good morning, good evening, and good night' have gradually become a part of a conversation among children. When foreigners visit the school, children frankly and confidently ask them questions in English. Though English is the third language for them, they struggle but they enthusiastically try to speak English.

Once I have heard the conversation between two children, and I got surprised as I heard 'intelligent' word in the conversation of class 3 children. One girl and a boy were discussing and deciding who is intelligent? They were on the way to returning home and I was going to the same place. I joined them and asked 'what are you discussing?' The girl said, 'we are deciding who is intelligent?' I asked 'and on which basis you are deciding this?' So they explained me their parameters. 'For instance, both of us can read a book in Hindi; so we are equally intelligent in Hindi.' Then I asked them, 'but what is the meaning of intelligent?' The girl said, 'the one who has more knowledge in any subject.'

In class 1, I have drawn few things on the wall and labeled it in English, such as Pot, Mat, Fan, Pen, and etc. I tried to make children familiar with the surrounding things with its English names. Once I was teaching in class 1 and one girl spontaneously said, '*Dekho, Pani bharno ko pot!* (देखो, पानी भरनो को पॉट!)

In Uday Schools, children learn the English language through 'whole language approach.' They learn new words through various resources such as conversation with teachers, storybooks, poems, etc.

A few months ago, I was introducing 'application letter' to the 5<sup>th</sup> class of children. During the discussion, two children captured the word 'application' and they formed this spelling in their own way! They mixed the alphabets of different words from their vocabulary.

Apple - lion - cat - lion: Application

They happily shared this with their classmates and everyone got amazed because this new and quiet big word became familiar with all of them.

Children learn the words by predicting the relationship between objects and sounds. Children are most likely to learn the words they hear the most!

## **2. Learning by Experiencing**

When I got to know that I am going to be a group teacher of class 1 (Rimjihim group), I was quite excited for this challenging responsibility. It was an experiential learning for me. I realized, experienced and tried to overcome out of the difficulties over the time.

From marking the attendance to the accepting all responsibilities of the whole class was totally new for me. It was a great exposure to understand the various aspects of GSK's pedagogy. I closely got engaged in Hindi and

Mathematics. Being a Single Teacher in the classroom, I could practice the core process of teaching.

My children and I were floating in the same boat. There were few children who had newly become a part of Uday School. The freedom, space, and child-centric approach were new for them. They were exploring and experiencing this new world. And being a teacher, even I was also exploring and experiencing at my level.

One day, children wanted to play and have fun, suddenly I remembered my childhood game. I gathered them by saying '*Chalo, chai banate hai*' let's prepare a tea! They got surprised and curious. I told them to sit in a circle and we played this game. The game has a fusion of mathematics and emotions. They really liked this game. After playing it, I engaged them in counting and addition of numbers. And they got involved in this activity so much that they did not realize for few minutes that school has got over!

### **Empathy**

Empathy is an important element of social and emotional development. Children can assimilate the sense of empathy through experiences. It is a gradual process. Teachers of Uday Community School make an effort to develop empathetic behavior among children in various ways.

When I began teaching for the first time in my life, I realized that my vocal cord is not too strong to speak loudly for 4 to 5 hours continuously. I was having throat pain and children were able to understand and feel my pain.

Whenever I entered the classroom, they reminded each other by saying 'Don't make noise. She is having throat pain.' They helped me in the class management.

This kind of response can be expected from elder children but when I come to younger children of class1, some of them were also aware of the same. Sometimes it happened that few children were making noise or disturbing the class and suddenly few of them realized and said 'Keep quiet. Ma'am won't be able to teach us' these concerns made smile on my helpless face.

## **Teacher-Child**

### **School as a family**

Child assimilates the values through the surrounding environment and the values become more profound while development of the child. The school as a social institution plays a large part in the socialization of children into the society.

In Uday Schools, children from different socio-economic background come together. The school environment does not impose them to get fixed into a particular structure. But it helps the child to learn, explore and experience the different things at own personal level. The children get the sense of belongingness with their peers and teachers as well. It majorly reflects through the sharing of lunch. If any child does not have tiffin, then other children and their group teacher share their tiffin. It is not same as eating



in Mid-Day meal by seating in one row. The reses or lunch break is an informal time to sit together and share the realities of life together. Someone brings onion with chapatti and someone has sufficient roti and sabji also. Someone has hungry stomach without anything in hands whereas someone has extra roti to share! This kind of sharing helps in the socialization of children.

### **Experiential Learning**

#### **COooooooooW!**

Once, a playful boy of class 1 was trying to learn the animals' name in English. He was reciting the spelling of COW by listening to his classmates. But when he looked into his notebook, the alphabets were again becoming strangers for him. Identification of alphabets had become a difficult task for him. After several attempts, he came to me and asked, 'what is this?' by pointing out at strange alphabets. I tried to introduce these three alphabets through fingerspelling. (Fingerspelling is a way of spelling words using hand movements.) He liked 'O' when I showed him by joining index finger and thumb in 'O' shape. It seemed interesting for him to learn through experimenting with fingers. He also joined the fingers of the left hand in a way that the shape was looking like a small 'o' with his small fingers! He kept rolling the index finger of right hand through it and started singing 'Ooooooooo.....Ooooooooo' on his own rhythm. He identified these alphabets and learned the new name of the animal while enjoying the melody of 'O'!

Children can learn in different ways. The teacher needs to find the ways by understanding the characteristics of each child to ensure their learning.

### **An Inventive Mango Tree**

'Uday School' is a place where children get a space to explore, experiment and learn through the experiences. This process gradually keeps going on after school hours as well. Sometimes it reflects through the imaginary creative thoughts and imaginary actions of children to experience it.

Once after the school hours, some children were playing on the playground. And two children of the pre-primary class were discussing about a mango tree while sitting behind the classroom. One was digging the soil and telling his friend that 'I have planted a mango tree. Tomorrow please bring a bucket of water with you. Thus after the watering, this tree will come out and it will get very big. The branches of the tree will get spread in this classroom. Children of this class will sit on the branches.'

Each child has own world in which he or she thinks, imagine and live the thoughts. Children write own poems and stories, they draw and color the pictures as their colorful thoughts. Uday teachers give the opportunities and encourage children to develop their thought process through conversations and art work.

## **Child - Child**

### **When a new child enters the classroom...**

There are few children who come to school with their elder siblings and sit with them without enrolling in the school. They get involved in the school environment and become familiar day by day. But what if when a new child enters a classroom? Where all children are unknown to him or her, the place is totally new to him or her.

When a 6 years old girl entered the classroom of Rimjhim group (class 1), she found the fun among other children at a high pitch. As she was quite a silent girl, the mixed voice of children was noisy for her. She was like a shade of light color in all bright colors. It was difficult for her to get into the flow. During the first one month, she was not talking to anyone. She preferred to stay away from others. Being a teacher, I preferred to give her time and space.

The changes were taking place leisurely. She became a friend of two children. And they gave her hands to come into the flow with others. By the mid of the year, she became more confident, talkative and active!

### **Peers' support**

Each child is unique with different characteristics. One seven years old girl of Rimjhim group (class 1) is also unique among other children. Her uniqueness is not any disability which may differentiate her from others. It's all about the learning and grasping capacity. Though people call her 'Goli-

Baavli', but she is not mentally challenged. She is a slow learner who learns at own pace.

Sometimes she goes to her classmates and asked them to teach. They also try their best to teach her, whatever they learned. And when she learns something, her peer supporters are the one who feel happy because she learned something new! No one has neither told these children to teach her nor told her to ask others, but they got evolved into the 'peers' supportive environment'. The relationship between children gets stronger over the time with sharing and caring. These things are not formally taught by teacher, but children adopt this behavior through living in the supportive school environment.

#### **INSIDE THE CLASSROOM:**

i. **Multi-Grade Multi-Level learning (MGML):** In Uday schools of Gramin Siksha Kendra children of different ages but of same level are made to sit in a class together. It is not necessary that the learning level of all the children of the same age will be same. Some children are slow learner and it is also not necessary that a child will take same time to understand different topics. So according to this the children are divided into different groups and teacher plan different activities for different groups. It helps the children to understand the topic clearly and then move to the next topic. In MGML learning the children get opportunities to interact and participate in different group activities and learn from them. It also helps the children of all

age groups to gain confidence, participate, perform and also ask each other if they have any doubt.

Example: There was an activity done in Girirajpura school, 7 groups were made, each group included children of class 3, 4/5 and the new students whose age were same as the students of class 4,5. Each groups was given a English story book, they had to read the story book, understand it with the help of group members, then they have to present it. They had to mention few English words which they learnt in the story. The level of the new students was not like the students of Uday school, but all them tried to read the story and asked their group members for better understanding. It was also found that students of class 4,5 were also taking the help of class 3 and the class 3 students were also helping the new students who were elder then them. Students of class 4,5 were also guiding class 3 students and new students. In this way they were helping each other, co-operating each other, they tried their best to perform well. They encouraged their group members, especially the new comers who were low confident, shy and had some fear, the other group member ensure that they will all together try to present their best. And this was one of the best activities where, all the students participated and performed really well. This kind of MGML learning boost confidence among the students promotes team work, respect and values each other.

ii. **Class room management:** In Jhilmil group of Girirajpura school, which consists of students of level 1 i.e. class 1 and 2 or the students whose level is same as level 1, irrespective of their ages are included in this group.

For a single teacher it is really hard to manage the class room which consist of different types of students, small children have a lot of energy , they can't sit constant at one place. In initial days of teaching it was hard to manage the class along with these students. After discussing a lot with Vardhana, senior teachers about class management and research on class management. The teacher tried few techniques in the class; one of them was to start a class with rhymes or to encourage the children to sing any rhymes by themselves, games, tongue twisters etc. This worked somehow the children were reactivated and they used to participate in the games and rhymes happily, they used to pay full attention in the class, concentration improved, teacher-child and child-teacher relation also got improved. Children started understanding and also gave space to their friends. After this they used to sit in the class with fresh mind and their grasping capacity also got improved.

In Rimjhim group of Jaganpura school, which consists of students of level 1 i.e. class 1 and 2 or the students whose level is same as level 1, irrespective of their ages are included in this group. The teacher applied the same technique mentioned above, with these students too, but was not so

successful. There were few students whose speed was good, they used to complete the written task before time and ask to give more task to the teacher. In this way it was hard to manage the class and to ensure the learning of each and every child. The children were good at writing but were lacking in identifying the same letters. Then teacher started to make the TLMs so that children can identify the letters and words they were writing. Children used to repeat after the teacher, when teacher used to read aloud. Children who used to finish the task faster than others, they used to read aloud like teacher, pointing fingers on the TLM. The other children used to repeat after him/her, in this way all the children have to read aloud at least once in the class. Meanwhile the teacher used to keep eye on how the children are reading. The notebooks of the children were also checked by the teacher and children used to write the same in their notebooks.

**Pedagogy (Initial phase):**

a. Using local language for better understanding: Girirajpura is a rehabilitated village, six years ago the villagers of Mordungri and padhda village were being displaced and rehabilitated here. All most all the children studying in Uday pathshala of Girirajpura are first generation learners. They didn't know any language other than the local language which they speak. The teacher didn't force them to learn the language like hindi, English, etc. Instead they interact with the children in their local language and the

children can connect with the teachers. The children can understand better in their own local language, along with other subjects now the children learnt other languages too.

There was new teacher in class 1 and her difficulty was to teach the students according to the pedagogy of GSK. The pedagogy of the GSK was new to the teacher and had never practiced it before. But after discussing with the experienced teachers and Vardhna, the teacher applied their suggestions in the classroom.

b. Whole language approach: teacher started with small phrases like stand up everyone, make a circle, hold your hands, what is your name, etc. Yes, this took several days for the children to understand and act. But after some days children started saying all the phrases themselves. Then the teacher got to know that how whole language approach works.

c. Learning practically: In Girirajpura School, the teacher was working with the students on theme 'My Village' with the pre-primary children. The teacher before starting the topic took all the children of pre-primary to the nearby village and asked to tell the name of the things they see in the village. The children saw the 'pani tanki' and shouted the name, then the teacher said it is called as 'Water tank' then children repeated after her 'water tank'. In this way they learnt the name of different animals they saw in the village, shed, houses, trees, hill, farm lands, etc. Teaching through



practically really works, children connect and understand the topic more clearly through practical.

There was a fair in Amla, Tonk. Students of class 4 and 5 were taken to the fair by the teachers of the school, so that they can observe, different activities and people in the fair. When they returned from the fair, they were assigned a task to write and share about their experience of fair. What they saw in the fair? They have to also mention the reason behind the activities of the fair they saw?

This type of activities is done to know the local culture, folk songs and dances, so that they can be preserved. This was done to make the children aware about the reason behind all this. This was also done because; rural children are attached to their environment and culture. They can connect and relate with it, it interests them and with this learning becomes easy for them. Teaching them something which they have never seen or heard before is hard for them to understand, if they can't relate it then, it can't be interesting for them and hence learning will become hard for them.

Discussion in the class: An open discussion about the topic is a part of Uday schools. In Khushboo group of Jaganpura once there was discussion

about cleanliness. Teacher asked few questions to the children that, how they can keep the school and villages clean? Where the garbage should be disposed? The answers of the children were out of the box.

It is nothing like children don't know about things or we have to tell them each and everything. They have different way of looking at things; they don't have any limitation in their mind, like elder. So they are full of ideas which hardly an elder can provide. Uday schools provides platform for free discussion to everybody, which encourages children to speak up their ideas and thoughts. It is really important for enrichment of the children.

5. AT HOME: This is a story of a little girl from Girirajpura school studying in class 3 but her level is of class 1. She always carries a smile on her face; she is hardly seen sad or worried. She has learnt to hide the pain of her life behind her innocent face. She has 3 sisters and her father is very hardworking farmer. Her mother left all of them and went to her parent's house when the girl was 3years old. After 4-5 years, her mother returned back but everything was not all right between her parents. This was known to the teachers, as the teachers also try to know the background of the children, condition of home, etc. The girl was not ever able to concentrate and she was not progressing. This matter got highlighted, when there was a fight between her parents and her mother got injured. She was bleeding and

no one was there to help her. She didn't returned home that night. Nobody can ever empathize, what was going through the girl.

Some students are weak at studies; there can be many reasons behind this. It is really necessary to know why the child is not progressing. Children hardly can understand what is bothering them and how it is affecting their studies.

Teachers of Uday schools do community contact on weekly basis and they also stay in the villages, which helps them to understand the children and their environment better. According to this the children are then taught.