

fenestra

A Window to our Culture of Learning and Sharing APR-2021

VOLUME II

PURANI HAVELI EDITION



Artwork by Mir Wafa Ali &
Mujtaba Ali C7

Staff Prizes

By Minhaj Arastu, Principal

Each year, we recognise staff members who exemplify qualities of the IB Learner Profile. Almost 80 staff members received prizes for being Inquirers, Reflective, and Principled, among other traits. We are grateful for the efforts of all our teaching and non-teaching staff who have persevered in this extra-ordinary year.

For two traits, we asked parents, students, and colleagues to choose staff members that have impacted them the most. Congratulations to the following staff members for being Caring and Thinkers.



Asma Zaidi

Vice Principal & EYC

For being Caring and best in service to others



Seema Sultana

Teacher of Social Studies

For being Caring and best in service to others



Zainab Asghar

Teacher of Montessori

For being a Thinker who uses best teaching practices



Kaneez-e Zehra

Teacher of English

For being a Thinker who uses best teaching practices

Finding My IKIGAI

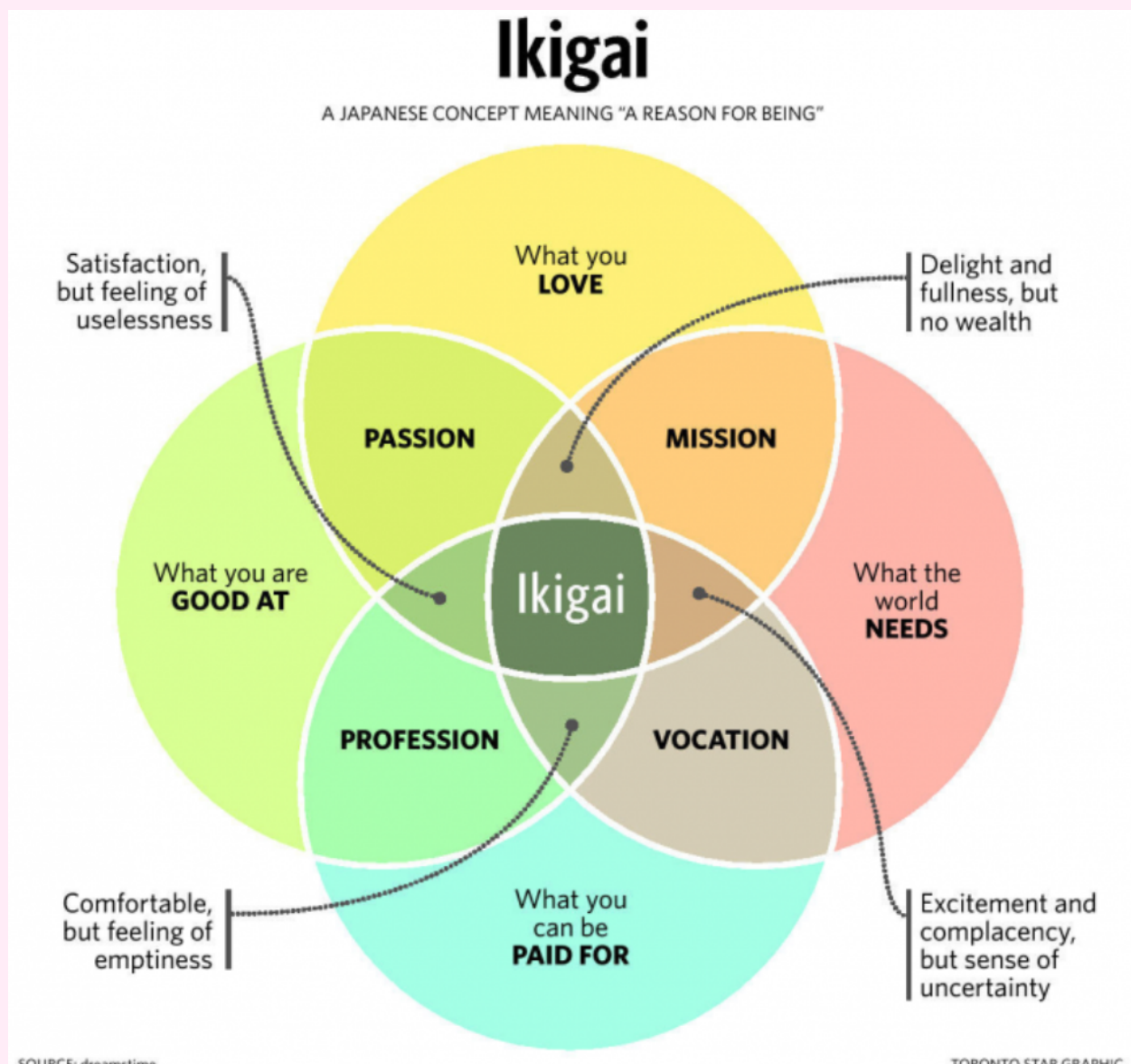
By Asma Zaidi, Vice Principal & EYC

For hundreds of years the Japanese have been amongst the foremost in being a community that has looked deeply into their inner selves and pondered on their purpose of living. The Japanese call this 'value for being alive' as IKIGAI.

To find your Ikigai is to find your purpose in life. It is a space where you find what you love to do, it is a drive that makes you wake up every morning with a sense of purpose and energy. When you find your ikigai, money is important but it isn't the force that drives you.

A person reaches their space where his/her potential is utilized, talents are recognized and one discovers who one is, and what their purpose of existence is. It's like discovering why you were born.

After years of exploring areas within education, working with different organisations, shifting countries and schools, I have finally found my space. The drive to serve my own community, transform generations and mindsets, nurture happy, healthy, little minds and souls is what keeps me going. I have found my ikigai. What is yours?



Building Reading Skills in Early Years

By Zainab Asghar, Teacher of Montessori

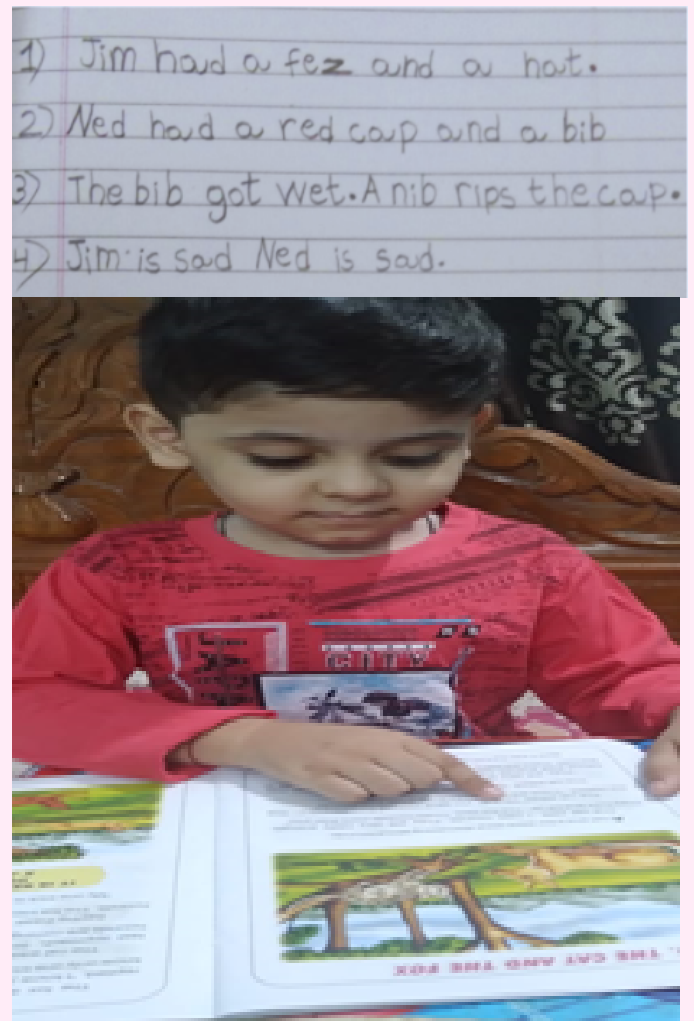
Children are born with the innate ability to hear and make sounds. As they grow older they try to imitate the words and gestures. Within the first few months, language is 'acquired' from the environment and a lot depends on the exposure a child has with adults who have a 'conversation' with him/her as opposed to just hearing sounds where the child is not involved. This marks the beginning of an emerging childhood vocabulary, and is an important foundation for language development and early reading skills.

At Focus High School we continue this process of language acquisition by developing phonemic awareness in children. This is a critical pre-reading skill and it becomes the basis of decoding and encoding words. The ability to segregate and blend sounds helps young students to learn to how to spell. Research has shown that phonics is an essential component of learning how to read.

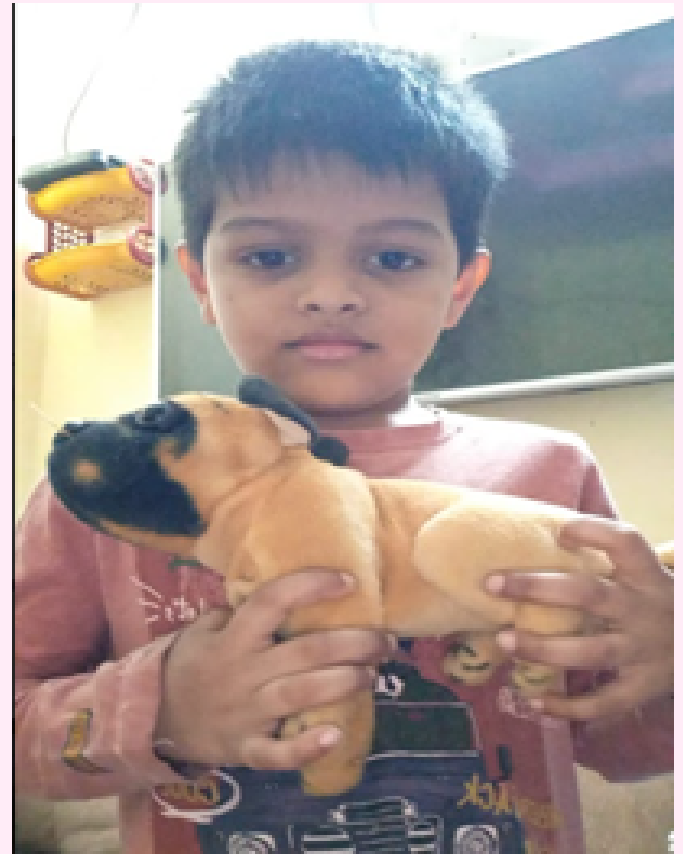
Our 'Let's Read' literacy program moves from reading simple CVC (consonant - vowel - consonant) words to reading simple CVC phrases and sight words. With constant practice we slowly move the emerging readers to reading CVC stories. The smooth transition into reading a story is a joy to behold. The 'Let's Read' structured program builds confidence in our young readers and makes them bold enough to try unfamiliar text.

Along with phonic program, students have constant exposure to reading texts during the carefully curated Storytelling and Guided Reading sessions. During the pandemic our Virtual Library was a repository of wonderful stories that children thoroughly enjoyed. Our school holds a number of activities like Reading Marathon to encourage reading of books.

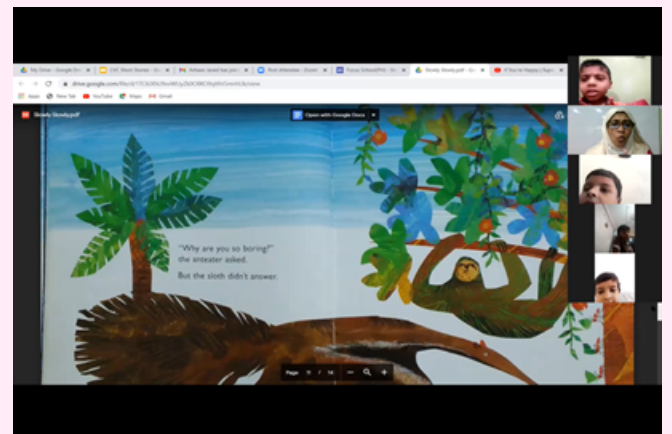
Altogether, the reading strategies used in our first year at Pre-primary Purani Haveli campus, yielded encouraging results. We continue to strive and build lifelong readers!



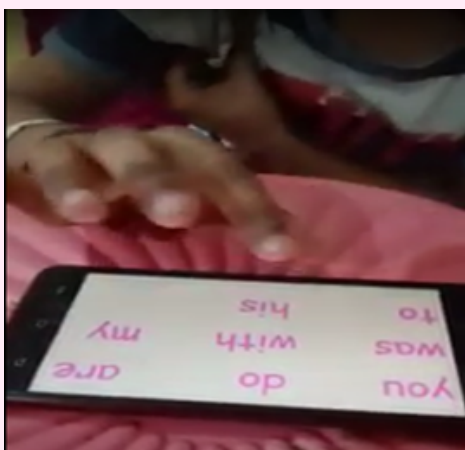
Reading - Syed Hadi Hussain - PP2 B



Show and Tell - Mohammed Junaid - Nur A(Left), Syed Abid Ali - PP2 A(Right)



Story telling from virtual library



Reading Virtually(Left), Syed Mustafa Hussain - Nur A(Right)

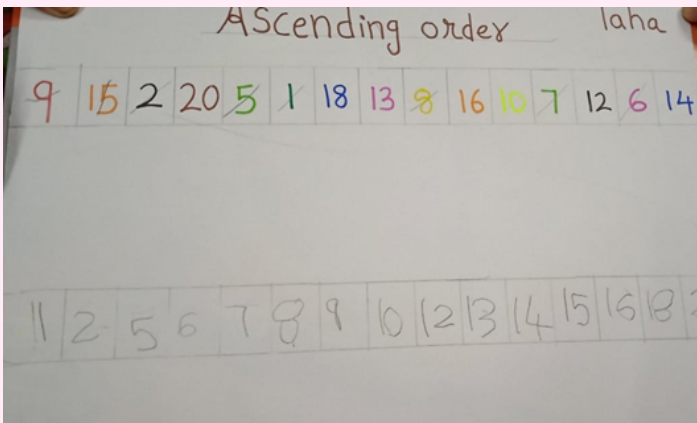


Motor Skills - Tying Shoelace
Alina Fatima C1 A

Fancy Dress - Taha - PPI A



Experimenting with floating and sinking
of objects - Ayesha Fatima - PP2 A



Math Activity - Activity with ascending
order of numbers



Motor Skills - Tying Shoelaces Alina
Fatima C1 A

My Pandemic School Experience

By Sakina Fatima, Grade 4

I would like to share with everyone that my experience in Grade 4 was completely different from all the other grades. Unfortunately due to the pandemic, all schools were closed and we had to study from home. Online classes were the new normal and it was something we had to accept. Though the online classes were fun and the teachers were really helpful, we missed physical interaction with our teachers and playing with our friends. I also missed our games in the PE classes. All the competitions, festivals and celebrations were held virtually. I am glad that I was able to win prizes and certificates in spite of many challenges.

I would like to thank all my teachers who have made education possible this year. I hope things will change in Grade 5 and we can get back to normal schooling.



Cone Art by C5 Naveedullah



Paper folding wall hangings by Ali Asghar C2

Urdu

By Saima Mateen, Urdu Teacher

حلیم نامہ

پہیلیاں

تحقیق پر پتہ چلا کہ حلیم کا مولد ایران ہے -
خیال کیا جاتا ہے کہ قطب شاہی بادشاہ اسے
اپنے ساتھ دکن لائے تھے - شادی سے پہلے قلی
قطب شاہ بھاگ متی کو حلیم بھیجا کرتے اور
اسکے جواب میں بھاگ متی املی بن کے چگر
اور بگھارے بیگن بھیجا کرتی تھیں - ایرانی اور
دکنی کھانوں کے تبادلے آخر رنگ لئے جو تاریخ
کا ایک روشن باب ہے - شاعروں نے بھی اپنے
زبات کا برملا اظہار کیا ہے

تن کا ہلکا ، سر کا بھاری
چوٹ لگاتا ہے وہ کاری

بری ٹوپى لال دوشالہ
جس کے پیٹ میں دانوں کی مالا -

اندھا ہے پر راہ دکھائے
آنکھ وہ اندھوں کی کہلائے -

روئیں نہ ہم حلیم کو جو پیٹ بھر ملے پکوان
خلد میں تیری لذت اگر ملے -

نور پری ہے جادو گھر میں
حاضر غائب ہو پل بھر میں
بنا ہے وہ نور کا سایہ
کردے وہ جو سامنے آئے -

عام طور پر حلیم کھانے والے حلیم الطبع پائے
گئے ہیں - حلیم زیادہ کھالی جائے تو قبض
کشاہ کا کام کرتی ہے - حلیم کے بارے میں
عورتوں کا خیال ہے کہ انکی نازک مزاجی کو
مدِ نظر رکھ کر مرغی ، بکری یا مادہ تیتھر بٹیر
کی حلیم بنائی جائے -
شاعر نے عورتوں کی حلیم پروری کا نقشہ کچھ
یوں کھینچا -

نہ رکشا ہے نہ گاڑی ہے
نہ پیتی ہے نہ کھاتی ہے
گھر بیٹھے وہ لیجاتی ہے
دنیا کی سیر کراتی ہے -

حلیم کھانے کے واسطے پیدا کیا انسان کو
ورنہ کھانے کیلئے کچھ کم نہ تھیں مرغابیاں

Ans

1- ہتھوڑا

2 - لال مرچ

3- لاٹھی

4- بجلی

5- کتاب

اس مزاحیہ خاکے کا اختتام یہ ہیں کہ ہم پہلے
تو خدا سے ڈریں پھر اس شخص سے جو خدا
سے نہیں ڈرتا اور ایسی حلیم کھلاتا ہے
جسمیں گوشت کم اور چھیچڑے زیادہ ہوتے
!ہیں

Importance of School Assembly

By Seema Sultana, C8 Class Teacher, EVS & Social Studies Teacher

Assembly is very important for both the teachers and students. School assemblies help in creating a good school culture for students and teaches them many skills and values in different ways:

- It motivates students to speak up in public and showcase their talents.
- It helps teachers to create a sense of responsibility among students by assigning different tasks for assembly.
- Students are motivated by rewards in the assembly for academic achievement and co-curricular activities.
- Assemblies are a good way to remind students about rules and policies.
- It helps inculcate discipline.

Our school has different types of assemblies which enable us to fulfill our agenda for holistic development.

Circle time: This is a safe space for students to express their emotions. By giving children a hypothetical situation and discussing options and suggestions, we take the focus away from a child and diffuse the problem. Thus creating a stress free space for vocalising different perspectives. Sometimes, we narrate moral stories or real life stories, to explore virtues like honesty, courage, truthfulness. Students are often asked to link these stories to personal lives. Sharing personal challenges, helps to create strong bond amongst staff and students.

News paper reflection: During News paper reflection students are asked to read the newspaper and select any article, paste it in the newsbook and write their reflection on it. Their reflections are then discussed in class. This activity, increases awareness about current events and improves the student's sense of inquiry and writing skills.

Sharing thoughts on Social Issues: We sometimes discuss the current situation or any heated news and ask the students to share their perspective with their peers regarding the issue. This debate enhances their critical thinking and communication skills.

Yoga and Pranayam activities, done in assembly time, helps students to calm down, and become mindful.



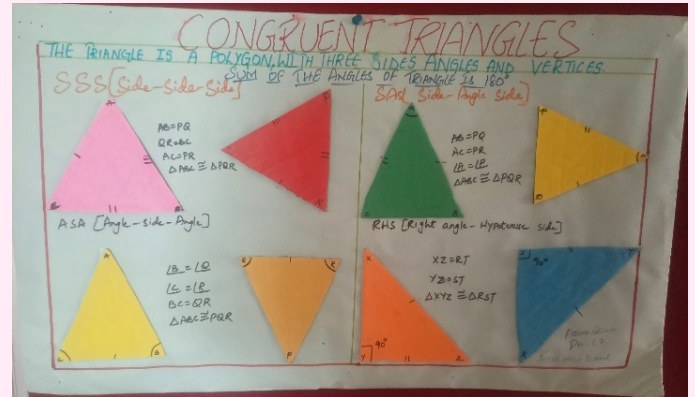
High School Activities

Arts

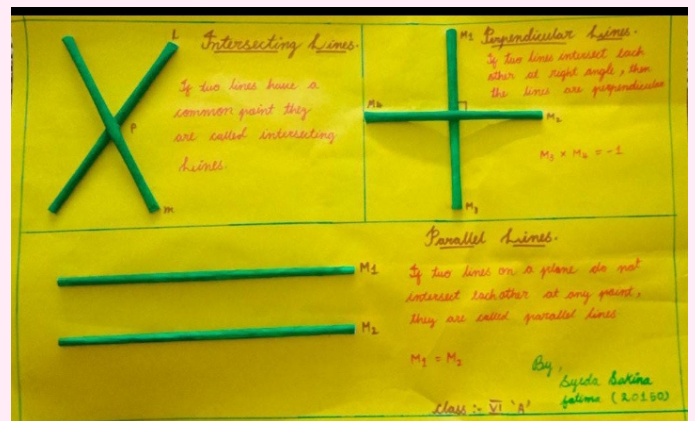


Decorative trays used for festivals
C8 group activity

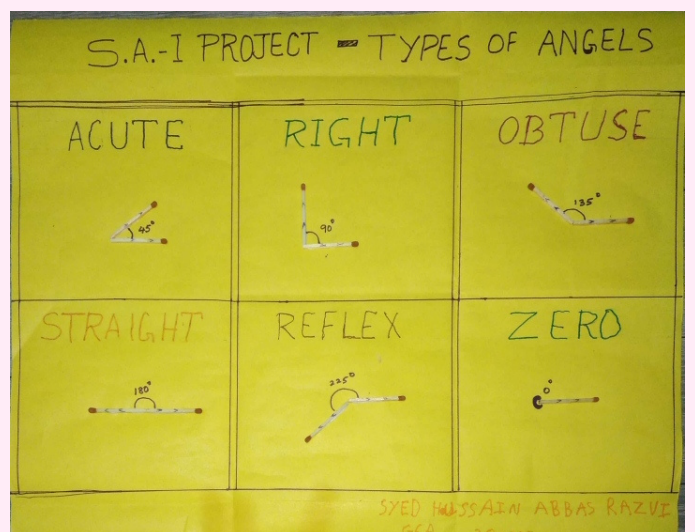
Maths



Congruent Triangles by Abiha Fatima
C7A



Pairs of lines by S.Sakina Fatima C6A



Types of Angles by Abbas Hussain C6A

STEM – Beginning of New Era in Education

By Anisa Rizvi, Teacher of Science

STEM stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. STEM is important because it pervades every part of our lives. Science is everywhere in the world around us. Technology is continuously expanding into every aspect of our lives. Engineering is the basic designs of roads and bridges, but also tackles the challenges of changing global weather and environmentally-friendly changes to our home. Mathematics is in every occupation, every activity we do in Our lives.

STEM is a curriculum based on the idea of educating students in four specific disciplines — science, technology, engineering and mathematics — in an interdisciplinary and applied approach. Rather than teach the four disciplines as separate and discrete subjects, STEM integrates them into a cohesive learning paradigm based on real-world applications.

STEM education is all about hands-on learning. Children are able to dive into the lessons and complete investigations with little or no help from a teacher.

Hands-on learning is not the only benefit to STEM education. Because of the structure of STEM projects and challenges, children are able to learn how to approach a problem using logic and open-ended problem-solving.

Students are no longer limited by the fear of failure, and are allowed to embrace the process and come to different solutions based on their individual research, tests, and data.

When kids read books about science, for example, it can spark new areas of discussion around STEM. And what they have read may prompt children to plan and carry out an investigation to test a hypothesis, which is a crucial aspect of a scientific investigation.

Children would then be encouraged to discuss their hypothesis and results with one another, which develops both core literacy and comprehension skills. Clearly, literacy and STEM subjects complement each other. Parents can ensure that their children are being exposed to STEM at home by encouraging independent thinking and by making connections between their experiences at school and at home.

For instance, asking a child what they learned in their science class that day or week will help to consolidate that learning experience as they explain and discuss the topic. Parents can then encourage their child to undertake a mini project relating to the topic at home to encourage independent thinking. This will show the child that STEM learning is not confined to the classroom.

Students have many things to consider when entering high school. Many young people today are focused on giving themselves the best possible chance at a successful career. Those looking to get a high paying job after college should consider studying science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). There are many benefits to studying STEM in high school. STEM programs help students develop problem-solving skills and learn how to work as a team. These are skills that can benefit them in all areas of their life.

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education puts an emphasis on preparing future generations to be successful in their careers. The skills gained from STEM education extend beyond those needed to be successful in STEM fields, preparing children with varied interests who move into any industry to have valuable skill sets that allow them to be successful.

We are proud to announce that Focus High School- Purani Haveli, will also be a STEM school, once we start school physically.

Pedagogy in Teaching Science Virtually

By Ms. Sabiha Begum, Teacher of Science

Teaching hasn't been easy during the pandemic—and teaching science is no exception. Despite the constantly changing learning environments, I have stuck to the true spirit of an educator, and I am constantly rising up to the challenge of supporting students during these uncertain times. The challenges have been numerous—access to quality education, equity, delivery of instruction etc. But, I think the biggest challenge has been navigating the diverse needs and wants of all the stakeholders. However, this current situation has forced many of us to adjust and adapt in the most creative ways. The biggest challenge has been to adapt to the ever changing abilities, beliefs, attitudes, dispositions, goals, and motives of the subject taught. All of these present unique challenges for the developing adolescent learner. Beyond skills and abilities, and perhaps even more important for the adolescent learner, is the adaptability and the willingness required to engage in the effortful thinking necessary to consider alternative points of view.

Considering all the above challenges, I have used the following strategies in remote teaching:-

- I start each section of my syllabus with a real-world problem that requires students to think about how they could solve it, even if they do not yet have the tools to do so. This approach has another more subtle benefit: It serves to create a "curiosity gap" which in turn motivates children to investigate further and inquire.
- The process of summarizing concepts in your own words is called 'paraphrasing' and connecting these concepts to prior knowledge is equally important.

I end each section of my syllabus with a discussion question that I call "Elaborate and Connect." This is where I give students time and space to answer some leading questions about the concepts I've just covered and to reflect how they connect to previous content.

- I give students the chance to practice one skill before I move onto the next concept, thus giving them a chance to consolidate their knowledge.
- The homework assignments that I give to the students are for additional practice. These questions are based on the concepts taught and give me the opportunity to identify any learning gaps or misunderstandings. The insights I gain from these interactions help me clarify what students know and don't know, so I can focus on the topics that require more instruction.
- Asking students to recall facts from memory is called 'retrieval' practice. Deliberately recalling information forces students to step back and examine what they actually know. It requires effort and struggle, which serves to strengthen memory while helping individuals identify gaps in their knowledge.
- After students read or watch a video assigned to them, I ask them to answer some simple questions. This gives them an opportunity to practice in retrieving information and it is particularly helpful when the assignment is leading up to an assessment- like a weekly quiz or exam.

I hope to continue the journey of immersed learning, in spite of all apparent challenges and look forward to a charged classroom.

Endeavour Department

By Asma Zaidi, Vice Principal & EYC

"Every child is a special kind of flower, that altogether make this world a beautiful garden". - Anonymous

A lot of children whom we come across in our lives have "special" needs that cannot be fulfilled in the regular classroom. These learning needs can vary from individual learning support to kinesthetic activities which enable a child to do and learn. Sometimes children need a lot of physical therapy to correct the coordination in the body and mind.

At Focus High School, Purani Haveli campus, we have started a new department with trained and experienced teachers and therapists to take care of the individual needs of children who are differently abled. Even though our first year was scattered due to the pandemic and our students did not receive the complete program, there was significant improvement in their acquisition of skills.

There are many students in our community, who are perfectly normal in their IQ but have somehow missed important years of learning, due to unusual circumstances in their lives. For such students, we have a special provision of completing the tenth grade board exam through the NIOS program. In this section, we focus on developing employable soft skills, communication skills along with preparation to give the 10th boards. Admissions are open for the academic year 2021-22, and classes will resume as soon as the government allows it.



**Drama-Akbar and his courtiers-
performed by students of Endeavour
Department.**



Students enjoying play in the sand pit



**Zayna using focus and concentration
to build a tower.**

Teacher Training

Overcoming challenges in professional development

By Syeda Lulu Fatima- Coordinator of TTC

At FHS, learning continues for all the trainees who joined our training programs in spite of the pandemic. This year Focus High School has trained thirty teachers in three different streams: Pre-primary teacher training, IB training and mentoring for CENTA interns .

- Various activities were planned for the Pre-Primary trainees to polish their skills. Our trainees participated in quality workshops given by experts, they attended lectures from some of the best professionals in the field, had debates over conflicting ideologies. They even had a very interesting Virtual exchange with students of Lone Star college (Houston).
- IB trainees took part in the virtual PYP exhibition which enhanced their learning.
- CENTA interns who are from different states of India were mentored by our school teachers and they participated in classroom activities remotely. This benefitted us mutually. While the interns learnt nuances of handling a class, our students gained insightful learning.
- Focus High School, organized a Placement Event to boost the confidence level of pre-primary trainees along with showcase of their skills in front of other school leaders and guests.

Our trainees did not stop learning despite of COVID. We overcame all hurdles and continued to strive towards self growth. I would like to conclude with a message that the teaching profession is not the last option which most people think, it can be the first to reach success. As the coordinator of this programme, I aim to empower teachers by making them aware of their strengths and find ways to overcome their weaknesses. This in turn helps them to develop into motivated self-learners which is the quintessential objective of any teacher.

Showcase and Placement Fair 2002-21

Focus Teacher Training Centre organized a showcase & placement event for Pre-Primary trainees.

It was a unique opportunity for our trainees to overcome their insecurities and share their learning with our guests. The trainees showcased their learning through impressive skits, using storyboards, a shadow puppet show to address the evils of child abuse, PowerPoint presentations and exhibit importance of traditional games.

The people present at the event were

- Eminent School Leaders from around the city
- Teachers from neighbouring schools
- Aspiring students
- ECA members

Our trainees carried out all the activities with ease and captured the attention of the audience for the entire event. Most of our trainees got job offers from the leaders and are now successfully placed in schools.

Admissions for the AY 2021-22 are open. Queries are welcome.





First Batch of Pre-Primary 2020-21



Storyboard



Glimpse of performance



Braingym



Shadow Puppet



Are you ready to see new horizons?

Become a highly skilled, certified educator
through internship and mentorship

PRE-PRIMARY Teaching | Online/Regular | AIECCE & JNCTE

IB Teaching | PYP & MYP | through International Baccalaureate

CENTA credentials | For excellence in teaching



For details, contact
Lulu Fatima at 9949235764
or visit Focus School, Noor Khan Bazar
www.focushighschool.org

Admissions Open for 2021-22



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Asma Zaidi



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