

Literacy Awareness at Municipal Schools

In the month of October students of second year B.Ed. conducted a three day long literacy awareness programme in three municipal schools in Mumbai.

Literacy is not just limited to reading and writing, but is also related to skills needed for daily living activities. Hence, in their programme student teachers transacted modules on practical topics such as safety rules, cleanliness, health and nutrition, environment and so on, that would help the school students improve the quality of their lives.



The programme was conducted at three schools – Colaba Municipal School, New Byculla Upper Primary English School, and at the East Byculla Secondary School.

Before the student teachers transacted their lessons at the schools, they engaged in rigorous and thorough planning. They were briefed by the professors in-charge of the programme, Ms. Kalpana Chavan and Ms. Priti Sivaramakrishnan, about what was expected of them. The student teachers were divided into pairs and asked to plan their lessons with their partners. They were asked to plan modules that were bi-lingual so that the students at the municipal schools could understand them.

For many students it was to be their first experience of teaching in a municipal school. Greeti Chacko, a student teacher for whom this was a novel experience said, “I have transacted 32 lessons in my practice teaching internship, yet I am nervous. In the municipal school I have to explain concepts in Marathi, and that is a bit tough.”



The students were then allotted to one of the three schools, and on the morning of 3rd October they began transacting their modules. At the end of each session the student teachers engaged the students in a creative activity in which they created a product that was related to the theme of the lesson. Some of the products that the students created included – paper bags made of waste paper, posters on cleanliness, slogans on road safety and so on.

The student teachers felt enriched by their experience. Leona Lemos a student who conducted a module at the New Byculla Upper Primary English School said, “I was so glad to see that the students were disciplined and the amount of respect they had towards the teachers.”

Student teachers at all the municipal schools remarked about how the eager students at the schools were to learn. Humera Mulani, a student teacher recounted her experience and said, “When I stepped in the classroom to interact with the students they gathered around me which actually gave me so much of joy because this usually doesn’t occur an elite school set up.”

The experience showed, another student teacher, Fateama Sangotwala the “other side of life.” “While talking to the students in my class,” she said, “I came across a 9 years old girl, who works as a domestic help as well. I reflected ‘what was I doing when I was in class 5?’ I never knew what are house hold responsibilities? Earning money? But this child, she is going through it every minute of her life!”



The programme thus sensitized the future teachers to the ground reality of the society that we live in and delineated the need for empowerment through education in today’s times.