

Sumavanam yearly report for 2009-2010

The year started with 40 children in the school. They were divided into five groups based on their abilities. Three of us Usha, Narasimhan and Chinna were the main teachers. Radha an old student of the school helped us for some time and after she left, a boy who had done his degree in dentistry helped us for some time. We also trained a couple of local teachers to help us with the four year olds. Subsequently these two girls left because they were getting married.

Children were divided into five groups. The four year olds were taught a lot of rhymes. They were given a lot of oral exercises in language and mathematics besides activities like puzzles, crayon work and games. The second group of five year olds was introduced to English. This was done through a graded oral, reading and writing exercises involving a lot of worksheets developed by Usha. They were also introduced to Mathematics through a series of activities and work sheets. The other three groups of six, seven, eight year olds in a span of a year and a half could pick up enough English to go to the level of sentence formations and hence could do a fair amount of reading and writing. They were also doing some serious lessons in sciences about animals, birds, living and nonliving things etc.

Apart from academics children had done some excellent work in handicrafts. They had done paintings, paper folding, needlework, mobiles, rangoli, small toys, etc. They had also made models of birds they had seen around the school and face masks of animals they had seen and heard of. They were also taken out on bird watching trips as a part of their study of birds. Subsequently they made paper models of birds.

They were taken out to interact with the children of another school.

Slowly we are introducing them to computers with the help of a few interactive c.d.s we have at the school. On the whole it had been an enjoyable year for the teachers and the students.

Visitors: A young man from coastal Andhra Pradesh visited the school. He took the children on a field trip and showed them various plants, told them their names and their uses. He also taught the children a few yoga exercises which we have continued after he had left.

A lady from Nellore came and spent a week with us to study the methods used in teaching Telugu. She also taught us making of masks using paper and plaster of Paris.

Workshops: All the teachers of the school attended a workshop conducted at another school. It was a workshop on some simple experiments in physics, to not only teach children physical principles but also to encourage them to think laterally.

Trainings: We trained a group of about sixty teachers from four different districts in Andhra Pradesh in teaching of Telugu to primary grade children, in methods developed by Usha. The work books developed by us are being used by these teachers in Government schools. We also conducted a review of the educational programme of another NGO. We trained some village girls in using Phonetics in teaching English for the beginners in the Government schools.