

# Literary Festival in English

*A reflection on how the literary festival conducted in English helped the teacher in building rapport with the school and parental community while improving learning in children.*

I have started trying the ACE program in class 5. There are 14 students in the class. For 20 days, we engaged in discourses like description, conversation, story narration and poems. I discussed with the students about exhibiting their writings to the parents and the public. They were very excited. I asked the children whether we should exhibit the same products that they produced during those 20 days or some new ones. Children wished to exhibit new ones. So, I showed them some more pictures and asked them to write as many discourses as they could. Almost all the students came out with descriptions and conversations. A few wrote narrative and poems as well. Children were very interested as they knew their creative writings were going to be read by their parents and public. While they were writing, I gave them optimal support - by supplying spelling and English equivalent of words they asked for. Students drew pictures corresponding to their writings.

The head master supported me during this process. He gave me full freedom, visited my classroom, and observed the process as well. My colleagues also supported me by spending their class time to prepare for the festival.

On the day of exhibition, students displayed their products. At first, the head master inaugurated the fest and went through the students' products. He interacted with the students and felt happy. Then our school teachers visited and read each and every product with passion, and appreciated the students. Usually in government schools,



parents never visit the school often, unless there is an urgent need. I expected the parents of all 14 students to come; but only a few had come. However, parents of a few students in the other classes visited the fest. After hearing about this event from the parents who visited, a few more villagers came to school and listened to the students' presentations.

Each student read out their products to the visitors. A girl read aloud her products to her mother. She even translated her ideas into Tamil wherever it was necessary. She wanted to make sure that her mother understood her ideas. Students were explaining each line to the visitors in Tamil, after reading them in English. Parents were so happy to see that their children could express their ideas in English.

After hearing a girl read out her products, one of the parents was curious to know if that child had studied in any private school previously. They were astonished to know that a government

school student could express herself so well in English. She was particularly amazed about the child's reading skill.

Eventually all students took their products home and presented them to their parents and neighbours. Many parents of students from other classes approached me and requested me to teach their students in the new method. I felt so

happy that I had done something beneficial for the students. We have also decided to conduct such literary festivals often as they will really help us to build a rapport with the community. As an extension, I have also thought of making students' magazines at the end of the year. I hope that it will come out well.



**James Kumar**  
PST, GPS Aranganoor