



MULYAVARDHAN

SHANTILAL MUTTHA FOUNDATION

The Mulyavardhan Voice

October 2018 Issue

NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Hello ABE and DSE schools! We hope you are all doing well and had a bright and happy Diwali. In this issue of “The Mulyavardhan Voice”, our feature piece is about the first Teacher Forum of the year, held on the 25th of October. It was a huge success, as everyone invited attended the session with their ideas and insights. We hope future forums will be just as enthusiastic!

We also have a note from Madhavi Kalbele, our Goa state coordinator, who conducted classroom observations throughout this month.

Finally, as always, we have a resource page for you. This month’s value is autonomy, which is all about independent thought and expression.

November is a special month because the 14th is Children’s Day. We hope that you take some time to reflect on this musing by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, the inspiration for this day because of his contribution to the Indian education system.

***“The children of today will make the India of tomorrow.
The way we bring them up will determine the future of the country”.***

Thank you for reading and we hope that you enjoy this issue!

THE FIRST TEACHER FORUM

**-by Navjot Kohli
& Madhavi Kalbele**



Mrs. Evelynna Fernandese Dacosta, Immaculate Conception Primary School (Paroda),
Mrs. Remina Sanches, St. Andrews Insititute (Vasco),
Miss SuvidhaBakal, St. Ann’s School (Quelossim),
Miss Apurva Ramnathkar, Mae Dos Pobres High School (Nuven), Miss Inacy Fernandes, Saviour of the World High School (Loutolim), Mrs Ana J. Fernandes, Santa Cruz High School (Santa Cruz), Ms. Velanni B. Mendes, Regina Martyrun High School (Assolna),
Mrs Annabela de Souza, Rosary High School (Navelim), Mrs Felcia Vieina, Rosary High School (Navelim), Mrs Wency Fernandes, St. Joseph Educational Institute (Chandor), Mrs Olvita D’Silva, St. Thomas High School (Cansaulim) Mrs Magoheleru Pereira, Our Lady of Destero High School (Vasco),
Madhavi Kalbele SMF Team, Goa

The first Mulyavardhan (MV) Teacher Forum was held on October 25 at the Clergy Home in Margao. Teachers from the 10 invited schools attended the forum, including our two Teacher Forum Coordinators, Ana J. Fernandes and Annabella D’Souza. The forum was very interactive with a lot of sharing from all the teachers.

For the MV team, it was very reassuring to learn that overall the programme is going well and children are enjoying their MV classes. The schools implementing MV for the second year are able to see clearly the development of values in their children. It was encouraging also to learn from schools implementing MV this year that they are already seeing changes in their children. The most important thing is that all teachers expressed how their children are enjoying the MV classes and are very engaged in the activities. Some teachers are also applying MV teaching learning strategies to the other subjects.

THE FIRST TEACHER FORUM

LET’S SEE WHAT THE TEACHERS HAD TO SAY:



Many teachers observed that children are sharing more now. They said children don't have to be told to share and do this automatically, whether it is their tiffin or a pencil they have to share. They also observed that the incidents of fighting and bullying amongst children has decreased.

Remina Sanchez:

....(there is this) activity on “My Timetable”. With this activity they had to come and present in front of the class and the entire class was so quiet and listening to the presentations. You know for small children it is very surprising, they would also say, “Oh really you do that, I don’t do that” or “I wake up at such and such time”. They were showing so much interest.

Another thing was stress activity. First I didn’t tell them the meaning of the word and they said is it tension and I said it is the same. I was shocked to hear how many examples of stress/tension they had, like, exams, tuition, when they don’t bring a book to class or when they don’t do their homework, etc. It was really surprising how much stress they take for small small things.

Then I asked them, is it good to have this stress, and they said no. So I said, “To overcome this, what are the solutions?” You know they could give solutions. For example, I would ask, “What is the solution to stress of not doing the homework?” and they would say, “We should do our homework.” So in their small way they could come up with solutions. They were really very good at it.

Inacy Fernandes:

With MV we are seeing a lot of changes. Children’s listening skills have developed and also their questioning skills. They have now learnt to work in pairs and share their opinions. They have also learnt how to love nature and how to take care of it. They are becoming good in helping people in need and understanding the value of truth, respecting others and also to follow school rules. Children have learnt to cooperate with each other through cooperative rules. Community circle is

helping them to develop public speaking. Through MV activities students have learnt dignity of people. The have learnt new words and are learning to form sentences and so they are more expressive. They are becoming independent in thinking and expressing their views and have also learnt to accept answers by other students.

Olvita D’Silva:

Learning through activities works well and they learn freedom to express on their own, their ambitions and what is close to them. Basic manners and discipline start to grow in students and they get to know more about themselves. They are developing social behaviour to become active members of society. They are learning consequences of certain behaviours and actions...MV is very helpful and encouraging. Even the students who don’t what to be involved feel excited to do the activities given in the book.

Velanni Mendes:

As soon as I went back to the class (after the training) I used the quiet signal and it is working very well. Also I used the cooperative game where the pencil is balanced on the head and if it falls your friend has to help put it back. I take PE for 3rd std and I did this activity with them. They had to cooperate and were telling each other don’t walk fast and walk together, go slow and so even the ones who were not talking before also started talking. Every time we had PE this was the game they wanted to play. I teach std 2 and I asked those who are smarter to teach others small small things. I also paired in class 2 a talkative child with a quiet one. Initially they didn’t like this but now they don’t want to change places at all.



THE FIRST TEACHER FORUM

LET'S SEE WHAT THE TEACHERS HAD TO SAY:

Teachers also gave suggestions on some activities to be included in the books. They also shared some challenges they faced in their classes.

Velanni Mendes:

Two situations took place in class that were challenging for me. When we have birthdays in class and some children bring chocolates for their teachers. Usually they go with one more person to give the chocolate. So after we sang the birthday song for this student she wanted to go and give the chocolates and I asked who would like to go with her. A boy raised his hand and the boy next to him said, "Why are you going, girls should go with girls and boys should go with boys. Why you going? Are you a girl?" I said, "What is wrong with him going?" I told the boy "If you want to go, then go." But I didn't come back to this topic.

We came back from Ganesh break and one Catholic child said your Ganesh is not good. That was one place where I faced difficulty. I dealt with it by saying all have seen apple and they said yes. So I asked them what color apple and they gave different colors, red, green, etc. Same way it is with God. If I am a Catholic it is Jesus Christ, if I am

a Hindu it is Lord Ganesh. It is each one's belief. If I bring in a stone tomorrow and say it is God for me, then we have to respect that opinion and I ended it there. So I think there should be activities on these.

It can get tricky! Velanni has given us an example of difficult situations that need to be corrected/explained to students carefully.

Have you had these types of difficult conversations with students? How did you handle it? Please do share on WhatsApp.

We also understand that some of you may have a tough time getting a hold of the MV strategies. That is completely fine; this is not an overnight switch! Please feel free to reach out to us and we can address your questions and challenges.

We thank again the schools and teachers who participated in the forum. We have sent the full transcript of the forum in the WhatsApp groups, so please go ahead and read it for an in-depth look.

A big thank you to Sister Jasmine, Father Jesus, and Father Arnaldo for making the arrangements. We look forward to seeing more schools and teachers in the next forum.

MEET THE COORDINATORS



Ana J. Fernandes

Ana teaches Primary Standard 1 at Santa Cruz Primary School, Santa Cruz.

School Tel: 2449378



Annabella D'Souza

Annabella is the Primary head and is not a class teacher at Rosary Primary School, Navelim.

School Tel: 2737940 / 2710027

We are glad to introduce you to the coordinators of the Teacher Forum. Ana will be responsible for the North and Central Forums and Annabella for the South Forums. If you have any questions regarding the forum you can contact Ana (9881997043) or Annabella (9822126828) as well as Madhavi (8839073347)

The next 3 teacher forums will be on the 1st, 8th and 15th December. Schools will be informed on the venue and time a week before the forum. See you at the next forum!!



NOTE FROM MADHAVI KALBELE

A FEW OF YOU HAVE PROBABLY MET MADHAVI, AS SHE RECENTLY CONDUCTED CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS IN SOME SCHOOLS!



Hello everyone! I've been visiting schools this month, and it has been a wonderful opportunity for me to observe how some of you are implementing MV in the classroom.

I am happy to see that your students are learning by being fully involved in the activities. I observed a first standard class, in which the teacher was conducting an activity on good health habits, and she told the students to make groups of four to five students each. In one group, I noticed that when a child said that he doesn't like to drink milk, the other students began insisting that milk is really healthy and he needs to drink it! It was cute to see the first standard students telling him this, and it was also surprising how quickly they understood what good health habits are.

In another school, I noticed that there were many students in one class and it was difficult for the teacher to get their attention for the activity. The teacher tried different methods, but then she started playing songs and games. Suddenly the students were interested, and that interest remained throughout the activity.

I would also like to make a few suggestions to you all, in order to deliver impactful Mulyavardhan activities.

- One thing I observed is that many teachers are not following the MV programme sequence. It is important to follow the sequence of activities in the teacher activity book because each unit builds on the previous unit. Please start from "Me and My Capabilities" followed by "Me and My Responsibilities", "Me and My Relationships", and end with "Me and the World".

- Before conducting any activity, please refer to the teacher activity book and follow the steps in the Procedure. If you read the steps carefully, you will have clear guidance on how to conduct the activity.
- I found at some of the schools, teachers are taking examinations for MV. I request you not to follow this practice as this is not a part of the MV curriculum and essence.
- Cooperative learning structures are a very important part of MV. They include "think-pair-share", group work, and community circle. Cooperative learning structures are very important because they give the students an opportunity to think critically and creatively. It also helps them inculcate the value of autonomy, in expressing their own views and in being sensitive enough to receive other views.

I have noticed that MV classes in many schools are taken by teachers who did not attend the training, but were trained by those who attended. This is fine, but we have some suggestions for the teachers who are training other teachers in MV. Be sure to emphasize:

1. Open-ended questions
2. The quiet signal
3. Using cooperative learning structures in every session
4. How to read an activity in the Teacher Activity book

At any point, if you have any queries, you can refer to the CDs and the teacher guidebook, which are available in every school.

Thank you and keep up the good work!



Our Lady of Grace High school,
Bicholim



St. Francis Xavier Hs,
Mapusa

MULYAVARDHAN RESOURCES

THIS MONTH’S VALUE IS AUTONOMY.

Mulyavardhan defines autonomy as expressing independent thinking and expression, with respect for others’ right to do so.

Here are a few resources for you all to use in your classrooms to strengthen your students’ autonomy.



VIDEO: “BIRDS ON A WIRE” BY PIXAR”

This video shows what happens when you simply follow what everybody else is doing without thinking for yourself. Show this video to your students and then ask them: “If you were a bird on that wire, would you do anything differently? What and how?”

-by Aparna Tirmale

SHIVANI’S RIGHT TO AUTONOMY

I met a 9 year old girl, Shivani, in a park one day, where she was playing a game of questions and answers with her friends. I noticed that Shivani was copying her friends’ answers instead of creating her own.

I wondered why she was copying answers when she could exercise her creativity and speak up. I see this often in my classroom, but I try to encourage students to make their own answers. I wanted to see if I could encourage Shivani to do the same, so I approached the group to learn more about the game.

Then I asked the other children to resume the game, and I turned to Shivani. I asked her, “Shivani, why were you copying your friends’ answers?”

Her response shocked me.

“Whenever my teacher asks me questions in school, I always copy other’s answers and she never says anything. She appreciates my answers.”

So I asked her, “How many students are in your class?” “Fifty!” she said.

I immediately understood why the teacher didn’t encourage Shivani. Big classrooms are overwhelming, and all the class time is spent on ensuring the students are following the syllabus and that the classroom is well-managed.

If we don’t encourage our children’s autonomy, how will they be able to express their ideas and thoughts as they grow older, in the world’s largest democracy?

Here are some common teacher practices in the classroom that affect the value of autonomy:

- **Imposing our own ideas/thoughts on children**
We often impose our thoughts on children. We tell them that what we say is the only correct and sufficient answer, so they do not need to think on it further or ask questions. For example, we ask “Yes or no, children?” and “Right or wrong, children?” Children say “Yes teacher” and they’re saying this mechanically. This does not measure how much they have learned and understood.
- **Encouraging copied answers**
We should encourage children to give different answers from their classmates. To receive different answers, we can rephrase our questions so that they can spark ideas in our students, and we should practice asking open-ended questions that encourage students to express their opinions rather than facts.
- **Not giving students enough time to think**
Sometimes, we ask questions and expect immediate answers from students because there is limited time. If a child fails to answer in few seconds, the teacher asks another student. It takes time for children to think; it is important to give them that time, so they feel encouraged and are able to express that they understand your lesson.

-by Pallawi Singh



“I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say!”

TIPS TO DEVELOP YOUR STUDENTS’ AUTONOMY

1. Give your students the space to express and be sure to acknowledge their efforts.

When students express their individual views in your classroom, you are creating a nonjudgmental and safe space. A classroom is meant to be a safe space for students to learn and be themselves. Allow students to share their answers to your open-ended questions, because allowing children to speak for themselves is respecting their dignity, and respecting who they are. Always be sure to acknowledge their sharing and praise their efforts.

2. Allow your students to take certain responsibilities.

Every day, try to give your students small tasks to stimulate his/her desire to try something new and feel a sense of accomplishment. You can assign them tasks such as arranging chairs in groups, collecting notebooks, cleaning the board, etc. Each student will have his/her own way of completing the task and that can show you how s/he thinks and approaches certain things. Remind them if they forget, but let them to do the tasks independently.

3. Encourage your students through the learning process by asking for their ideas.

When we ask students for their ideas to a certain problem or incident, they often come up with great solutions, and sometimes they can even teach us something new. Cheer on your students and praise them for their sharing and their accomplishments. This will make them feel more motivated to learn and take interest in what you are teaching.

4. Allow your students to make their own experiences.

Are you constantly stressed with the limited time you have for class? If a child is determined to try something new, give him/her the opportunity and time to go through the process. Be supportive. If they succeed, you will be pleasantly surprised. If they don’t, they will learn from the experience and you will be right there by their side. Learn to stay calm and allow your students to learn by experimentation.

-by Sneha Pathak

10 WAYS TO INCREASE STUDENT TALK

1. Allow and expect students to talk in the classroom. They should get used to sharing their ideas. They have to see it as an acceptable and good practice.
2. Insist that when someone is talking, others should listen keenly. To not listen attentively to someone is to insult that person.
3. Ask “Why do you think so?” often (followed usually by “How?” or “Tell us more clearly”).
4. See that students use the word “because” often.
5. Do not accept one-word answers from students. If you repeatedly get one-word answers, it means you are asking the wrong questions!
6. Wait for answers. Give students time to think...it leads to better answers. Don't allow the students to raise their hands till you ask for a response.
7. Avoid asking the student who puts his hand up first to give an answer. It discourages other students from thinking.
8. After any answer to an open-ended question, ask the other students, “What do you think?”
9. Move away from where you usually stand in the classroom. Move closer to and among the students. It will increase their participation, and change the way they view you.
10. Don't talk for more than three minutes at a stretch. It will put many students to sleep. (Students are very good at “sleeping with eyes open”).

-by Ashok Gopal
MV Content Development

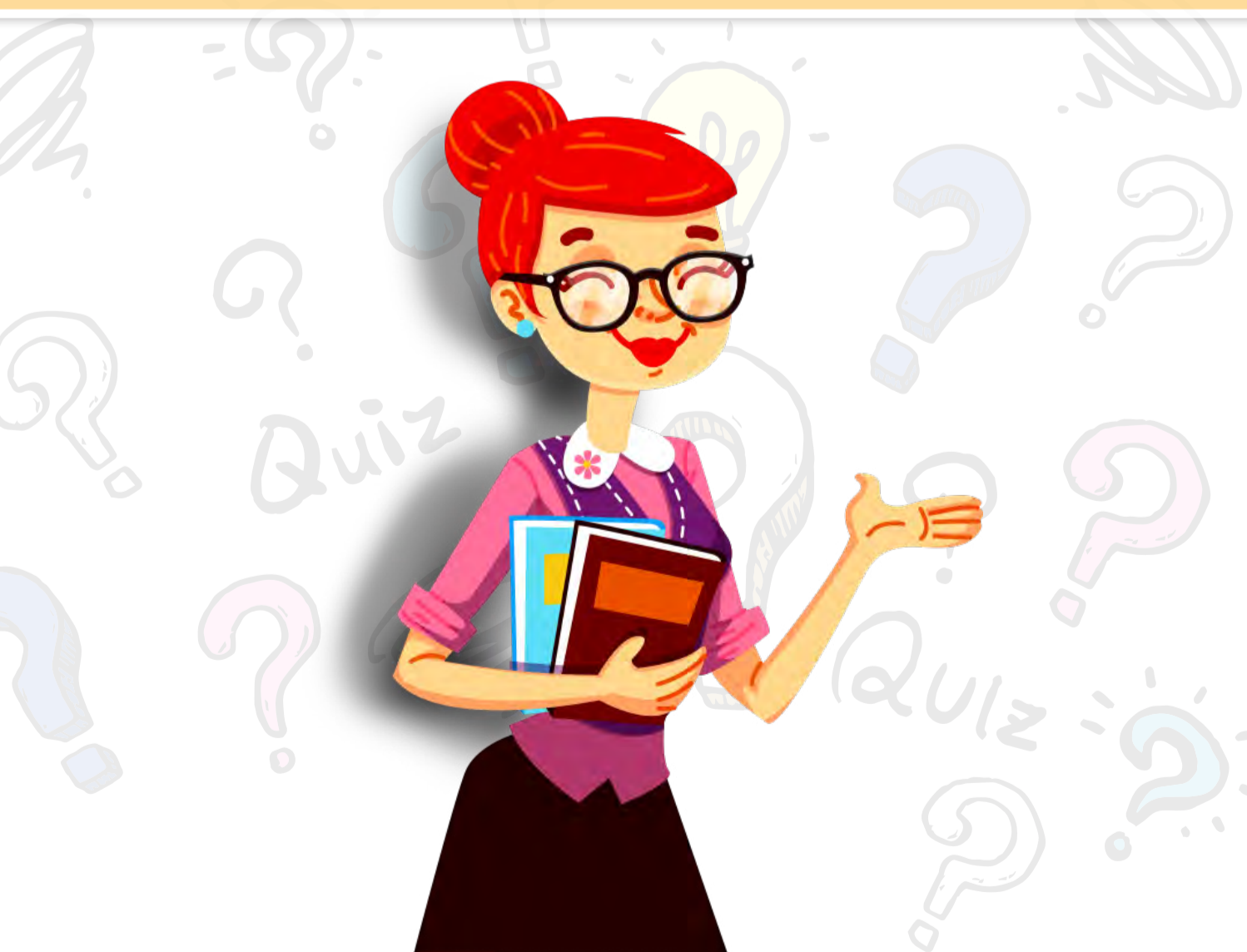


We did not receive any correct responses to September's quiz on the WhatsApp group, so no one will receive a special mention here.

To avoid this, send your answer to this month's question on your WhatsApp group as soon as you think of an answer!

Question: Send three examples of open-ended questions, according to the question types that you learned in the training. The first should be a “Consequence” question. The second should be an “Analysis” question. And the third should be a “Compare and Contrast” question.

***suggestion:** Please stay away from questions that you would ask in the science classroom.



Dear teacher and HMs, since you are all on holidays, our next issue will be one focusing on the “Behind the Scenes” of Mulyavardhan. How did the program begin? How was the content created? We'll discuss these details and more in interviews with integral members of the Mulyavardhan team. Happy Holidays, and, of course, stay in touch!