

The Centre's Work with Young Students

'How can one believe in oneself - what is the way to do it?' A young student of Modern School (Barakhamba Road) rushed up to the speaker with this question, as soon as the talk finished. This is just one example of the kind of questions that the young children today are seeking answers for. On the surface is the personality of superficial pursuits - a facade that often makes the grown-ups despair and label the children as disinterested in the deeper values of life. But underneath, just waiting to be kindled into a flame, is the spark of heartfelt quest for the truth of life and their own identity. Over and over again, we have met students whose eyes sparkle with a secret knowledge of their potential, the forward movement of evolution, their own place in the destiny of the world. Not only do they share their dreams and their seeking, they are eager to take the first steps in developing themselves as the builders of the future, who are in control of their own selves.

As a response, the Gnostic Centre has taken up a number of activities in the last few months, that are specifically focused on young children and school students. These are:

TALKS FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS: As part of the series, 'In Search of the Soul of India', the Centre has held talks at Apeejay school (Saket), Sardar Patel vidyalaya and Modern school (Barakhamba). These interactions have led to further actions, not only with the students, but with the teachers as well.

After the talk at Modern School, some young students (along with one of their teachers) took the initiative to visit the Gnostic Centre, as they had many questions which required a longer and more intimate interaction. Some of them took back books to deepen their understanding of the issues they were concerned with.

At the Sardar Patel vidyalaya, the teachers opted to visit the Gnostic Centre for a full day session on Self-development and Education (23rd Sep'99), as a precursor to further activities.



Sardar Patel vidyalaya students during the talk: 'Power of Attitude' (speaker: Ameeta Mehra)



Modern school students asking questions after the talk: 'The Indian Genius' (speaker: Sraddhbalu Ranade)



Modern school students in a question-answer session during their visit to the Gnostic Centre



Modern school students looking through books in the Gnostic Centre library



Apeejay school (Sheikh Sarai) has taken the initiative to introduce some form of meditation for children of classes 4 to 12. The Gnostic Centre is presently holding one-hour sessions with these students, in batches of two sections at a time, to teach them simple forms of quietening and widening the mind and self-observation.

INTERACTIVE, CREATIVE AND MEDITATIVE SESSIONS WITH CHILDREN (at the Gnostic Centre):



Going for an Animal Walk (Discovering Your Hidden Treasures)

Children learn best in an environment of beauty and silence. The Centre’s meditation hall draws them irresistibly - even the youngest ones enter with a feeling of quiet joy and respond to the Presence that infuses it. This year we have made a conscious effort to develop and set up spaces that can provide different shades of an enriching learning environment for the children – the quiet central space (meditation hall), the warm, friendly and interactive study centre, the outdoor activity circle suitable for messy work, the playground with swings and sand-pit under the trees.



On to the Tyre Swings! (Discovering Your Hidden Treasures)

After exploring the joy of creative crafts during the summers, with children, the Centre is now holding two programmes concurrently, for the age groups 4-12. As the names suggest – Discovering Your Hidden Treasures (4-8) and My Master Mind (8-12), these are founded upon

the faith in a child’s innate abilities and knowledge.

Through ‘Discovering Your Hidden Treasures’, the children explore the world of Creativity, Aesthetic Sense and Gross and Fine Motor Skills, with puppets, theatre, arts, crafts, music, movement. Through ‘My Master Mind’, they bring into play their mental faculties of Observation, Concentration and Imagination – with the idea of developing a scientific attitude in whatever they learn and do.



Young scientists: making models (My Master Mind)



Making masks (My Master Mind)

Both these programmes aim at levels deeper than information or even skills. They concern themselves with drawing forth and training the faculties that are the basic tools for any learning – alongwith instilling the basics of stillness, meditation, silence, quiet mind, in children.



The young puppeteers at work, and the puppet show (Discovering Your Hidden Treasures)

