

Joy in the Classroom by Teach for India

Teach for India (TFI) staff and fellows led by example as they conducted a session in Joy in the Classroom for participants, telling them how to make the classroom a joyful place for the children. Creating groups, having teams, asking the participants to come up with team chants, rewarding participation and correct answers and generally creating an air of enthusiasm in the air, Maureen Ferry showed participants how the classroom could be made into a really fun place. "Spreading joy and celebrating student success is the most," said Maureen Ferry, the training director at Teach for India. Teach for India fellows also shared their experiences about learning could be made a lot of fun and how lasting knowledge can be built by using props, being creative and creating a joyful atmosphere. Srinu Swaminathan, a 2010 fellow with Teach for India has brought the world in the classroom for his children. From a cotton candy man who came and made cotton candy for the kids in class, to a beauty parlour right in the classroom, to letting the children learn about a tortoise by actually bringing a tortoise in class are only some of the things that Srinu has managed to do in his one year in the classroom. "Happiness must be the foundation of every classroom and it is important to make the classroom and cheerful and happy place where children will be more invested in learning and education," said Srinu.

Chaitra Murlidhar, a 2010 fellow from Pune has an elaborate public academic tracker in the class where the students can see how much progress they have made in math and English in the year. "Excellence in academics will earn the children golden tickets which means an opportunity to visit a cool place," said Chaitra. Apart from academic excellence children can also be a part of a number of clubs like the art club, dance club, music club etc thereby getting an opportunity to excel at other fields too.

Alika Clark, a program manager with TFI at Pune also spoke about how having fake money in his class which could be redeemed for goodies worked wonders with his kids and got them really motivated.

The entire TFI team stressed on the fact that simple ways to make the children feel special and happy could go a long way in making the classroom a place where children feel like coming and learning.

-Revathi Ramanan

-Sindhu Ankisettipalle