

EKLAVYA સરી

EKLAVYA EDUCATION FOUNDATION
Ahmedabad, INDIA

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Dedicated to

Teachers, Principals and School Managements

**who strive endlessly to make the teaching-learning process
a joyous endeavour**

**their endless strive neither expects nor awaits an applause
the only reward is the smile on the face of the student**

Preface

सरू is an ancient Sanskrit word meaning 'pravahati' or 'flowing'. Pravahati is more evocative than its English translation 'flowing'. Pravahati evokes images of - abundance, richness in diversity, dancing gaily as it flows, giving khulle dil se, bringing bounty and happiness wherever it goes, eager to reach out and share and belief that by sharing we actually grow. Eklavya सरू is that sharing from Eklavya School.

Before setting up Eklavya, we visited about 150 schools and colleges in seven countries, all with a basic question - what is a school; and then about 300 other small-small questions like what is the height of students in different classes (so we can design staircases, urinals, shelf-heights). We met the Director/ Principal, we brainstormed with the teachers, attended classes, slept in the hostels sometimes, etc. After starting Eklavya, we continued sending educators to other schools (typically for a week) to expose them to best practices. In many schools our educators were welcomed, allowed to attend classes, visit the library, etc.

In the last twelve years, Eklavya has welcomed schools from Jalandhar to Kakinada and Porbandar to Aligarh to come and visit. This has been a very enriching experience for both teams. They typically stay with us for three to five days and observe classes and the working of the school in minute detail. Sometimes they stay for a month or two. At the end of their stay they give a presentation and identify practices they will go back and implement.

In nearly all of these presentations, they request us to document our working. They say that here one actually sees all that is said happening every day. They saw ordinary people motivated into putting in extraordinary effort. We did put together some details into a power-point presentation. This presentation became bigger and bigger over time, and now this book.

In this book, we have transparently shared all that we do in great detail the process and the outcome. Here Eklavya is sharing small-small details of various aspects of running a school. Most of them are day-to-day aspects and some are conceptual or what we call

'philosophical' insights. Each individual point is called a 'सरी', eg सरी no 25. Thus, we have woven single सरीs into the main सरी- the book. Some सरीs are focussed towards the teacher, some for the Principal and some for the trustees or Managements. It can be said that some 'सरीs' nourish the body of the school and some enrich its soul!

This 'giving' is offered with modesty and humility not for once assuming that what we do is considered to be the right thing. We invite the reader the teacher to write to us and share and question. Teachers will try some things we do and find out new ways of making them work. This will enrich us also.

Foreword

There are many reasons why we are honoured and happy to write this foreword. Of course the first is to see an organization that one was a part of helping start reach a level of maturity when it is able to share a long list of practices. (Though Eklavya does not call them that, many of these would, in our opinion, qualify to be called 'best practices' but more on that later). But that is not the only reason.

We often ask ourselves and others this question – "Why is it that, as a society, we are able to come up with better and cheaper models of mobile phones and even cars every few months, but are not able to improve the quality of our school education over decades?" It is a moot question and we do not claim to have the complete answer. But we believe that at least part of the answer lies in the fact that as an educational community we are not putting in as much systematic, focused and high-quality effort to solve challenging problems in education. Professional communities that build mobile phones and cars have a rich discourse – professional bodies and affiliations, research journals, certification and training programmes that get updated regularly, forums to share learnings and mechanisms to attract the best and brightest to the profession. We lack almost all of these in education. And that is where we see the compilation of 'Eklavya स्तरी' as a pioneering contribution – it will build a database of ideas that the education community can learn from, debate and add to.

Sharing what we have done or tried to do is probably the best way we can help the field develop. We often bemoan that we do not have a healthy research culture in India – painfully evident in education. But what is 'research'? Though it sounds esoteric, research is essentially 'peer review' of work done systematically. If a person working in a field discovers something interesting, the best people who can comment on it, benefit from it, disagree with it or add value to it are others who work equally deeply in that field. That is peer-review. Eklavya स्तरी presents practices, clearly listed out, to the education and larger community. Its contents will prove valuable to individuals and groups interested in starting schools. Rather than reinvent the wheel and make the same mistakes and learn, here is a useful compendium, which others can build on.

The other reason we like this collection, is that it represents a philosophy we respect greatly – 'Go deep and solve real problems'. Somebody once commented to one of us, 'but teaching 6th class children is not rocket science, is it?' We believe the appropriate response is, 'No, it's tougher!'

Figuring out the best way to make something work best in a school is not easy, and it sometimes takes many iterations and attempts. Such efforts are greatly aided by a systematic documentation of successes and failures. This often happens during the tenure of a principal, or within an individual institution - Eklavya ऋषि allows that process to happen across the entire community of schools. It allows us to ask ourselves "What is the best way of giving feedback to students after an exam? What measures have been tried, and what are the experiences? How can we improve on it? etc." School education, today, can benefit a lot from such analyses.

The spirit of sharing that this book represents is the next reason why we are impressed by it. It is not easy to give, but to give without expectation of getting something in return is truly commendable. That spirit of sharing has the power to raise the level of our system, our schools and each educational professional to greater heights – one where our schools too will earn the respect of society.

And last, but not the least – We thought that many of the ideas compiled in this collection are remarkable and deserve to be implemented across all schools! We specifically liked the idea of the Free Elective Project for students (#84) which encourage each student to take up a problem and investigate it. Such explorations at the senior school level are no less than life-shaping in a very meaningful way. The process of induction of the educators (#104) and the Educator Bag (#54), the No Tuitions policy (#131) for students and teachers, and the processes for professional development of educators (#98) are ideas that every school should probably study, and try and emulate.

Sharing one's practices always increases the pool of ideas that other institutions can pick and choose from in building their own unique cultures and ways of doing things. Sharing also brings a discipline to the documentation of processes and activities, beliefs and values. Almost all the ऋषिs are elucidated clearly. We look forward to seeing,

in the next edition, a detailed WHY behind each belief and value statement (eg, why is 100% attendance important, etc.).

We hope that all these ideas and efforts will help improve the quality of education that we provide to our children.

Sridhar Rajagopalan and Venkat Krishnan N.
Ahmedabad & Mumbai
23 November 2008

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*Educational Initiatives works with a vision to create a world where every child – across geographical and socio-economic boundaries - learns with understanding. EI's research is focused on meaningful measurement of student learning, teacher feedback based on such measurement and ways to improve the quality of student learning.
(www.ei-india.com)*

GiveIndia is one of the world's first "philanthropy exchanges" that helps individual donors choose and donate to a wide range of causes of their choice all over India, be it in education, disability, employment, children, women, rural development, environment, etc. GiveIndia expects to channel Rs28cr from more than 100,000 individual donors, to more than 150 NGOs in 2008-09. (www.giveindia.org)

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1. Introduction and Philosophy

Eklavya Education Foundation came into being in the year 1996 with a mission to revolutionize school education in India. It is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization established by young professionals, educators and businessmen to set up and run schools and teacher training colleges in a professional, modern and ethical manner.

Brief Introduction

In the year 1986 a company named Core (started by Mr. Sushil Handa and Mr. Sunil Handa) formulated its investment philosophy, which simply put, is:

The first rupee earned will be reinvested in productive assets (more machines and more sales people)
The second rupee earned will go to the employees in terms of better salaries, working conditions, etc.
The third rupee earned will go to the shareholders.
The fourth rupee earned will go back to the society, from where, in a way, all the four rupees are being earned.

Over a period of time there was intense debate and brainstorming on how to spend the 'fourth rupee'. Many suggestions were put forward - some believed that the fourth rupee should go into building an orphanage, aid for drought and relief fund, building a temple etc, but the way to spend this sum was not found.

After two years Core finally decided to: *Set up and run educational institutions (schools, colleges, ITIs etc.) of a very high standard of excellence.* And a non-governmental, non-partisan, not-for-profit organization was born and this was - Eklavya - which was initially supported by Core, but is now on its own.

Eklavya's Philosophy

Eklavya believes that ***education is an infrastructure, atleast, as important as nation's roads, electricity and telecom. It plays a fundamental role in determining the prosperity and well-being of its citizens. Progressive nations have strategically invested heavily in education on a long-term basis.***

Education is also the only 'real', long term solution to the problem and challenges faced by a nation. The nature of education determines the character and skills of the next generation and more specifically, pre-primary and primary education are the most crucial, as they deal with the ages when the basic character of an individual is formed.

Eklavya's mission is to work towards bringing about a revolution in the field of school education through a multi-pronged approach. Broadly, Eklavya will:

- set up and run high quality schools,
- work to create conditions that will attract the best minds to the field of education including creating such persons through high quality training.
- work to integrate parents and other members of the community in the educational process, and
- encourage and aid adoption of relevant modern technology as a significant educational enabler.

Eklavya's approach is a hands-on one. It will seek to influence more by *practice*, than by *precept*, say, trying to influence at a policy level. High quality schools, effective teacher training programmes and demonstrated improvements in teaching methods would be Eklavya's desired vehicles of change.

The central aim and purpose of all education is the child. Eklavya believes that every child is unique and has inborn gifts and talent. The role of the school and its educators is to help the child *discover* and *develop* her talents by focusing individually on her, and not in a "mass production manner".

2. Structure of Schools

The entire school (Nur – 12) of 1500 students (right now 1250) is divided into four schools. Each school has a Principal and staff under her. The staff comprises of educators, an executive assistant, housekeeping staff and lab assistants (wherever needed).

The summary table below shows the basic broad structure and facilities in each school –

Sr	School	Classes	Sections per Class	No. of students/ section	Total No. of students
1.	Pre School	Nur -SKg	5	20	300
2.	Junior School	1 - 4	4	25	400
3.	Middle School	5 - 8	4	25	400
4.	Senior School	9 –12	4	25	400

Each school has its own timings and a day schedule that makes it possible for basic infrastructure like the buses (transportation), playgrounds, computer labs, dance, music, art and craft and wooden block room to be used by the whole school in a staggered fashion. Thereby avoiding duplication of resources and maximum utilization of all infrastructures available in the school. (By staggering we achieve tremendous benefit – better utilization of all resources)

School Timings

Sr	School	Classes	School timings - Students	School timings - Educators
1	Pre School	Nur JKg& SKg	9.00 am to 1.00 pm (M – F) Visits – 8.00 am to 12.00 1 st , 3 rd & 5 th (1 st , 3 rd & 5 th S)	7.25 am to 1.00 pm (M–Th) 7.25 am to 3.00 pm(F) 8.00 am to 12.00 1 st , 3 rd & 5 th (1 st , 3 rd & 5 th S) 9.00 am to 1.00 pm (2 nd & 4 th S)
2	Junior School	1 – 4	7.25 am to 1.00 pm (M – F) 7.25 am to 1.00 pm (1 st , 3 rd & 5 th S) 2 nd & 4 th Saturdays - Holidays	7.25 am to 3.00 pm (M – F) 7.25 am to 1.00 pm (1 st , 3 rd & 5 th S) 9.00 am to 1.00 pm (2 nd & 4 th S)
3	Middle School	5 – 8	7.25 am to 3.00 pm (M – F) 7.25 am to 3.00 pm (1 st , 3 rd & 5 th S) 2 nd & 4 th Saturdays - Holidays	7.25 am to 3.00 pm (M – F) 7.25 am to 3.00 pm (1 st , 3 rd & 5 th S) 9.00 am to 1.00 pm (2 nd & 4 th S)
4	Senior School	9 – 12	9.00 am to 4.30 pm (M – F) 9.00 am to 4.30 pm (1 st , 3 rd & 5 th S) 2 nd & 4 th Saturdays - Holidays	9.00 am to 4.30 pm(M – F) 9.00 am to 4.30 pm (1 st , 3 rd & 5 th S) 9.00 am to 1.00 pm (2 nd & 4 th S)

3. Day Schedules of Schools

Day Schedule of Pre School

Outdoor Free Play	25 minutes	9.00 – 9.25
Assembly	15 minutes	9.25 – 9.40
Class P1	80 minutes	9.40 – 11.00
Break	30 minutes	11.00 – 11.30
Class P2	85 minutes	11.30 – 12.55

Day Schedule of Junior School –

Home Period	15 minutes	7.25 – 7.40
Daily Assembly	20 minutes	7.40 – 8.00
Classes P1 & P2	35 minutes	8.00 – 9.10
1 st Break	25 minutes	9.10 – 9.35
Classes P3 – P5	35 minutes	9.35 – 11.20
2 nd Break	15 minutes	11.20 – 11.35
Classes P6 & P7	35 minutes	11.35 – 12.45
Home Period	15 minutes	12.45 – 1.00

The curriculum and timetable is designed to have value education, nature club, cubs and bulbul, computers, skating, art, craft, music, dance and sports sprinkled throughout the week.

Day Schedule of Middle School –

Sports	45 minutes	7.25 - 8.10
Change Over	15 minutes	8.10 - 8.25
Home Period	15 minutes	8.25 - 8.40
Assembly	20 minutes	8.40 - 9.00
Class P1	40 minutes	9.00 - 9.40
Class P2& P3	35 minutes	9.40 - 11.00
Lunch Break	30 minutes	11.00 - 11.30
Class P4	40 minutes	11.30 - 12.10
Class P5	35 minutes	12.10 - 12.50
Class P6	40 minutes	12.50 - 1.30
Class P7 (Activity CI 7 & 8)	35 minutes	1.30 - 2.05
Home Period	10 minutes	2.05 - 2.15
Class 8 (Activity CI 5 & 6)	45 minutes	2.15 - 3.00

MS students play sports in the morning – beginning of the day and do activity in the afternoon before they leave. The time in-between (9 am to 2.05 pm) is for academics.

Day Schedule for Senior School

Home Period	15 minutes	9.00 - 9.20
Assembly	15 minutes	9.20 - 9.40
Classes P1 – P4	40 minutes	9.40 to 12.20
Lunch Break	30 minutes	12.20 - 12.50
Activity	40 minutes	12.50 - 1.30
P6	40 minutes	1.30 - 2.10
Change Over Break	10 minutes	2.10 - 2.20
Classes P7 & P8	40 minutes	2.20 - 3.40
Sports	50 minutes	3.40 - 4.20
Change Over	10 minutes	4.20 – 4.30

SS has activities on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and seminars on Tuesday and Thursday. Sports are played at the end of the day.

In addition, educators also spend time over and above their regular school hours to do Home Visits, conduct Mother's Workshops, Clearing Doubt Sessions, Remedials and IPEM's (Individual Parent Educator Meetings).

All of the above are a part of the educators' job and no overtime or compensation is due for these. This is explained in detail at the time of interview and again at the time of appointment.

4. Optimum use of resources by various schools.

Buses, computers, playgrounds and other resources are used across the various schools.

4.1 Buses – The school timings in Eklavya are staggered to suit and give the buses enough running time to comfortably ferry students to and from school.

JS and MS begin their day at 7.25 am. Buses reach the first stop at 6.40 am. Buses leave the first stop at 6.45 am and reach Eklavya School by 7.20 am.

Once all the buses are inside the campus and the students have got off, the buses go back to the city on their various routes to pick up the PS and SS students whose school begins at 9.00 am.

All the buses leave the first stop for this trip at 8.10 am. They reach school by 8.50 am.

JS (classes 1 to 4) and PS (Nur, JKG and SKG) finish school at 1.00 pm. Students leave the campus at 1.10 pm and the buses drop them and come back to campus by 2.30 pm.

After this, the buses drop the MS students who finish school at 3.00 pm. The buses leave campus at 3.10 pm. These buses then come back to pick up the SS students who finish school at 4.30 pm. The buses leave campus at 4.40 pm. After dropping the students the buses are parked in a parking space on the outskirts of Ahmedabad.
Bus Schedule –

Departure from 1 st stop (JS & MS)	6.45 am Running Time - 35 minutes
Arrival ESA	7.20 am Running Time – 25 minutes
Departure From 1 st stop (PS & SS)	8.10 am Running Time – 40 minutes
Arrival ESA	8.50 am

The time the bus takes in subsequent trips is more since traffic increases as the day gets older. So adequate provision is made in school timings to accommodate this.

4.2 Computers

Eklavya has one Computer Lab (with 25 stand-alone computers) that is used by the entire school. The JS uses the Lab from 7.25 am to 12 noon, MS from 12.05 pm to 1.30 pm and SS from 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm.

The timetables of various schools are adjusted so that maximum use of the computer Lab is achieved and duplication of services that require high maintenance is avoided.

4.3 Playgrounds.

Eklavya has three football grounds, five basketball courts, two volleyball/throw ball courts, a gymnasium with four badminton courts and twelve table tennis tables. We also teach students Yoga and Karate.

Sports Period of various schools is distributed in such a manner that students can use the playground all day. JS has the sports period distributed in its timetable at various time except from 7.25 am to 8.10 am when the entire MS is playing sports. SS students play sports from 3.40 pm to 4.30 pm.

The recess and lunch breaks are also staggered so that at no point of time is there crowding in the playgrounds or gym.

	JS	MS	SS
Lunch	9.10 – 9.35	11.05 – 11.30	12.20 – 12.50
Short Break	11.20 – 11.35	2.05 – 2.15	2.00 – 2.10

4.4 Music and Dance rooms – Music and Dance is an essential part of the curriculum in JS. It is offered as an activity in MS and SS. The time table is so adjusted that the rooms and educators are occupied with JS from 8.40 am to 1.00 pm, with SS from 12.50 pm to 1.30 pm and MS from 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm.

4.5 Art Room – This room is shared by JS and MS. Art and Craft is a regular part of the curriculum for JS and offered as an activity in MS. The JS timetable accommodates Art and Craft periods for various classes from 7.25 am to 1.00 pm and MS from 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm.

4.6 Library – Each of the schools has a library of its own. The library in PS is also a mobile one and educators carry books to the Mother's Workshop held once in two weeks. The books are issued by the

mothers of PS students and this helps inculcate the reading habit in their children.

In JS, MS and SS the libraries are well defined rooms with books that are appropriate for the classes they are meant for.

The MS library has reference books, encyclopedias, magazines and periodicals that students of that age and level enjoy reading and referring to.

The SS library also has many reference books in various subjects, copies of books for entrance exams and many magazines and periodicals that help students in their project work and internal assessments.

Many books like encyclopedias, dictionaries, popular novels and story books (Harry Potter, Enid Blyton) are duplicated across libraries in JS, MS and SS. This is because students do read the same kind of books in the transition from one school to another. (class 4 to 5 and class 8 to 9)

5. 100% Attendance

Eklavya encourages regular attendance of students. Regularity is important. With this aim, 100% attendance awards are given to students every month. The data is collected from the class teacher on the last working day of each month and the names of students getting 100% attendance is announced in the assembly the next day. Students are also given a sticker of appreciation to stick in their diaries.

In PS, JS and MS badges are given every month. The name of the child and the month for which she has received it is written on it. The child then proudly displays the badge for 3 days.

This helps in motivating the students to maintain their record throughout the year. Students getting 100% attendance throughout the year receive a certificate and a medal at the Annual Prize -Giving and Investiture Ceremony. A two-day grace is considered for awarding this certificate but these two days should not be the last working day before a vacation or the first working day after a vacation.

Educators also receive a certificate for 100% attendance for the year on the same day.

Parents who attend the Mother's Workshop 100% are also felicitated on the Investiture Ceremony Day.

This award is a very prestigious one and students come to school regularly and work for it trying not to be absent even for a single day throughout the year. Many times a child may feel slightly sick or low in the mornings. Yet she makes a good effort to be present so that she maybe eligible for the award.

Sunshine Smile Badge

To inculcate the good habit of brushing teeth at night before going to bed, JS gives the children a 'Sunshine Smile' Badge. The children honestly tell their class teachers whether they have followed the good habit for the entire month or not. If not, they do not accept the badge and make a promise to follow the good habit for the next month and win it.

6. Knowing 100% Names of Students

All educators are required to know more than 80% of the students by name and always address them as such.

This is facilitated by the following practices –

- All students and educators wear name tags for one month in the beginning of the academic session
- In their free periods educators may attend other classes
- A class - wise photo - matrix is prepared (In one page 25 photos of students are put with their names). This is then circulated among educators.
- Educators go to each other's classes and take attendance.
- Educators go to each other's classes during lunch break.

One parent shared with us that her child left Eklavya and went to another school. After a year the child came back to Eklavya. On asking the reason for coming back the parent said the child wanted to come back because in the other school he was called – 'that new boy' for the whole year! The sense of belongingness that the child feels with the institution is immense because every adult knows him by name. It gives the child a sense of security and well-being and makes him want to be in school.

The Principal is required to know 100% names of students. She is also expected to know the names of most parents and in many cases their profession/business and family background.

In other words, the Principal is expected to know each student quite well.

The Principal takes 10–16 periods per week in nearly all classes of her school. These are either a subject or Value Education.

In Eklavya the whole school is divided into four schools (PS, JS, MS and SS) and therefore each Principal does not have more than 400 students under her care.

7. 100% prayers

The morning Assembly in each school starts with the blowing of the *shankh* (conch).

After this, students chant a *shloka* and sing a prayer.

All educators and students chant prayers together in the same posture. The educators and students are expected to know all the prayers 100%. To ensure that this takes place, practice is given in the home period.

During assembly for the first month students carry their School Diary which has the prayers printed day-wise so that they learn all prayers by heart.

8. Activities - General

Activities are important. Eklavya believes in holistic development of a child. In the Junior School children are exposed to all the activities namely Music, Dance, Art, Craft, Nature Club, Skating and Computers. A student is given no choice and has to do all activities. Each class has a period allotted to each of the above activities.

After four years when the child reaches MS she chooses an activity that she likes and wants to pursue. So it is in MS that she gets a chance to pick up the nuances of the activity. In MS activities are held four days of the week – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday. Students choose one activity from a list given and pursue it for the entire year.

To enhance the child's creativity, in SS activities are offered twice a week Monday & Tuesday for Class 11 & 12 and Wednesday & Friday for class 9 & 10.

In the beginning of the year, the child chooses (from a range of activities offered) one activity that they pursue twice a week.

The school offers the following activities: Drawing, Painting, Pottery, Knitting-Embroidery and Needle Work, Keyboard, Guitar, Tabla, Drums, Vocal-filmi and non filmi, Western dance, Electronics, Chess and Carrom.

Throughout the year, students get ample opportunity to display their talent, learnt in various activities, be it through Euphoria, Phoenix, Picasso and Inter-house Competitions.

Part-time activity teachers are recruited by the school to teach students. These teachers maintain attendance and also plan what they will teach the students for the entire year.

A letter sent to parents at the beginning of the academic year is given on the next page –

Dear Parent,

10th April, 2009

Following are the activities offered for the academic year 2009-10. You are requested to give your preference as 1 & 2. **Students should submit the form on 6th June, 2009 positively.**

Sr. No	Activity	Preference
1	Keyboard	
2	Knitting & Needle Work	
3	Drawing	
4	Drums	
5	Dance (Maniti Ma'am)	
6	Dance (Archana Ma'am)	
7	Guitar	
8	Mouth Organ	
9	Tabla	
10	Vocal	
11	Drawing & Painting	
12	Wood Work	
13	Theatre	
14	Pottery	

Following are the sports offered for the academic year 2009-10. Each student will select one from the list.

Sr. No	Sport	Please Tick
1	Football	
2	Basketball	
3	Volleyball	
4	Throwball	
5	Yoga*	

* Yoga is twice a week. Students opting for yoga should select one more sport from the list.

For, Eklavya School Ahmedabad

Neha Shah
Principal, Middle School

Name of the Student: _____ Class: _____

Sign of Father: _____

Sign of Mother: _____

Sign of Student: _____

9. Activities - Musical Instruments

Tabla, Keyboard, Guitar, Drums, Mouth Organ and Flute are offered as activities. Some students have an inborn talent for music and art whereas others develop it through these activities. Many students do change their activity when they go from Class 5 to 6 but after that more or less settle down and pursue the activity they are good in.

Music is relaxing. It soothes the mind and helps one overcome the stressful period. It also enhances the creativity and imagination of the students. By playing wind instruments like mouth organ and flute breathing becomes deeper and healthier. The slow and soothing melody gives instant relaxation. Instruments like these are easy to carry and students can play on their own even later in life for relaxation.

Students are encouraged to practice the instrument they learn in school at home also. Most of them buy an instrument for home.

10. Activities - Clay Work

Through clay work as activity students learn to handle the potter's wheel. The class begins with the fun of making the clay dough to giving it different shapes and forms. Students learn to make jewellery, utensils, masks as well as artistic showpieces of clay.

This activity not only develops fine motor skills but also gives a different dimension to the imagination and creativity of the students.

Clay Work is also considered to be very therapeutic - where the children feel calm and relaxed while handling the potter's wheel and the wet clay.

Clay Work is done by the PS students also. Students with special needs have a class everyday. It helps them to give expression to an idea as also helps them develop motor-coordination.

All work that the students do throughout the year is displayed on *Kala Sarjan*.

11. Activities - School Band

School band is an activity wherein children learn to synchronize different musical instruments like drums, euphonium, baritone, Bugle, saxophone, trumpet, and *khanjari*. Students learn and master one instrument and then all of them play a tune together as a team.

Co-ordination of different instruments is an integral part of the school band. Students develop the skill of co-ordination and co-operation with each other during this activity.

We have the entire set. But have not found a band master who knows all the instruments and can teach children. Even if they come they do not continue for long. We wish to have this as an activity and as yet are not successful.

12. Activities - Wood Workshop

Wood Workshop is a curricular subject in MS where children learn to give different shapes to small pieces of wood. Students learn the art of cutting, hammering the nail, screwing and polishing of wood pieces. Students make artistic key holders, pen stands, showpieces by bending the wires and intricate designs on chalk.

Wood Workshop is also offered as an optional activity. Here children learn to handle heavy drilling and sandpaper machines used for finishing of wooden pieces. The scientific principles of screw, pulley and gear learnt during the science classes are made practically clear and applicable.

Students are instructed how to handle machines well, to avoid accidents and are made aware of all safety precautions to be taken during the class.

Wood Workshop activity develops in the students' observational, analytical and organizational skills along with development of fine motor skills. Students learn to take care of one's self and others during the activity classes.

They learn to handle equipment with all safety requirement and precautions. For e.g. – the use of the saw is taught to them or else they will cut their hand. Therefore they develop a sense of responsibility and learn to look after themselves. They take equipment from its place, use it and keep it back and not leave it on the table. This ensures others find it in the proper place for use. They maintain a safe distance and take care of each other's safety.

Like clay modelling this activity is fascinating and gives a sense of satisfaction and achievement to the student who starts with a raw piece of wood and transforms it into a product like a key stand.

All work that the students do throughout the year is displayed on *Kala Sarjan*. Here they see each other's work and compare and improve upon their work the next time.

13. Activities – Embroidery

Here students learn needle and thread work. They learn basic stitches and then move on to make intricate designs.

Students learn to make tea coasters, cross-stitch frame, embroidery on pillow covers, patchwork napkins, soft toys, cross-stitch bags and crochet caps. This activity motivates the student to build up their confidence and concentration by exploring their potential.

This activity teaches children eye - hand co-ordination, to be nimble with their fingers, sense of neatness, enhances aesthetic sense, exposes them to colour combinations and arrangement of patterns.

Most important is that the back of the cloth is paid as much attention as the front of the embroidery for neatness and finesse.

So far only girls opt for this activity and Eklavya is working on how to make it a gender-free activity.

All work that the students do throughout the year is displayed on *Kala Sarjan*.

14. Adhyatmic Camp - Class 11 → 12 students

A camp is held for Class 11 students after their final exams in the month of February. In Eklavya we regularly conduct outdoor camps where the basic purpose is to have an environment where the students can learn things that are almost impossible to teach in a classroom situation.

One of the things in life is to learn “*apne upar kaboo pana*”, learn to take disappointment in life yet keep trying, learn to be *swatantra* – *Swa* (own) and *tantra* (control). The real meaning is ‘I am under my control’ thus implying that I am responsible for my actions and I accept that responsibility.

The word *swatantra* means independence. The word has a very deep and significant meaning. The use of the word independence is superficial – it does not give a feeling of responsibility. One always says – Yes, I want independence. The word *swatantra* makes your heart miss a beat. I – *swa* - am taking on the responsibility. One thinks a hundred times and feels – No. I do not want this. It is dangerous because I and only I am responsible.

We call it an *Aadhyatmic* camp. During their study from Kindergarten to class 12, students of Eklavya attend many camps. Some are fun camps, some have a focus like marine environment or desert climate and some are nature camps.

But this is a special camp. Here we are sowing seeds in the mind of the child. During this camp they are asking and attempting to find answers to fundamental questions like – *Main kaun hoon?* What do I want in life? And *Main apne upar kaboo kaise paon?* Class 11 and 12 are serious classes – students are preparing for a career. Many students say – *Padha nahin jaata*. We cannot concentrate. What we hear is – Is there some tablet, some easy solution like a tonic that will help me? Some people recommend that doing *Bhramari pranayam* helps concentration. Maybe it does. But this is the stage in life where everything depends on the student herself. How much can she push herself and take charge of her course in life.

Eklavya was fortunate in finding the right person in Mussoorie who designed and executed a programme just for us. At a physical level the camp includes *yogasanas*, meditation, discourses on *Gita* (relevant to their age group), knowledge of various hand *mudras* and long evening walks. The students write their reflection daily and at the

end of the day in an hour long question answer session clear their doubts and try and find answers to their questions.

But the way the Camp instructor and his wife conduct the camp and get the message of self responsibility across is significant. The way he connects with children of this age group and allows them to question him and through a process of dialogue discover the answer themselves, which if given straight away would not have been accepted, is the crux.

The answers are obvious – anybody can give - but the way he makes students discover for themselves – by allowing them to keep on questioning him is the magic. So the method and the process is what is important and fruitful.

Students come back to the material world with more refined targets and with knowledge which will help them to move up spiritually as well as face the challenges of preparing for a career called life.

So far we have conducted three camps and our experience and feedback from parents and students is that it has made an exceptional difference in their lives.

15. Amphitheatre-cum-Multipurpose Hall

On the campus we have a Multipurpose Hall (135 ft length X 87 ft breadth X 46 ft height) It ends in a stage 5 ft above the ground and the size of which is (35 ft length X 31 ft breadth) There is sufficient space on either side of the stage to keep sets, props, about 30 students at a time so that plays and other events can be held comfortably. The stage also has a dressing room for participating students to use.

This Multipurpose Hall is used –

- As an indoor facility for Badminton and Table-tennis. There are four adult full size Badminton Courts and twelve TT tables in the Hall. It also has a *Maalkhamb* and a rope gymnastics facility. It is used by MS from 7.25 am to 8.10 am and by SS from 3.40 pm to 4.30 pm.
- The Hall is also used by JS intermittently to teach *Lazeem* and other indoor sports activities to students.
- Guitar (20nos.) and Keyboards (20 nos.) are also kept in the Hall. These are used by the SS students (12.50 pm to 1.30 pm) and MS students (1.30 pm to 3.00 pm)
- On the 1st, 3rd and 5th Saturdays MS Inter-House Activity Competitions like Dance, Singing, Music, Mimicry are conducted here. When large spaces are needed for *Rangoli* or Collage competitions this Multipurpose Hall is used.
- It is used for the joint assembly every 3rd Tuesday of the month when all schools get together and have an assembly together.
- The Hall is used for lunches and get-togethers like the lunch on Sept 5 every year on Teacher's Day.
- The *Dussehera Havan*, HRD *Havan*, convocation and *Kala Sarjan* is also held in this Hall

The stage opens on both sides (front and back). Behind the school gymnasium is constructed an open-air amphitheatre.

The stage of the school gymnasium has been constructed in a manner that it opens into the gymnasium on one side and if the

shutters at the back are opened then it can be used as a stage for the amphitheatre.

The amphitheatre has been constructed with ascending stairs and has a seating capacity about 2000 people. It is widely used for all annual functions like Euphoria and Phoenix. This helps us to accommodate a large number of people in an open space.

16. Anecdote File

Anecdotes are interesting or amusing incidents, which are noticed by the educator. These incidents are briefly written in a separate file maintained by the class teacher known as "Anecdote Files", which contains one page per child.

For e.g. - On the Sports Day, during an event in which special children (refer # 90) were taking part, one of the participants tripped and fell at the very beginning of the starting line. Another child stopped immediately, turned back, and helped the first one. Then both of them ran towards the finishing line hand-in-hand making the event very special.

An educator of class 1 was teaching children that God is present everywhere. That very day during the lunch break a child very innocently asked, "Ma'am, if God is present everywhere then He must be present in *the roti, chawal, and dal* also?" The educator agreed; The child then asked, "Then how can I eat this *roti* ? It will be eating God too!" The educator had to search for words to answer her!

One student of class 8 (who was academically good) shared in his English class that his ambition in life was to become a film hero. This surprised the parents when shared during the IPEM. (refer # 107)

The student is now in class 10. When he was in class 5 he once said that his ambition was to live in the jungle and be with animals. During the IPEM when parents were told about this, the father was surprised! He said – "*Bachpan mein mera bhi yehi sapnaa tha*. How come he thinks the same? I have never discussed this with him and in fact keep him most of the time in Ahmedabad. Still he loves the same things that I do."

A student of class 10 was very frustrated with the home situation. He vents his frustrations by breaking his compass box, or tearing up charts on the softboard, etc. After counselling, for a long time he was not convinced and kept doing the same things again and again. Then one day he came and sat down and said – "I tore up a worksheet today. But I've realised it is only harming me. It makes no difference to anybody else. After today I will never do it again." And to date he has been exemplary in his behaviour.

A student of Class 12 was very touched when the class teacher started sweeping the classroom clean after lunch. Everyday the students would dirty the class and forget to clean. As the educator

was sweeping he took the broom from her hands and said - *Rehne dijiye, Ma'am. Aaj ke baad aisaa kabhie nahin hogaa.* And started sweeping.

Once a student of class 10 was awarded more marks for an answer in the exam. He immediately went to the educator and said, "Ma'am everybody comes to you to increase their marks I am coming to you so that you decrease my marks! You have given me more marks in an answer."

Anecdotes are also a record of the child's development and the changes that she undergoes emotionally as she grows from a child to an adolescent. The anecdote file of a particular child is passed on to the class teacher of her next class every successive year. Anecdotes give an insight to the lesser-known aspects of the child's personality.

Recently we have published about 100 anecdotes in a book called '*Bachhon ki Kahaniya*'

Sample of Anecdote

17. Appreciation Letter

Positive strokes and words of motivation are bestowed on the children throughout the year. Yet, after spending a full year with a child a educator feels so much is left unsaid.

So, class teachers of PS and JS write a letter to each child of the class at the end of the academic year which is in-a-way sharing with her memories of the year gone by. The educator praises her for the virtues, hard work and other qualities that she displayed over the whole year. Tender moments are shared but words of caution are not spared either.

This letter is written with the essence of evoking in the child a feeling of pride, belonging and achievement. Whenever she is reminiscent of her school days this letter would conjure a parade of bright images.

This is one of the many bonds that a educator in Eklavya shares with her student and it is written with great love and care.

No two letters are the same as each child with her innate uniqueness touches a chord in the educator's heart.

This letter is given to the children on the last day of the academic year along with the Report Card and other materials (Holiday HW). The original letter is given to the child. A lot of care is taken in colouring it. The photocopy is kept in the child's Scope File.

This letter along with other related materials give the next class teacher a good idea about the child before she comes in for the next year.

From the academic year 2007 onwards, JS has stooped writing the Appreciation Letter. There used to be grammatical and spelling errors as the written English of all the educators were not very good. It then became a tedious task for the Principal to go over 400 letters and correct them. We found that it was not working out so we decided to stop it. In Eklavya, we at times find that a particular concept does not work out the way we would have wanted it to. This is the reason why there is a system of reflect, review and reconstruct prevalent in our school.

18. Assembly and Joint Assembly

PS, JS, MS and SS conduct a daily assembly for 20 minutes in their own school buildings separately. It is conducted in English on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and in Hindi on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. It includes *Shloka* chanting, prayers, songs, thought and facts, news and views, presentations, talent shows, participation by the parent guests etc.

All the four schools have their own assemblies. The agenda is different for each school. The assembly agenda is performed in JS class-wise and in MS and SS house-wise.

The assembly is guided and conducted by an Assembly committee comprising of educators in each school who sit together at the beginning of the academic session and decide on the agenda for the coming year. They choose and decide the prayers and *shlokas* in Hindi and English for the weekdays from the prayer booklet and add on beyond the booklet from outside also.

Eklavya has a school prayer booklet from which some prayers and songs are selected.

The National Anthem, *Vande Maataram* and the Eklavya School Song are sung one day of each week at the end of the assembly. In JS the school pledge is also taken on Monday.

Assembly is also a platform for:

Giving general announcements

Celebrating birthdays of students as well as educators by putting *tilak*, giving a birthday card (made by student or educator) and collectively singing the Happy Birthday song in English or Hindi depending on the day of the assembly.

Special days – for example: Eklavya Foundation Day: Sharing of the inception of the school by the Principal, calling some old parent to share of her experience with the school etc.

Anniversaries of great people: for example: Bhagat Singh *Jayanti* : A student gives talk on the life history of Bhagat Singh or a small skit depicting his bravery is staged

Festivals : for example : *Janmashtami* : A poem, song or drama depicting a part of Lord Krishna's birth and life.

In JS, MS and SS, on the first working day of the month the 100% attendance badges are given to children. In JS the class winning the Healthy Trophy and the Cleanliness Trophy is announced. An English Speaking Trophy has been introduced from November 2009. In JS filmi type items are not allowed.

The assembly is also assessed and points are given to the best house of the month. These points are considered while deciding on the 'Best House of the year' during the Annual Prize-Giving and Investiture ceremony. (refer # 62)

Each assembly starts with blowing of *Shankh* and *Shloka* chanting. In JS the students take a pledge once a week as follows –
I pledge to show my respect by listening to others,
Using my hands for helping,
Caring about other's feelings
And being responsible for what I say and do.

Apart from the daily assemblies, a joint assembly is conducted once a month (normally the 3rd Tuesday of the month) where the whole school (except PS) gathers with an agenda where each school participates.

All students gather in the amphitheatre for the assembly. The assembly is conducted by the Head Boy and Head Girl of the school. All the schools have a fixed agenda as decided by the assembly committee. The agenda consists of dance, playing of musical instrument, skit or song. Each school takes up an item one after the other. The prayer and *shloka* to be sung in the joint assembly is fixed and same for all assemblies throughout the year. In the last joint assembly for the year, the items are prepared and presented by the educators.

As an experiment since last year i.e. 2009 - 2010, we are not having a Joint Assembly. Maybe it will start from the next academic year again with MS and SS.

Sometimes it is good to drop a practice for a year and take it up again with renewed vigour.

Day	Pre School	Junior School	Middle School	Senior School
Mon	Value drama by educators on values like saying sorry, thank you, co-operation etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - Prayer - Story telling (by Educators) - Pledge - Eklavya song 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - News & Thought - Quiz - Prayer song - National Anthem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Aum</i> prayer - <i>Shloka</i> - chanting - Book Review - National Anthem
Tue	Puppet show by educators / Skit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - Prayer - Drama/Skit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - News & Thought - Humour - Prayer song - Sare Jahan se Achha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Aum</i> prayer - <i>Shloka</i> - chanting - Inspiration icons
Wed	Student performance – Joke, song, dance etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - Prayer - Talent time – Poem, song, dance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - News & Thought - Skit/Poetry - Prayer song 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Aum</i> prayer - <i>Shloka</i> - chanting - Story making
Thur	Quiz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - Prayer - Quiz 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Doha</i> - <i>Shloka</i> - News & Thought - <i>Pahelia</i> - Prayer song 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Aum</i> prayer - <i>Shloka</i> - Chanting - Career Guidance
Fri	Student performance – Joke, song, dance etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - Prayer - Presentation on topics like Birds, Festivals etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - News & Thought - Talent - Prayer song - Eklavya Song 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Aum</i> prayer - <i>Shloka</i> - chanting - Talk of the week - Eklavya Song
Sat		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - Prayer - Parent Item - National Anthem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Shloka</i> - News & Thought - Educator's item - Prayer song 	

19. Behaviour chart

There are many ways through which discipline can be reinforced in the students. One method to do this is to display a Behaviour Chart in the class. This is done in MS– Classes 5 to 8.

This chart is put up in all the classes with the names of the students of the class. The students are then marked in the chart with abbreviations (given in bracket) of the desired behaviour that they have not fulfilled.

They are marked on various criteria as follows –

Regularity in homework submission(HW),

Books Forgotten (BF)

Proper and correct Uniform (U)

Nails / Hair (N)

Reading for the day (R)

Books maintained well (BM)

Behaviour in class, library, activity, discipline between the classes, in the corridor, breaks, etc. (BEH)

Exam Behaviour - cheating or copying (EB)

For every good and remarkable behaviour a tick is given (or left blank) and the abbreviation filled in red for inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour. This chart helps the student to evaluate herself. Also putting up the sheet on the classroom softboard reminds students everyday about areas they need to improve upon. They see that some students do not have a single cross and this motivates them to try and achieve the same.

If the number of red abbreviations exceeds the desirable limit then the student is counselled. Ways and means of emulating acceptable behaviour are shared. Parents are also informed periodically through the diary through the PEC (Parent Educator Communication) pages and if need be a personal meeting is also held in the Principal's office.

20. Best Notebook-of-the-Month

Children from an early age need to understand the importance of neatness and presentation. Neatness not only of their personal appearance and uniform among other things but also of their belongings.

Selecting the best notebook of the month by the educator is a way of encouraging and positively motivating children to take the responsibility of keeping their books neat, tidy and well-maintained.

Apart from the outward appearance of the notebook, while selecting, the regularity and neatness of the work done by the children is also taken into consideration. The best notebook-of-the-month is given a sticker on the cover so that children can proudly display the efforts put in by them during the entire month.

From the year 2009 -10 we tried an experiment of no plastic covers on books. This was done with the aim of encouraging environment friendly practices. This point came up in one of the Mother's Workshops where parents requested us to carry our pledge of 'say no to plastic' and 'waste no paper' a step further by instilling in students a sense of responsibility by not covering their notebooks and textbooks and yet keeping them clean.

Now students of JS, MS and SS do not cover their notebooks or textbooks with either paper or plastic.

21. Birthday celebrations

Birthdays of all students and educators in Eklavya are celebrated in the traditional Indian way. In Eklavya we believe a birthday is a very important day and should be celebrated in a simple but loving way with the family members and well-wishers.

We do not encourage children to distribute formal invitation cards calling friends to lavish parties given at hotels. A birthday celebrated in the typical Eklavya style includes food cooked by the mother or any other family members and enjoying it together with friends and family members at home. Generally we ask students to invite five or six or seven or eight friends home, not too many.

Children do not wear coloured dress or distribute gifts. This is to do away with any disparity amongst children. We want it to be a low-key but unique day for the child.

The child is called on stage during the assembly and asked to speak about her favourite things e.g. food, colour, sports, hobby etc. Then the educator conducting the assembly puts a vermilion *tilak* on her forehead and gives the child her blessings. The student shows respect by touching her feet. The children then wish their friend by singing the birthday song in either Hindi or English as per the day. (Mon-Wed-Fri : English ; Tue-Thu-Sat : Hindi). A hand-made card is given to the child on behalf of the entire school.

Everyone feels loved and cherished when they are a part of such a celebration.

In case of an educator's birthday, she is also called on stage during the assembly along with the children and shares her favourite things. She receives a card signed by all the Principals and the Chairman.

Birthdays of educators are also not celebrated in school. Students do not bring any special gifts – like flowers, cake, etc. for their educator. The students wish their educators just like they do to their school-mates. An educator does not accept any such gifts from any student.

Birthdays of house-keeping ladies of that particular school are also celebrated.

22. Block room

'I hear, I forget
I see, I remember,
I do, I learn'

Children in PS are in the process of growth and development. They have better control on their gross motor skills than their fine motor skills. Thus it is important to enhance their fine motor skills. The block games serve as a structured play in this regard.

Children of class 1 to 4 also go to the Block room to further strengthen their fine motor control skills.

Block games are made with wooden blocks of various sizes. Through these block games and puzzles children develop co-ordinated movements. Their eye-hand-coordination, patience, concentration, logical reasoning power and three dimensional concepts all improve.

We have different types of block games:

1. Montessori Materials
2. Froebel Gifts
3. Construction Blocks
4. Taleem Material.

The Block room period is a platform which gives the toddlers the complete freedom to do and learn. Children explore all these equipments one by one learning all the concepts on their own. It is a marvel to watch these children work on the "equipment" they have chosen.

By handling the material and using them in different ways, concepts not obvious at first glance, like ascending order, become apparent as the child not only sees the fundamental ideas but discovers new ones (descending order)

Through repetition, concepts are understood and internalised rather than simply memorised.

23. Bronze Busts of Famous Personalities

24. Brooms and dust cloth in each class

Broom, dust cloth, dustpan and dustbin are an essential part of each classroom. It helps the students and the class teacher to keep the classroom clean.

Eklavya believes that each classroom is the responsibility of the class teacher and its students. After lunch in MS and SS, if the class is dirty, the students are expected to clean it.

In PS and JS also after lunch the students take a piece of cloth and wipe their tables. They also clean any food off the floor using a small broom and dustpan.

25. Call-up tree

Call-up tree is a database containing phone numbers of students of one section of a class. It is used to pass messages to every student and educator during an emergency. All the class teachers (Nur – 12) make the call-up tree of their own class. The class teacher selects four students to whom she calls and gives the message. Each of these students further phones up five students of her class and passes on the message. The educator carries this sheet with her to field visits and nature camps.

The staff also has its call-up tree made; where the Principal calls up four educators, usually the class coordinators and similarly they pass the message on to other educators.

A specimen of the call-up tree for students is as under:

26. Calling up parents in case of absence for 3 days

We are very particular about attendance. If the student has been absent since three days without any prior information the class teacher calls up to inquire.

This helps the educator to be in touch and sensitive to certain issues pertaining to the student.

Sometimes if a child has not completed the project or the home-work (mostly in MS and SS) they may lie to the parents and remain absent from school. Sometimes they give a note in school from the parent that they are going out – perfectly legitimate from the parent's side but without divulging that there is an important submission or test.

If the educator calls up the 2nd or 3rd day the child is absent, such issues come to light and both – the school and parents, are alert and monitor the child closely. It is also a way to keep truancy in check.

An example to illustrate this is given. A child was absent from school continuously for three days. The class teacher called her home to find out why. On calling, she learnt from the mother that the child was coming to school everyday. She was getting ready in time, taking her bag and lunch box and going to her bus-stop at the regular time to take the bus to school. Moreover, she went home everyday from school at the right time.

Further investigation revealed that the student would leave home, go to a cyber café that was near the house, surf the internet the whole day and then go back home when it was time to do so from school. She also had lunch and kept in touch with her classmates for homework, etc. so that her mother's suspicion would not be aroused!

A child should not remain absent from school without information. One day is OK but from day two onwards some information should be forthcoming from the parents about her absence.

If parents become careless and say – '*Kya farak padta hai?*' then this is an opportunity to tell them that in Eklavya it is important to give full attendance in school. A call from the class teacher also passes on the message that if parents are not particular about their children attending school it is time to tighten their belts and start taking care.

27. Charkha, Hoopla, Stilts and other interesting Games

Charkha is an activity for the students in MS and SS.

In this activity, the students prepare thread out of cotton. While performing this activity, the values of patience and concentration are inculcated in the students. Also they become a part of the feeling of self reliance that Gandhiji always wanted to imbibe among the people.

The *Charkha* that we use is called as the *peti Charkha*. This type of *Charkha* was one of the major factors bringing about a revolution in the times of our freedom struggle and a way of getting employment.

Other activities that are different and more or less focus on developing patience, concentration, perseverance and fine motor skills are given below –

1. Hoopla – An excellent combination of kinesthetic and balance, this exercise helps students to concentrate and develop perseverance. They also innovate various ways of playing the hoopla like walking while rotating it, moving it from the waist to the knees and then back to the waist again and so on.
2. Stilts – Again a balancing exercise that develops the thigh and shin muscles and also facilitates motor – eye coordination.
3. Fishing the bottle – A fishing line with a round metal ring at the end is given to the student. She then tries to put the ring around the neck of a Coca-Cola bottle. Excellent exercise to develop eye-hand coordination among older students.
4. String Games - String Games most probably originated from fiddling with strings and knotting and twisting them around because they happened to be in idle hands! String games are great fun. They exercise memory and imagination. They are good for hand and eye coordination. Children start with making easier figures and then move up to more complicated ones
5. Origami – Paper folding without cutting is taught to students in the Japanese classes. Students make various things out of paper and enjoy displaying it in the school.
6. Hopscotch – The court is drawn on the pavement or path in two places in school. Students play during recess and discover the joys of moving in a coordinated fashion through a game. And the fun of winning and losing.

28. Child of the Year

The award is given to one student from every section (Class 1 to 12).

Each year along with the regular awards given to students during the Annual Prize-Giving and Investiture Ceremony, a special award called "Eklavya Child of The Year" is given to a student in each section and class. This is given to a child with all round personality, behaviour, attitude, sports, activities and attendance.

This award is given Classwise - Sectionwise. It is given away to a child who in real terms is Eklavya, who has strived hard in bringing out the best within her with the available resources. She is the one whose overall performance in the areas of academics, activities, sports, behaviour and attitude, initiative in visits and seminars is exemplary.

There is process by which this selection takes place. The class teacher nominates 6-7 students from her section and fills up different forms with parameters of evaluation. Subject teachers and sports and activity teachers are consulted while filling these forms.

A separate committee of educators is set up which comprises of the Principal, subject teachers, activity teachers and class teacher who finally decide the winner for each section. Attendance and regularity are an important aspect of the evaluation.

A child of the year may not necessarily be the academic topper. An overall balanced personality of a student is judged.

Winners receive the trophy and certificate from their parents. The trophy has the name of the child, the class in which she is studying and the year for which it is awarded to her written on it.

This award is given to students irrespective of whether they are continuing in the school for the next academic year or not. Quite often a student who has left the school, say because of the parents' transfer and gone to Bangalore, comes with her parents to receive the awards on this day. They are informed well in advance and invited to the Investiture Ceremony.

29. Class Decoration

One typical aspect of Eklavya educators is that they decorate their classrooms very appropriately – with a lot of colour, ingenuity, resourcefulness and information.

Once the Principal of a school visited us. One of our educators from Eklavya had joined her school. She said – ‘The first thing this teacher from your school did was to clean her classroom and decorate it!’

Our educators have an ability that is unique. Anywhere they go, in Eklavya also, they first clean the class themselves and then decorate it using low-cost or freely available material. If there is a discolouration on the wall due to moisture, they cover it up with a painting done by a student.

The class teacher also involves the students of her class in this exercise. The students and educator may paint the glass windows or partitions in the glass with poster colours to make the room pleasing to the eye. The pelmet over the blackboard is also decorated with a hanging ‘*toran*’ made by the students.

Each class has a softboard, which is decorated by the class teacher during the summer break. Class teachers decorate it with borders and corners and with charts based on different subjects relevant to the class.

Project work of the students done throughout the year is also displayed on the softboard.

One softboard is reserved for current notices, timetable and announcements for the students.

The material put up in the classroom is updated throughout the year by the students and the class teacher. Softboard is a medium to explore the students’ ideas and emotions through different works of art and presentations.

There is a separate board dedicated to display the children’s artistic work. They put up their drawings, craft work on the board. The projects and charts made by them is also displayed. The children also bring interesting and informative articles, newspaper cuttings or pages from the net to share with the class.

30. Class Library

Reading is the most fundamental skill a child ever learns. Without a good reading background a child is virtually lost, for it is on this that the major portion of her future learning and success depends.

To encourage and enhance reading skills in children, apart from the regular library periods, children along with their teacher create their own class library.

Every child gets two to three books of her personal collection (from home). These books are then listed and kept on the shelf. Thus the class has its own library of about 60–70 books. Whenever a child finishes her assigned work she is free to take the book from the class library and can read, sitting in any corner of the classroom.

Children love these books more so because they belong to their friends. The initial reason for interest in the book gradually turns into love for reading.

31. Class Photo and Staff photo

Every academic year in the month of December class photo function is held in SS. The same is held for PS, JS and MS in the month of February.

A class photo is taken of each class each section against a backdrop of the school they belong to. The Principal, class teacher and one or two activity teachers also sit for a class photo.

Students are informed about the class photo date fifteen days in advance so that they plan to be present in school under all circumstances. Educators also look forward to the day. On the day of each section along with their class teacher arrange themselves in rows and a photo is taken. A copy of the photo is given to each child of the class with a photo sheet on which she writes the names of all her class-mates row-wise. The sheet has the date on which the photo was taken printed on it. This is a precious record for the child.

The class 12 passing-out batch class photo with the names of all the students printed on it is framed and hung on the wall outside the Principal's office in SS. Alumni who come back to visit always spend a moment near this wall looking for their batch photo and names.

Every year a staff photo is also taken of all the staff members of all four schools together. Sunil Sir is also joins the staff for this photo.

Photographs are taken of the Admin staff including house-keeping staff, drivers and conductors, *maali* and security.

32. Clearing Doubts Session

Clearing Doubt Sessions (CDS) takes place from Monday to Thursday from 8.40 am to 9.50 am for SS students (classes 9 – 12).

A day is assigned to a particular subject. Monday is for Mathematics, Tuesday for Physics and Accounts, Wednesday for Chemistry and Thursday for Biology.

All subject teachers and their trainees come an hour early during CDS (instead of 10.00 am which is the regular school time, they come in the Middle School bus and reach by 8.40 am). These classes commence after 15 days of start of a new academic year. The purpose of these sessions is that the students get individual attention from their subject teachers so that their doubts are cleared.

Students are encouraged to note their doubts during the class as the educator moves at a certain pace. Some of their doubts do get cleared during the class but still a few are left unclear. So CDS helps them to sit with the subject teacher and get their concepts clear.

CDS is mandatory for students who have not been performing well in the unit tests or are not regular in their homework submission.

Now after the timings of the SS have changed to 9.00 am - 4.30 pm the above arrangement is not possible since students have to come very early by the 6.45 am bus. So now CDS is taken as follows –

On 1st, 3rd & 5th Saturdays – from 3.00 pm to 4.30 pm – Educators of all subjects are available. Students not having any doubts leave with the MS students by the 3.00 pm bus. Those having doubts stay back.

On 2nd & 4th Saturdays – from 9.00 am to 11.00 pm – Educators of all subjects are available. Those students interested in CDS come by the 8.10 am bus and a special bus on a single route takes them back.

33. Common Errors

Common errors students make while answering tests are identified at the end of each test. Over the past few years English and Mathematics educators of Eklavya have analysed and noted that batch after batch of students tend to commit the same mistakes repeatedly year after year. We call such mistakes "Common Errors "

For example in English they write

This is there house instead of
This is their house

For articles they write

a hour instead of
an hour

In Mathematics they write

Factors of 16 as 16, 32, 48 instead of 1, 2, 4, 8, 16

While adding fractions they write

$3/4 + 1/2 = 4/6$ instead of $5/4$

The exercise is done in English, Maths and Hindi for Classes 1 to 8 and Sciences also for classes 5 to 8.

Worksheets aimed at rectifying and correcting these errors are made by the educators and given to students.

The educators also take a special workshop for parents where they are made aware of the common errors their children make during exams. Parents also solve the worksheets with the educators and understand how to correct these errors.

Correcting common errors greatly increases the academic scores of students.

34. Computers from Class 1 onwards

All students in JS do one period a week of computer aided learning in the computer lab. Our aim is to teach Maths and English with the help of computers. Though this is called the computer period but it is not computer that they learn but they learn Maths and English *using* computers.

During the summer break before the beginning of the academic year the respective class teachers sit and map the Maths and English curriculum with the games and CDs to facilitate the learning process. The activities are self-corrective, little or no instructions are needed, and the educator is only required to brief them about the purpose of the activity and do overall monitoring.

The classes are usually incorporated in the lesson plans as revision classes or as reinforcement to clinch the learning and help it to be embedded in the student's memory. Many computer games (educational) are available in our computer lab e.g. "Break the Wall". There is a brick wall and when you double click on one brick you get a sum e.g. 5×12 . If you get the correct answer the brick goes boom and disappears. So, you try and break each brick till the whole wall has disappeared. You get very nice graphics on the screen (fireworks, clapping etc) and the child feels a sense of achievement.

Similar games are there for both English and Maths at different levels class-wise. Most of these games have the option of "levels of difficulty". In a class children may be playing games of different levels depending on their ability.

Children upgrade their levels in the various activities by choosing the level that they would like to work in. So in class 3 all the children may be working with fractions but of different levels. This is where the educator comes in to ensure everyone reaches the desired level. Depending on the activity to be done children work alone or in pairs.

Children look forward to these periods and as the schedule for the day is already put up on the board. Whether they are working independently or in pairs, productive silence is always maintained in the computer lab.

35. Convocation – PS, JS & MS

Convocation is a formal graduating ceremony held on the last day of the academic year when students of Eklavya complete the last year in one of the schools and move to the next stage of the school.

A *havan* is held in the school gym. When students of SKg go to JS, class 4 students go to MS and class 8 students go to SS, they are embarking on a journey that will take them to a new environment (school building), new timings and new method of learning. This is a solemn and serious moment. The Sanskrit teacher chants appropriate *shlokas* that the students listen to. Then each student from SKg or class 4 or class 8 takes a twig from the *havan samagri*, or some water in her hand and takes a *sankalp*. She then offers the twig or water into the *havan*. All the students of each school attend the *havan*.

Havan for class 4 students (JS) is held from 7.30 am to 8.30 am. For class 8 students (MS) from 9.00 am to 10.00 am and for SKg students from 10.30 am to 11.30 am.

In PS parents are also invited and many of them do join us in this ceremony which lasts about an hour.

An informal goodbye is said to the students a day earlier in the individual school assemblies and classes. The class teacher reads out an appreciation letter for each student of her class. This is prepared with the help of other subject teachers. It is an emotional sharing filled with anecdotes and good luck wishes for the child. Other subject teachers are also welcome to share their feelings. Students perform a dance or a skit for the educators. The objective is to make the child feel comfortable and in a subtle manner prepare them for the next stage of transformation in their life.

36. Convocation - Class 12

Class 12 completes their Board Exams in end March-early April. After this they start preparing and appearing for the entrance exams to various colleges for courses they are interested in. When the results are declared all of them are scattered here and there filling admission forms for various institutes.

One day after the last exam their convocation is held in school. Students and their parents are invited. A *havan* is performed. The head-boy, head-girl and a representative from the science, commerce and humanities students sit around the *kund* and perform the *havan*. The *havan* is conducted by the *Havan mandali* (refer # 89). At the end of the *havan* all students take some water and a twig in their hand and make a *sankalp* for their future. The entire occasion has a solemn and emotional aura.

After this the students and some parents share anecdotes about their journey in Eklavya. Many educators and Principals who have taught them through the years also share their feelings and thoughts. There are few laughs and many tears – of joy and sadness. It is quite an emotional journey and everybody cherishes the moment.

The convocation ends with everybody – students, parents and educators having a cup of tea together.

37. Corridor Activities

Teaching learning in the JS is not limited within the classrooms only. It takes place everywhere.

The JS has wide corridors opening into open spaces, which are used efficiently for placing Interactive Corridor Elements/games catering to various skills. Children have enough space and natural light to be seated comfortably and enjoy the games either alone or in pairs and groups. School buildings are so designed that it facilitates incidental learning.

The ground floor and the first floor of the JS have eight interactive games and two electrical board game sets. Children play the games during the two recesses. Apart from enjoyment and other specific skills learnt from these games, children are also taught the proper use of the materials and the need to wind up properly after playing any game. None of the resources in Eklavya are kept under lock and key. These games too are not played under supervision but the children display a responsible attitude.

These games are not bought from the market but are designed in-house by our *Taleem* (refer # 197) division. The ideas of these games come from various sources. Sometimes some existing games are modified or ideas are taken from books and magazines. While travelling many of us come across various games, which are redesigned to suit the age group.

There are at times interesting stories behind some of these games. There is a game called Brahma's Rings. Once *Narad muni* asked Lord Brahma when the world would come to an end...instead of answering him the Lord gave a set of 64 rings and said that when he finished arranging the rings as instructed the world would end. We have modified it to 5 rings (JS).

Various skills are enhanced when children play with these games e.g. sequencing, spatial discrimination, logical thinking and both fine and gross motor control. *Taleem* has also made sets of electronic matching cards where the child matches the object with the word written on a flash card or the sum with the answer. The cards are both in Hindi and English.

Some of the games are three-dimensional puzzles, a variation of the old cross and knot game, a xylophone to enhance recognition of the

musical notes and play different tunes and other games to improve their aims.

The educators are also well versed with the games and often play with students. The positions of the games are changed every Saturday so that every week they have a different game at a different place. If a new game is included the class teachers demonstrate the rules and way of playing the game...children who do not know are taught by their peers.

Some of the games are played alone but most are played in pairs. This helps in developing patience, tolerance and inculcating social skills.

38. Cosmopolitan environment

There is no 'selection' in Eklavya for admitting students in various classes. There are no 'parent or student interviews' and no 'criteria' for admission. So in a way the macrocosm of India gets reflected in the microcosm of the school.

Eklavya has students and educators from diverse cultures and religious backgrounds. Students from underprivileged backgrounds are admitted in Eklavya under the Financial Assistance scheme. (refer # 81).

This helps develop a healthy socio-cultural mindset and acceptance of people from different backgrounds. This enables students to learn about various religions and cultures in detail and we are able to cherish all festivals of India as these are celebrated in school.

39. Counselling - D.A.T for Class 9 and10

Differential Aptitude Test, or DAT, as it is commonly known, is an aptitude test used by counsellors to help students make suitable career choices in classes 10 and 12. DAT has been found very useful in providing educational and vocational guidance to the senior secondary students.

The test is administered to students of class 9 to 12. The test material consists of question booklets that can be reused, scoring sheets, a detailed self-explanatory manual, and tables for computation and conversion of scores. It comprises of the following eight tests: Verbal Reasoning, Numerical Ability, Abstract Reasoning, Perceptual Speed and Accuracy, Mechanical Reasoning, Space Relations, Spelling and Language Usage.

It takes about 3 hours for administration. This is usually done in two sessions with a break in-between. The sheets are scored with the help of the keys and the scores are converted to percentiles with the help of the tables provided.

The percentiles are indicative of a student's rank in a population of 100. In Eklavya, however the same test is administered to students of classes 9 to 12 with a different purpose.

The results are shared with the student with the perspective that *the result is an indicator of her current performance level*. Specific feedback is then provided as what special inputs she can put in, such as solving maths puzzles or reading mystery novels etc, so that she can improve and move ahead in each of the areas tested.

A copy of her result sheet is given to the student and one is kept for school records. The test reveals to the student that whatever class she is presently studying in is just the stepping-stone towards her future and given the correct feedback and inputs she can choose and work towards a career she is interested in.

Name : Vikramaditya Jairath**Sex :** Male**Age :** 16 y10 m**Class:** 10**Place of Testing :** EKLAVYA SCHOOL**Date of Testing :** 18 & 19 Aug, 2004

FORM A

	VER	NUR	ABST	SPACE	MECH	CLERICAL	SPELL	SENT	VR+NA
Raw Score:	33	35	40.5	78	50	75	82	28	68
Percentile :	80	90	85	90	65	95	85	30	90

Above 75= High Aptitude

Between 25-75 = Average Aptitude

Below 25= Low Aptitude

In the example shown above, it is quite clear that the child is doing very well in majority of the areas. The student needs to develop mechanical reasoning and sentence relationship skills. Therefore the child needs to develop his applicative skills related to various scientific principles by applying the theory learnt in everyday situations.

For sentences, she should read on various subjects and solve crosswords.

40. Counselling - Lavya

Lavya is a platform for sharing in a warm, loving and a non-judgmental environment for the students of MS and SS.

Classes are aimed at developing life-skills (*jeevan jeene ki kala*) in children. Classes are of about 40 min, are held once in a fortnight with class 7 and 8 students.

Objectives are achieved in small groups of sixteen students with one educator who are normally not teaching them. This allows children to share their concerns freely.

This group is a mixed group of students – each group consists of students from classes 5 to 8 in MS and classes 9 to 12 in SS (ideally five students from each class). The group remains the same for four years i.e. a class 5 student will be in the same group and the same educator for four years. The advantage of the mixed group is learning through peer experience is enhanced. Fr e.g. a class 9 student says that there is very little time and a lot of work. Then a class 10 student speaks of her experience and says she also went through the same and gives tips on time management and what to focus on. This helps the class 9 student more than any advice or help that an adult can give because this class 10 student speaks from a recent experience and in a language they understand and relate to immediately.

The focus of the classes is at development of skills like friendship, self-awareness, decision-making, peer pressure etc. These are done through role-plays and group activities.

While the beginning of the term focuses on building a good rapport with the students, the latter half of the year dwells on much serious issues like bullying, gender issues etc. A *Lavya* curriculum has been devised separately for class 7 and 8, which is revised every year before the beginning of the term. A typical *Lavya* session would be as follows:

Objective (Team Building)

Play the game Philadelphia by dividing all the students into groups of 4 - 5, asking them to make smaller words from it. Ask them an estimate of how many they would be able to make.

Students typically estimate about 30 words to be made from the word Philadelphia. However in reality about 80 words can be made from this word.

De-briefing: We can do a lot more in a group than we can manage alone. But working in a group isn't easy.
Share their problems while working together.
Everyone shares responsibility while working in a group as how it behaves. So ensure every one gets a fair chance.

Once in a year the educators doing *Lavya* have a one-to-one meeting with the students of their group.

The *Lavya* team comprises of in-house teachers of different schools (PS, JS, MS, SS) who have been identified as having good rapport building and counselling skills. These teachers then meet once-a-month for an hour. The objectives of these meetings are to strengthen the skills of the *Lavya* teachers as counsellors and a lot of reading material as well as role-plays along with movie-clippings are shown and discussions are held. The teachers also discuss about the *Lavya* classes and any other issues, on which the team member wants others' opinion.

41. Crèche

Eklavya provides crèche facilities to all educators free of cost. The school employs two maids who are in charge of the crèche. Currently there are about 27 children in the crèche from the age group of 3 months to 13 years. The maid takes complete care of the children right from eating meals at proper time to sleeping and changing their uniforms to taking them for a round in the evening for free play. Educators sometimes bring their own private maids. Eklavya provides individual mattresses along with a bed-sheet and a pillow for each child. There is a refrigerator for storing curd, juices, milk etc. There is a heating facility also. The crèche has toys, story books, as well as educational games to keep the children engaged for the whole day.

Some children are as young as 4 months to 3 years and do not go to school. They are in the crèche the whole day while the mother is working in school.

Many educators' children study in Eklavya. After they finish school they go to the crèche, change out of their uniform, have lunch and a little rest and then do some homework or play.

The crèche maid is in school from 7.25 am to 4.30 pm to look after and supervise the children.

Comments of some educators using the crèche –

'For a working lady like me the crèche in the school is a 'boon'. It gives a lot of mental peace to know that my 2-year old is in the same premises and well looked after.'

'It is a relief that my daughter is in a safe place. She is not watching TV and whiling away her time but eats well, rests for some time and completes her homework.'

'If my daughter has a fever or is not well otherwise, I can go and see her in the crèche and give her medicines. This is a huge support and I can continue my job 'tension-free'.

42. Database of Class with teacher

The school maintains a database of all the 1250 students studying here.

This database prepared in Microsoft Excel spread sheet has one student's information per page.

One page is maintained for each school. This means when the child is in pre-school information from Nursery to SKg will be available on this page. When she moves to JS a new page is created with same basic information but academic columns change due to subjects changing.

The page has the name, address, date of birth, identity number, photo of the student, her family photograph (parents, siblings, sometimes grandparents also if they are living with the family), names, office address, occupation and landline and mobile phone numbers of father and mother.

Further, the page has marks scored by the student in each exam. The name of the class teacher is given. Each year column also mentions whether the student has held position as an office bearer for that year (Head Boy, House Vice-Captain, Scouts Captain, etc). Academic excellence in terms of 'Topper of the Year, Subject Topper in a Subject, Eklavya Child of the Year is also mentioned in the row below. It also mentions the activities and sport that the student pursues in school for that year. (MS and SS)

This database is hence a comprehensive information page for each child for the years she has spent in each school.

The database is available on the computers of Principals of all four schools.

One database sheet of a student studying in Class 10 is given on the next page for reference.

43. Dirty Dozen

Once in every two months a group of 12 educators selected from volunteers from the four schools meets for two hours.

The meeting has no agenda. It is a coming together to share, understand and know each other well. Typically in the first meeting members introduce themselves, share their likes and dislikes and about their role in school and at home.

As the meetings proceed, a lot of sharing about home visits, common practices in the classrooms, difficulties faced in school and home front, and something somebody has read and seen is shared.

Once in a while a visit to an Old Age Home or Mother Teresa's Orphanage is arranged and everybody gets together and goes there.

In all six such meetings of the 'Dirty Dozen' are held in an academic year.

44. Educator of the Year Award

The finest educator is awarded the 'Educator of the Year Award' in each school.

The educators of the school nominate according to their choice the names of three educators in order of preference.

An educator is to be nominated on the following criteria – she should have completed one full academic year in that school.

A person nominating an educator should also have completed one academic year in the school to have the right to nominate.

In this manner the Principal of each school, collects these nominations. She fills in a form to evaluate the educator's nominations.

Many a times educators are nominated because of the 'popularity factor'. The Principal keeps in mind qualities such as rapport with students, teaching-learning process in the class, regularity of work – corrections, evaluation registers, class teacher jobs, relationship with peers, extending beyond one's own subject, active organizational capability in school functions and so on.

The nominations are short-listed and presented before a committee that then selects one by consensus.

The educator is awarded the 'Educator of the Year Award' at 'The Annual Prize-Giving and Investiture Ceremony Day'.

She is awarded a framed citation, a trophy and a cheque of Rs.10,000.

45. Educators – Diwali HRD

After educators join back from the Diwali Break many HRD programmes are planned for them. Students have a two-week Diwali break. So educators are actually without classes for a week.

During this week they do a half-yearly review of the lesson plans and progress of the academic syllabus in their respective classes. They also work out details for all forthcoming events like Euphoria, Sports Day and Phoenix that are in the held in December – January.

We have a special Diwali HRD in this week. Educators are asked to volunteer to present one topic of their interest or conduct one activity which they are good at for the rest of the educators. They can do so individually or in a group.

Educators get together and plan an activity accordingly and give their names to a small committee formed for this purpose. They also submit a poster describing their activity and tell the committee what they will be presenting in short.

Based on this the committee selects some programmes and rejects some. A final list is drawn up and circulated amongst all educators of the school. The list has details about the name of the programme, the person conducting it, the time and venue. The posters of the selected programmes are laminated and displayed on the staff room notice of all schools by rotation.

Educators choose the programmes they will attend. The programmes are spread all over the day from 8.00 am to 3.00 pm in 50 minute slots. One slot will ideally have five programmes. There are four to five such slots. An educator chooses one out of them. Every educator must attend atleast three programmes. Once an educator chooses and attends the programme she must attend it fully. She is not allowed to leave half-way or once the programme has started.

These programmes are a huge success in terms of educators volunteering with programmes of their interest. Educators attend and rate the programme. Books are given away as prizes. A format of the programme is given below –

46. Educators - Family Visit

Family members of an educator have a curiosity as to how is the school where their family member is working? Where does she sit? How do the classes she teaches look like? And many other such questions because a lot of sharing of school happens at home also.

To answer these queries and give the family members a first hand experience of Eklavya an Educator's 'Family Visit' is organized on November 14 every year.

On that day the family members (intending to visit) board the school bus and come to school. On reaching the school they are taken on a detailed guided tour of the school campus.

A senior teacher briefs them about each school and as they see, states Eklavya philosophy and unique features.

Then a power-point presentation on unique features is done and a short question-answer session is arranged with one of the principals. The day ends with lunch in the afternoon.

47. Educators - Group of educators visiting schools in India for a week.

As mentioned in Sari 98, Eklavya encourages educators visiting other schools as part of their professional development. These visits promote bonding amidst the educators. They also get a taste of the place e.g. if it is a historical place they do a city visit and bring in that flavour to their students as and when needed. Apart from that, they also get a chance to practice some good habits like writing daily report so that work is not piled up when they return back. The feedback from educators about such visits has been so positive that Eklavya tries to facilitate such visits almost every year.

Such visits are usually initiated by a senior educator or Principal and Vice Principal. Mails are sent to the concerned school introducing ourselves, our purpose and convenience of dates from the host school. After a few exchange of mails dates are finalized. The visiting team is selected on the basis of enthusiasm, exposure and giving a fair chance to all. Educators often show eagerness for such visits and they are accommodated as and when possible.

On 16th of January 2010, seven educators visited Rajghat Besant School at Varanasi. It is a class three to twelve co- educational boarding school affiliated to CBSE and run by the Krishnamurty Foundation of India.

A brief description of this visit will help you understand why such visits enhance the productivity of educators.

The train journey of almost 36 hrs from Ahmedabad to Varanasi helped the educators to discover each other. It also threw them in situations where they had to adjust and share with each other. Infact they said that the train journey was one of the best part of the visit. Sometimes they faced some situations which they solved together and there was always a great learning in it.

The stay, interaction with various faculty member and students was an enriching experience in itself. The educators absorbed the spirit of the school without being a disturbance in the host school's working. They interacted with administrative staffs, housekeeping and other members of the school fraternity. As this visit like most of the school visits was in a boarding school, the visiting educators developed a bond with the students and teachers as considerable time is spent together. Time spent in the girls' hostel with the House Parents (wardens) was an interaction rich with emotion.

The educators in all such visit “stretch themselves” to the fullest so that they are able to do a lot of multi- tasking on a day. They made it a point to plan the day in ahead so that no time was wasted and also informed the school of their plan so that they could be accommodated with ease and time was not wasted. After dinner there was sharing time and no matter how late it was a detailed report was written as the day was fresh in their mind Laughter was always an important ingredient which helped these seven to enjoy to the fullest and work with zest. A lot of material e.g. worksheets, report cards, school calendar etc were brought back from the visit which helped them to match our working with theirs and emulate what applied to our system of working.

Eklavya educators carried gifts for the host school which comprised of books from our publication. This is done for all such visits as a token of our appreciation. The educators give a presentation to all the schools (PS, JS, MS, and SS) once they returned. They shared with their colleagues their experience and learnings and as is the belief of our school that good practices should be started immediately so if they wanted to follow something of the host school they started it as soon as they were back e.g. one of the educators after visiting RBS started an Opinion Chart in her class which she had seen in the SS library and had liked it.

The approximate cost for such a visit of six to seven teachers including travelling, boarding and other expenses is about 40 to 50 thousand which is borne by the school.

48. Educators - Fun HRD (Whole school together)

Educators across all schools meet at least thrice in an academic year for fun HRD which is usually one hour of games and half hour of sharing food. This is usually in the one working week after Diwali when students are still on vacation, before the year-end break when students are on a Christmas vacation and in the summer ending of the HRD for the year.

A team of educators, one from each school plans and conducts this HRD. They plan games and fun sessions. Educators are divided into mixed groups so that educators from different schools get to know each other informally. The games are fun and educators enjoy themselves immensely. They run, play, sing and dance just like the students they teach and an amazing transformation happens during these sessions where hidden talents are discovered and inhibitions shed. Many educators overcome their shyness and each one's effort is appreciated and applauded.

One such game is described. Educators are divided into various groups. Then they are given the famous sequence from the film Sholay kitne aadmi the... to enact in various languages. Educators enact in Bengali, Punjabi, Marwari, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil and Sanskrit. They are given the license to alter the script from the original to make it interesting and humourous. The performances on stage are hilarious and a lot of fun.

In another game the groups send one member to participate in a set of games like balancing a ball between two people without using hands, skating, wearing shoes and socks in minimum time, dressing up one of the group in a sari and applying make-up and so on. There is lot of cheering and boosting by team members so that their team wins.

Everybody ends up laughing a lot. New friendships are fostered. Everybody becomes one group bound by joy and laughter.

In the end educators of all schools have lunch together. Sometimes everybody just brings what they want to but for one more person. Tables are laid out in the huge foyer outside the JS library. Everybody keeps what they have brought on the tables. All get together and share the pot luck. Sometimes the team decides on a menu - PS and SS brings *pakor*s, JS brings sandwiches, MS brings *halwa*. Everybody eats together giving a fitting finale to the one-and-half hour of fun.

49. Educator's Oath

All the educators of Eklavya take an oath in the beginning of each academic year. A day is fixed in the first week of June when the Principal of each school renders the oath to the educators of the respective school.

Just like doctors take the Hippocratic oath as soon as they are ready to practice so the educators take an oath on similar lines reiterating their dedication towards the profession.

Oath for Teachers of Tomorrow

On my honour, I swear that I shall, at all times and places, in thought, word and deed, live up to the high ideals and dignity of the noble profession of teaching.

I shall see myself as a friend, philosopher and guide to the learners in my care, recognizing all the while that I am no less a learner myself. I shall try to empower them to actualize their individual potentials. I will not only help her dream, but help her realise that she has been given the power to actualise that dream.

I shall not be judgemental, but see the unique greatness of each child.

I shall care for every child without any show of partiality or favour. I shall not, at the same time, hesitate to confront her and tell her things she doesn't like. Keeping such responsibilities in mind I shall try to develop the golden skills of love, kindness and patience without which I will be unable to make any impact in this noble line.

I will not be ashamed to say "I know not" and will not shy away from the onus of finding out and sharing with my students.

I shall not misguide, misrepresent or mislead; nor point the wrong way to my students. I will not try to be popular and earn favours or appreciation from students by any unethical or unfair means.

I will remember that warmth, empathy and understanding are as important as academic results. I will respect what Mahatma Gandhi said : the literary qualifications of teachers is not so essential as their moral fibre.

Finally I will not permit considerations of nationality, prejudice or material advancement to intervene in any way with my work and my duty to the present and future generations.

Jai Hind

50. Educator's Planner

It is a mini diary, which is helpful for the educators to plan their day and get more organized. The planner has the calendar for the year, the timetable sheets of all the schools, week-wise chapter completion plans, dates for nature camp, parent-educator meetings and exams.

In the planner the educator writes the birthday dates of her students. The educators plan their day by writing the topics to be covered in the respective classes. She also makes a note of other important events on a day-to-day basis.

It is a handy organizer (size: 18 cm X 11 cm X 1cm) that helps the educators to plan their days ahead and schedule her work in a systematic manner.

It also has pages to jot down points discussed during the staff meeting, and a page to keep a record of the books read by her throughout the year.

51. Educators – 2nd and 4th Saturday

In PS students have a holiday on the second Saturday and in JS MS and SS students have a holiday on the second and the fourth Saturday. Educators work on these Saturdays and utilize this substantial time to read more about the subject they teach and also prepare for the coming week.

This 2nd Saturday all educators of PS, JS, MS, and SS are on the campus. Educator's fun HRD (refer # 99) is held on this day. Sometimes Sunil Sir meets all four schools together for a common HRD on this day. Educators taking Lavya classes meet from 12 to 1.00 pm on these Saturdays and share with each other about their classes.

Saturdays provide excellent opportunities for educators who have been busy the entire week to spend adequate time in the library, browsing through reference books and encyclopedias. They are encouraged to read other than the subject they are regularly teaching with the purpose of widening their perspective.

This brings an eclectic approach not just in their thought process but also passing it further to the students when they teach. We believe that the educator has to be aware about everything happening around them and reading definitely helps them achieve this.

Any interesting newspaper or magazine articles (eg. Speaking Tree, Tol), which an educator comes across while reading, is then circulated among the other staff members. All educators share, discuss and brainstorm about many more topics that interest them rather than simply those that they teach in the class.

52. Educators - CPD Dateline

Eklavya invests strategically in the development of its educators (refer # 100).

This development is mainly for professional and personal skill enhancement and quality.

Educators maintain a CPD (Continuous Professional Development) Dateline. This diary requires them to write down the date, name of programme attended, venue, resource person and learning from the talk, programme, workshop or visit.

Throughout the year, workshops/visits/seminars are arranged for the educators of Eklavya for their continuous professional development. Guest faculty or in-house workshops are conducted depending on the need of educators for each school

The educators record all the visits/seminars /workshops they attend in a book given to them which is titled Continuous Professional Development.

53. Educators - HRD register

Every educator is given a notebook when she joins Eklavya, called the HRD register. This she carries with her for the HRD sessions with Sunil Sir. She also takes the register when she attends seminars and discussions outside Eklavya. She may carry it to the Staff meeting also.

The register is used to take down interesting information, points from the HRD discussion that might be of special interest to the educator or good proverbs and sayings.

At the end of about five years, this register will have a wealth of information - rich with anecdotes, sayings and personal experiences.

54. Educators - Leather bag and stationery

On their first day of joining, educators are given stationery by the school listed here.

1. School Planner
2. CPD Date Line
3. Prayer Book
4. Leave Card
5. Stationery
- 5.1 Stapler
- 5.2 Stapler Pins
- 5.3 Punching Machine
- 5.4 U-Pins' Box
- 5.5 Pencil
- 5.6 Sharpener
- 5.7 Eraser
- 5.8 Red Ball Pen
- 5.9 Big Scale
- 5.10 Scissor (Medium)
- 5.11 Single Line Note Book
- 5.12 Clip Pad

Educators who have completed two years in Eklavya are given a nice leather school bag as a gift by the school.

55. Educators - Point System

Most of the educators working in Eklavya are ladies. They finely balance their duties at home and school and try to maintain this balance.

Sometimes illness of a child or guests coming home disrupts this carefully planned schedule and they are forced to take a day's leave when actually grace of an hour or so would have solved the problem at home and allowed them to continue their duties in school.

In a school if the educator is absent for a day it *does* upset the students and schedule. If she is a class teacher even more so.

To help the educator carry out her home and school duties well Eklavya started giving them some late-coming or early-leaving points.

For e.g. a JS educator takes the 6.45 am bus to be in school by 7.25 am. On a given day she may take the 8.10 am bus and come to school at 9.00 am i.e. about an hour late. So she has availed 1 point. In this manner she can avail upto 3 points a month.

Educators in the various schools may avail points in the following manner –

Sr. No.	School	Timings	Coming late	Going Early		Max Points Allowed
				1.00 pm	3.00 pm	
			8.40 am	1.00 pm	3.00 pm	
1	PS	7.25 – 1 pm	1	-	-	2
2	JS	7.25 – 3 pm	1	1	-	3
3	MS	7.25 – 3 pm	1	1	-	3
4	SS	9 – 4.30 pm	-	2	1	3

56. Educators – Sitting Place in the staff room

Educators of JS, MS and SS sit in a staff room that has a work station allotted to them.

The arrangement in the MS staff room is usually done by draw of lots. Each educator picks up a chit with the staff room number and the seat number written on it. She then shifts from her previous seat to the new one.

Sometimes the Principal wants the educators to sit in a particular mix. Maybe some old ones and some new, subject-wise or committee-wise. She may also want to include a General committee member in each staff room. So now the arrangement is not random but becomes governed by the whims and preferences of the Principal of that school.

In SS the Principal would decide how and where an educator would sit.

We thought it a good idea that educators decide how they would like to sit. We did an experiment in SS. A committee of three educators of SS was formed. The committee comprised of one newly joined, one old and one about a year old educator. The committee met all the SS educators and asked them how they would like to sit in the staff rooms. Then they compiled all their findings and gave suggestions. The committee in their presentation said that they recommended some element of randomness and some definite grouping of educators. The following options were suggested –

1. Subject-wise drawing lots - Any one subject teacher will pick a chit (floor and seat number) and rest of the same subject teachers will accompany.
2. General Draw-Chits (with floor and seat number) to be drawn by each teacher and accordingly seats will be allotted.
3. The Alphabetical Draw - Chits to be drawn by each teacher. (with floor and in alphabetical order)

The committee strongly recommended option 1. In SS there are three staff rooms, one on each floor.

Educators were grouped subject-wise. 12 groups were formed. Then one educator from each group picked a chit with the floor written on it and chose their seat numbers. Educators sit for a year in these seats and change in the beginning of the next academic year.

57. Eklavya Excellent Educator Awards (5th September)

The purpose of the Eklavya Excellent Educator Awards is to recognize and reward excellence in school teachers (of classes Nur – 12) of Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar, and at the same time, inspire others to take up the noble profession of teaching.

The award is being given in five categories.

The Excellent Educator Award is awarded to teachers whose performance has been of the finest quality as recognized by her students, co-teachers, principal and others. The award consists of a citation, a trophy and cheque of Rs.10,000/-.

The Excellent Young Educator Award is awarded to a teacher below 30 years of age, who has been teaching for less than 5 years, and has the potential and talent to become the finest of teachers. This award also consists of a citation, trophy and cheque of Rs.10,000/-.

The Excellent Innovative Educator Award aims to reward outstanding educational innovation, which satisfies the criteria of reasonable cost, usability and which has not already been commercially exploited. This award also consists of a citation, trophy and cheque of Rs.10,000/-.

The Excellent Institution Builder Award is awarded to a Principal, a Vice-Principal or a Director who has been responsible for running a school for at least 5 years and has displayed an exceptional degree of managerial and administrative skill. This award also consists of a citation, trophy and cheque of Rs.10,000/.

The fifth category is the Lifetime Achievement Award. This award is given to veteran teachers who have spent over 25 years in the education field and made a significant contribution to the field. This award consists of a citation, trophy and cheque of Rs.25,000/-

The Process

Nominations are sought for the two Excellent Educator Awards, the Excellent Educational Administrator Award and the Educational Innovation Award. About 100 eminent people in Ahmedabad are contacted to get suitable candidates for the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The nomination process is designed to be flexible, but rigorous. Application is through a process of nomination – so the principal of a school can nominate a teacher for an award. However, nominations can also be made by fellow teachers, students, ex-students, parents

of students, or even the applicant himself or herself. Each person who is nominating has to fill out a nomination form while the nominee has to fill out a self-appraisal form.

The forms are designed with care to include both objective and subjective criteria. Applicants will have to reflect and describe what they feel is their 'greatest setback or failure as teachers', as well as their views on some topics like punishment of children and tuitions. Nominators are asked what, in their knowledge, the applicant had done to make the class more interesting or easy for her students, her strengths and weaknesses, etc.

All the forms received are carefully scrutinized by a sub-committee of volunteers and a shortlist of candidates and recommendations for each placed before the Jury.

Some of the criteria used for short-listing the applicants are, the genuineness and practicality of the answers, conditions and resources constraints within which the teacher is working and the challenges before him / her, the role and importance of the student in the eyes of the teachers, as emerges from the answers and her own views on the larger issues of punishment, tuitions, etc.

Based on this shortlist, the jury asks for further investigation on some of the short-listed candidates. A team meets these candidates in their schools, sits in their class for a little while, meets the school principal, some co-teachers, even some students and obtains their feedback. In this way, an attempt is made to understand the candidate a little better over a period of a few hours.

The jury holds three meetings, deliberates on the findings, and then chooses the awardees in various categories.

The winners are awarded a cash prize, a trophy and a citation on September 5, Teachers' Day every year.

58.1 Eklavya Hall

Eklavya Hall has been especially designed for screening movies or presentations, guest lectures and seminars to be held for a large audience. This can be for one full class together for about 100-150 students or for a group of 50 or more educators.

It is an air-conditioned hall which has a large LCD screen projector, along with a computer, DVD-VCD combo and complete power back up with a seating capacity of about 150.

It is extensively used for seminars and formal presentations as well as movie screenings.

58.2 Kalpana Chawla Hall

This hall in Senior School is a large 90-seater hall where students can sit on a table and chair and take notes, etc.

The hall is air-conditioned, has a LCD projector facility with a screen. There is also a black board.

Combined classes are taken here where sections are combined together to take a 1.5 hr 'lecture' session. Films that are part of the curriculum and related to it are also shown here to large groups of students. For e.g. when students are studying Julius Caesar in Class 10, the film or parts of it are shown along with or after the lecture on a particular scene is done.

The hall is also used to show films on scientific processes, geographical happenings like the eruption of a volcano and films from History like Martin Luther King's historic speech.

It is used to hold activities like Debates and Declamation competitions and for formal presentation of projects.

Sometimes educator HRD sessions are also taken here and movies are screened when the group is more than 30.

58.3 Hungama Hall

One room towards the MS building on the ground floor in SS has been converted into a projection room for MS students. The students have named it Hungama Hall. It has a LCD projector and screen facility with seating capacity of 50 students at a time for film and documentary viewing.

59. Eklavya Samachar

Eklavya *Samachar* is a monthly newsletter published in the first week of each month circulated to all students and educators.

This newsletter has information regarding all events held in the previous month in all schools–PS, JS, MS and SS.

Important announcements are made in this bulletin. Also forthcoming events are mentioned in brief.

The *Samachar* has a Parent Corner every month where articles on Good and Effective Parenting from books and the internet are shared.

Students Achievements throughout the month are mentioned with the photos of the student.

A photo feature on special events like *Janmashtami*, Euphoria, Phoenix or Sports Day are also printed in the *Samachar* mentioning the event and names of students.

The Eklavya *Samachar* Team comprises of an educator from each school who gives the information for the *Samachar* from her school. One person out of them collates and designs the *Samachar* in MS Word and sends it to the design studio in Core House for design in Corel Draw and printing.

All issues of Eklavya Samachar since the day of publication are available on the website – www.eklavya.org
link -<http://www.eklavya.org/mainsamachar.htm>

60. Eklavya Slogan (Motto)

The central aim and purpose of all education is the child. Eklavya believes that every child is unique and has inborn gifts and talent. The role of the school and its educators is to help the child discover and develop her talents by focusing individually on her, and not in a "mass production manner."

The school philosophy is reflected in its motto:

स्वयंदर्शनं Discover Yourself

Each person must first look within and learn about herself, since this is an active, on-going exploration, the call is to discover oneself.

स्वयंज्योतिः Be your own light

Rabindranath Tagore, in his poem *Eka Chalo Re*, exhorts us to walk alone. "When the night is dark, and there is no one to walk with you; fear not; but burn your heart in the lamp of your rib-cage, and in its light, O Traveler, Walk alone!

स्वयंमार्गकरणम् Make your own path

Each person creates her own path by her actions. To believe that a path has to be simply found, rather than created, is to miss the opportunity and challenge of building one's own future.

61. Events - General

All through the academic year various events are held in Eklavya. Some of these are festivals like *Janmashthami* and *Dusshera* that the entire school gets together to celebrate.

Events like Euphoria, Sports Day and Phoenix are those where educators and students of all schools come together, work with each other and present before an audience. These events are much awaited and contribute an essential, integral philosophical aspect to the curriculum.

Events held in an academic year are –

- Annual Prize-Giving and Investiture Ceremony
- Edison 1% inspiration, 99% perspiration Science Exhibition
- Creative *Mela*
- *Janmashthami*
- Teacher's Day
- *Dusshera Havan*
- Euphoria
- School Play
- Sports Day
- Phoenix
- Picasso
- *Kala Sarjan*

For each event usually a committee of one or two educators from each school is formed who work under the Principal of their respective schools. Principals of the four schools coordinate the events.

The committee designs the invitation card, sequences and schedule for the event. Wherever required a team of educators and students is formed for logistics like stage decoration, back-stage management, light and sound, parking area, welcoming parents and sitting arrangement. Student volunteers are an essential part of these aspects. (Refer sari # 194)

For events like Euphoria, *Janmashtami*, 15th August, etc. the committee decides on the items to be presented and holds auditions. The decision of the committee is final. A rehearsal of all the performances is done. The committee sets high standards for selection.

In the following pages each of the events held throughout the year are explained in detail.

62. Events – Annual Prize-Giving and Investiture Ceremony.

The Annual Prize-Giving and Investiture Ceremony is held in the beginning of each academic year to felicitate the students on their excellent performance in academics and activities in the previous year. The members of the Student Council for the academic year also take their oath of office.

It is held over two days in the third week of June every year- Thursday for PS & JS and Friday for MS & SS.

The ceremony felicitates the students on the following:

Eklavya Child of the year: (refer # 28)

Overall Academic Topper: The student scoring highest marks academically among all the sections of the class (from class 5 onwards) are awarded 1st, 2nd, and 3rd positions.

Subject Topper: The student scoring highest marks in each subject among all the sections of the class (from class 5 onwards) are awarded 1st, 2nd, and 3rd positions.

100% Attendance Award: This is given to all students who have 100% attendance throughout the year with a grace of two days, provided they are not the first day of school after a vacation or the last day before a vacation. This award motivates the students to be regular in school.

Other Awards: Best Scout and Guide, Best in various activities, Reader of the year and 'Best House of the Year' Trophy, Sports Trophy, 100% Mother's Workshop Attendance, 100 % Attendance – Educators, One-Year Trainee Certificates, Scholarships and Educators of the Year Awards (refer # 44) are also given away.

The unique feature of the award ceremony is that the awards are not given away by the Chief Guest or the Principal or by any educator, but by the parents of each student. A special invitation is sent to the parents of the award winners. This is our way of acknowledging the all important role of the parents in the progress of their child. Parents feel very proud and honoured and are full of emotions during the ceremony.

The new members of the Student's Council take an oath for the positions of Captains and Vice Captains of all the four houses, Head Boy and Head Girl, Prefects and Scouts Captain and Vice-captain. The Oath is administered by the Principal.

63. Events - Creative Mela

About 50 artists working in various medium (oil, acrylic, water colours, poster colours, charcoal, embroidery, thormocol, metal scrap, clay, paper maiche and plaster-of-paris, terracotta, glass painting, pottery and sculpture to name a few) come to Eklavya for a day and execute a work of art.

This Creative *Mela* is organized every year in school to inculcate in students an appreciation for various art forms and inspire them. It is held in the month of November - December every year for the whole day from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm.

Various artists are invited to spend a whole day in the school and create a piece of art in the school campus. The students get a chance to observe closely the entire process of an art piece being created in front of their eyes. These artists include professionals from all fields of art, such as: Handicraft experts, people from NIFT (National Institute of Fashion Design, Gandhinagar) and NID, (National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad) students of Fine Arts colleges and local artists of repute. Parents of students of Eklavya and educators of the school also join in. These artists do not charge any fees. The school provides all the art material to them for their work. The final art piece is later framed and put up in the school.

All students and educators are taken for a round and they spend some time interacting with these artists and if they want, they try their hand at some art form.

Students of MS and SS go around and observe two or three times during the day. In the morning they see the beginning of a work of art. Then during the day they see it developing and taking shape. By evening they see the finished work of art and learn to appreciate the process and the finished painting of sculpture.

64. Events - *Dusshera Havan* and *Navratri*

Students and educators all sitting together and performing a *havan*, giving *ahuti* and chanting *Mantras* will be seen on every *Dusshera havan* day in Eklavya. It is performed on one of the days of *Navratri*, in the month of September-October every year. It is a pious occasion where everybody comes together and offers prayers. It ends with everyone taking *prasad*.

The day begins with the *yagna* performed by educators and students. Five different *yagna kund*s are made in the gym and various *mantras* are chanted. The students of the *Havan Mandali* guide students and educators during the *Yagna*. (refer sari # 89) The whole atmosphere resonates with good feelings and intentions. Students along with educators give their offerings in the *havan kund* and make a resolution, which they will follow. After the *havan* is over, the *havan kund* is taken to each and every corner of Eklavya so that whole school gets purified.

The students wear traditional outfits on that day.

After the *havan*, there is a stage *garba* performed by the students and also by the educators and the housekeeping ladies. The function ends with the students, educators, and administrative-and-housekeeping staff getting together for the free *garba (sheri garba)* for two hours with the in-house *mandali* singing *garba* on the *dhol*.

Studies are resumed at the end of the function.

65. Events – Euphoria

“Euphoria” is held once a year in December. It is a platform where students perform and show their talent in Music, Dance and Acting. The event is held in the open-air amphitheatre on the Eklavya campus which has a capacity of about 2000. This event is held on two successive evenings - the first evening is for PS and JS, and the second evening for MS and SS.

The total time duration for the event is exactly two hours. There are about 30 to 40 performances during the event. The sequencing of the performances is done in such a manner that there is no gap in between two successive performances. This aspect is very tightly and efficiently managed. The next item is ready before the current item is over. Often the next-next item is also ready!

There are solo as well as group performances given by the students. Since the event is divided into two evenings maximum number of students participates and there is more than 75% participation from each school. Various dances like *Bharatnatyam*, *Kuchipudi*, *Kathak*, Folk Dance and Fusion Dance are part of Euphoria. Fusions between various musical instruments enthrall the audience.

As far as possible we encourage students to perform to live music and also motivate them to play various musical instruments and sing to a dance. Diversity is important and only one kind of dance say – moving to a single kind of film music or popular western singing is discouraged.

Unique performances like the Parent - Educator dance or an Educator – Student dance and an item by “Special” children also form part of the show and is much appreciated.

The school hires the light and sound system. The educators and students of Eklavya do the entire handling of the system. One or two students thus get exposure and are trained in aspects of light and sound management and operation on stage.

Some best items from Day 1 are repeated on Day 2 and some good ones from Day 2 are selected to be performed on Day 1. Parents are encouraged to take photographs and special arrangements are done for this. (Refer Philosophy sari # 38)

The total cost of event (about Rs 1 lakh over two nights) is borne by the school. School does not encourage any kind of sponsorship for the event.

66. Events - Independence Day and Republic Day

Eklavya School celebrates Independence Day and Republic Day with full zeal and patriotism.

A committee of educators from each school is constituted. They work out the schedule for that day. Grandparents of children are selected randomly from each school for the function as the Chief Guest.

The students of all schools reach at 9 am in the morning and assemble for the Flag Hoisting Ceremony on the Sports Ground. The National Flag, Scouts Flag and School flag is unfurled by the three grand-parents who are chief guests for the occasion. This is followed by the National Pledge. The pledge is taken by all the students and staff members. The pledge shows the feelings of love, affection and loyalty towards the nation. Grand parents share their experiences of early independence days. Various songs, dance and skits related to the freedom movement are performed by the students of each school.

After the function inter-house competitions are held in each school. The school does not work the full day and students go home earlier than usual after the competitions are over.

NATIONAL PLEDGE

India is my country.

All Indians are my brothers and sisters.

I love my country and proud of its rich and varied heritage.

I shall always strive to be worthy of it.

I shall respect my parents, teachers and all my elders and treat everyone with courtesy.

I pledge my devotion to my country and its people.

My happiness lies in well-being and prosperity.

Jai Hind.

67. Events - *Janmashtami*

Out of all the festivals celebrated in Eklavya, *Janmashtami* is one of the best.

This festival celebrates the birth of Lord Krishna. The students put up a small cultural program that depicts stories from the life of Lord Krishna in the form of song, dance and ballets.

The SS students perform the "*Handiphod*", where a small pot full of curd is hung at a height. SS boys form a pyramid. Then a PS child, dressed as Lord Krishna, climbs up the pyramid, reaches the height of the *handi* and breaks it with a stick. It is always a romantic ending to the celebration and all the 1200 students of Eklavya along with their educators chant – '*Haathi, ghoda, palkhi – Jai Kanhaiyalal ki.*'

Prasad is then distributed and classes resume after the half hour celebration.

68. Events - *Kala Sarjan*

Kala Sarjan is held on the last working day of the school in April. It displays all creative work done by all students from Class 1 - 12 during their activity periods throughout the year.

All parents are invited to come and enjoy the display

It is a platform where they get an opportunity to see a variety of things made with wood, clay, glass and waste material by children during the year

Students also go around and see the various things they have made during the year and appreciate each other's work.

In JS, the last week of school hosts Waste to Wealth. Here children make different decorative items from waste material. These items are also displayed during *Kala Sarjan*.

69. Events - Phoenix

Phoenix is the Amateur Drama Club of Eklavya. It is held in two portions –

1. School play put up by JS and SS - The JS puts up a half-hour play with a lot of music, dance and colourful costumes.

The SS play is a full length one-and-a-half-hour play with some acts and various scenes. The play usually has a mature theme suited to the thoughts and feelings of the students of SS. Classes 9 and 11 play an active role. They select the play or write one themselves. The students also may decide to take up a play written by a famous playwright like Vijay Tendulkar or Habib Tanvir and then give themselves the poetic license to change some scenes or even the climax of the play.

2. The second part of Phoenix is the annual drama competition by the students of MS held in the month of January. It is done in the form of an inter-house competition in which the students from class 5 to 8 take part. The students along with the help of educators choose the script with a theme that may vary from being based on Indian culture to corruption to social issues etc.

This is the event where the entire MS come together to give their best performance. Many times the students and educators write their own play inspired by a current theme. For e.g. in 2007 one house wrote a play on Global Warming inspired by Al Gore's presentation –'The Inconvenient Truth'. Another house wrote a play on the *Gurgoan* school shoot-out incident and went on to win the first position.

Sometimes theatre artists are called to conduct a workshop to train the students in the skills of light, sound, stage performance, direction, costumes and other aspects of play performance. Auditions are conducted and the cast is finalised by the students under the guidance of educators.

The entire process is enriching and enjoyable. After a month-long practice the students perform their play in front of an audience of parents of Eklavya.

Each house puts up the play which is then evaluated and points are added in the final house evaluation.

Apart from the invitees of the parent community, renowned theatre people are chosen to judge the performances.

Some of the dramas performed by students are: 'Harry Potter', 'Here and There', 'Us and Them', '*Kal Aaj Aur Kal*', '*Juloos*', '*Jalebi*', 'Cricket', '*Bholaram ka jeev*'.

One salient feature of the Phoenix club is all its activities – enacting, props, music, costumes and sets are made and managed by the students and educators of Eklavya. Educators and students choose or write the play, write songs, compose the music, sing the songs and play background music during the play! The aesthetics of the props, sets and costumes are also decided and designed by the students with help from the educators.

In the year 2009 -09 we took up Shakespearean drama. SS put up a full length play – 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' complete with sets, props and costumes to match the time, era and ethos of the play.

MS selected excerpts from the plays – 'King Lear', 'Macbeth', 'The Merchant of Venice', and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and enacted them for 20 minutes. The entire event was accompanied by a recitation competition of famous dialogues from these plays. Huge posters on which these were printed were displayed in the assembly area and school gym. A Shakespeare trophy was specially made for the occasion and given away to the winners.

Students lived, breathed and performed Shakespeare for nearly three months and some of them developed a love and appreciation for the great poet and playwright.

70. Events - Picasso

Picasso is the annual art and painting exhibition of the paintings made by the students and educators of Eklavya throughout the year. It is held on the second week-end of March in an art gallery in Ahmedabad.

Out of all the paintings made in the year by all students from Nursery to class 12 the good ones are selected and put up in Picasso. About 300 paintings are exhibited every year.

Invitation cards designed in-house by educators are sent to the parents to visit the exhibition. It is inaugurated on a Saturday at 4.00 pm and lasts until Sunday 8.00 pm. Thus is on for one-and-a-half days. Sometimes a renowned person in the field of art inaugurates the exhibition. In 2008 great-grandmothers aged about 90 years inaugurated it.

The paintings displayed are put up for sale for a nominal price of Rs. 150 and 300. However, parents are not allowed to buy their own child's painting. This acts as an encouragement to our budding artists to prove to them that people other than just their relatives or parents appreciate their artwork. The amount earned from the sale is used in the education of some students in Eklavya School.

71. Events - Sports Day

In the month of December the school organises an annual sports day, where all the students of school participate with full enthusiasm. The unique feature of this day is that every student of the school runs a race. Full participation is thus achieved.

A committee of four members, one from each school, is formed. The committee with the help of the sports teacher plans all the events for the sports day. 100% participation is ensured. All students right from Nursery to Class 12 participate in one or the other event. Once the event list and the participants list are ready with the help of the house captains, students are informed.

An invitation card is prepared by the committee members and all parents and grandparents are invited to witness the event. A parent is invited from each of the school (PS, JS, MS and SS). These parents also give away the awards to the winners once the event is over. Before the sports day, tracks for various events are made. While PS and JS have separate tracks, MS and SS have events together being held on two simultaneous tracks. Cloth flags of the colours of each house are placed on the tracks.

Prior to sports day, events like Long Jump, High Jump, Discus and Javelin are held.

On Sports day, which begins at 9.00 am sharp and ends at 11.00 am, various events like Sprints (100 and 200m), Obstacles, Relay (400 m), Obstacles race, Hurdles, Lemon and Spoon race and Sack race are held. Each school prepares its own events list according to the age group of their children. Points are allotted to each event and thus the house with the maximum winners takes the first position. Certificates and cups are awarded to students as soon as the event is over. These are given away by the parents of a student from each school who are Chief Guests for the occasion.

A Prize-Giving Ceremony at the end of the Sports events takes a very long time and is a lengthy and boring function. So we have made this innovation: as soon as a race is over there are 'runners' at the finishing line who take the result to the 'scribes' who are sitting near the announcers. The scribes quickly fill in the name, class and house of the winners in the certificates on which other details have already been written. Then the announcers announce the winners and the certificates and cups are given away. In this way throughout the two

hours that races are going on the prizes are being concurrently given away to the winners.

This is going on four tracks for the four schools. Each school has a co coordinating committee of educators and students combined headed by a main coordinator.

The entire event has a *mela* – like carnival atmosphere. It is held on Dec 25 every year; it being a holiday, parents are able to attend in large numbers. Parents are allowed to take photographs freely. A parent and educators race is also organised at the end which adds to the fun.

A running commentary is given by educators and students of each school as the events are being held. A gift is given to drivers, conductors and the house keeping staff on the sports day as a token of appreciation for all the hard work done by them.

All students are encouraged to cheer for the participants. All in all it is a fun filled day with a little chaos but lots of enthusiasm and fun.

Preamble Speech

Suprabhatam

Sports is fun, challenging, demanding and rewarding. We improve our skills, learn to co-operate and get a sense of accomplishment & pride in this honest effort. Sports teach us valuable lessons, lessons that can never be taught or learnt in the confines of a classroom.

“That’s not fair!”

We have heard this phrase often and have even said it ourselves. When someone does something against the rules, we think it is not fair. When we play, we want fair play. Fair play is all about respect for rules, respect for your competitor and for the officials and acceptance of their decisions, it’s about giving everybody an equal chance to play and about maintaining self-control.

Today we are here to participate in various events. Let us be brave and make our parents, teachers and our House proud of us. Let us take an oath before we begin our Sports Meet.

Oath taken on Sports Day –

On my honour, I solemnly promise:

To take part in this Sports Meet with the true spirit of sportsmanship; respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, for the glory of Sport and the honour of my House.

To respect all competitors.

To remember that participating is more important than winning.

Let me win but if I cannot win let me be brave in the attempt.

Let me conduct myself with fairness and dignity.

On my victory, I shall not tease others and on my defeat, I shall congratulate the winners gracefully.

Jai Hind

72. Events - Teacher's Day Celebration

Teacher's day is the day where educators become students and students are given chance to teach their juniors

The Student's Council (refer sari # 193) organizes and handles the entire day. It is a good opportunity for them to experience hands –on how the school works.

Educators are expected to sit in a row during the assembly. Some of them are assigned to read the thought for the day, facts, etc. Some educators share their views and experiences about the school. Students manage the programme for the whole day. Students who are 'Teachers' for the day teach in various classes. Some students of SS take classes in PS, JS and MS while those from from MS and JS may teach a lower class in their own school or in PS. For e.g. a student may want to teach Hindi in class 7. She gives her name to the teacher-coordinator. Once she is allotted the class she goes and meets the Hindi teacher of that class and finds out what is exactly the portion to be taught that day. She prepares the lesson and then delivers it in the class on Teacher's day.

JS class 3 and 4 children teach class 1 and 2 and PS children.

A chart is put up in each school indicating the names of the student-teachers for that day and the class and subject they will teach.

Sometimes there is a sick child or one who is hurt while playing. Students who are teachers for the day learn to handle these small emergencies and also understand and appreciate their educators.

Chief Guest for the Eklavya Excellent Educator Award shares her views on education during the day with all the educators of the School.

The School arranges a lunch for educators on this day. A menu is decided having an assortment of dishes well liked by educators. The lunch is arranged in the school's multipurpose hall. Circular tables are arranged with chairs around them so that educators can sit and have lunch comfortably. All educators of all schools come together and greet each other and have lunch. It is an interactive, fun filled time for all of them.

In the evening all educators attend the Eklavya Excellent Educator Awards Function. (refer # 57).

73. Events - *Uttarayan*

Uttarayan is an important festival in Ahmedabad and Gujarat. It is a rare festival that follows the solar calendar and is on January 14 every year. On this day the entire city of Ahmedabad is on their roof-tops flying kites. The sky is speckled with thousands and thousands of kites from morning to evening. This festival is also known as *Sankranti* in Maharashtra, *Pongol* in Tamilnadu and *Bihu* in Assam.

The JS and MS students celebrate *Uttarayan*, a couple of days earlier since the school is closed on January 14. They bring their own kites and *Manjas* (strings). Students fly kites on the school grounds for an hour or so. The whole atmosphere is charged with everybody shouting "*Kate*," "*Kapioche*."

On January 14, *Uttarayan* is celebrated on the roof-top of our administrative office in the city called Core House. Parents, students, staff and friends are invited, About 800 to 1000 people fly kites from 10.00 am to 2.00 pm and end it with a sumptuous, traditional lunch of *Undhiyoo-puri*, *til papdi* and *bhajiyaas*.

74. Excursions

During every academic year Eklavya organises excursions for students from classes 4 to 12. These excursions are held during *Diwali*, Christmas and summer vacations. During summer vacations an excursion of 10 to 14 days is organised and during *Diwali* or Christmas vacations it is of 3 to 5 days duration. So far we have organised a camp in summer vacations and *Diwali* or Christmas vacations. We have so far not done an excursion in all three vacations but we may do so in future.

The objectives are -

1. Historical significance of the place.
2. Tourism aspect – temples, monuments etc.
3. A science lab or factory
4. Fun
5. Experience of travelling and handling the travails of it.

This is planned so that students gain holistic exposure. The excursion lasts for about 10 days and is full of fun-filled learning experiences for the students. It gives them opportunity to learn and experience outside the classroom and books. It is a mixed group of about 50 students and three educators accompanying them. The younger students are looked after by the older ones and lessons in taking responsibility and accountability also happen.

One day of the tour is designed to be a 'Tough Day'. On this day students have breakfast as usual and leave for the day. This day has a walking or trekking schedule. Due to 'some reason' they get delayed or take a wrong route and cannot get lunch! There is no shop or place where food is available locally. Now they either turn back or go to the base point or they carry on and finish the trek. Usually they finish the trek at the end of which food is served. Children are so hungry that they relish and eat with gusto whatever vegetable (*Doodhi, Baigan*) is served. They find all the food tasty!

These excursions are voluntary for students. They pay a fixed amount for the same. This amount includes their back and forth fare, lodging, boarding and sight seeing. The school also provides Financial Assistance (refer # 81) is given to some students if applied for. Students enjoy these excursions a lot and according to them, it is informative and educative and is a good break from structured studies in school. They also say that they learn many things here that are not possible to learn in the school.

If a student goes for all excursions from class 4 to 12, she has gained in richness of knowledge and experience which adds value to the education she has had in Eklavya.

Excursions held in the previous years –

Sr.	Year	Summer	Diwali	Christmas
1	2000 – 2001	Sikkim	Nainital	Panchmarhi
2	2001 – 2002	Gangotri		Sawai Madhopur & Ranthambhor
3	2002 – 2003	Nainital + Aarohi	Lakshwadeep	
4	2003 – 2004	Kulu Manali		Diu – Somnath – Junagadh
5	2004 – 2005	Bhutan, Sikkim	Bangalore	
6	2005 – 2006	Amritsar	Panchmarhi	
7	2006 – 2007	Chennai	Hyderabad	
8	2007 – 2008	Manali	Coorg	

A sample of the letter sent to parents about three months ahead of the programme is given in the following pages.

February 9, 2007

Dear Parent,

The School is organizing an educational cum sightseeing tour to Chennai, Mahabalipuram, Pondicherry, Kanchipuram, Sriperumbudur during the May Summer vacation. The places of visit will be:-

Chennai: Formerly known as Madras is the capital city of Tamil Nadu state and is the fourth largest metro city in India. The city grew up around the English settlement of Fort Saint George and gradually absorbed the surrounding towns and villages. However, despite the strong British influence, Chennai has retained its traditional Tamil Hindu culture and effectively blended it with the foreign influence. Chennai is a journey into timeless India, a kaleidoscope of moods rich in the treasures of history, from temples and shrines to forts and palaces, the landscape of the past lives easily with the present. This 350-year-old city is the gateway to the south, providing many a fascinating vignette of southern heritage.

Mahabalipuram: 55 km from Chennai, the marvelous city of Mahabalipuram forms an integral part of the golden triangle of the southern India. The city was earlier called Mamallapuram but was later called Mahabalipuram or 'The land of Bali'. The lovely seaside was the capital of the Pallavas dynasty.

Pondicherry: The headquarters of the Union Territory of Pondicherry which comprises Pondicherry, Karaikal, Yaman and Mahe – four widely separated towns, the first two enclaves in Tamil Nadu, the other enclaves in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala respectively, made one by their French connection. Legend associates Pondicherry town with the Sage Agastya, who travelled from the north and settled here. Recorded history talks of Pondicherry being, for almost 300 years, the center of Anglo-French conflicts, and, later, the retreat of Indian freedom fighters, including Sri Aurobindo.

Neat, pleasant, and charming, Pondicherry has a beautiful beach and a sea that is always warm and refreshing. It has been made world-famous by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and its offshoot, Auroville. And in what still remains of its French connection there is uniqueness that makes it different from the rest of India.

Kanchipuram: Also known as one of India's Seven Sacred cities, Kanchipuram was the historical capital of the Pallavas from 6th to 8th century A.D. and later became the citadel of Cholas, Vijaynagar Kings, the Muslim and the British. It has been a center of Tamil learning, cultural and religious background for centuries. Kanchi is also known center of the finest silk sarees made in the country. It also has magnificent temples of unique architectural beauty bearing eloquent testimony to its glorious Dravidian heritage. Adi Sankara established his Episcopal seat (Kamakotipeetam). Kanchipuram is the birthplace of C.N. Annadurai, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu affectionately called as "Anna" by the people of Tamil Nadu.

Sriperumbudur: Located in proximity to Chennai, it is a panchayat town in Kanchipuram district. On May 21st, 1991, Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India was assassinated by a human bomb in Sriperumbudur. It is the birthplace of Sri Ramanuja, one of the most prominent Hindu Vaishnava saints. There is now a temple of Lord Vishnu at his birthplace, the only Sleeping Vishnu.

With good highways and infrastructure not being too far from a major metropolis (Chennai), Sriperumbudur offers all the facilities that the big companies want. Sriperumbudur is already becoming a strong case for being developed into a satellite township. Hyundai cars are manufactured here. Nokia has set up a production center here. Saint Gobain manufactures floating glass here. Vellakotai Murugan temple is just about 9kms away from Sriperumbudur, where you can find the tallest Murugan statue in India.

Details of the trip are as under:-

Departure: 17th May, 2007 (Thursday) at 6:30 a.m. by Train No. 2655 Navjeevan Express
Reaching Chennai on 18th May, 2007 (Friday) at 4:05 p.m.

Departure: 25th May, 2007 (Friday) at 9:36 a.m. by Train No. 2556 Navjeevan Express
Reaching Ahmedabad on 26th May, 2007 (Saturday) at 7:45 p.m.

The total cost of the trip per child will be Rs. _____. The cheque is to be drawn in favour of "Eklavya Education Foundation". Interested parents may submit the filled in form latest by 15th February, 2007 to the class teacher.

For Eklavya School, Ahmedabad
Principal

Yes, I am interested in sending my child to the Chennai, Mahabalipuram, Pondicherry, Kanchipuram and Sriperumbudur tour. Please accept enclosed

cheque of Rs. _____ (Cheque No. _____, dated _____ drawn on _____)

Child's Name/Class: _____ Date : _____

Parent's Name : _____ Signature : _____

EKLAVYA SCHOOL, AHMEDABAD
APPLICATION FORM

To,
The Principal
Eklavya School, Ahmedabad
Village Sanathal, P.O. Sarkhej
Ahmedabad 382 210
Tel. No. 95-2717-250199

(USE BLOCK LETTERS)

NAME : _____
AGE : _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____ GENDER: M / F
ADDRESS: _____
CITY : _____ PIN : _____
PHONE : (R) _____ (O) _____
(M) _____
E-MAIL : _____
STANDARD: _____ DIV : _____

DECLARATION

I would like to enroll myself / my son / daughter to participate in the Camp / Tour organized by you. I understand and agree that the organizers or any individual associated with it will not be held responsible in case of any accident / emergency situation.

Signature of Father

Signature of Mother

Note: *It is very important for the participant and parent to go through the programme circular. If the participant is under medication or has any kind of allergies, please inform the same in detail to us. Any other specific characteristics like night walking, phobias etc. should be mentioned in the space below. This will help us to take proper care of the participant.*

SPACE FOR SPECIAL REMARKS (if any):

75. Extra classes (Class 8 – Maths)

After class 8, students now start the 'Board Exam Journey'. Maths is a major subject and various mathematical skills need to be reinforced before they start class 9. When they go from class 8 to 9 we do not want them to be *kachha* in maths concepts. For this some additional inputs are given in class 8 itself.

After the Diwali vacation in the 2nd term class 8 students have a Maths extra class once a week i.e. on Wednesday for 15 weeks. They are taught mathematical concepts from class 5 to 8 that they are required to know well and fall back upon in class 9 to 12. This class is held from 7.25 am to 8.30 am.

They do a worksheet based on a mathematical concept for one hour. During this class, they revise the basic concepts of math like algebra, commercial arithmetic etc.

Worksheets are prepared in advance. Each worksheet consists of 15 sums for class work and 25 sums for homework. They complete the homework and submit the notebooks on Friday morning.

The home work is evaluated by the educator and marks are given out of 50. The marks are recorded in a sheet for reference.

These classes give educators an idea about areas and concepts where more practice is needed.

The schedule for the extra class is put up on the softboard. Students revise the concepts for the day before coming to the class. A test of 50 marks is taken at the end of a 15 week program. A sample of the topics covered date wise is given below.

Extra Maths Classes

Date	Topic
16/11/06	Fundamental topics of Algebra (Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, Division)
23/11/06	Indices and Exponents
30/11/06	Special Products and its Expansion
07/12/06	Factorization
14/12/06	Linear Equation
21/12/06	Simultaneous Equations
04/01/07	Word Problems of simultaneous Equations
11/01/07	Quadratic Equations
18/01/07	Unitary Method (Direct Variation, Indirect Variation)
25/01/07	Unitary Method (Time and Work)
01/02/07	Percentage
08/02/07	Profit and Loss
15/02/07	Discount
22/02/07	Simple Interest
01/03/07	Announced Test

76. Family Life Education (FLE)

Family Life Education (FLE) is held for students of classes 5 to 8 once a month. Awareness about sexual and reproductive health is imparted in these classes. Students of class 5 to 8 undergo a lot of physical and psychological changes as they attain puberty. FLE classes are aimed at addressing the same.

Curriculum has been developed for each class and educators of Eklavya volunteer to take these classes. These educators talk freely to students and provide correct scientific information on topics related to the growth and development stage of their life. The initial classes in the beginning of the year are aimed at providing information to the students. Slowly these classes transform into interactive sessions where students feel free to share their concerns and queries.

To encourage student participation, a Question Box is placed in the MS library. Students are encouraged to drop their questions without writing their names (to maintain confidentiality). Educators incorporate these queries and concerns in their next classes and provide accurate information and clarify myths and misconceptions. The classes are enriched by charts and posters.

The topics covered are as follows:

Class 5: Puberty, Pleasant and Unpleasant touch, Reproductive system in males and females.

Class 6: Menstrual Cycle, Secondary sexual changes, Abuse.

Class 7: Revision, Test tube babies, Surrogate mother, Social issues like rape, child abuse, AIDS awareness.

Class 8: Changes during adolescence, AIDS, Pregnancy, Contraception, Social issues like eunuchs, homosexuality.

During the year some sessions are arranged with experts in the field – psychologists, counsellors and NGO workers who come to school and give presentations on – ‘ How to cope with Adolescence’, ‘Secondary Sexual Changes’ and ‘Female Foeticide’.

77. Feedback

At the end of the term examinations, a subject wise detailed feedback is given to the students of class 3 to 12 to make the students aware about the mistakes they have made in answering the exam paper and how to correct them and make up the lost marks for the next exam. After an educator prepares a term question paper, she is also required to prepare an answer key which contains the elements of the correct answers.

In JS educators emphasize on the common errors made by the students. Correct answers are given to students so that they compare it with their answers and rectify mistakes. The whole class solves the entire paper along with the educator.

In MS and SS, the next day after the examinations are over, 45 minutes to 1-hour slot is allotted to each subject. The subject teacher goes to the class, distributes the answer sheets, puts up the answer key that has been photocopied on the transparency on the overhead projector and starts discussing each answer in detail. She points out to the children the areas where they have lost marks, key words, which should be present in their answers and common errors. The students take note of all of these points.

The focus is on every mark lost and that it does not repeat in future. Teaching and evaluation together constitute only 50% of learning. It is important for the student to KNOW where she has lost marks. Therefore, correct and exhaustive feedback will tell the student where and how marks are lost. The purpose of feedback is that if a student has scored 67/100, at the end of feedback she has recovered those lost 33 marks and if the same paper were to be given again she will now score 100/100.

A follow up worksheet is prepared covering all the common errors and given to the children immediately after the feedback.

In SS, students are also encouraged to issue from the library the photocopies of the answer key and do self reference to improve on their own. It usually lasts for two days and the objective is to motivate and encourage students to achieve maximum marks.

On the next page is the feedback schedule for Class 10. English and Hindi are given one hour slots since both Literature and Language feedback is done.

Feedback Schedule, Class 10 Date:30/07/07		
Time	10A	10B
10.00 -11.00	English	Hindi
11.00 -12.00	Hindi	Maths
12.00 -12.40	Maths	EVS
12.40 -1.00	LUNCH	
1.00 -1.40	Physics	Bio
1.40 -2.20	EVS	Geo
2.20 -3.00	Bio	History/Civics
3.00-3.10	Break	
3.10-3.50	History/Civics	Chemistry
3.50-4.40	Geography	English
Feedback Schedule Date:31/07/07		
Time	10A	10B
10.30 -11.10	Chemistry	Physics
11.10 -11.50	6 th Subject	

78. Festival Celebrations

We celebrate all festivals of all religions in a traditional and authentic manner. School remains closed only on *Rakshabandhan*, *Dussehra*, *Diwali*, *Dhuleti* and *Uttarayan*. All other festivals are celebrated in the school in its true flavour.

Janmashtami: (refer # 67)

Diwali: On the last working day before *Diwali* vacations students decorate their classes beautifully and draw *rangoli* in the gym. Each section makes arrangements to eat lunch together. MS students bring *puris* and boiled *chhole* from home. A sumptuous meal is cooked in school by students along with the educators. Students of SS also arrange for a similar lunch while JS enjoys a mouth watering snack of *bhel* or *paanipuri*. Students are advised against bursting crackers to arouse awareness against environment pollution.

Dhuleti: *Dhuleti* is a holiday so the festival is celebrated a day ahead in the last hour of school. Students and Educators all gather in the ground for a time of colour and fun! This festival creates a rare bond amidst the students and educators.

ID: Id calls for a visit by the *Maulvi* – the muslim priest. Muslim students dressed up in traditional attire demonstrate the procedure of offering *Namaaz* and share the values and ideals of the one month long abstinence called ‘*Roza*.’ The *maulvi* delivers the message of Id to the students.

Dussehra: (refer # 64)

Uttarayan: (refer # 73)

Lohri: A parent is invited to share with the students the customs that this harvest festival brings along. The fire is lit on the stage and *revari* and *phulia* (popcorn) is distributed as part of the celebration.

Pateti: A guest dressed in traditional *Parsi* attire graces the assembly on this day. The students are informed about this community their culture and their religion.

Christmas: A priest from the church is invited to deliver the message of love, peace, and good cheer that Christmas brings along. Children present nativity play depicting the birth of Christ. Christmas carols and a surprise visit by Santa Claus enhances the festive spirit and mood.

79. Field Visits

During the academic year students make visits to places like factories, companies, exhibitions and heritage sites. These visits help students to gain in-depth knowledge and information first hand about the products of the factory or working of various departments of a company or awareness about the rich cultural heritage of our country.

Field visits are the 'exposure visits' arranged for students. Five, six or seven visits are planned for each class separately which are spread over the entire academic year.

Visits are to a variety of places. For each class some visits are directly related to their curriculum while some are apparently fun visits organized to provide appropriate exposures.

Places for visits are local museums, hospitals, blood banks, old age homes, science parks, factories, food processing units, banks, nature parks, historical places, architectural monuments etc.

A week before the visit is to be done, educators actually go to the place to be visited and make a blue print of the visit that includes a rough map of the place and all the areas that are to be seen and explained. They also speak to the resource person there and discuss what type of interaction will take place. (Appropriate for the visiting class).

Students are briefed about the purpose and nature of the visits. If needed some additional information about the visit is also given. Sometimes brochures, pictures, movies, and posters are shown. Students are encouraged to take down notes during the visits and write down their experiences immediately after the visit.

A separate 'Visit File' is maintained with details of each visit like the appropriate days and time for visit, contact details, time required to travel to the place, time taken for the actual visit, travel time coming back, educators accompanying the visit etc. A detailed and comprehensive report is prepared which is filed in the visit file.

The main purpose of many visits like the one to Old Age Homes or orphanages is to provoke students to go beyond the physical aspects of the visit and question as to why such set ups like an Old Age Home is needed? To enable them to question the structure of society and understand how social and economic structures change with times.

When they visit heritage sites or temples they study the importance of a cultural background and its preservation.

In SS these visits are organised class wise based on their curriculum and subject knowledge. The visit also helps students to make better presentations for their project. The visits are conducted to give a practical experience of the particular place. Some places of visits are Divya Bhaskar Press, Parle Biscuits Factory, Arvind Mills, Core Emballage, Claris Pharma, SAL Hospital, Electroplating Workshop, PRL, Amul Dairy and Muni Seva Ashram. A committee of three educators is formed in the beginning of the academic year. They look after the logistics of the visit and seminar and plan them for the next academic year.

Interested educators from the schools other than the one for which the visit is arranged are encouraged to accompany the students on the visit.

Some of the visits are listed on the next page:

Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Sundervan	Naranpura Post Office	Sterling Hospital	Adalaj Step-well
Traffic Park	Kalory Bread Factory	Van Chetna	Rancharda Dental Hospital
Brick Kiln	School Garden	Core Factory	Soap & handmade paper factory
Gujarat Vidyapith	Places of Worship	Shreyas Museum	L D Museum
Class 5	Class 6	Class 7	Class 8
Radio Mirchi	Science City	Sarkhej Roja	Krishna Heart Institute
Uttam Dairy	Lothal	Gujarat High Court	Baroda Museum
Shreyas Museum	Sola Vidyapith	Safai Vidyalay	Pirana Sewage
Brick Kiln	Divya Bhaskar	Kankaria Zoo	Paper & Soap Factory
			WIAA Aeronautics

Class 9	Class 10	Class 11	Class 12
Arvind Mills	Marble Factory	CHPL	Muniseva Ashram
Jeevan Sandhya Old Age Home	Safai Vidyalaya	Prathma Blood Bank	Claris Pharma
Tirupati Oil Factory	NEPL	Ahmedabad Zoo	Halcyon Labs
Core Emballage	Vintage Car Exhibition	Cancer Institute	Architect Bimal Patel's Office
	Divya Bhaskar	MICA	

80. Filler Weeks/Subject Weeks

In the beginning of the session, a schedule is planned and prepared for the entire year's programme, which are to be held during the year. Filler weeks are a part of it. These are spread throughout the year subject wise.

It creates enthusiasm and inquisitiveness in the students. They celebrate by making banners, dangles, posters etc. Also various activities like poem recitation, elocutions, debates, bookmarks and poster making competitions, reading time, drama from the classic authors of the Hindi and English languages, Maths puzzles and games, mock sessions, skits and plays based on the anecdotes of the personalities etc are conducted in the assemblies and within the class thereby creating an atmosphere of that subject in the air. It peps up every one and helps in peer learning as well. Usually a filler week is held for three consecutive days.

Prizes are also distributed to the students at the end of the competitions. During English week we have allotted a special time for reading any book during home period where the students and educators are engrossed in reading books thereby inculcating the habit of reading. In Hindi *Humjoli* students are given topics for essay and poem writing etc.

In all schools the prizes given to the children are prepared by the educators themselves.

Some of the filler weeks celebrated in JS and MS are –

1. Reading Week
2. Science Week
3. Maths Mela
4. Hindi Humjoli
5. How you say it – Reading and Recitation Week (Middle School)
6. Then and Now – Social Science Week
7. Waste to Wealth
8. Value Week

81. Financial Assistance

Eklavya has created a fund to partially or fully subsidize the fees for students who are unable to afford the full amount. Financial assistance is purely need based and varies from 25% to 100%.

About 25% of the children in Eklavya come under what we call "Financial Assistance (FA)." Some pay almost no fees at all (may be Rs.10 per month or Rs.50 per month), some pay 1/4th fees, some pay half, and some pay 3/4th of the fees - this depends on their financial condition.

Each year parents have to apply in a prescribed form, declaring their income, assets, and how much they can afford. In most cases the Financial Assistance Committee accepts what they say and grants them financial assistance asked for. Our fees are approximately Rs.2000 to Rs. 5000 per month from Nursery to Class 12 (including books, outings, bus, etc - not included is only uniform and food which they bring from home). Thus some pay Rs.10, some Rs.300, some Rs.800, some Rs.1500.... etc. Each year when they apply, the committee sees whether the parents are taking interest or have "switched off", and also if the economic situation of the family has improved, part of that should go to paying more fees, even if it is Rs.50 more per month.

In 2006-07, 203 students out of 1100 were getting Financial Assistance in the following range:

Sr.No	No. of Students	% of fees Parents pay
1	40	0 - 10 %
2	44	11 - 25 %
3	70	26 - 50 %
4	42	51 - 75 %
5	7	76 - 100%
Total	203	

Eklavya's philosophy strongly believes that you can donate money to a charity or a temple or a needy cause. But when you invest in a child you invest in the future. You help make a LIFE. Unlike monetary donation, which makes the recipient dependent, education makes the recipient independent and enables her to achieve more.

82. First Aid Classes

These classes are held for students of classes 5 to 8 once a month to inform and educate on essential information regarding First Aid.

Curriculum is developed for each class and the objective is to empower children to handle a medical emergency without panic.

The Science and Scouts teachers take these classes. These classes are enriched using a lot of charts, posters, as well as demonstrations. Students are given a lot of practice of tying various kinds of bandages.

The curriculum is as follows:

Class 5: Dressings, Bandages, Burns, Poisons and Stings.

Class 6: Wounds, Hemorrhages, Respiratory problems, Fever, Nose Bleeding, Dehydration and Fainting.

Class 7: Muscular cramps, Heat Stroke, Snake Bites and Dislocation.

Class 8: Fractures, Poisoning, Artificial Respiration and Heart Attack

83. First day schedule

Children are welcomed at the gate of their respective schools by their educators with a `tikka'. Usually on the first day of the school, the students are made aware of the working of the school system by allotting the class sections and announcing the respective class teachers and subject teachers in the assembly.

The educators join three days before the students after summer vacations. Respective classes are decorated by the class teachers. The educators also make sets of the books and stationery and place it on the desk of every child. The list of students belonging to the class is displayed and each class teacher makes a small bookmark or card to welcome her students to their class.

Educators are able to thus identify and know each child by name.

Then the students submit their duly filled medical forms, third language, sports and activity slips, and their summer vacation homework. Each student is expected to remain present on the first and last day of school. Attendance on these days is compulsory. Students are then given the stationery (textbooks, notebooks, school diary, files, atlas, dictionaries-Hindi and English, geometry box, pencil, pen, eraser, and sharpener) and name tags.

Students are given the timetable of their respective classes. The educators teaching various subjects spend ten minutes in each class that they will be teaching and identify the textbook and briefly discuss the plan for the term.

The first day of school is thus very important and is planned well to give a good start to the academic year. It is a very efficient day and every minute is well planned and executed.

In the afternoon, students are involved in different activities, which are fun based and help them mingle with and know each other.

84. Free Elective Projects (Class 11)

Students of Class 11 select a Free Elective Project of their choice. They are required to work for 40 hours on this project. This project is besides the regular subject projects that they are required to submit as a part of their syllabus. Students from all the three streams - Science, Commerce and Humanities are required to carry out this study.

Students put in about 40 hours of work into the project over six months starting from August to January. This means they are required to put in about 1.5 - 2 hours per week for the project.

Students study and research a topic of their own interest and choice. Some projects students have in the past worked on are Aliens, Interpretation of Dreams, Life of a Drug Addict, Life of Eunuchs, Study of phi, Deep Ocean Mysteries, Floods – Natural or Man made? Tarot Card Reading, Crop Circles, Missile Technology, Palmistry, Life of an Urban Slum Woman, Multiple Personality Disorder, and Hacking and it's Prevention.

A student who had taken up 'Making a Computer Virus' told us that he was actually interested in making a virus that will infect a particular type of file. He discovered that he will need to specially learn some computer languages - Java, C++, Python and Q Basics to design the computer virus. He attended these classes after school, learnt the languages and designed the virus. During the presentation he showed the process, designed the virus on screen and stopped just short of infecting the computer!

Another student decided to study the Life of Eunuchs. She found that it was quite difficult to meet them or even talk to them over the phone. Through a series of meetings with NGO's and individuals who work with them on a one-to-one basis she was able to arrange a meeting. This meeting was a real eye opener for her. She learnt about their customs, their beliefs and the way they congregate and meet and run their lives. She discovered that most of them lead parallel lives and juggle between the society inside and outside.

These Free Elective Projects are in fact an opportunity for students to analyse, discover and learn about a subject or issue that maybe freaky, out of this world and bothering them for an answer and something they do not normally do.

Students search the Internet, meet people and make visits to institutions related to their study. They collect a lot of reading and reference material from which they make notes for their Project Report. Sometimes they do case studies and also make questionnaires, which they get filled, and process to give conclusions or interpretations. All this that they do is recorded and documented for the final Project Report.

The final Project Report is in two parts - 1. A written record in a given format. 2. A power point presentation made and delivered by the students. Evaluation is on both. The power-point presentation usually takes a whole day, the students come dressed in a suit and tie (usually their mom's or dad's!) and many students of other classes and educators attend for short durations throughout the day (depending upon their classes). It's a very very impressive show.

A jury of three people - usually a mixed group of professionals – like lecturers from other colleges, managers in corporate offices or educators (not necessarily of any particular subject) are chosen. The jury independently evaluates and gives comments on every project. At the end of this the students are awarded grades.

Most important part of the project is that students are doing something of their interest. So they go deep into something they identify with and live with for a period of six months. The learning is in the process and experiences they gather along the way during this time.

Free Elective Project For Class 11

(2005-06)		(2006-07)	
No.	Title Of The Project	No.	Title Of The Project
1	Rape - A Crime	1	Aliens
2	Myths and Superstitions	2	Interpretation of Dreams
3	Stamps, Coins & Currency of India from 1947 till date	3	Palmistry
4	Heavy Metal Rock Bands	4	Making a movie
5	Cardiology	5	Evolution of explosives and their methods of detection
6	Edible Vaccines	6	Hacking and its prevention
7	How to start a factory	7	Your mind and its unlimited potential
8	Finger prints and Forensic Science	8	Do ghosts really exist?
9	Computer Virus	9	Multiple Personality Disorder
10	Aerodynamics in Formula 1 Cars	10	Organic Food
11	A play	11	Industrial Espionage
12	Space and Universe	12	Life of a drug addict
13	Reincarnation	13	Hallucinations
14	Magic	14	What causes dreams?
15	Stock Exchange	15	India China Rise
16	Indian Arts over 100 years	16	Antimatter
17	Indian Dances	17	Life of a women in an urban slum
		18	24 x 7 - The Sun
		19	Life of an Eunuch
		20	Tarot Card Reading
		21	Ocean Mysteries
		22	Indian Air Force
		23	Save the Girl child
		24	The number phi
		25	Missile Technology: Types of missiles

Free Elective Project For Class 11 (2007-08)

No.	Title Of The Project	No.	Title Of The Project
1	History if Manchester United	20	Indian Heritage
2	Homosexuality	21	Mystery of King Arthur
3	Agony and grievance of Indian Women	22	Birds found in the little Rann of Kutch
4	Hippie Movement	23	What could you mean about life?
5	1993 - Mumbai Blast	24	BPO
6	THOR-Electric Bike	25	UFO
7	Animation	26	Human Trafficking
8	Growth of Dubai	27	Nutrition and wellness in Indian population
9	Poetry and emotions	28	Stigmata
10	Serial killer are made and not born	29	Realistic Pictures
11	Power of one	30	Suicidal cases of children and women(attempted)
12	Movie Making	31	Life of Andrew Carnegie
13	Olympics in Ancient Greece	32	Ghosts
14	Multidimensionality of Leonardo Da Vinci	33	Buddhism in its present perspective
15	Bartender	34	Fashion Designing
16	Existentialism	35	Comparative study of CNS and CPU
17	Drug Addiction	36	How people get inspired to become a saint?
18	Study of fighter planes	37	Forever club Twenty seven
19	Concentration camps		

Free Elective Project For Class 11 (2008-09)

No.	Title Of The Project	No.	Title Of The Project
1	Dreams (Interpretation)	20	Multifunctional Helmet & Jacket
2	Parallel Universe	21	Magnetic Gloves
3	Share Market	22	Bike working on air
4	Sleep Walking	23	Phobia
5	Writing a play and Various aspects related to perform the play	24	Schizophrenia
6	Hindustani Music & Classical Ragas	25	2D animations
7	Science Fiction Story	26	Start an NGO who works against child Labour
8	Mafia System	27	World Flag
9	Various types of Western Dance (Popping & Locking), Salsa& Indian Contemporary	28	Language of Mentally Retarded children
10	Street Painting	29	Coach a Football team
11	Innovative Business Ideas	30	Soccer Skills And Technique
12	Comparison of immunity of rich and the poor	31	Wall Walker
13	Gynophobia	32	Hitler & Nazism
14	Zodiac Signs	33	Green Buildings
15	Infrastructure Development in Mecca	34	High rise Sky Scrappers
16	Fashion Designing	35	Solar Mobile Chair
17	Ahmedabad Zoo	36	Composing a song & playing on guitar & drums
18	Making Documentary Film on Vultures	37	Vastushastra
19	Conservation of Snakes	38	Stray Dogs

Free Elective Project For Class 11 (2009-10)

No.	Title Of The Project	No.	Title Of The Project
1	Working model of a Solar Bicycle	25	Skills in football
2	Alternative Surgical Instruments	26	Basketball skills & Fight between bulls and lakers
3	Electricity Recharge Station	27	Documentary on poverty
4	Ling Kong Jing - Chinese Martial Art Skill	28	Comparison Presentation on Gandhi, Martin Luther King & Ikeda
5	How is magic performed? - Science behind it	29	Ten ways by which people get fooled
6	CERN - Particle Physics	30	Cricket bat & other accessories
7	How to plan a town	31	Seven extraordinary inventions by ordinary inventors
8	Mossad - Anti Terrorist Operation - Operation Thunderbolt	32	How to improve your sixth sense
9	Hypnosis & the subconscious mind	33	Scientific & non-scientific practices in Jainism
10	Town Planning & architecture of the Polls in Ahmedabad	34	Cuisine from around the world
11	Illusions	35	Reading Tarot Cards
12	Graphology	36	Stigmata
13	Multiple Personality Disorder	37	A 100 things people want to do before they die
14	Stegonography	38	Study of Golden Gate bridge - San Francisco
15	Chocolates	39	Making a Solar Car Design
16	Megastructures around the world - planning , architecture & construction	40	Aspects of Advertising
17	Setting up a NGO for child education	41	Study of NGO - SEWA (Chhindi work done by women)
18	Holocaust	42	The invisible killer - Microburst
19	Art of strategy (Corporate, Political, Military)	43	Importance of Smiling
20	Crazy car design	44	Case Studies - The positive effects of peer pressure
21	Save water by banking & Carbon credit stock exchange	45	Extra sensory perceptions
22	Augment Reality	46	Greek mythology
23	Human Trafficking in India	47	Innovative ideas for home decoration
24	Education through satellite - EDUSAT		

85. Gift on Women's Day, *Diwali*

March 8 is celebrated as "International Women's Day" all over the world. About 80% of educators in Eklavya are women. Eklavya salutes the spirit of womanhood on this day in a very special manner.

All members of the Eklavya family (male and female, educators and others) receive a gift of appreciation on Women's Day and *Diwali*.

The gift on Women's Day is usually a fruit. Last year it was a dozen large, juicy oranges. Year before last it was a box of strawberries.

On *Diwali* everybody receives house-hold utility articles like a set of hot-cases, a set of stainless steel storage boxes, a set of six dinner plates or glasses and bowls.

86. Grandparent's Day

Grandparents of students and educators are invited to spend a day in school. This is done once a year, usually on the 14th / 15th of November.

Grandparents play a very important role in the family. Seeds of good values and principles are sown by them. To honour them we celebrate 'Grandparents Day'.

Around 21 days before the scheduled day an invitation with the details of the days programme is sent to all students of PS, JS, MS and SS. Grandparents are requested to confirm their attendance within a week. This then helps us to work out the logistics for the day.

Due to the overwhelming response we get every year we celebrate this day over two days. Around 200 grandparents came on each day. They came along with the PS and SS students by the 8:10 am bus and depart from school at around 11:40 am. Buses are run on four special routes for the Grand parents to go back.

When they arrive they are welcomed by educators who then take them around for a detailed school visit. Then they are served with tea. During the tea break the grandparents freely interact with each other.

A *havan* is then conducted for them. The *havan mandali* group, a group of children from class 5 has been trained to conduct a *havan* – they chant *mantras* and also direct the '*vidhis*' for eg. "Take water in the right hand – when you hear *swaha*, pour the water outside the *havan kund*." During the *havan* the grandchildren sit next to their grandparents.

The grandparents really feel elated at the importance given to them and they thank us from the bottom of their hearts.

87. Green Projects in Eklavya

Seven educators from MS & SS completed the One-year Green Teachers Diploma in Environment Education, a distance course conducted by the Centre for Environment Education, Ahmedabad.

This one year course includes two contact sessions and one on-going environment project that the educators and students have to do together. Five such projects were taken up that are still carried out in the school.

1. Aerobic Leaf Composting using Bioculum

Dry leaf composting is a better way to dispose the leaves that fall during autumn instead of the conventional way to burn them causing air pollution.

Procedure - Dry leaves are collected in layers of about 2 feet. They are watered everyday to maintain the moisture level of about 40%. After the moisture level is achieved, *bioculum** containing aerobic microorganisms, is mixed with water in a ratio of 1:10 (one part culture ten parts water) and is sprayed over the heap of leaves.

The leaf pile is checked for moisture and is watered with the help of a sprinkling can, once every 5 days. The compost will be ready in 10-12 weeks. The compost resulting from this process has all nutrients and is a very good soil conditioner.

**Bioculum* is a culture obtained from Excel Industries based in Narol, Ahmedabad.

It contains aerobic microorganisms like Rhizobium (Bacteria), Acitnomycetes(Fungus) which help in decomposing the leaves into manure. The culture is made in a fermenter (a big vessel) and then passed through minerals like geolite and lignite. The microorganisms adsorb (stick) onto the surface of the mineral used. In this process a dry powder form obtained is packaged. To activate these microorganisms they are mixed in water before sprinkling on the waste pile.

The main advantage is these piles do not smell as normal decaying organic material does. Also this has been a successful project and all the manure required for the campus comes now through this method.

2. Pedal Power Water Pump

Man exercises to keep fit. One such exercise is riding a stationery bike. Physical exercise produces mechanical energy. This energy can be harnessed.

Such a bicycle is connected to a water pump which pumps water when it is paddled. This is a Pedal Power Water Pump. Water can be raised up to 10 feet of height from the underground water tank.

This mechanical device does not require electricity. Physical energy is converted to mechanical energy.

This mechanical energy can be converted to light, sound or heat energy. For e.g. - to charge batteries, to light a lamp, listen to a radio, charge a mobile etc.

The concept of 'Green Gyms' is now being explored actively. For example an exer-bike that is used in the Gym by people to exercise is connected to a device that charges batteries. This then lights up the gym.

Can we have a gym that does not use any energy from outside and is wholly powered by the mechanical energy generated by humans through physical exercise?

3. Rain Water Harvesting (Khambhati Kuva)

Khambhati Kuva is a traditional way of conserving water. It can be constructed by the following steps:-

1. Dig a well about 25 -30 feet deep and 8-10 feet broad.
2. Make a layer of bricks leaving space on the sides in honey comb fashion.
3. Fill the space on sides by broken brick pieces.
4. Provide some inlet for water to enter the well. Water will come through pipes from the area where rain water is collected
5. Extend the brick wall till the slab on ground level. Cover the inlets with bowl shaped covering.
6. Put pebbles on the slab. It will act as a filter allowing only water to enter the well leaving other impurities like leaves and soil on the surface.
7. The well is now ready.

"Of all the countries in the world, India gets the most rainfall per square unit of land area. If we walled the country and didn't let any rain escape into the sea , we would have water one meter deep on the ground each year. That is a lot of water-enough to comfortably meet ever Indian's need. "

- Jalyatra, Exploring India's Traditional Water Management Systems, by Nitya Jacob (Penguin, 2008)

Rain Water Harvesting is a way to capture the rain water, store that water and use it later. This happens naturally in open rural areas. But in cities, we need to create methods to capture the rain water.

Rain water harvesting is essential because surface water is inadequate to meet our demand and we have to depend on groundwater. Due to rapid urbanization, natural recharging of ground water has diminished. The components of rain water harvesting are:

1. Catchments: Surface which receives rainfall directly
2. Conduits: Pipelines or drains that carry rainwater
3. Storage/Recharge: Containers, tanks, pits , wells
4. Outlets: Collection of recharged water for use

Artificial recharge to groundwater is a process by which the ground water reservoir is replenished. Any man-made facility that adds water to ground is considered to be an artificial recharge system. Few methods of recharging ground water are bore wells & dug wells, recharge pit, percolation pit.

Water has been harvested from ancient times in India. People harvested rain water from roof tops and collected in tanks and wells. Some common examples are Johads & Kunds in Rajasthan, Tankas I & Kuva in Gujarat , Temple Ponds in South India , Khatri or Kuhl in Western Himalayas , Baolis or Dighis in the Gangetic plains , Bhandaras or Kere in the Deccan Plateau , Surangam in Western Ghats.

We have this rain harvesting well in front of MS.

4. Briquettes from Dry Leaves.

Eklavya campus has many trees (last year we actually counted, and came with an est of about 3500 ! only trees, not counting mehndi,

bushes, plants, etc but counting only regular 'trees'). Thus there are many leaves, more so in certain seasons, but round the year.

So far we used to collect them and burn them. We did not like doing it and were struggling with coming up with a better 'solution'. Of late since some of our educators are doing a year-long course on Green Teachers at the CEE (Centre for Environment Education) and thus there is a greater consciousness and greater questioning.

We converted these dry leaves to briquettes.

Converting leaves into coal-briquettes - Burn the leaves in a closed vessel under controlled conditions, they get 'charred', add flour as a binder and make them into 'laddoos' then pass them through a high pressure briquette machine where they get pressed into 'coal'. See photos below.

5. Save Water Campaign - Sticker Making Competition

To do something to practically spread awareness and stop wastage of water we organized a sticker making competition in each class of MS. Educators of all schools joined this competition.

Later SS students also joined in. Students designed stickers with the slogan or message or a illustration giving the message – 'Save Water'.

The winner's sticker was selected and thousands of copies were made. They were distributed to students of all schools. Each one of them put one up in her home and distributed the others to friends and relatives. Some of the students also stood at the cross roads and various books shops like Crossword, Navneet etc. to give away these stickers.

Students participated very enthusiastically in this activity.

88. Happygram

Happygram is a happy telegram. It describes appreciation given by the Educator to a student for something done "out of ordinary."

The Happygram is addressed to the parents of the student to inform about the event of appreciation. A mention is made in the Anecdote file and a copy kept in the Scope file.

Parents feel very nice and happy when they receive it. It describes an achievement of their child and is very valuable and meaningful for them. It brings joy to the student on receiving and serves as motivation for her and encourages her.

Anyone can give a Happygram to any one, say - an educator can give a Happygram to a student, a student to an educator, an educator to the Principal, a Principal to an educator, an educator to another educator and also from an educator to the bus driver or any administration staff.

89. Havan Mandali

Many students in Eklavya learn Sanskrit and over the years we have students who pronounce and chant *shlokas* accurately in correct rhyme and tune.

This inspired us to form our own '*Havan Mandali*'. Earlier priests from the Arya Samaj would come and conduct the *havan* held at various times. Now a group of students usually class 5 and 6 students chant the *shlokas* and conduct the *havan*.

The entire group chants the *shlokas*. Then one student guides the students and educators around the *kund*. For e.g. she says – now take water in your right hand and hold it over the *kund*. After we recite the *shloka* and when we say *swaha* pour the water on the floor to your right. Then the *mandali* chants the appropriate *shloka* and the students follow.

The *shlokas* are all written in sequence and each student has a copy of this during the *havan*. Students and educators also chant the *shlokas* with the *mandali*.

We have found this way of performing the *havan* is enriching and extremely motivating. Earlier we were dependent on the priests and their time convenience. Also students were unable to follow the *shlokas* and lost interest somewhere half way through the *havan*. Now they feel included and everybody participates fully with enthusiasm and fervour giving a new meaning to the entire *havan*.

90. Heterogeneous Classrooms

A classroom in Eklavya is heterogeneous. From Nursery to class-4 there is no admission test or interview. Eklavya believes that given the right environment each child has a capability to learn. Hence, admission is granted on a first-come-first-serve basis. Therefore, in a class of twenty-five students there is tremendous amount of diversity in the student's socio-economic-intellectual backgrounds.

Eklavya gives "Financial Assistance"(refer # 81) to students from lower economic strata. There are also students who are first generation English learners, students whose parents are professionals as well as students who come from business class families. And students who come from middle class families where both the parents are working. If we look at the student's context of a particular class then there is a lot of variety.

It is a challenging task for a educator to cater to the requirements of this mixed group. All the students get equal opportunity and treatment. There is lot of peer learning. Apart from this Eklavya admits students with special needs, who are a part of a regular class. (refer # 103)

Students develop empathy for those coming from economically backward sections of the society. They are sensitized to the fact that each child if given a chance can do as well as the other. Acceptance for various sections of society and circumstances is created.

91. Hikes

Hiking is an important activity in the school as part of Scouting. Students of Classes 4 to 8 go on a hike on the day they have a night-out in school. (refer # 128).

The main purpose of the hike is to be a part of nature. Students have to observe every natural element while they go for a hike. Detailed observations regarding the soil, farm, trees, birds, animals, villages are to be made. The scouts teacher leads the troop with necessary equipments like string, knife, torch, etc. that might be needed. Students of class 8 hike part of the time in the late evening or night.

Hiking is done in an area of about 10 km around the school. Since the school is away from the city, it provides an excellent area for the hike. The students wear their scouts-guides uniform. They carry a pen and a notebook to take notes during the hike. After coming back from the hike, students are allowed to rest for a while and then they make presentations in groups.

92. Holiday Homework

Holiday Homework is given during the *Diwali* break and summer break in order to keep the child in touch with her school work. Homework is given keeping in mind that the child enjoys doing her homework during the vacation time. It aims at reinforcing the concepts taught during the academic session. In the PS and JS the homework involves some reinforcement of the topics done and includes assignments which tap the creativity of the child. While in the MS (where academics take a greater focus) worksheets are given in the subjects English, Hindi and Math.

For English and Hindi, worksheets include topics like composition, letters, comprehension, proverbs, idioms and phrases and various grammar exercises.

In maths 25 problem sums and exercises based on concepts are given.

This homework helps children to remain in touch with the studies during holidays. Students are required to submit holiday homework on the first day of school after the break.

In JS the Holiday Homework is so designed that children find it interesting and yet revision takes place – e.g. children are asked to write poems and stories, make scrap books, make word ladder, find out recipes, etc. In Maths too practical activities of estimation, measurement, time and money are incorporated.

- Write a poem based on the place you have visited during the vacations.

- Prepare a scrap book, stick pictures and write a few lines on the place you have visited as a tourist.

- Write an adventurous story, where you are the hero.

- Prepare a chart on summer season.

New students who have taken admission to Eklavya in the next academic year also collect the Holiday Homework and submit it on the first day of the new session. So they do not do homework of the old school but of Eklavya.

93. Home Period

The first period of the day in JS, MS and SS is the Home Period (about 15 - 20 min). It is the time when students and their class teacher interact *without any specific agenda*.

The fixed schedule of the day usually does not provide much time for the students to share about the small-small (but still important to them) things of their lives. So the time is provided in the form of a Home Period at the beginning of the day.

Home Period starts by taking attendance and then the conversation flows to what the class did the previous evening and any specific issues that may come up. The class teacher also shares her thoughts with the class. This helps to build up a rapport and also helps children settle down and be ready for the day.

The time can also be utilized to give specific instructions about school rules, values, as well as providing information about school functions and competitions. The small tiffs among students can be addressed and resolved and the class teacher can make it into a learning experience for the class.

Sometimes students do go out of the classroom, under a tree or an open space for the home period. Sometimes a student may demonstrate a specific talent or read out and present a topic of her choice and interest to the other students during the home period.

Home Period is utilized to decorate as well as clean the class. Any upcoming event to be presented by the class is planned, discussed and rehearsed during this period.

If a child has done some work of noble note she is appreciated by the educator and her peers during this period.

In the JS, *the last 15 minutes of the day is also the Home period* where the time is used as a *closure*. Children are in the class with their class teacher before they leave for home.

The teacher uses the time to wrap up the day, give reminders or any specific instructions and bid the children good-bye. This period sees to it that none of the children go home with an unresolved issue.

In the MS and SS attempt is made while designing the time table to allot the last period to the class teacher to take her subject. In MS

there is a home period at the end of the day also just before students go for activities. This helps the class teacher to be with her class before the day ends.

During the Home Period the class teacher usually plays the role of a good listener. Now-a-days the need of someone listening with interest often remains unsatisfied due to the hectic schedule of parents.

Diaries are signed at this time and it is seen that students have copied the homework.

94. Home Visit

Class Teachers visit *each student's home* for about an hour in the first one to one-and-a-half months of the academic year. The bond created by this and the understanding got by the teacher regarding the various aspects of the child's background and the child herself is of immense value. This truly helps her to play the role of a nurturer and facilitate the overall development of the child. (refer # 107 and # 123)

These visits are coordinated with parents and it is necessary for both parents and the child to be present during the Home Visit. All other family members (e.g. grand parents) are encouraged to be a part of the discussion and give their inputs. The purpose of this visit is to learn about the home environment of the child and also know the people living with her.

There is a Home Visit format which is used to give a structure to the visit but the format is of secondary importance as the focus is on rapport-building between the family and the educator. This helps the child to get the most effective guidance from both home and the school. *The home visit is the first step to unite the educator and the parents with the single-minded goal of what's best for the child.*

The questions asked during the visit cover areas like the socio-economic background of the family, likes and dislikes of the child, general health (including medicines) and habits of the child, friends in the neighborhood and concerns of the parents regarding the child.

Home Visit is an opportunity for the class teacher to discuss the philosophy of the school and help the parents understand what the school expects from them. The discussion also helps her identify the various areas requiring guidance and also the reason for any particular behavioural pattern displayed by the child.

Apart from questions, she also observes and makes a mental note of various points like the neighborhood environment, the parenting style, lifestyle, etc. Eklavya educators are expected to accept no hospitality other than water! Politely but firmly they refuse all offerings, even tea or coffee.

The educators take time out after the regular school hours and make these visits. Sometimes the location of the homes is difficult to find and the rains make it quite cumbersome for them to reach the right place on time. Sometimes they wade through knee-deep water but always do the home visits!

Last year we brainstormed on how to make the Home visits more time saving yet as effective since it would take almost three weeks to complete them. The educators felt that the existing format needed a change as it was becoming monotonous for the parents to keep answering routine questions every year.

So we decided on a system of clustering the students of a section address wise and then completing all the visits to that area together. The educator would then complete one cluster in a given area and move on to the next area instead of doing it haphazardly.

The next change was that Home visits were scheduled for a 2nd and 3rd Saturday plus a weekday e.g. Tuesday. Students were given holidays on the 3rd Saturday and the weekday and the 2nd Saturday which was already a holiday. The educator started from 8 am and did the visits. She was free to take a break whenever she wanted.

We also split the entire questionnaire into 2 separate sheets. The first sheet had the regular details. This sheet was sent with the student to get it filled from home. This saved the time that would have been spent had the educator filled it up during the visit. When she went for the visit she had both the sheets stapled and she concentrated on the second sheet which was an interactive one. We also added a few new questions e.g. Share some incident about your child which is not related to school.

2009-2010 was the first year we followed this format and the feedback was very positive. Both the parents and the educators were happy with the new form of interaction.

In SS three days in the end of April and early May are scheduled for Home Visits since the session begins in March.

95. Homework submission schedule

Home-work submission schedule (MS and SS) is a time-table for students for submission of home-work notebooks, class-work notebooks, work-books etc. for correction.

This schedule is set up after the regular class time-table as well as subject teachers' time-table is made.

Each subject teacher (considering her workload on a particular day) decides the homework submission day for each of the section/s and subject/s that she teaches. The respective classes and sections are informed about the same.

The frequency of submission of the notebooks, work books etc. is decided on the basis of number of periods of that particular subject.

For example for subjects like English and Maths which have 5 – 7 periods per week, there are two-three days for submission of the books spread properly over the week. Whereas for subjects like Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History/Civics, Geography etc that have 2-3 periods per week, the submission is once or twice a week.

This arrangement helps educators as well as students. It helps students plan out in advance their schedule for doing home-work. It allows educators to plan out properly for the correction of each set that she teaches.

As the schedule is chalked out at the beginning of the year, it helps an educator to effectively use the apparently small but several slots of time that she gets throughout the day.

The burden of the books that the child is carrying to the school is also, to some extent, reduced. Children become responsible over a period of time as completing the work and submitting the books on the submission day is entirely their responsibility.

Home work submission schedule for a MS class may look like:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
HL	EL	Physics	EG	Geo	Maths
H/C	HG		Maths	Chem	
	Bio				

An important point to note here is that the days for submission are to be decided by the subject teachers for their respective sections. So like any other time-table, the homework submission schedule might be different for each section of a particular class, though the frequency of submission for each subject remains same across a class.

Students are motivated and reminded that homework is important and must be completed on the day it is given so that correct and immediate reinforcement of what is learnt in the class happens. This helps them to identify something they have not understood and ask the educator in the next class or in CDS.

It also helps the student learn time management and regularity.

96. Houses – Why they were selected and House oath

The students of Eklavya are divided into four houses Shraavan, Prahlad, Aruni and Dhruv. The school is named after a young hero who proved himself through his deeds of devotion and dedication towards learning. In a similar manner, the four houses are also named after boy heroes who have proved their mettle and set an example for the rest of us to follow. *It is a matter of extreme regret that we failed to include girl heroes while naming the four houses.*

Various sport and cultural activities are held house wise. Every child is allocated to a house at the time of joining school and stays in the same house till she passes out. Named of the houses are based in children who have done great deeds and are remembered for certain unique qualities they possessed. Each house has a colour and children are expected to wear a shoulder strap daily, depicting the house they belong to. House colours are also sported on the T-shirts.

House	Colour of the badge	Values they stand for
Shraavan	Orange	Sacrifice, Duty towards parents, Hard work
Prahlad	Yellow	Courage, Trust, Forgiveness
Aruni	Green	Obedience, Sacrifice, Environment Conscious
Dhruv	White	Determination, Dedication, Devotion towards God

Each house takes an oath in the beginning of every academic year. The oath describes the qualities of the child hero and motivates the students to emulate him. Students of JS, MS and SS take the oath in their respective assemblies on a fixed day.

The oath of each house is given below –

श्रवण

- मैं श्रवण संकल्प लेता हूँ, कि श्रवण-कुमार की भाँति माता-पिता और बड़ों के प्रति मैं सदैव अपने कर्तव्यों को निभाऊँगा। मैं यह जानता हूँ कि माता-पिता ही पृथ्वी पर ईश्वर का स्वरूप हैं। क्या फायदा, अगर मंदिर में जाकर मूर्तिपूजा की, किंतु घर में माता-पिता का आदर सत्कार नहीं किया।
- जीवन में कठिन परिस्थितियाँ आती रहती हैं, मैं श्रवण-कुमार की तरह, शांतचित्त होकर, तथा सूझ-बूझ से इन परिस्थितियों का सामना करूँगा और उनका हल भी निकालूँगा।
- मैं श्रवण-कुमार की तरह आत्मनिर्भर बन कर परिश्रम करूँगा तथा असंभव को संभव बनाकर अपने देश व स्कूल का नाम रोशन करूँगा।
जय हिन्द

प्रह्लाद

- मैं प्रह्लाद संकल्प लेता हूँ कि भक्त-प्रह्लाद की तरह सद्-मार्ग पर निडर होकर चलूँगा, क्योंकि सफलता उसी को मिलती है, जो आस्था, विश्वास और अटूट मनोबल के साथ कार्यशील रहते हैं।
- मैं भक्त-प्रह्लाद की ही तरह जीवन की विपत्तियों का बिना डरे, बिना घबराए, प्राणों की परवाह न करते हुए सामना करूँगा।
- भक्त-प्रह्लाद ने असत्य के सामने सर नहीं झुकाया, लेकिन जब उसकी जीत हुई तो उसने प्रेम और विनम्रता से अपना बुरा करने वालों को क्षमा कर दिया।
- मैं संकल्प करता हूँ कि भक्त-प्रह्लाद के इन गुणों को मैं अपने जीवन में उतारने की कोशिश करूँगा और अपने देश व स्कूल का नाम रोशन करूँगा।

जय हिन्द

आरुणि

- मैं आरुणि संकल्प लेता हूँ कि शिष्य-आरुणि की तरह मैं अपनी जिम्मेदारियों के प्रति सजग रहकर ऐसा आचरण करूँगा, जिससे समाज की रक्षा तथा कल्याण हो। मैं स्वार्थी बनकर अपने कर्तव्य से मुहँ नहीं मोड़ूँगा।
- धैर्य की परीक्षा लेती हुई कई परिस्थितियाँ जीवन में आएँगी। उस समय मैं शिष्य-आरुणि की तरह स्थिरता से उचित-अनुचित का विवेकबुद्धि से विचार करते हुए समस्या का हल निकालूँगा। डरूँगा नहीं।
- मैं शिष्य-आरुणि की तरह जान की परवाह किए बिना अपने कर्तव्यों को निभाऊँगा। चाहे कोई भी कठिनाई आए, मैं शिष्य-आरुणि की ही तरह गुरु की आज्ञा का पालन करते हुए स्कूल व देश का नाम रोशन करूँगा।

जय हिन्द

ध्रुव

- मैं ध्रुव संकल्प लेता हूँ कि बालक-ध्रुव की तरह लक्ष्य प्राप्ति के लिए अटल और अडिग रहूँगा, क्योंकि सफलता उसी को मिलती है, जो पूरी एकाग्रता, लगन और दृढ़-निश्चय से साधना में डूब जाता है।
- बालक-ध्रुव की तरह मैं अपने अधिकारों के प्रति सजग रहूँगा, क्योंकि अधिकारों के साथ कर्तव्यों का पालन करना मेरा धर्म है। अपने अधिकार मैं सदैव दूसरों के हित में प्रयोग करूँगा।
- बालक-ध्रुव की भाँति मैं भी स्वयं अनुशासित रहकर, दूसरों के प्रति भावुक तथा गुरु के प्रति कृतज्ञ रहूँगा। अपने स्वाभिमान की रक्षा कर संसार में अपने देश व स्कूल का नाम रोशन करूँगा।

जय हिन्द

97. HRD - General

HRD (Human Resource Development) is a forum where Sunil Sir spends one hour/week with the educators, as per the following schedule:

Thu	2 00 pm – 3.00 pm	PS & JS
Thu	3.30 pm – 4.30 pm	SS
Fri	7.25 am - 8.25 am	MS

In his own words Sunil Sir describes:

– I wanted to be able to ‘be in touch ‘with every educator regularly. In a school, the role of the educator is fundamental, and the most important. In a hotel, or a factory, it is not like this. There is no one set of people whose role is so fundamental. In a school, 99% is educator, and only 1% is everybody else! So I wanted to be able to ‘touch’ them, be in contact, motivate them, listen to them....

We tried an experiment in PS for a year. The PS team and I would meet once-a-week, 7.30-8.30 am, Wednesday mornings. We took a book of Maria Montessori (blue colour, The Discovery of the Child) and would read a few pages together. Sometimes we would discuss some incidents which had happened in the previous week – incidents of students, of parents; some lovely and cute incidents, some not so happy ones. Through this one hour, I was ‘getting a peep’ into the PS and it was good, because I was able to relate and connect to other things, and quite often it happened that while an educator shared an incident (and did not think beyond that incident) I connected to other things, and one thing led to another, and we made an improvement, or got an idea, or made a policy, or a way of approaching certain type of incidents, etc.

This one hour also gave the educators a peep into my mind, how I think, what I want, and often I would link small small things with larger philosophical aspects,; and I think this helped all of us to come closer to each other, to start thinking alike, and having common concerns. We would debate certain aspects, and many viewpoints would emerge, but we also found that over a period of time, there would be ‘convergence’. Which was good.

Next year, in addition to the PS ‘weekly meeting’ (we still did not call it HRD) I started doing similar meetings in JS, where in the afternoon

we would spread durries on the back lawn and as the breeze caressed us we would share....no agenda. Generally chat about things here and there for an hour. I soon realised that an 'anchoring factor' was needed... a *disha* helps.

In the third year was born the HRD concept – all educators to meet once a week, in my room, sit in a circle on durries on the floor. We had this 4 times since educators of all 4 schools could not find a common time, the time-table and logistics were such. Which was a good thing since we had a small, homogeneous, 'cosy' group of educators who are working and interacting with each other round the week. To identify the anchoring factor I did the following:

I thought its best to identify a book, give one copy to everyone, each will read a few pages and come, and we will discuss. This we could do for half-hour, and then chat about and share various things. I thought the book should be interesting, lead us to reflect, but not connected with our subject of 'education'.

The first year we selected the *Bhagavad Gita*. I did not want to take the original one; it is a bit difficult, and high-funda. I wanted something simpler. So I read about a dozen or more English translations (by Sw Chinmayananda, Iscon group, Sw Chidbhavananda, Gandhiji, Sri Aurobindo, Annie Besant and so many others) and found that the one written by Vinoba Bhave would best suit our purposes (he had originally given these as discourses in a jail while he was a political prisoner during the Freedom struggle, just to pass time, since they had no work and could not be given typical jail-work, so someone suggested that since Vinobaji knows *Gita* so well he should give discourses, during these one person took notes in Marathi, and later in 1956 published it, it was a runaway best seller, later it got translated in several languages, including Hindi, Gujarati, and English).

So we bought several copies (in English, Hindi and Gujarati – depending upon preference given by the respective educator), stuck a page in the beginning which specified which pages we will read for each of the 44 weeks during the year, kept some 'free sessions' also when no reading is to be done. Each educator was given a yellow highlighter, and told to mark whatever lines 'strike' them or 'touched' them. During our weekly meetings each educator will share what touched her. The year turned out very well.

At the end, when we had finished reading the entire *Gita*, we needed to do something to bring the whole exercise to a 'close'. We all had

enjoyed it. Also enjoyed meeting in a family once a week, it was very relaxing. If in one week we could not meet for any reason, people felt as if something is missing. Everyone looked forward to these weekly 'gatherings'.

The idea was a hit! The *Gita* part was enlightening and everyone loved it. They had 'studied' the *Gita* like this for the first time in their life. But in addition, people shared openly. So many issues would get identified, and later 'solved'. People brought newspaper clippings, articles, CDs, puzzles, and so many other things to the HRD thereby enriching it.

To 'close' the year, two assignments were given – (i) write the essence of what you have understood on the *Gita* in five bullet points; and (ii) write a poem, it need not rhyme, 18 lines long, on what you have understood of the *Gita*, could be one line per chapter but need not be, it is not a summary of *Gita* but a description of what has happened to you while studying it.

The final poems people wrote were too good! Many educators told me later on – Sir, my father-in-law gave me a copy of the *Gita* when I got married but I never read it, now he is very happy and wants to thank you! Sir, my father was crying when he went through my poem, he said to read the *Gita* is in itself something nice, to write a poem on it in your own words is fantastic, he was very very happy.

Thus began the HRD in Eklavya, today it is a well-established institution.

The room echoed with hearty laughter and the walls were silent witnesses to the tears we shed without inhibition. At times Divya ma'am's famous *sukhdīs* were well relished. It was a kaleidoscope of emotions and a deluge of positive energy.

The HRD has germinated many projects...it was here in that the concept of writing *Bacchon ki kahaniyan* was conceived and what joy all of us felt when the eager parents read the book and came back to us with requests for more.

21 *shlokas* on how an ideal student should be also took birth here. Now HRDs are an integral part of our lives. All of us eagerly wait for our slot when we can cherish each other's company and open the doors of our hearts. If we miss it for any reason we feel empty, *ek*

adhurapan...just like the day is not proper if we have not read the newspaper!

The proactiveness of each member to contribute her bit and learn at the same time is what makes the HRDs so unique. Nobody attends just for the sake of attending....the whole philosophy of Eklavya being a *parivar* where we applaud each other's success and wipe the tears, comes true in this room four times in a week.

After each session we are empty but not drained...empty as a tree whose fruits have been shed but there is the promise of a new bounty.

Year	Name of the book / Topic
2002	<i>Gita</i> by Vinoba Bhave
2003	Being a Woman
2004	Dale Carnegie-How to Win Friends and Influence People.
2005	Autobiography of Gandhiji, My Experiments with Truth.
2006	<i>Bhagvad Gita</i>
2007	Study of Islam, Sikhism and Christianity
2008	<i>Ramayan</i>
2009	<i>Mahabharat</i>
2010	<i>Srimad Bhagvata</i>

98. HRD - Educator's Professional Development

Eklavya invests strategically in the development of its educators.

This development is mainly for professional and personal skill enhancement and quality.

This is done in many ways –

1. Attending Subject Workshops conducted by the CISCE – The Council to which the school is affiliated conducts workshops in different subjects at the ICSE (class 10) and ISC (class12) level throughout the academic year. Teachers teaching the subject in school attend these workshops and gain valuable inputs in making of question papers, marking scheme, definition and scope of syllabus, practical difficulties faced while teaching some topics and also discuss need to make the syllabus relevant and interesting. Subjects covered include – Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Biology, Economics, Accountancy, Psychology, English and many more.

2. Educators also attend workshops in various subjects conducted by the British Council and many other private training organizations in the subjects of English teaching, Maths and Science.

3. Eklavya School writes to and requests some of the finest teachers in their subjects to allow educators of Eklavya to attend their classes and spend time with them discussing and learning more about the subject. Educators have visited-

- Welham's Girls' School (Dehradun)
- Vidyaniketan (Bangalore)
- Sahyadri (Pune),
- Cathedral School (Mumbai)
- Shri Ram School, Gurgaon, Delhi
- Frank Anthony School, Bangalore
- Vidyaniketan, Bangalore
- Pranava, Hyderabad,
- Rishi Valley School, Madnapalle
- Rajghat Besant School, Varanasi, to name a few.

Educators stay in the school during the entire working hours of the school, attend classes, see the facilities, visit the libraries and collect information on how best to teach their subject.

4. Eklavya encourages educators to attend workshops and lectures on various subjects of their interest and beneficial to being good

educators. Such workshops are held in the city by various organizations – Ahmedabad Management Association being the main one. These vary from How to be a good educator, Counselling for students, How to teach effectively in the Classroom, First Aid, School Safety, and so on.

5. Educators accompany students of the school on various visits to factories, organisations and institutions. They then learn and understand the practical aspect of what they teach in the classroom and bring it back to the classroom. Such exposure also broadens their perspective and helps them to teach beyond textual material. They visit the Ahmedabad Electricity Company, Centre for Environmental Education, Drug Rehabilitation Centre, Pharma and Small Scale Manufacturing Units, etc.

6. School Visits are organised for a group of five to ten educators to good schools near Ahmedabad. During this one-day visit educators attend classes and interact with teachers of the host school.

7. Eklavya invites excellent teachers from various schools who have spent fifteen to twenty years teaching their subject in the school and are masters in their subject to come and conduct a workshop. These educators spend two to three days with us here on the campus and give our educators small details of teaching in the class, expected answers, how to handle difficulties while conducting practicals, how much emphasis to lay on a particular topic, and so on. Educators find this interaction extremely useful and supportive. They gain confidence and are able to do a good job of delivering their subject in the classroom.

8. Eklavya also invites such teachers to come and stay for 15 days to a month and take classes and give useful tips to the students on how to tackle the Board exams.

9. Eklavya conducts workshops and training programmes on campus also where the faculty maybe our own educators or somebody from outside. These are on subjects like – Transactional Analysis, How to be a good teacher, Team Building, How to Maximise the Child's learning potential, Reward and Punishment and Use of *Taleem* material in classroom teaching to name a few.

99. HRD - Fun HRD on Saturdays (School-wise)

Students of JS, MS and SS have a holiday on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Students of PS have a holiday on the 2nd Saturday of the month. Educators of these schools work for half a day from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm on these days.

Educators have a one-hour 'Fun HRD' on these Saturdays. They spend the remaining time doing extra reading and making notes related to their subject or reading any other material of their interest and choice. This time is thus used for updating and rejuvenating themselves. No corrections are done on these days.

Educators of each school spend a one-hour session together, in which a team of 2 – 3 educators from within conduct a training module which is on diverse issues like discipline, team building, innovative teaching methods in the class room, spot evaluation, films and feedback, trust walk, counselling, making good question papers, case studies, role play and such.

All educators are required to attend this session and actively participate in the module. At times reading material is given a week ahead and discussion and presentation is a part.

The purpose of this HRD is to bring the team together within a loosely framed agenda while giving them the space and time to share and discuss issues that are of significance during the last fortnight. It also provides valuable guidance and inputs that are necessary to keep academics innovative and interesting.

Since all educators get a chance to take a session it develops skills within the team and they learn to appreciate each other's talent and expertise.

100. HRD - Seminars, Lectures, Visits, Workshops

The challenge in any organisation is to transfer individual learning to group learning. Then the organisation grows. When the individual leaves the educator's learning is still retained back in the institution.

The first time we came across this kind of a practice was in a book written by Arthur Hailey called 'The Final Diagnosis'. Here it is described that on the last Saturday of the month all the staff of the hospital – doctors, nurses, ward boys, para medical staff , in fact anybody who has anything to do with patients is there. They discuss all the mistakes done – the patients who died due to any reason, or the ones who suffered or the ones who went away dissatisfied with the hospital services. They openly discussed all the mistakes – one by one with an open minded understanding that we all make mistakes. What is important is along with the mistakes is a learning – from our own and from others mistakes. Care was taken not to accuse anybody of wrong doing or to blame a specific person for a specific event.

The achievements through such a process are that organisational learning is attained and wisdom increases. Across departments people understand importance of small small things they were not even aware of. Until now they were aware only small important things in their limited area (school). Now the awareness extends to the entire school. They look for and rectify and modify practices that other schools have experimented with in their own areas.

The School extends itself by ensuring that educators invest in their self development in various ways. Some of these ways are by conducting in-house lectures, workshops and visits.

Educators attend relevant seminars at Ahmedabad Management Association, which is a local body in Ahmedabad that conducts various seminars all the year around. They share their learnings from the seminars with their colleagues in school. So also the concepts of 'One Training the Other' and 'Peer Learning' are materialised.

Various workshops are conducted to orient educators teaching class 10 and 12 The Council for Indian School Certificate Education (CISCE) sends their schedule of workshops which are spread throughout the year. Educators teaching these subjects attend the workshop to gain tips on how to prepare students for the Board Exams, how to write answers and the marking schemes.

The school also invites experienced faculties in their subjects who come to Eklavya and take workshops in their subjects. This is done in consultation with the Council. The teachers are respectfully invited, received at the airport and arrangements for stay are done. They are paid a monetary fee but more important is the respect given to them that a person of their standing deserves.

When a good teacher comes and spends time with the educators of Eklavya there is instant feedback of teaching methodology they use, how to conduct practicals, improve on question papers and so on.

Eklavya invites educators from the city of Ahmedabad, ICSE schools in Bhavnagar, Rajkot, Surat, Valsad, Bharuch and Godhara and a few select schools from Mumbai, Indore and Rajasthan to attend these workshops. They do not pay any fees to attend this course. All expenses are borne by Eklavya including lunch, an air conditioned hall for the workshop and the costs of inviting the subject expert.

We have observed that when we have a mixed group of teachers – five from Eklavya and about twenty from other schools - the quality of discussion and interaction is far superior. Teachers bring in various questions, issues and problems from their work experience and this enriches the learning for the Eklavya educators also. Professional friendship develops between the teachers of various schools. Normally there is rivalry but all sensible people know that this is useless. Only by sharing and extending one's self is excellence and progress possible.

Therefore it makes sense to go back to the old saying by Vivekananda – 'It is in one's selfish interest to be selfless'.

Visits are also held to various Schools in and around Ahmedabad for the educators to get exposure to various aspects related to School teaching and managing day-to-day activities. Educators also spend from 3 to 7 days in well reputed schools like Welham's or Valley School to attend classes and gain insight into innovative and different methods of teaching-learning.

101. HRD - Video recording of educators

Individual video recording of classroom teaching is done every year for every educator teaching in Eklavya. The purpose of doing this is for the educator to look at herself and examine carefully how she is teaching in the class. A Cd is given to the educator after the recording is complete. She is welcome to watch it by herself or sit with some colleagues of hers with whom she feels comfortable enough to ask for a feedback. This helps every educator to strengthen on aspects of classroom teaching and management.

It is usually done in the month of July-August so that the educator and the students have formed a rapport since the session is already in progress. Exchanging feedback with each other and attending each other's classes help the educators to evolve and become good in classroom management as also to address their weak areas, blind spots, etc. and improve upon them.

Some educators take the Cd home and show it to their family members and have a great time watching it!

102. Including children's names in Question Papers

There is a great teacher – Father Morondo who teaches Biology in St. Xavier's School, Ahmedabad. Several batches of students have graduated from school learning from him. The students worship him and even after many years remember him with great reverence and fondness.

Father Morondo has a certain style of making question papers. He includes the names of the students of the class while making the paper. This paper then becomes interesting and funny.

We have picked up this habit from him. When we make a question paper and use names of the students of the class in the paper (Eg. Kaushik knew that it took 3 men 5 days to dig a ditch....) it apparently amuses, motivates and makes them take more interest in the subject!

103. Inclusive Classroom

Somewhere we read a child asking, 'If I cannot learn the way you teach, will you teach me the way I learn?'

All over Eklavya, wherever our efficiency permits, we implement to take care of individual learning differences.

Eklavya admits students with special needs from mild to moderate range. The special needs vary from Hearing Impaired, Autism, Down Syndrome, ADHD, Ataxia, Dyslexia etc.

These students are a part of the regular class. She does all that her friends do – as much as she can. The class teacher gives her extra time and explains the oral/written activities to her. This makes her feel she is one of them and this feeling makes her put in her best.

Students develop empathy towards children with special needs. In course of time they also serve as a support system and assist the special child in class.

Historical background: Some years ago a couple, recently transferred to Ahmedabad, approached Eklavya. They had two children, both severely hearing impaired. No school was giving them admission, which is understandable since schools normally do not have the infrastructure to address such situations.

Eklavya took the challenge, made it clear to the parents that we are not experts but we will try our best, we sent the educators to Blind Men's Association where they received some training in handling blind / deaf / mute students. Some things the educators read from books and from the internet and over a period of two years both the children were not only doing well but very well.

We try to have not more than one special child per section (otherwise the educator finds it very difficult to cope), and try not to give a new educator a special child for the first year.

In the past few years from 2001 to 2004 we sent about eleven educators for a five week course on 'Handling students with special learning needs' to an institute called Alpha to Omega in Chennai. Educators underwent the training, attended workshops and made presentations on their observations.

This experience was of great practical value when they came back and implemented in Eklavya. They also trained and taught other class teachers what they had learnt there. So in a way these eleven trained twenty more!

Thus such children are included in the folds of a regular classroom. The only training that the educators have and need is to deal with these children with empathy, sensitivity, love and stress on "I can".

104. Induction Programme

When a new educator joins Eklavya she needs to know what Eklavya is all about. This is done in the Induction Programme that is conducted in the first week of June. It is a programme of two days with an agenda.

They go through various files containing information on the making of Eklavya. The initial team that started Eklavya visited about 150 schools and colleges in India and abroad (7 countries) and made detailed exhaustive reports on these. Later through a series of brainstorming sessions a compilation of what a school should be and what will Eklavya School be, was done. The files contain this material in brief. They also go through various articles pertaining to education and watch some cds on education and how to deal with children and their behaviour. (See list below).

On the second day an interactive session of about two hours of the educators with some educators of each school (PS, JS, MS and SS) who have been with Eklavya for some time is held. They share various aspects of the working of their school, the schedule, timetable, activities and in general about Eklavya. Questions are invited and interactive discussions and answers do take place. Sometimes another interactive session of about one-and-half hour- is taken by the Principals responding to queries.

Apart from this one more session is conducted in school throughout the year as and when educators join. This is a power-point presentation done on "Knowing Eklavya". Here apart from the salient features the descriptions and uses of various forms and documents used everyday are shown. The documents discussed are Tour/Leave form, Vehicle requisition, Home Visit form, Tour expense form, Debit note, Leave rules, etc. This makes the new educators aware and comfortable about the use of formal paperwork that is required in daily working in the new environment.

The new educator is also assigned a "mentor"—usually another educator who has been working in Eklavya for atleast two years – to help them feel at ease with the Eklavya System and gradually become independent. The mentor is always there to help the educator with all her queries and doubts. The mentor tries to ensure that within a few weeks the educator becomes independent and comfortable in her new work place. For example the educator may want to know if she could leave early on one day for some personal work. The mentor gives her the confidence to use her "leaving early points" (refer # 55)

and go so that she is able to balance school and house obligations with efficiency.

List of Videos to be watched:

1. Mamuliram – on Dr. Kurien and Amul
2. Teachers as Dream catchers.
3. Eklavya Education Awards Ceremony – 1997
4. Pressures on Pre school children – Counselling films (B&W) – Learning to understand Children – 1&2.
5. Learning Discrimination and Skills.
6. The Miracle Worker
7. Nine-month Miracle

List of books to be read and presented:

1. Totto-Chan: The little girl at the window by *Tetsuko Kuroyanagi*
2. Divaswapana by *Gijubhai Badheka*
3. Black Board Book
4. How Children Learn by John Holt
5. File containing interesting dialogues and articles on School Education and teaching.
6. Knowing Eklavya
7. Eklavya sari
8. Eklavya Parent Handbook

Topics covered in the Induction Programme in school:

1. Home Visit for each child
2. IPEM (Individual Parent Educator Meeting)
3. Festival and Special days Celebrations
4. Comprehensive Evaluation System
5. Special Need Centre-Indradhanush
6. Activities – MS and SS
7. Nature Camp
8. Visits and Seminars
9. Kalasarjan
10. Euphoria
11. Library (JS/MS/SS)
12. Taleem (SS)
13. Bus Routes
14. Workshops and Visits for Educators
15. Stationery
16. Specially designed furniture
17. Call up trees - Educators and Students
18. Lavya – Counselling Center

19. One-to-One Meeting with Sunil Sir and Principal
20. Value Education (VE)
21. Small Class
22. Multiplication Table Test
23. Inter-House Competition (SPAD)
24. Board Examination
25. Sick Room
26. Assembly
27. Mother's Workshop
28. Investiture Ceremony
29. Happy gram!
30. Thorough Examination Feedback
31. Nature Club
32. Night outs
33. Pre-School Weekly Picnics
34. Sports and games
35. Eklavya Hall
36. Phoenix
37. Laboratory (Phy/Chem/Bio/Computer)
38. Science Park
39. Leaves – Circle/CL/SL/PL
40. Driver Conductor Award
41. Lunch Time
42. Eklavya Samachar
43. Excellent Educator Award
44. HRD with Sunil Sir
45. Question Banks on computer
46. Family Life Education (FLE)
47. Common Error
48. Inclusive Classroom
49. Science Math Exhibition
50. Projects
51. Tea Machine / Lunch Facilities
52. Committees - Assembly
53. Committees -Time table
54. Committees -Sports and Activities
55. Committees -Examination
56. Committees -Festivals, Days and Events

A box containing the must- read and watch books and films is kept in the library. Educators issue this box and go through it completely. It contains a copy of the books Totto-Chan, Divaswapna, The Blackboard book, Helen Keller's Teacher, Eklavyasari, Knowing Eklavya, Eklavya Parent handbook, The films are Nine month miracle and The Miracle worker.

105. Internet access for students

In each school we have internet access available. Sometimes we have a virus problem and we cancel the connection for a few months. Then we again start after educating everybody on adequate measures to be taken to prevent virus infections in the computer systems.

In SS (Class 9 - 12), the computer in the library has internet access. Students are encouraged to refer to the internet for their work. They can do the reference during the breaks and reference periods given by subject teachers.

Nowadays many students have internet access at home.

106. Inviting grandparents for functions

For all functions in Eklavya, we call upon the grandparents of our students as Chief Guests. In every function three or four grandparents are invited, one from each school (PS, JS, MS, SS). The grandparents are invited by the class teacher personally and respectfully. On their acceptance of invitation, their presence is confirmed for the function.

When the honour of being a Chief Guest is given to a Governor, an IAS officer, a government official or any other VIP, they are invariably late, they are in hurry to go and they think that they are *obliging* the school with their presence. They actually have no love for the children getting awards or putting up some items, they have no special attachment to the school, they just want to finish it off and go back!

On the other hand, when grandparents are invited for being Chief Guest, they are *always* before time, they feel proud of being here, they go around the school, and they feel valued and honoured. They take keen interest in the function. They feel happy to see and be part of the function where their grandchildren participate and sit throughout and actively applaud.

Sometimes we do invite great-grandparents also.

This also sends a subtle message to the community to value and respect grandparents.

107. IPEM (Individual Parent Educator Meetings)

Individual Parent Educator Meetings (IPEMs) are held twice in an academic year in the school campus, once in September-October and once in January-February. Parents are informed about the date and time slots a month in advance to enable them to be prepared with the points they need to discuss. Educators maintain files in which details about the child's progress and requirements are recorded (called SCOPE file and Anecdote file, refer # 181 and # 16).

In these meetings, class teachers and subject teachers meet the parents and review the child's progress till that time. IPEM's are one of the several methods Eklavya uses to help Educators and parents work hand-in-hand with the single-minded purpose of benefiting the child. These meetings have a clear agenda which is to provide inputs – academic, behaviour and social interaction- for the improvement of the child.

These meetings are organized in different ways in the different parts of Eklavya School.

PS: Class teachers meet the parents for about half-hour. The agenda generally includes the child's physical and emotional growth, a review of how the child is developing her social skills and acquiring her academic skills. The timings of the meetings are schedules from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm and spread over two days usually a Friday and Saturday. Each student's parents are given a half-hour slot.

JS: Class teachers meet the parents individually for about 30 minutes discussing the child's work habits and her performance in English, Maths and Science. The parents then also meet the Hindi, third language (Sanskrit, Japanese, and French) and activity teachers (Music, Dance, Sports, Art, Craft and Library) who are available in the library during this time. The timings of the meetings are scheduled from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm and spread over two days usually a Friday and Saturday. Each student's parents are given a half-hour slot with the class teacher and a half hour after that to go around and meet the activity and sports teachers.

Apart from work habits and academic performance, any other issue of concern regarding behaviour is also discussed. Anecdotes are shared with parents giving them a glimpse of their child in school

MS: Subject teaching begins here and parents need to meet all of them to get a complete picture of their child's performance. Educators

(both class teacher and subject teachers) sit on separate tables arranged in several rooms. Parents accompanied by their child, move from one table to another spending about 5 to 10 minutes (or more in rare cases) with each educator. Class teachers give a feedback about the child's work habits, general behaviour while the subject teachers discuss the child's performance in her subject. It is important for the student to be present because they are old enough to understand the feedback and gain academic and other input. The design of the school ensures that the class teacher of the student is also a subject teacher in the same class/section. These meetings are scheduled on 2nd and 4th Friday and Saturdays (when the students are not there). To ensure smooth movement of parents from one educator to another "slots" of about 32 parents are made every hour, approximately two parents from each of the sixteen sections (class 5, 6, 7, 8 – 4 sections each)

SS: The Principal, class teachers, subject teachers, parents and students sit in a circle in a room. All the educators speak one-by-one about a particular child's progress, discuss the areas where she needs to put in more effort. The entire session can be completed in about 2 hours. This system works in SS as by the time a student reaches Senior School the parents are well acquainted with each other. They are comfortable to discuss and review their child's performance in front of other parents. The students are also mature and ready to acknowledge their shortcomings if any. It creates a bond amidst parents and helps them work towards the main target at this stage – the board examinations. We conducted IPEM's by this method when our classes were small and it worked out very well. These students had been in Eklavya, studying together for atleast six years and it was a small cohesive group.

As the strength in each class increased and more sections were added formal IPEM like MS is held. Students accompany their parents and meet educators in the given slot. They gain academic input and ways to work towards the Board Exam.

The Principal keeps herself totally free and is available during the IPEM'S and parents are welcome to meet her individually.

IPEM's serve as a platform for effective communication between parents and educators to provide and do what is best for the child.

108. JS, MS and SS Inter-house Activities

The students of Eklavya are divided into four houses- Shravan, Pralhad, Aruni and Dhruv. The school is named after a young hero who proved himself through his deeds of devotion and dedication towards learning. In the similar manner the four houses are also named after boy heroes who have proved their mettle and set an example for the rest of us to follow. It is a matter of extreme regret that we failed to include girl heroes while naming the four houses.

The houses have their respective colours: Shravan – orange, Pralhad – yellow, Aruni – green and Dhruv – white. The regular uniform is worn with the flaps of the respective house colour. The student's House remains the same throughout their school life. The House is randomly allotted when the student is in class 1 or whenever he takes admission to the school. Similarly the educators are also assigned houses, though for them it changes every two years.

The houses have their respective house captains from SS and vice-captains – one from MS and one from JS. Each house has a House teacher in each school. Together they share the responsibility of the house and the various inter-house competitions and activities.

The inter house competitions are held once every fortnight in the JS, MS and SS respectively. A special committee is formed in the three schools that arranges for the activities and keeps a track of the points scored by the various houses. Each school has competitions that are age relevant. In JS an effort is made to ensure that all the children participate in the competitions and activities. They get an exposure to all the activities, whereas in MS and SS the children get an opportunity to choose the competitions that they want to participate in.

The competitions are segregated into activities and sports. Activities in JS include Handwriting competition, Poem writing competition, Rangoli Competition, English Elocution, Hindi Story Telling Competition, Folk Dance Competition and so on. The activities are held in the form of a group- 6 to 8 children per house participate (Rangoli, Folk Dance), individual – one child participates (English Elocution) or whole class - where the entire class participates (Handwriting, Poem Writing). In JS the children are selected by the House Teacher in consultation with the class teacher.

In MS and SS the activities are held in a group or individually. Here the children themselves choose the competition that they want to participate in. In case the numbers of children who wish to participate

in the competition are more than the required number then a small intra house competition is held and then the best are selected. The same method is applied to the inter house sports competition, here the help of the sports educator is enlisted along with the house captains and the house-teachers.

The points that are scored in the competitions are recorded and added up along with the points won during the Sports Day. At the end of the year these scores determine the winning house and is awarded the House Trophy.

The trophy has been designed by Eklavya and it is in the shape of a house, the four sides of the trophy depict scenes from the life of the four heroes – Shraavan, Prahlad, Aruni and Dhruv. The base of the trophy has small plaques which provide space to engrave the year and the name of the Captain and the vice captains of the winning house. This trophy can be used for 65 years. The base of the trophy can be further extended to include another 20 years of the award.

109. JS Science Mela, MS and SS Science Exhibition.

109.1 JS Science Mela –

Learning by doing from a young age is important for children. This is partly achieved by celebrating a 'Fun with Science' week in JS.

Usually the week starts or ends with Edison's birthday. The main objective is to develop an understanding of science and maths in relation to daily life and its problems and solutions. It is also to encourage children to experiment through crazy ideas, using imagination to arrive at scientific conclusions.

Day-to-day activities in science are planned over three days. The assembly has a drama from a scientist's life, an experiment that is performed by the students and explained. During the day in the Science and Maths periods various activities like puzzles, experiments, crosswords and role play are carried out with a focus on Science.

Students are awarded badges for good and lucid presentation and also for introducing and solving mad problems and finding solutions to day-to-day problems.

109.2 MS and SS Science Exhibition-

Every year a Science and Maths exhibition is held in the last week of July. It is called the 'Edison 1% Inspiration 99% Perspiration Exhibition'. All the students from class 5 to 12 participate individually or in groups of up to four. The main purpose of holding the exhibition is to give children a chance to demonstrate a science or math project from an area of their interest. The focus is primarily to bring out the scientist hidden in each one of them. 100% participation is encouraged and ensured. The prime objective is not a very attractive looking finished project but the learning process that takes place. For SS, further stress is laid on children developing their own ideas, as creative as possible, based on the theory they have learnt so far.

They are also encouraged to build models or provide solutions to hypothetical questions. Take a problem and find a solution. Go to the library, look up the internet, listen to the News, and pick up a problem that is an issue in daily life. For e.g. When 'Prince' fell into a hole in the ground, students came up with alternative solutions to rescue him. They are also encouraged to come up with creative ideas to solve a

problem. For e.g. – You are in a *razai* on your bed and somebody rings the doorbell of your hostel room. How do you open the door without getting out of your *razai*? Some rope–handle contraption needs to be invented to do this!

Some other such experiments that students have taken up are –

1. Tenrun – to make special shoes for tennis players , so that they gain maximum grip and mobility on court.
2. Aerodynamics - how to modify an aeroplane so that it gains maximum speed. Students made about a hundred models of paper planes of various shapes and specifications and flew them to study travel efficiency, speed etc. Some of these paper planes resembled various birds and insects.
3. *Daag Accha hai* – Students studied the cleaning capacity of various chemicals on stains of different kinds and found which was the most suitable stain remover for different kinds of stains.
4. Stomach Simulator – A machine was used to simulate the digestion in the stomach. Students mixed various proportions of food crushed in a food processor with dilute HCl and enzymes and studied how food is digested in the stomach.
5. Water Analysis
6. Making a sun-dial

Students are also required to do a one-page write-up on a standard format explaining their project. The write-ups along with photographs are compiled together and a binder is prepared every year.

Four committees of three educators each is appointed to evaluate each project individually and grade students A+, A, B+, B or C. The students securing A, B and B+ grade get a certificate while students securing grades A+ are awarded a certificate and a trophy.

110. Kar Seva

A visitor in Eklavya often finds children (Nur to class 12) sweeping the campus and helping to maintain it clean. The concept of *Kar Seva* is very strong in Eklavya.

A class normally cleans for a week, then the next class, and so on. Sixteen sections in JS or MS thus take sixteen weeks to do a 'round'. Then start all over again. The area around the school building is divided into 'plots' and a group of three students is given a plot to maintain. Each plot has a set of brooms, *tagara* and other equipments. A class of about 25 students has about 8 groups and between them the entire area gets divided. *Kar Seva* is done during breaks. In MS, students do *Kar Seva* in the first 20 minutes of the morning sports period. They sacrifice part of their sports period for it.

In PS three sections clean for one day, then another three on the next day and so on. *Kar seva* is done in the outdoor free play time. So each class has one outdoor free play period less per week.

In SS, *Kar Seva* is done in a similar way during the first ten minutes of the lunch break and first fifteen minutes of the sports period.

One of the deplorable scenes of a modern house : the child takes a toy, plays with it for some time, has had enough now, just walks away in search of the next adventure, leaving the toy cluttered all over the room ! Then the *naukarani* (quite often the mother herself!) comes and cleans up the room – further reinforcing the feeling to the child that her job is only to play and somebody else will clean up the mess!

The concept of *Kar Seva* is not restricted outside the school building but it is also inculcated within the classroom. *Kar Seva* teaches the child to take anything she wants, to use it properly, and then to put it back from where it was taken in the same way.

Every religion has a concept of *Kar Seva*. It is an attitude. When we work in a spirit of *seva* we think about what we can give rather than what we can gain. The Golden Temple in Amritsar has a lake which is cleaned once every so many years. Sikhs from all over the world volunteer and take pride in cleaning it themselves. Some of them could have written out a cheque which could be used to hire people to clean it. But no! That is totally against the concept of *Kar seva*. In the *Swaminarayan* sect, there are occasions where the community gathers to celebrate functions and feasts. Devotees vie with each other to volunteer for the dirtiest of the dirtiest jobs – all in the name of

Kar Seva! One often sees wealthy well-to-do people manning the dirtiest jobs.

Meaning of *Kar Seva*, *Kar* - Hands and *Seva* – Service. *Apane hathon se seva karna*. To serve with your own hands.

Once, just after he had come back from South Africa, Gandhi attended a Congress Annual Conference in Calcutta. He was not yet the Gandhi we know, he had not much work, so he went up to the chief organiser of the camp and said that he would like to be useful by cleaning the toilets! He brought home to everyone the secret of service. Again, in Gandhi's own words "Our stay in *Shantiniketan* had taught us that the scavenger's work would be our special function in India. We offered, during the *Kumbh Mela* in Hardwar to cover up the excreta with earth and see to their disposal to which Dr Dev readily agreed".

The concept of *Kar Seva* says:

1. Voluntary
2. Do it during your leisure time, e.g. not during Math period
3. Should include dirty work as well, in fact the dirtier the better
4. No boasting as then it loses its value (*Neki kar koovain me daal*)

In JS it is done house wise - Shravan, Prahlad, Aruni and Dhruv covering four weeks of the month.

After major events in school educators and students do *Kar Seva* by helping pick up chairs and rearrange props etc where they belong.

111. *Khari Kamai*

All Students (Nur to 12) are encouraged to earn some money (Nur-2: Rs. 50; CI 3-4: Rs. 200; CI 5-12: Rs. 250) during the two-week *Diwali* vacations through the concept of *Khari Kamai* (earning through honest labour).

A schedule of jobs and rates is given. (Then a parent cannot give Rs. 200 for polishing shoes once and end the project). The project aims at the concept of working hard and earning money. (Realisation that to earn even five rupees is not easy). *Khari kamai* also teaches the value of money and the fact that a lot of slogging is needed to earn some. They now think twice before demanding an expensive toy or item, as they know the value of hard earned money.

Khari Kamai can be done through gardening, room cleaning, car or scooter cleaning, wealth from waste, office cleaning, helping neighbours, ironing clothes, selling milk bags, boot polish, etc. The maximum limit of payment for work for one hour is Rs 20.

The money collected (usually around Rs 70,000) is usually given for the education of underprivileged children and upgrading some rural / municipal school infrastructure.

(from *Eklavya Samachar*, 1 Feb 2009)

The *Khari Kamai* Project was extended to schools around villages near Eklavya.

A team of students along with an educator visited schools near Eklavya and identified four schools where the amount collected in *Khari Kamai* could be used productively.

These schools are

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Shela Prathmik Shala | 3. Jivanpura Prathmik Shala |
| 2. Sanathal Prathmik Shala | 4. Shantipura Prathmik Shala |

They spoke to the Principal and teachers and learnt that there are many bright students in each class and they require material support like notebooks, pencils etc throughout the year to help them with their studies. Some sort of scholarship would be helpful.

It was mutually decided to give a scholarship to six students three girls and three boys from each class, from classes 1 to 7 in the form of

notebooks, pencils, crayons or Geometry boxes. Also each child will receive 2 storybooks. This will encourage reading habits and over the years the student has a library of storybooks at home.

Six such sets will be given in each class, from class 1 to 7, so 42 students from each school will receive the scholarship. Students in four schools will receive such a scholarship so a total of 168 scholarships will be given.
Total cost: approx Rs. 40,000.

Dear Parent,

Would you like to see your child self-earning (*Khari Kamai*) during *Diwali* Holidays? It is a part of school activity held once a year. This is to inculcate the value of dignity of labour.

We would appreciate the role you play in motivating and facilitating their activity. Please do not pay more than the rate specified. Looking forward to your support in making this a successful activity.

Khari Kamai can be done through gardening, cleaning cupboard, helping in cooking etc. A child should not be paid more than Rs.20/- for an hour's work. Please find below a list of jobs that children can do and amount of money that can be paid as *Khari Kamai*. This list is for your reference, children can do similar other jobs and can be paid accordingly.

Schedule of Rates

Nur, JKg, SKg, CI 1 & 2					
Sr	Task	Rate	Sr	Task	Rate
1	Sorting Vegetables	10	11	Arranging magazines and newspapers	5
2	Folding Clothes	5	12	Arranging flowers	5
3	Wiping Vessels	5	13	Watering plants	5
4	Dusting Wooden furniture	5	14	Arranging shoe stand	5
5	Sweeping	5	15	Taking care of pets	5
6	Peeling boiled Potatoes	5	16	Putting cover on pillow/cushion	5
7	Serving the guest	5	17	Helping in shopping	5
8	Cleaning shoes	5	18	Filling up bottles	5
9	Setting table for dinner	10	19	Cleaning bicycle	5
10	Arranging their room	10	20	Carrying light luggage	5

Class 3 to 12					
Sr	Task	Rate	Sr	Task	Rate
1	Polishing shoes	10	20	Arranging bookshelves	10
2	Cleaning cupboard	15	21	Folding clothes	10
3	Car wash	20	22	Cutting vegetables	10
4	Two wheeler / cycle wash	10	23	Flower arrangement	10
5	Watering plants in the garden	10	24	Attending to guests	10
6	Deweeding	10	25	Cleaning the refrigerator	20
7	Buying vegetable/grocery	10	26	Filling drinking water	10
8	Bank Work - depositing cheque, telephone bill, electricity bill	15	27	Cleaning the storeroom	20
9	Cleaning bathroom	15	28	Operating the washing machine	15
10	Helping in cooking	15	29	Heating food in the microware	5
11	Taking care of sibling	20	30	Cleaning her room	5/ day
12	Ironing	5/pc	31	Baking (cake/dish)	20
13	Helping in Diwali cleaning	25	32	Preparing tea, Maggie	10
14	Making breakfast	15	33	Glass cleaning	20
15	Laying table	5	34	Sweeping	5 / room
16	Taking care of pet	10	35	Mopping	5
17	Filing of papers	5	36	Carrying luggage	5
18	Dusting	10	37	Arranging/ sorting fruits & vegetables	5
19	Cleaning of vessels	10			

Thanking You

Sincerely yours

(Principal)

112. Kid of the Week

In the JS, every Saturday, the class chooses a "Kid of the Week" for the coming week keeping in mind the fact that each child is unique and should be valued. It is the children who decide on whom to bestow the title. Then the class teacher and all classmates write cards and letters to her.

The decision is usually made on a Friday or Saturday and the letters are written over the weekend. On Monday the educator reads them out during the Home Period and then they are put up on a separate soft-board. They are there for a week after which the child takes them home to share with her family.

Appreciation and positive strokes received from peers work as a great motivating factor for children.....why, it does for everyone! In the letters the children also give each other feedback regarding behavioural aspects which are accepted in a positive way.

Attempt is made to ensure that the child chosen has had a prior week of commendable behaviour and performance. The humane aspect of the child is looked for, appreciated and encouraged .Of course, every child gets a chance to hold the title at least once a year.

113. Krishan Kant *Samanvay*

The shady area behind the amphitheatre, near *Lavya* with the teakwood forest as a backdrop is the Krishan Kant *Samanvay*. 800 students can be seated at a time. There are three open air classrooms accommodated in this area under shady teakwood trees. The pavers block paving makes it convenient for students to sit and have assemblies, activity competitions, practice for Euphoria, Phoenix and classes.

This area has added immense value to the nature of interactions that take place. Students find the area quiet, peaceful and inviting and also spend time doing self-study here.

Interactions with groups of parents, teachers from other schools and educator's HRD takes place here.

The *Samanvay* is named after Shri Krishan Kant, former Vice-President who was a patron and closely associated with the school.

Shri Krishan Kant was a rare politician in today's times who believed (and practiced) that 'politics is a noble profession'. Son of Lala Achint Ram (a freedom fighter and Member of the Constituent Assembly-one of the 283 signatories of the Constitution of India) he was a worshipper of truth and did not believe in being economical with it.

He started his career as a 'scientist' with CSIR, then Rajya Sabha, Lok Sabha, Governor of Andhra Pradesh and Vice-President of India (where he died in office).

Shri Krishan Kant consistently strove to build a national consensus on major national and international issues. He had a unique ability to bring people with 'differences' together to arrive at a consensus. He brought *Samanvay* - a confluence of minds, ideas, thoughts and action.

We take great pride in naming this lovely part of Eklavya as "Krishan Kant *Samanvay*" - hoping that our students will be inspired to emulate this quality of this great humanitarian and benevolent leader.

114. Less holidays

There are few days in a year (*Raksha Bandhan*, *Dussehra*, *Makar Sankranti* and *Dhuleti*) that are holidays in Eklavya.

On other festival days like *Janmasthmi*, *Pateti*, *Ramzaan*, *Onam*, *Ganesh Chathurti*, *Mahavir Jayanti*, *Ramnavmi*, etc. students come to school as any other normal day. The festival is celebrated in the assembly. A speaker, normally a parent volunteer or a religious head (if it is a religious festival) speaks in the assembly for 5 minutes about the festival and its significance. The person dresses in traditional attire for the festival and sometimes also brings special food that is cooked during the festival.

For example on *Pateti* a Parsi comes dressed up in traditional finery and addresses the students. On *Onam* a parent volunteer comes in the sari worn in the typical Kerala style and also shows special food and other delicacies made for the festival. On *Makar Sankranti* a Gujarati parent brings *Undhiyo–Jalebi*, a Maharashtra parent brings *Tilgul* and a Tamilian parent brings *Pongal*. This also gives students an idea about the different ways people from different parts of the country celebrate the same festival.

Festivals like *Janmashtami*, *Dussehra Havan* and *Garba* are celebrated as common celebrations with all the four schools gathering together at a common place. Various programmes are held and then students go back to their normal school routine after the celebrations.

Religious birthdays are not holidays. *Buddha Jayanti*, *Guru Nanak Jayanti*, *Ramnavmi*, *Janmashtami*, etc are celebrated in school in a nice, informative and lively manner.

Too many holidays where the child is at home and whiles away time sleeping until late and watching TV all day actually do harm. The child breaks off too often from the school routine and spends time in an insignificant fashion. In school, where these festivals are celebrated she not only learns about the festival but also realizes that normal routine hard work is important.

Besides this students have a two weeks *Diwali* Break, a one week Christmas-New Year Break and an eight weeks Summer Vacation.

115. Less strength in class

Eklavya has the following structure for strength of students.

School	Class	Students/Section	No. of Sections
PS	Nur,JKg,SKg	20	5
JS	1 – 4	25	4
MS	5 – 8	25	4
SS	9 – 10	25	4
	11 & 12	30	2 Science 1 Commerce 1 Humanities

The classrooms in each school are structured and designed so that only so many students can sit and study. The advantage of small classroom sizes is tremendous.

The educator can pay individual attention to each child in the class. In the words of the educator if you have 25 students in a class '*mazaa he kuch aur hai!*' The teaching process becomes highly custom made. The educator knows how this bunch of students learns and moulds and modifies her classes to suit as far as possible the individual differences of the class.

She has a small set of notebooks for correction and can remember and guide students through their mistakes. During corrections of exam papers she remembers the styles or well written answers and can quote and appreciate students in class. This is very important motivation for students. Students get a chance to ask questions and interact more frequently.

The educator has a chance to know each child individually and inside out. Sometimes during IPEM's parents say that the educator knows the child better than the parents do.

The size is ideal for a class teacher also to manage since she does Home-Visits and conducts Mother's Workshops.

The ideal classroom size is actually 16. But this makes the economics too different. The school then ends up being too elitist, catering to the rich and exclusive for the wrong reason. So 25 per class seems to be alright and works out the economics also. The maximum we can stretch is 30, but to be avoided.

Physically each classroom has a seating capacity of 26 since all benches are 2-seaters. We limit admissions to 25 per class and do make an exception to accommodate educator's children or siblings.

From an educator's point of view, 25 per class is also a manageable size for night-outs, camps and visits that happen through the year. One seat in each class is used as an observation seat by educators attending each other's classes or a visitor-teacher from another school.

Non-academic concepts also have a doability and manageability factor. Activities like embroidery and pottery cannot have a high class size. With a class of 25 students, resources for activities and sports are manageable and children respond uniquely to the individual attention given.

116. Lesson plans

Lesson plans contain details of the topic to be taught in the class, the methodology and teaching aids to be used for the specific topic.

In the beginning of every academic year, subject teachers teaching a particular subject, say, Biology for class 9 sit together and prepare lesson plans for every period throughout the year. It is done for all classes' right from PS to SS and for each subject.

The educators sit with the textbook and scope/curriculum guidelines as prescribed by the Board/Council and take note of all the topics/concepts/chapters to be taught. For each topic, the objectives, details of the content, methodology, teaching aid, other references and Home Work to be given is worked out. The school is rich in resource material – posters, CD's, 3-D models, statues, books, etc. All these can directly or indirectly be brought into the class by incorporating it relevantly in the lesson plan.

The educators go through textbooks of various publishers. Of course they can choose only one textbook to teach from in the class but when she goes through so many of them she realises there is no one textbook that has everything. (refer Philosophy sari # 24)

The procedure is then repeated for all the topics/chapters.

In the next year we do not make new lesson plans but improve upon and add upon the previous years. When the educator is teaching in the class there are many examples she gives to reinforce and ground the learning in the child's mind. One of such examples may be from something that happened a week ago. She immediately comes back after the class and adds it to the existing lesson plan. This we do for 2 – 3 years and then make new enriched lesson plans.

A typical lesson plan format for Biology, Class 9 would be as follows:

Class: IX	Year: 2007-08
Subject: Biology	Week No: 20
Topic: The Circulatory System	Period: 60-63

Objective: To understand the concept of body fluids, details of blood - its functions and composition.

Contents: Body fluids, Properties of blood, Functions of blood, Composition of Blood, Blood Transfusion and blood groups.

Methodology: Explanation method-

Different body fluids will be discussed in class. Properties of blood and functions of blood will be discussed in the class with suitable examples. Composition of blood will be explained in the class. (CD will be shown in the class) Clotting of blood will be explained with the help of a flow chart. Blood groups and blood transfusion will be explained in the class. (CD will be shown in the class)

Lab Method - Examination of Blood Corpuscles under a microscope.
Preparation of a blood smear slide.

Teaching-Learning Materials used: Overhead Projector
Transparencies, BlackBoard, CD-327, Blood Composition and
function, Lab- 2 slides- Leishman stain, coverslip.

Reference: Textbook of ICSE-Concise Biology-SELINA, Holyfaith
Insight into Biology

Homework: Textual Questions

117. Library Activities

The philosophy of Eklavya in a nutshell can be described as – ‘Creating a Love for going to school; Love for Reading and Love for Mathematics.’

JS forms the base for children and plays a crucial role in shaping their attitudes towards school. It also provides the opportunity for the fulfillment of this philosophy. The success of JS lies in the extent to which these are met.

Love for school can be described more clearly with the following two scenarios:

Scenario 1: Its 6 am, time to wake up for school. The child is sleeping and the mother is trying to wake her up. She tries everything ranging from coaxing, to bribing to threatening. Finally the child wakes up reluctantly and listlessly dresses for school. The mother drops her at the bus stop and heaves a sigh of relief. Another day over. Phew! In this case the child, the mother and the school - all three lose.

Scenario 2: Its 6 am, the child has fever, the mother coaxes her not to go to school. But the child is adamant and insists she is fine and will go to school. She dresses up all charged-up and goes to school. In school all her pain and fever seemingly disappears. She returns home happy, refreshed and fever vanished. In this case the child, the mother and the school - all are winners.

The aim of Eklavya is to make scenario 2 a reality.

The second philosophy deals with developing “love for reading.” Eklavya has four libraries in all – EITE library, JS library, MS library and SS Library, and a fifth small library in PS. Each of the library houses age appropriate books which include – story books, reference books, magazines, CD’s, audio cassettes, educational books for students as well as educators. The library is open for everyone and is not restricted to members of a particular school. Children, educators and parents can issue books freely from any library. The noteworthy thing about all the libraries in Eklavya is that all the shelves are open; nothing is under lock and key. There is also no restriction to the number of books that can be issued, in this process the school does lose books but it is more than compensated in terms of the values of responsibility and caring for school property that Eklavya wants to instill in the children. The educators, children and parents also issue

books to read during the vacations – *Diwali*, Christmas and Summer, which they return on the first day that schools re-opens.

In JS each class has two library periods per week. In the first period the children issue books to read during the week (of course they are free to issue books any day of the week in the breaks or the second home period. (refer # 93). The second period is devoted to activities related to reading. The aim of each and every activity is to somehow bring in elements of reading skills. Reading is done in various forms and for different purposes – for collecting information, entertaining oneself, gaining knowledge or to perform some other activity. This is kept in mind while the various activities are designed.

The activities are different for each class depending on the reading proficiency of each age group. The time allotted for each activity is 35 minutes and is split into explanation of the activity by the class teacher, performing the activity and then the debriefing.

Some of the activities are listed below:

1. Arranging the books in the library and demonstration of how to handle books and arrange the shelves.
2. Listening to story cassettes and following the words on the Overhead Projector.
3. The class teacher reads for the class with a lot of expressions.
4. There are different words displayed on the soft board and children in teams make compound words. E.g. Tooth – brush.
5. There are nouns and verbs displayed on the board and the children make sentences using them.
6. A short story is cut into parts and put up on the board. The children read and then sequence the story.
7. The children are divided into pairs and each pair is given a word. They search for the meaning of the word in the dictionary.
8. Information related to birds, festivals and famous personalities are put up on the softboard. The children are divided into groups, they read the information and then a quiz is conducted.
9. Various idioms are given to the children along with their meanings and usage; the children work in groups and understand the idiom. Then they share with the rest of the class the idiom they have read and how to use it in their daily life.
10. The class is divided into groups. Each group is given a couple of famous proverbs. The meanings of the proverbs are displayed on the board. The children go around and have to match the proverb with its meaning. Thereafter the class teacher conducts a quiz.

11. The children are given chits with few questions whose answers can be found from the books displayed on the table. They have to go through the books and find the answers.
12. The class is divided into groups and each group is given a write-up on how to perform a magic trick. All the materials are provided to the children. They are required to read the instructions and practice the tricks and then perform them in front of the class.
13. Various magazines like *Tinkle*, *Balvihar*, *Champak* are given to the class. They are required to read the various jokes given in the magazines and then share one joke with the class.

In this manner children perform various activities throughout the year that encourages them to read and develop an interest and love towards it.

MS has one library period per week; unlike JS they do not have any specific reading activities. The children read books, issue and return books. Apart from the library periods the children can access the library during breaks and any other free time. The books are issued for a period of two weeks and can also be re-issued.

SS have access to the library all through the day. The SS students are free to read books, carry on research work on any projects assigned to them or search for CD's which they want to issue. The students also access the library during the breaks and during free classes. They are free to surf the net or read books. SS library also has a number of books and magazines related to career development and preparing for competitive exams. Subject related magazines are bound and available for reference. The students can also issue old magazines and with permission cut pictures from very old magazines for their project work. The books can be issued for a period of 14 days for students and one month for educators.

Through this system of a free and encouraging environment Eklavya is making sustained efforts to develop the reading habit and love for reading.

118. Library open to all

We have four big libraries in our campus – one each in JS, MS, SS and EITE and a small one in PS. The unique feature of all our libraries is that you will never find any book under lock and key. This openness is one of the main attractions to our young readers. They are free to move from one shelf to the other, pick a book and flip through it until they find a book of their choice.

Students and educators of PS, JS, MS and SS can issue books from any of the four libraries. This means a MS student or educator can issue books from JS or SS libraries and vice versa.

The Eklavya fraternity also has the privilege and issues books from all libraries. A large variety of books are taken to the Mother's Workshop by the PS educators and every mother issues a book of her choice.

All the members of the Eklavya family – Children, Parents, Educators, Admin. Staff, Drivers, Conductors, Gardeners and the House Keeping Staff can issue a book from any of libraries.

All the libraries have the following salient features –

- The library is never locked. It is open throughout the school hours. If the librarian is absent then the students and educators self – issue the books they want. They pick a book, write their name on the card and drop it in a basket kept on the librarian's desk.
- Each library has a librarian
- There are many books duplicated in the library. Books like encyclopedias, dictionaries, and sometimes popular novels and story books. The reason is that during the transition from one school to another, students read the same kinds of books. For e.g. students of class 4 and 5 read Enid Blyton. Also some books offer reference or enjoyable reading across all classes and all age groups like Harry Potter.
- The library is like a downtown area in a city. It is a very 'happening place'. For e.g. in JS and MS parents who come to meet the Principal are requested to wait in the library. If a new educator applying for a job has come for a school visit she is asked to wait in the library. Weekly educator meetings with the Principal and amongst themselves take place in the library.

Activities like chess and charkha are held in the library. Some inter-house competitions are also held here.

- If students and educators are surrounded by an ambience of books we think it has a certain positive effect.
- Because of this openness we lose some books – some are deliberately stolen but most through mistakes, carelessness or oversight are taken but not returned. We lose about Rs. 3000 worth of books per library per year. So a total of Rs. 12,000 worth of books are lost every year. We believe this is the price one has to pay to have a open-door-open-shelf library.
- We have no budget for the libraries. As and when we see a need educators and Principals, twice or thrice in a year go out together and buy books. Educators are also encouraged to buy books that interest them or they would like to read and bill it to the school to add to the appropriate library.
- Students and educators are encouraged to issue as many books as they want at the start of summer vacations and Diwali and Christmas breaks.

119. Loans to Staff

The school grants loans of reasonable amounts to the staff. This loan has a limit of Rs. 20,000/- .

Larger amounts are sometimes granted on a case-to case basis after taking into consideration the work record of the employee – attendance, quality of work, number of years of service, etc.

The staff member is required to fill in a form clearly stating the purpose for which the loan is required, and the monthly installment that will be paid back.

The form must be signed by two guaranters who are working in Eklavya in the same capacity as the employee seeking the loan. For e.g. Drivers and conductors ask another driver or conductor to sign as guaranter and educators ask two of their colleagues. All of them understand and realize that they must have many friends who trust them and will help them. So everybody makes an effort to be friendly and helpful. This helps in maintaining harmony to a great extent.

The form is then submitted to the immediate head to which the employee reports (normally a Principal or the admin in charge). This is then considered by the Chairman after going through the recommendation of the head and a personal meeting with the employee.

A format of the form filled in by an employee requesting a loan is given on the next page.

120. Lunch with Students (nutritious food)

In all schools students are encouraged to bring good, wholesome, nutritious home-cooked food.

In JS the children have a breakfast break. Here they are expected to bring healthy home-made snacks like *thepla*, *poha*, *upma*, *idli*, *dhokla*, *dosa*, sandwiches etc. No pickle is allowed. Children are also expected to bring seasonal fruits and salads. The class teacher also eats with the class. 1st, 3rd, and 5th Saturday are 'free-food day'.

It is in JS that the children are taught (especially in class 1 and 2) how to eat with one hand, using a spoon and fork when needed, taking small bites and using a napkin etc.

The students of MS and SS bring a balanced meal from home, which includes *roti*, vegetables, *dal* and rice. Pulses and vegetables are compulsory everyday except on Fridays when they are allowed to eat food of their choice. The class teacher, co-teacher and students take lunch together in their respective class rooms. The educators ensure that the students bring a proper meal and finish it also.

During this time a lot of sharing happens. For e.g. sometimes a full meal is not given in a child's lunch box and the class teacher discovers that the mother is sick or gone out of station, etc. This helps her to know small things about the child and the home atmosphere. It also helps the students to interact with the class teacher.

In Eklavya, emphasis is laid on bringing nutritious food right from PS. Good nutrition is important for children for many reasons. Children will learn, think, play, and work with others better if they are eating right.

Why do we insist on children having healthy food habits? We have seen that food is a factor that binds people together. When the educator and her students eat together, apart from developing healthy food habits, many other values and sensitivities are inculcated in children. We use food as a *bahana*. While eating, educators can deftly bring about the necessity of having green vegetables. Ways of having bitter gourd can be discussed. And amidst this fun and frolic everybody finishes their food happily. It is a relaxed atmosphere where some serious learning of life takes place incognito.

The school shows concern to children's nutrition and to make the most of children's nutritional intake they are encouraged to select and eat the correct foods. This is also discussed in the first mother's

workshop for the year and during home visits. A list of items of foods allowed is displayed on the softboard in each classroom.

121. Medical Test – Educators, drivers, conductors and housekeeping.

Eklavya arranges a medical test on the campus for all employees. Earlier we did this only for educators but now we include the house-keeping ladies, drivers and conductors also.

We contact a diagnostic lab and work out the details with them. The lab sends about five to six technicians to the campus. They come with all lab materials required to take blood and urine samples. The fasting blood sample is taken. Then educators have their meals at the normal time they do every day and again blood samples are taken an hour after they take lunch.

The lab technicians then prepare the reports and after about 4 to 5 days a team of doctors comes to school for consultation.

Everybody working in Eklavya finds this a big convenience and makes full use of this opportunity.

Eklavya bears half the cost of these tests so that more and more people are motivated to take benefit of the facility.

122. Model Paper, Key, Feedback, Grid and Repair work

Continuous evaluation is done throughout the year in the form of Announced/Unit tests, 1st Term and Final Exams, Projects, Internal Assessments, Orals and Practicals in the various schools.

For all written tests, educators prepare a 'key' that they use during corrections, give feedback, display model papers, prepare a subject grid and then do repair work in each class for every subject.

Key: During the term exam, every subject teacher prepares the answer keys which are taken on transparencies. This is used as a guidance tool during the feedback.

The key contains the elements of the answer and does not show how the answer is to be written Students are encouraged to write answers in their own language.

For e.g. A question in Physics in a Class 8 Question paper asked is – Explain what happens to the current and potential difference values across resistances connected in (1) series and (2) parallel. The answer must contain the elements as follows –

- (1) Series – Current is the same, potential difference is divided and hence different across various resistances.
- (2) Parallel – Current is divided and hence different across various resistances, potential difference is the same.

Copies of key are given to each subject teacher for correction of the exam papers of the students. This ensures a certain standardization of the marking scheme for all subject teachers to follow.

After the exam corrections are done and before the feedback, two things are done – 1. The key for each subject is displayed in the classroom and a model paper is selected for each subject and in each class (all four sections put together) and photocopied and displayed on the soft board.

So as soon as the student receives her answer paper she can compare her answers with the key as well as one best /model paper that have actually been awarded excellence.

Model Paper: They are the answer papers of the students for different subjects written during the term exams, which exhibit high quality presentation and writing skills. The subject teachers of different subjects (while correcting papers) select the best model paper out of all the four sections of that class. They are displayed on the common

softboard with the caption mentioning the name of the student, subject and class with section. It motivates the students to perform well since all students would love to have their papers displayed on the soft board. Model papers are selected and displayed only for the 1st Term and Final Exams.

Feedback: It is held just after the term exams are over. As soon as the exams are over each subject teacher gives the answer papers to the students in the class and discusses the answers of the question paper and addresses the common errors. The educator gives her inputs to enhance their presentation skills of each answer. Before the feedback, the keys are displayed on the softboard of each class section wise so that the students can cross check their answers.

Feedback is done for all tests – Announced/Unit, 1st Term and Final Exam.

Grid: Educators prepare a marks grid for each subject they teach, evaluate and correct. This is so that they know which are the questions all students have answered correctly and which are the ones most of them have been unable to get correct.

This indicates to the educators that (due to whatever reasons) the teaching-learning process has some deficiency in these topics and has to be redone. This is done in the three days after Feedback is over called Repair Work.

The subject grids analyze the performance of students question-wise for each subject. This exercise helps the educator to retrospect on the topic taught. After repair work, if there is a need, the topic is further reinforced by giving worksheets as revision.

Repair Work: This is an practice of making individualized worksheets for correction and learning of the mistakes students have made in the exam. The subject teacher, teaching say biology in class 8 alpha identifies two or three topics where more than fifty percent of the students have made mistakes while answering the question paper. These mistakes may be conceptual or application based. She makes a repair work worksheet containing questions based on this chapter. In the one hour repair work period allotted to her right after the exams she gives the students this worksheet to do.

123. Mother's Workshop

From Nursery to class-8 regular fortnightly workshops are conducted by the class teachers for the parents to enable them to know the agenda in school for the next two weeks. The class teacher teaches the mothers (about 10-15% fathers also attend) what she is going to teach their children in the next two weeks.

Research shows that programmes that teach mothers to improve the quality of cognitive stimulation and verbal interaction produce immediate effects on the child's intellectual development. It is seen that the level of involvement of mothers in the initial years of rearing is high and a mother is always the first teacher to the child, hence it is called "Mother's Workshop."

Many years ago an educational consultant from The International Academy of Education (UNESCO) visited Eklavya from whom we learnt about the Mother's Workshop concept. He said that when we have a PTA (Parent-Teacher-Association) that meets once or twice in a year, it serves no real purpose. Each blames the other over a cup of tea and *samosas* and the meeting is over with nothing purposeful achieved. The parents and educators should meet more often and develop a bond with each other. This can do by meeting over a Mother's Workshop preferably once in two weeks but atleast once in a month.

These workshops are held after school hours on a fixed day and time for one hour (generally between 4 to 6 pm). A note is sent in the school diary regarding the agenda of the forthcoming Mother's Workshop.

In PS (Nursery, J Kg, S Kg) the focus is on the homebound activities a parent can undertake to enhance learning. At times experts (e.g. psychologists or pediatricians) conduct these workshops.

In JS and MS the class teacher/subject teacher takes up the main subjects – Math and English. The teaching methodology is explained and actually shown on the blackboard for a particular topic so that there is no conflict between the educator and parent style of guiding the student. Thus parents and educators are working together for the child's benefit.

Any individual query regarding a particular student by a parent is strictly discouraged, as Mother's Workshop is not the forum to discuss any one-on-one issues. Curriculum based questions by parents are

encouraged. Topics like Common Errors (refer # 33) and projects are also discussed. Parents are encouraged to share experiences they come across while guiding their child.

At times rapport-building sessions are conducted in which the class teacher introduces certain games or a questionnaire like how well you know your child or how to boost the child's self esteem etc. Parents share actual experiences or anecdotes from their child's life. Sometimes children are also invited and ' triangular sharing-cum-feedback' sessions are held, often these become very emotional and intimate bringing the whole community together like nothing else can.

Mother's Workshops help bring educators and parents close. Children benefit when the adults around them share common values about child-rearing, communicate with one another, and give the children consistent support and guidance.

Normally Mother's workshop of only one class is held on a given day. Workshops are not held on Saturday, Sunday or a festival or National holiday. If a Mother's workshop is due on that day it is held a day earlier or later at a time later than the regular workshop.

The dates for the Mother's Workshop to be held throughout the year is published in the first Eklavya *Samachar* in the month of June of every academic year.

Mother's Workshop Dates for 2010-2011

Month	Nursery	Jr.kg	Sr.kg	CI 1	CI 2	CI 3	CI 4	CI 5	CI 6	CI 7	CI 8
June	17	18	21	8,23	9,23	10,24	11,25	14,28	15,29	16,30	17
July	1,15,29	2,16,30	5,19	6,20	7,21	8,22	9,23	12,26	13,27	14,28	1,15,29
Aug	12,26	13,27	2,16,30	3,17,31	4,18	5,19	6,20	9,23	10,23	11,25	12,26
Sept	9,23	10,24	13,27	14	1,15	1,16	3,17	'---	'---	'---	'---
Oct	7,28	8,29	11	19	20	21	22	25	26	27	28
Nov	'---	'---	1	23	24	25	26	29	30	'---	'---
Dec	2,16	6,17	6,20	7	8	9	10	13	14	1,15	2,16
Jan	12,27	12,28	17,31	4,18	5,19	6,20	7,21	10,24	11,25	10,25	11,27
Feb	17	18	21	8,22	9,23	10,24	11,25	14,28	15	16	17
March	3,17	4,18	7,21	8	9	10	11	'---	1	2	3

124. Movies - for educators

During *Diwali* the educators have a one week vacation and students have a two-week vacation. During the one week when students are on a vacation a selected list of films is screened in Eklavya Hall. One film is shown every day.

This is again done during the summer vacations when the educators work for four weeks on lesson plans after the students have gone on a vacation.

All are encouraged to watch as many movies as possible during this time. Film watching is voluntary and if educators have some work pending then they do not watch films but complete their work as a priority.

These movies are on various themes like – some of them show relationship between educators and students, parents and children; some show sentiments of teens; some are just classics of their time which are fun to watch. These movies are refreshing and also give educators a chance to do something else rather than their day-to-day affairs of teaching, making lesson plans, corrections and report cards.

Movies also provide subtle hints and solutions to day-to-day handling of classroom crises situations.

Many have some value demonstration and the point is got across in a non-threatening fashion.

Some of the movies shown recently are –

1. Queen
2. The last King of Scotland
3. The Pursuit of happiness
4. Dead Poets Society
5. Paris when it Sizzles
6. Juno 2007
7. Mamooliram – Dr. Kurein – The Amul Story
8. Great Expectations
9. To Sir With Love
10. Koshish
11. The Ten Commandments
12. The Illusionist
13. Roman Holiday
14. Kindergarten Cop

125. Movies - for students

Eklavya lays emphasis on practical as well as multi-sensorial learning along with a sound theoretical knowledge during the teaching-learning process. To fulfill this purpose we have many informative and educational CDs, films and documentaries related to the syllabus. Educators include these as one of the teaching-learning aids while preparing their lesson plans in the beginning of the year. For each school (PS, JS, MS and SS) a subject-wise catalogue has been prepared which contains list of all CDs and a short description of its contents.

Children love watching movies. The visual impact of the story and dialogues helps them develop English language skills.

Besides the movies shown in school, students go for a movie to a theatre in town once a year. This year the students from classes 3 to 12 watched the film *Chake De*. After the movie students complete an assignment that is given to them before the movie. The assignment is designed separately for each age group. For e.g. this year the assignment was as follows -

Classes 9 - 12 (Action Oriented)

What is the ONE lesson which you will implement in YOUR life?

And HOW will you do this?

What specific changes will you undertake?

Classes 5 – 8 (Comprehension Orientation)

What are the lessons you have got from this film?

Describe the dialogues and scenes that taught you these lessons.

Classes 3 – 4 (Enjoyment Orientation)

What are the moments which you enjoyed the most?

What scenes left the GREATEST INFLUENCE on you?

Last year we took students for *Lage Raho Munnabhai*. Students also saw Harry Potter and the Prisoners of Azkaban, *Mangal Pandey* and *Madagascar*.

Given below is a school-wise list of movies shown to students during the year -

Junior School

Sr No.	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
1	Dunston Checks in	Peter Pan and Pirates	Kungfu Panda	Superman Returns – 2
2	Finding Nemo	Stuart Little – 1	Madagascar – 2	The Legend of Bharat Singh
3	101 Dalmations	Shark Tale	Harry Potter – 2	E.T.
4	Garfield	Toy Story – 2	Ratatouille	Harry Potter – 3
5	Pinocchio	Lion King - 2	Stuart Little - 2	Hook
6	Antz – 1	Baby's Day Out	Free Willy – 2	Wizard of Oz
7	Lion King – 1	Born Free	Iqbal (N.O)	Free Willy – 1
8	Tom and Jerry & Swiss Family	Harry Potter – 1	Jurassic Park – 1	Jumanji
9	Toy Story – 1 (N.O)	Madagascar – 1	Night at museum	Dr. Doolittle
10	Disney's Tarzan	Ganesha – 2	Air Buddies	Matilda
11	Beethoven	Treasure Planet	Jagruti	Narnia
Harry Potter – 1: Philosopher's Stone, Harry Potter – 2: Chambers of Secret, Harry potter – 3: Prisoners of Azkaban				

Middle School

Sr No	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7	Class 8
1	Sound of Music	Spiderman II	Children of Heaven	October Sky
2	Wall E	Mrs Doubtfire	Kindergarten Cop	Speed – 2
3	Willy Wonka & Chocolate factory	Nanny Mackfy	Night in the Museum	Under Seas – 2
4	Harry Potter – 1 (Philosopher's Stone)	Harry Potter – 4 (Goblet of Fire)	Harry Potter – 5 (Order of the Phoenix)	Harry Potter – 6 (Half-Blood Prince)
5	Munnabhai MBBS	Makadi	Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikander	Andaz Apna Apna

Senior School

Sr No	Class 9	Class 10	Class 11	Class 12
1	Freedom Fighters	To Sir with Love	Ron Clark	Renaissance Man
2	Lawrence of Arabia	Indian	Gandhi	Sardar
3	Paper Chase	The Magnificent Seven	Rain Maker	Frost / Nixon
4	Angoor	Heroes	Golmaal (Old)	Khatta Mettha
Extra	Legally Blonde	The Great Dictator	Chupke Chupke	Schindler's List

126. Nature Camps

Camps are organized for all the classes from class1 to class 11. Each class goes once a year for camp, so they are spread well throughout the year. The locations are chosen in such a manner that students get education about marine life, forest life, mountain life and desert life from their visits over the years.

Class – wise places and the time of visiting camps is as follows:

Class	Place and Time	Duration	Distance
1	Indroda in September	1 day	1 hour
2	Vasad in August	1 day	3 hours
3	Hingolgarh in July	2 days 1 night	4 hours
4	Jambughoda in January	2 days 1 night	4 hours
5	Zainabad in March	3 days 2 nights	6 hours
6	Polo in September	3 days 2 nights	4 hours
7	Beyt Dwarka in January	4 days 3 nights	9 hours
8	Mt. Abu in November	4 days 3 nights	9 hours
9	Kutch in September	4 days 3 nights	9 hours
10	Narmada (Shoolpaneshwar) in April	5 days 4 nights	12 hours
11	Mussorie in March(by train	10days 9 nights	36 hours

Camping allows children to learn how to live life without amenities like *pucca* bathrooms, beds etc. as the arrangements at the campsites are very basic. Tents are provided for sleeping and the students bring their own sleeping bags. Toilets are makeshift kind, which are kept clean by students and educators. Food is simple and nutritious. Students bring their own plates, mugs and spoon, which they clean after eating. As there is no running water provided students learn to save water by using only so much as is minimally required.

Camps instill certain work habits and discipline in the children. They are required to finish food they have taken and not waste it. As they cannot bring packed food from home (This includes Ruffles, Lays, Kurkure, ganthiya, fafda, chocolates and chewing gum), they learn to eat what is provided at the site. They learn to keep their tents neat by packing their bags and folding their bedding everyday. They also keep their surrounding areas clean by not littering.

In the morning they wake up at 6 am after hearing one blow of the whistle from the instructors. Thereafter every whistle means that they have to line up for the daily activities. Morning exercises and meditation makes their mind and body tough.

Each day has a specific agenda like going for nature walks, visiting places, meeting and interacting with local people, camp fire and star gazing. Students write reflective notes at the end of each day and share with their educators and class-mates.

On all camps experts accompany the students. They point out and help students discover and learn the peculiarity of the flora and fauna of the place, the natural habitat and how the climate of the place affects the economic and social order.

For e.g. The Rann of Kutch has a large migrant population that moves to the plains nearby during the rainy season finding fodder for their cattle. Their small villages are therefore empty and abandoned during this time.

A student who does all the nature camps from class 1 to 11 has visited a wide range of places that are different climatically and vegetation wise. This experience of visiting and comparing goes a long way in value adding to education imparted during school hours.

After they return from a Nature camp a group of students make a presentation in the assembly.

Camps are a part of the school curriculum and it is essential for all students to attend.

127. Nature Club

Small hands holding a hoe, mattock and rake being seen as digging land, sowing and in the process learning a lot from nature - that's what Nature Club is all about.

In JS, Nature Club is a part of the curriculum and is an activity period once a week for each section separately.

All the students go to the Nature Club area (an open plot for farming) and follow the curriculum already designed. In the initial days (before the onset of rainy season, in June when school reopens) they till the land and remove all the weeds present in their specific plot. After the onset of monsoon, they start sowing selective seeds and take care of it till winter.

The second round starts in winter and fully ripe fruits or vegetables are taken out in the month of March. For all the children this time is the best, as they can choose and take out the product of their hard work done for so many days. This satisfying product can range from carrot to cabbage! They take the earning of their hard work to their home. They tell their mother to cook it for them and then they enjoy eating it.

Nature walk and bird watching are also an interesting part of the Nature Club programme. Children go to the nearby village for Nature Walk and observe the migratory birds that come to the SS Lawn on winter mornings.

Here we want our students to learn and respect the hard work done by the farmers in order to grow fruits, vegetables and grains. They should, at the end, learn the importance of hard work and should Live Nature instead of just learning it.

This is only one aspect of Nature Club, the second aspect is all the more interesting. Looking at the budding biologists with a magnifying glass in their hands and lost in observing everything that surrounds them, is indeed a wonderful sight. This activity teaches them not to be scared of nature but to learn to explore it. Believe it or not, but children always search for an insect around them, so that they can proclaim him. Mainly they go to the Teakwood Forest in Eklavya which is comprised of trees of many species: Mango, Cheeku, Amla, Guava, Lemon, Sandalwood, Sweet Lime, Banana, Jamun and of course Teak.

128. Night-out

Night-out is a camp organized for a night on the school campus for students of class 1 to 8 spread-out over the winter months (November- February). One class at a time stays back on a working Saturday and goes back home on Sunday morning at 8:00 am.

JS children have regular classes till 1:00 pm on these Saturdays, followed by different activities, while MS students have classes till 3:00 pm followed by a hike of about 5 km (a part of the scouts activity) and then stay back for the night-out.

Thirteen tents are put-up on the camping ground specially made for this purpose in school campus, students bring their sleeping bags with them and sleep in those tents. Prior to the night-out a lot of planning is done. Students are divided into groups and are assigned different duties like cutting vegetables, cooking, serving, cleaning up, and tent arrangement.

Different group games like *antakshari*, dodge ball, *kho-kho* and dumb charade are played followed by a simple and sumptuous meal like *khichdi*, *pulav* or *pav-bhaji*, which is cooked on *chulha* in open air. The wood used for the *chulha* is collected over the year from the school campus. Activities like star gazing are organized on moonless starry nights along with a night walk in the silent, empty school campus which adds on to the thrill. The main attraction however is the campfire time, which is accompanied by songs, dance, mimicry and story telling. Finally, when children are tired and ready to drop, educators along with the children go to sleep in the tents.

Night-out is the time for sharing and children learn differently from how they do within the four walls of the classroom.

It is also a way to experience school after working hours and see how the campus looks on a dark night.

129. Notebooks

In Eklavya, students from Skg to Class 12 use notebooks registers for various subjects. As pre writing skills are nurtured in Nursery and Jkg, there is no need of registers.

A regular Class 1 register is 18.5 x 25 cm having 48 pages i.e. 96 sides. The length is so, keeping in mind the age group and the convenience in handling them. From Class 2 onwards the registers are 18.5 x 31 cm.

In Class 1 English and Theme (Social Studies and Environmental Science) are written using 4- lined registers which helps them in the formation and proper spacing of the alphabets. Maths is done in registers having 1.5 x1.5 cm squares. For Hindi we use a 5-lined register with three blue lines in between the top and bottom red lines to help them with writing the *matras*.

Class 2 follows the same pattern only the squares of the Maths registers become 1 x 1 cm.

Class 3 and 4 introduces single lined registers for Theme to help them in the transition from 4- lined registers as alphabet formation tends to become mature and students learn spacing and can control the size of the alphabets by now. For English, 4- lined register is continued. In Hindi 5- lined registers give way to double lined ones as the students are comfortable with the script by now. But we do have students who are new admissions and have not done Hindi before. In such cases whichever register the educator feels will help her is given.

Class 5 onwards all registers are single lined for all the subjects.

As all stationeries are issued by the school, when a student needs a register she shows the old one to the respective educator wherein she signs at the last pages confirming the need for a new one and gives one to her.

Registers have a white cover with the school emblem and the name. Our students do not cover or laminate the registers as we are concerned about misuse of paper and against the use of plastic. Then how does a Class 1 student keep her register neat? One would have assumed that the easy option would have been to print a dark

coloured cover. But by doing that we would have denied our students an opportunity to impart true education.

We do not want them to take the easy way out but take the onus. So it is the responsibility to keep them clean as every month there is the "Best notebook of the class" award to be won.(refer Sari # 20) They are also made aware of this responsibility in various ways e.g. by chanting this shloka. (shloka in the CD)

The average printing cost of a Class 1 register is Rs, 10 and others Rs. 13. Eklavya on an average prints about 30, 000 registers annually.

130. No Canteen

There is no canteen on the campus. No food, cold drinks, packaged snacks or chocolates are sold on the campus.

All food that children eat in school comes from home. Students are encouraged to bring only home made food. They are not allowed any other packaged snacks except biscuits.

Students from Classes Nursery to 4 are encouraged to bring *Roti–Sabji, Paratha –Sabji*, sandwiches or other wholesome nutritious food. Mothers are motivated, encouraged and advised (sometimes professional dieticians are called to talk to them) to provide this kind of food.

In MS and in SS students bring a full meal from home (*Roti, Sabji, Daal, Chaaval and Salad*). This ensures that the daily supply of proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals so essential for the growing child are provided for. Mothers are required to take interest and provide food to the child.

We also believe that when the mother cooks food from home and sends she puts in an element of love, affection and homeliness in the food that gives strength to the child. Canteen food leaves the choice of the type of food to eat on the child and the mother never really knows what the child has eaten and whether she has had a full nutritious meal or not. Here the mother can inspect the lunch box in the evening and know the mood of the child!

Educators in MS eat with the students and monitor the food from home. They advise mothers on inappropriate food and unhealthy eating habits of children. In SS, tiffin boxes are periodically checked and monitored and students are encouraged to eat the right kind of foods.

It is seen that over a period of time children learn to eat all kinds of food, are less fussy and remain alert and active in school because their stomachs are full with the right kind of energy providing food.

Weighing the advantages of food from home, a canteen on campus is actually detrimental to the growth of the child.

Children share food with each other. This food, since it is brought from home, has a varied taste and type of cooking. So children taste and learn to appreciate different kinds of cooking.

On Friday, children bring what is called 'free food'. Everyday's lunch has to include '*daal, chawal, sabzi and roti*'. On Fridays students bring food like—*chole-bhature, paav-bhaaji*, sandwiches, pasta, *idli-sambhar*, homemade pizza and many more.

Each class has a Food Chart on the softboard. (refer # 120).

Special attention is given to food brought from home by obese students. They are encouraged to eat more salad, vegetables and daal and avoid too much of rice or junk food (refer # 134)

If there is a Mess people say the children will get hot food. This is true. But a mess is difficult to manage, unhygienic and churns out only one kind of food. The taste of the food is also standardised – oil and *masala* - according to the mess-in-charge's taste. There is no 'home culture' in the food they eat.

Eklavya therefore follows a 'food from home' policy since the advantages are too many and too significant to ignore.

131. No Tuitions

Students studying in Eklavya are not allowed to take any tuitions. Educators teaching in Eklavya also do not give tuitions to students of Eklavya or those of any other school.

Tuitions are a crutch for students. Once a student starts taking tuitions for day-to-day study which she should be doing on her own (since it is a part of the learning process), she becomes dependent on an outside source that determines the time, content and methodology of study. Independent thought and creativity, especially in the subjects of Language, Science and Maths is restricted. Students do not look for new material and do not read anything beyond their text books.

Eklavya also believes that parents play an important role in the learning process of their children. Not allowing tuitions ensures that parents take interest and sit with their children during study time and while doing homework. Continuous parental support goes a long way in enhancing academic performance.

Eklavya also conducts Mother's Workshop (refer # 123) where educators inform and familiarize parents with what is going to be taught in the classroom in the next 15 days. These workshops are in the subjects of Maths and English. Class teachers take the workshops for classes 1 to 4 and subject teachers in classes 5 to 8. This also ensures that when parents help their children with studies they more or less follow a similar methodology as the one followed in school

In classes 9 to 12 parents are rarely able to help their children academically and therefore CDS is conducted in school. (refer # 32).

Remedial classes are also conducted in school for short durations if a student is found lagging behind in studies. (refer # 169).

132. No TV day

We observe one day in the week as 'No TV day' to help children understand the worth of utilizing the time saved by not watching TV in doing some creative activities or spending time with the family.

The day is not only applicable for the students but for the whole family. Mothers willingly switch off the TV sets without watching their favourite soap and the entire family uses the time in an effective way. The educators also follow this.

Usually Thursday is earmarked for this day. In the evening children after completing their Home Work use the time to make any art/craft items or spend time talking or playing games with their family members. It is not that they do not do these things on other days but on that day a conscious effort is made to stay away from televiewing and use that time in a productive way. They might also observe other days as 'No TV' days.

Things made during No TV day are brought by children the next day to school. They are shown in the assembly and this encourages other children also to make something creative and utilize their time well. In the Home Period, educators and children share the different things done on No TV day.

133. Number of periods taken and Proxy taken.

At the end of the day educators fill in the number of periods taken by her on that day in a register called 'Periods Taken Register.' The educator fills in the total of number of instructional periods, periods of invigilation done, proxy taken, CDS taken and Home period taken.

At the end of the month every one adds their number of periods together and a summary of the number of periods taken by all educators is made. This tells us which educator has taken how many periods in that month.

But this is not a platform to judge the educator and does not measure the capability of an educator nor does it say that if an educator has less number of periods she had been sitting idle. A general work load can be assessed of educators teaching same subjects.

The timetable committee maintains a proxy sheet for every week. At the end of the month a summary is made for the number of proxy periods taken by an educator. This also has details of the number of periods not taken by her due to her absenteeism. Thus the grand total of the proxy taken and periods not taken gives information as to how many periods the educator can be given to make good the loss due to her absenteeism. This also sometimes solves problems of queries as to why some educators were given more proxy than others.

Sr.No.	Name of Educators	Periods not taken	Proxy taken	+ / -
1	A	-1	2	+1
2	B	-3	0	-3
3	C	0	1	+1
4	D	0	1	+1
5	E	-4	2	-2
6	F	-1	2	+1

For every (-) more class/proxy be given

134. Obese children monitoring

Weight of students (class 1-12) is monitored twice a year.

Childhood obesity has multiple causes centering around an imbalance between *energy 'in'* (calories obtained from food) and *energy 'out'* (calories expended in the basal metabolic rate and physical activity). Students spend less time exercising and more time in front of the TV, computer or video games. And today's busy families have fewer free moments to prepare nutritious, home-cooked meals. Much of what we like eating nowadays is quick and easy, fat-laden fast food.

Obesity presents numerous problems for students. In addition to increasing the risk of obesity in adulthood, childhood obesity is the leading cause of pediatric hypertension, is associated with Type II diabetes mellitus, increases the risk of coronary heart disease, increases stress on the weight-bearing joints, lowers self-esteem, and affects relationships with peers.

The BMI* is calculated and the obese students and their parents are informed. The class teacher closely monitors lunch. We encourage all students to bring only home made food and strictly do not allow certain food items like Chips, Kurkure, Pickles, Fryums etc. to be brought in their lunch (refer # 120)

We talk to parents of overweight students and seek their help. It includes sharing with them the importance of proper nutrition, selection of low-fat snacks, good exercise and activity habits and monitoring of television viewing.

Dieticians are called to give talks regarding the type of food that can be given to such children. Sports are compulsory for all and take place for an hour everyday. Before their sports the students are made to run two rounds, which helps them to warm up and also loosens their body.

* Early and appropriate intervention is particularly valuable. We calculate the Body Mass Index (BMI) of all students. BMI is a number that shows how weight is compared to the height ($BMI = \text{weight (kg)} / \text{height (m)}^2$). BMI indicates how thin or how fat one is (unless one is very muscular, in which case BMI is not accurate). The higher the BMI the more fat one has compared to height.

In adults a BMI of over 25 is considered overweight. But in children the overweight BMI number is not the same as in adults, and is not

even the same for children of different ages. Therefore, it is important to use a BMI calculator (www.blubberbuster.com)

The "overweight" range is 26 to 27.3 for women, 26 to 27.8 for men, though some authorities peg the upper limit of overweight at a BMI of 30. All authorities agree that anyone with a BMI over 30 is obese.

Data of Height & Weight for Senior School taken on 15/5/06										
No	Name	Cl	Date of Birth	Height (m)	Weight(kg)	Expected wt.	Class Teacher	BMI	Category	Needs to loose (kgs)
1	Student 1	12	8/21/88	1.72	82	75	Teacher 1	28	Over weight	7
2	Student 2	11	1/19/91	1.64	86	68	Teacher 2	32	obese	18
3	Student 3	11	12/2/90	1.67	77.5	70	Teacher 3	28	Over weight	7.5
4	Student 4	11	9/15/89	1.43	55.5	50	Teacher 3	27	Over weight	5.5
5	Student 5	10	7/3/91	1.56	65	60	Teacher 4	27	Over weight	5
6	Student 6	10	3/12/91	1.77	86.5	78	Teacher 4	28	Over weight	8.5
7	Student 7	9	3/2/93	1.64	80	68	Teacher 5	30	obese	12
8	Student 8	9	6/10/92	1.67	70	68	Teacher 5	25	Over weight	2
10	Student 9	9	10/13/92	1.6	73	65	Teacher 6	29	Over weight	8
11	Student 10	9	6/1/92	1.57	64	60	Teacher 6	26	Over weight	4

135. Obstacle Race Track

The obstacle race track is laid along the border of the sports fields.

This is a much awaited and exciting race held on the Sports Day. (refer # 71). The students who participate are the really tough ones since the race is one of endurance and strength. The race begins at the Basket ball court by throwing a ball into the basket.

The next obstacle is the crawling under barbed wire. Students crawl 'military style' under a barbed wire canopy and then get up and run to the high jump pole. Then they do a long jump on the sand pit there and run to the gate vault.

After transcending this they do the 'Monkey Jump' and move over to the 'Zig-zag balancing beam'. Then the 'Right Vault' and then 'Straight Balancing' on a plank of wood. Then they 'Clear jump' to reach the 'Rappling' obstacle and do the 'left vault'. Then is a 'rope swing' that leads to a 'double stride jump'. They crawl through the Tyre tunnel' and do the 'Tarzanjump' Then they cover the 'Slope Deep' and then climb the 'Army Wall'. The final obstacle is the 'Step Jump' after which they run about 50 meters to the finish line.

Students of SS cover the entire Obstacle Course and Students of MS do some of them.

136. One-year free training Programme

Eklavya has designed a unique one-year-free-training programme, which is for anyone who wishes to pursue teaching as a career. Teaching (like medicine) is a subject where on-the-job training is really the key element. Eklavya offers a systematically designed one-year free training in school teaching.

A candidate can start the training from *any day of the year*. Most trainees do June-May but it is not necessary. The main focus is to *observe and learn*. There are two types of programmes.

The first training programme is for those ultimately wishing to join PS or JS. They are called PS/JS trainees. Here their timings are 7.25 - 3, Monday to Friday, and 7.25 – 1 on Saturdays (JS timings). Trainees get a stipend of Rs 3000 pm for the first six months and Rs 4000 pm for the next six months. At the end of their training the Principal decides whether the trainee should be offered a job in Eklavya (of course the trainee also should be interested! and quite often they are not, and join some other school near their house, which is OK by Eklavya, since we feel proud of anyway adding to the pool of high quality educators, whether with Eklavya or any other school). Salaries and timings depends on the school they join – PS or JS.

They spend one month each in Nur, JKg, SKg, and class 1, 2, 3 and 4. When they join, the first class they start off with – there they work for about one-and-a-half months, till they settle down and get comfortable with the 'Eklavya system'. Then one month in each class. They also spend some time in admin. In the end, for the remaining months they decide where they want to spend the time, depending upon their wishes.

The trainee spends one month in each class from Nursery to class 4. During this period the class teacher is her mentor. The trainee is constantly with the class teacher taking part in all the class activities, assisting in corrections. She studies the curriculum of that class thoroughly and prepares lesson plans. She also takes some classes, which are attended by the class teacher, and feedback is given. As the trainee moves from one class to another, it is a unique experience for her to observe students of various age groups as well as teaching styles and class room management techniques of various educators.

The second training programme is for MS and/or SS. Here the educators are 'subject teachers'. Quite often they are either post-graduates or BEs. Trainees get a stipend of Rs 4000 pm for the first

six months and Rs 5000 pm for the next six months. Normally they spend six months in MS and six months in SS. At the end of their training the Principal decides whether the trainee should be offered a job in Eklavya. Salaries and timings depends on the school they join – MS or SS.

These trainees are allotted a subject teacher as their mentor. The trainee attends all her classes, studies the curriculum (of Class 5 - 8 or Class 9 – 12) and also appears for all the written tests the students are appearing for! In addition they give some more written tests, as they finish with chapters of the text books. She also prepares some lesson plans and after approval from the mentor takes classes. Mentor attends these classes and feedback is given.

All the Eklavya Trainees are engaged in the following activities on a regular basis throughout the year:

1. Daily reflection journal - at the end of the day, at home, each trainee is expected to reflect upon the day and write something. The mentor is expected to check this journal daily, not the content but that *some reflection was done last night*.
2. Presentation - once a month trainees give a presentation on a given topic like book review (Divaswapna, Toto Chan, Black-board book), Teaching learning material, case study etc. There is a jury and prizes are given to the best presentations.
3. As a part of training ' exposure visits ' are organized – normally the one-year-trainees attend all Field Visits of JS/MS/SS, so they end up doing about 30 visits in the year !
4. Attending Mothers Workshop, Home Visits, Camps, Night-outs etc.

A certificate is provided on the successful completion of the training. This training does not carry with it any guarantee of employment in Eklavya or elsewhere.

137. Orientation for New Children.

An orientation programme is held for parents and students who have taken admission in Eklavya School.

This programme is held in February preceeding the academic year the child has taken admission to.

Letters are sent 15 days in advance by post to the parents and they are asked to confirm their participation. Orientation is conducted on separate days for Nursery, JKg and SKg, Class 1 - 4 and Class 5 – 9. Parents and children come to school by the school bus. So they travel to school as the children would in future.

They are received by the educators of the respective schools. Here the parents and children are separated for their respective orientation programmes, shown below.

SAMPLE OF LETTER SENT TO PARENTS

January 22, 2007

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Eklavya!

We congratulate you on the admission of your child to Eklavya. The facilities and programmes at Eklavya are rich in their depth and diversity and we do hope you and your child will take initiative to derive maximum benefit.

Eklavya is a place designed and run to help blossom the uniqueness of every child. It is our experience that when parents take an active interest in their child's development, the results often far exceed the expectations.

We look forward to working closely with you with the single – minded focus of the development of your child.

An orientation programme is being organized for you and your child. The purpose of this programme is to familiarize your child with the school and its surroundings and to help you understand the philosophy of Eklavya School.

Attendance in the orientation programme is **compulsory for all children and both the parents**. The schedule is as follows:

<p>Date : Wednesday, February 14,2007 Bus will depart from Nehru Nagar Char Rasta at 8:00a.m. Orientation Programme begins at Eklavya School at 8:45a.m. 8:45a.m. – 11:30a.m. Orientation Programme, separate for children and separate for parents. Buses depart from Eklavya School at 11:30a.m.</p>
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Everyone is required to travel by the school bus.

If you need any clarifications, please contact Mrs. Rita Patel between 10.00 am – 6.30 pm on 26461629.

If you are not able to come on February 14th, or if one of the parents is unable to, we need to receive from you a written letter along with an explanation before Thursday, February 8, 2007

With warm regards,

For Eklavya School, Ahmedabad

138. Outdoor Classes

In Eklavya, educators have the freedom to conduct classes not just in classrooms but also anywhere on the campus. Eklavya is spread over 35 acres of land. At various places on the campus, benches or sitting areas have been placed and created. An outdoor classroom, (complete with a blackboard) is also there and formal classes like Math and Science can be taken here.

Educators take their classes outside. This provides a rejuvenating atmosphere for everyone studying with nature. Since the various Science Park (refer # 180) equipments are all around in the open, taking classes around them helps the students and educators in understanding the theory and practical aspect of the topic.

Some places designed to be outdoor classes are the duck pond, *Luv-Kush* containers, Boat, garden, amphitheatre, tree stumps under various huge shady trees, SS lawn, Samanvay and the teakwood forest.

139. Peer Learning

Peer learning is one of the many tools used in Eklavya to improve the skills of an educator and make the teaching learning process more effective.

The concept of Peer Learning arises from the belief that each person has some unique good quality worth adopting and emulating. It also reconfirms the view that self learning is the best way of developing and improving.

During an academic year an educator attends classes of other educators (of any subject or section of her choice) and makes worthwhile observations. Thus a MS Mathematics teacher may attend classes of a JS educator or a SS Biology educator.

No prior intimation needs to be given to the educator whose classes are to be attended. The main aim of attending classes of each other is to pick up some tips and techniques.

Each educator is expected to attend minimum two to three periods of atleast three educators and learn something new from each class. Then she asks three educators to attend her classes (atleast two periods each) and takes feedback from each of them.

The learnings that she gains will improve, enrich and enhance her own skills of teaching. Peer learning is an excellent form of training and self improvement, completely free of cost, and can be availed any time during the day in one's free periods throughout the year.

Besides this, once a year all educators are video-graphed during a period in any class. The videographer sets the camera in one position and does not move about in the class so that the class is not disturbed. Then a cd is made of the recording and given to the educator. She sees herself teaching and identifies points for improvement. She may also invite colleagues to watch the cd with her and take feedback from them. At times an expert may also give her technical feedback on the aspects of the class.

Peer learning also takes place amongst children. They help each other in solving certain difficulties, sharing information and it goes beyond academics where they learn certain skills from each other e.g. dance steps, songs and dramatics.

140. Photo chart in the class

One way by which we remember everybody's birthday is to put up the dates in a manner that it is seen everyday. This is what is done in each class in PS, JS and MS.

A birthday chart is put up in each class on the softboard by the class teacher. There are many other advantages of it rather than only remembering the birth dates. The advantage is also that the photo put up on the soft board of the class gives a kind of recognition and a feeling of belongingness to the class.

The scope file (refer # 181) also has a photo chart of the child. The photographs of the child from the time she joined Eklavya are pasted, class-wise, year-wise in ascending order. This is a record of the child and is printed in the Year book (refer # 217) of the class when they leave school after class 12.

141. Policy – Anti Bullying Policy

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

A breach of this policy by pupils will be regarded as a very serious breach of discipline.

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are –

- Physical (Hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (Name calling, racist remarks)
- Indirect (Spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
- Any action that subjects other students to harassment, or otherwise adversely affects other students' work.
- Damaging the school property and the property of those within school. Theft, tampering or other abuse of the system.

Eklavya's philosophy states that 'Eklavya is a happy and friendly community in which everyone respects, supports and cares about everyone else'

It is our aim to ensure that this is always true.

Eklavya school thus views bullying seriously and the school will take the firmest action against any forms of bullying.

School staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with the school policy.

Implementation

The procedure to be adopted in dealing with bullying incidents –

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately. The concerned educators (class teachers and one more educator) will counsel both the bully and the victim.

- The head teacher will take account of the evidence and all views. It will be insured that all involved are kept informed.
- The head of the institution may operate a system of sanctions and punishments which will reflect the seriousness of the offence.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by –

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience.
- Reassuring the pupil by offering continuous support and restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by –

- Discussing and discovering what happened and why the pupil became involved.
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- Informing parents/guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.

The following disciplinary actions can be taken –

- Official written warnings to cease offending.
- Detention
- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises.
- Minor fixed term exclusion.
- Major fixed term exclusion. (Suspension from school)
- Permanent exclusion. (Rustication)

The school will review the policy from time to time and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

The principal aim of the policy is to foster an atmosphere where bullying is discouraged and is seen to be inappropriate and wrong.

142. Policy – No use of mobiles on campus.

Eklavya is a No mobile, No Gutka, No smoking campus.

Once a visitor or parent enters the Eklavya campus she is required to switch off her mobile.

One is not allowed to use the mobile on the campus. If we find somebody using their mobile it is immediately confiscated and a fine of Rs. 1000/ is taken.

Sometimes parents are expecting an urgent call. They are requested to wait outside the school building after taking permission from the respective Principal. We do not encourage mobiles on the vibratory or silent mode since a call can still be seen and people will move around during the programme (Euphoria, Phoenix, IPEM or Mother's Workshop) to take it.

A parent told us this very apt incident that happened. His daughter said – 'Papa listen to me'. He was watching TV and without taking his eyes off the screen he said – 'Yes, talk. I am listening.' His daughter walked away without a word. She wanted him 100%.

Parents attending the IPEM and mother's workshop are required to switch off all mobiles during these meetings. In case they are expecting an urgent call they must to inform the class teacher about this and are allowed to take the call outside the building. Under no circumstances must they answer a call inside the hall or during the meetings.

143. Policy – On Cheating

Cheating means, "to deceive and act dishonestly." The definition would also include possession, exchange or use of unauthorized help. It does not build strength but hides weakness. It acts as a means of temporary success but does not aim in achieving academic excellence and integrity.

The mission of Eklavya School is to turnout students with integrity and values. The policy on cheating is to help the student come out of it through counseling and self-realization. As a last resort give a warning and thereafter expulsion from the school.

Any student caught cheating or helping a student to cheat in Eklavya will be dealt with in the following manner.

Category 1- Cheating during Tests / Exams (including Unit test, Mid-term, Final, Revision and Preliminary Exams, practical, etc).

Child will be made to realize the seriousness and gravity of the situation. Counseling will be done. Parents will be called and told about the incident. A letter will be issued in writing to be acknowledged by both the parents and the student.

The student will be awarded zero in the paper.

The student *may be* forgiven the "first" time. In case she cheats again, she will be expelled from the school with immediate effect.

Category 2 - Projects, Assignments and Homework.

Cheating in any of the above would mean copying out a para or more, which is the same as another student or from publications or from the Internet *or any such practice deserving blame as plagiarism.*

Cheating will be suspected if a student who completed an assignment independently cannot explain both the intricacies of the solution and the techniques used to generate that solution. In any such cases the decision of the concerned educator will be final.

The entire project, assignment or homework will be cancelled and the student / students shall *redo the whole assignment again* within a specified time to be stipulated by the subject teacher after which marks will be given for the same.

144. Policy – Promotion Policy

Promotion Policy – MS

1. The minimum passing marks in each subject is 45%.
2. Subjects for class 5 are – English Grammar, English Literature, Hindi Grammar, Hindi Literature, History & Civics, Geography, Science, Maths and Third Language.
- 2.1 Subjects for class 6 are – English Grammar, English Literature, Hindi Grammar, Hindi Literature, History & Civics, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Maths and Third Language.
- 2.2 Subjects for class 7 are – English Grammar, English Literature, Hindi Grammar, Hindi Literature, History & Civics, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Maths, Third Language and Computer Science.
- 2.3 Subjects for class 8 are – English Grammar, English Literature, Hindi Grammar, Hindi Literature, History & Civics, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Maths and Third Language.
3. If a student fails in any three of the subjects mentioned above, with a score between 35% and 45%, she will be *conditionally promoted* to the next class.
- 3.1 The promotion condition is that if the same situation arises in the next class i.e. the student fails in three subjects again, then she will be detained in that class. If the student fails in two subjects or less then she will be promoted to the next class.
4. If a student fails in more than three subjects then she will be detained in the same class.
5. Percentage calculation in each subject will be on the basis of total evaluation conducted throughout the year i.e. Announced Tests, First Term Exam, Final Exam, Class work, Home work, Orals and Practicals, Projects and Internal Assessments.

5.1 The percentage for each subject is calculated as given below

–

4 AT's of 25 marks each	= 100 marks X 0.25	25
1 st term	= 80 marks X 0.25	20
Final Exam	= 80 marks X 0.25	20
Project / Internal Assessment	= 40 marks X 0.25	10
Classwork	= 40 marks X 0.25	10
Homework	= 40 marks X 0.25	10
Oral / Practical	= 20 marks X 0.25	5
Total in each subject		100

Policy – Promotion Policy – SS

Class 9 to 10

1. The minimum passing marks in each subject (each written paper) is 40%. Overall pass percentage in all eleven written papers subjects is 45%.
2. Compulsory Subjects –
 - a. Compulsory subjects are English1 & 2, Hindi, Social Studies 1 - History & Civics, Social Studies 2 - Geography and Environmental Education is 40%.
3. If a student fails in any one of the compulsory subjects mentioned above with marks between 30 to 40% he/she will be conditionally promoted to class 10. After conditional promotion in the 1st & 2nd UT of Class 10 the student must score minimum 40% in that subject, failing which he/she goes back to class 9.
4. If a student fails in more than one compulsory subject then she will be detained in class 9.
5. The passing marks for Science – Physics, Chemistry & Biology, Maths and 6th subject is 40%. If a student fails in any one of these i.e. scores between 30 to 40%, he/she will be conditionally promoted to class 10. The student must score minimum 40% in the 1st & 2nd UT of class 10, failing which she goes back to class 9.

6. If a student fails in two papers out of those mentioned in point 4 then she will be detained in class 9
7. If a student fails in one compulsory and one out of those mentioned in point 4 he/she will be detained.
8. The percentage is calculated in each subject by the following formula – 20% UT + 30% 1st Term + 45% 2nd Term + 5% Regularity & Homework, Classwork, Project submission, Attendance & Behaviour.

Class 11 to 12

1. The minimum passing marks in each subject is 45%. Overall pass percentage in all six subjects is 50%.
2. It is compulsory to pass in English and Environmental Education i.e. 45%.
3. Of the remaining four subjects if a student fails in any one with a score between 35% and 45%, she will be *conditionally promoted* to class 12. After *conditional promotion* the student must score minimum 45% in each – the 1st & the 2nd UT of Class 12 failing which she will repeat class 11.
4. If a student fails in two Electives the student is detained in class 11.
5. In case of the student repeating class 11 she is allowed to choose and decide the stream she wishes to opt for all over again.
6. The percentage is calculated in each subject by the following formula – 20% from UT + 30% from 1st Term + 45% from 2nd Term + 5% from Continuous Evaluation (Regularity, Homework, Class-work, Project submission, Attendance & Behaviour).

145. Preparation for class 10 and 12 board exams.

Class 10 and 12 session is from March to February unlike June- April for other classes. They appear for the board exams in the month of March. The course and syllabus is completed by the end of September.

Question Bank

In the month of October students answer Question Banks in each subject - this is an exhaustive session where students solve *all possible questions* that could be asked in the board exams. During the Question Bank, each subject is given a fixed number of classes. For e.g. Biology gets eight classes each of 1 hour with class 10 and 20 classes each of 1 hour with class 12. The course is divided depending upon this. Here the educator gives the students all varieties of questions from the previous year's board papers and from every nook and corner of the textbook. Students are given these questions on Friday so that over the weekend they start reading those chapters and solve the questions. During the class the educator addresses the common doubts and each student solves the question bank without taking the help of the book, as far as possible.

Practice Paper Writing

After the Final Exams in the month of December, Practice Paper Writing sessions begin. Practice Paper Writing aims at students getting practice of writing the papers in the board exam style. The only difference being that the syllabus is limited for in-depth learning to take place. For class 10 the course is divided into two parts so 2 paper-writing sessions are held where the questions are prepared from the limited portion. For class 12 the course is divided into 3 parts and 3 paper-writing sessions are held.

As an example, Physics (class 10) has 9 units, in the first paper writing the chapters on Work, Energy, Power, Pressure and Light are covered. In the second Paper Writing, the topics included are Sound, Electro-magnetism, Heat and Radioactivity. This leads to detailed study of the limited portion.

Finally in the month of January the Preliminary Examination is held. Extensive and in-depth feedback is given to the students. 15 days study leave is given to the students prior to the Board exam. The students are encouraged to come to school if they have any queries during study leave.

For e.g. the planning for class 10 and 12 for the year, 2009-10 was as follows:

Sr	Particulars	Class 10	Class 12
1	Question Bank	03 Oct – 28 Oct	03 Oct – 28 Oct
2	Study leave	29 Oct – 09 Nov	29 Oct – 09 Nov
3	End Term Exam	10 Nov – 25 Nov	10 Nov – 25 Nov
4	Study leave	26 Nov – 27 Nov	26 Nov – 27 Nov
5	Practice Paper Writing -1	28 Nov – 09 Dec	28 Nov – 05 Dec
6	Study leave	10 Dec – 11 Dec	NA
7	Practice Paper Writing -2	12 Dec – 23 Dec	06 Dec – 14 Dec
8	Practice Paper Writing -3	NA	15 Dec – 23 Dec
9	Study leave	24 Dec – 01 Jan	24 Dec – 01 Jan
10	Preliminary Exam -1	02 Jan – 19 Jan	02 Jan – 13 Jan
11	Study leave	20 Jan – 25 Jan	14 Jan – 22 Jan
12	Preliminary Exam -2	26 Jan – 10 Feb	23 Jan – 03 Feb
13	Study leave	11 Feb – 28 Feb	04 Feb – 19 Feb
14	Board Exam	01 Mar	20 Feb - Practical commences 01 Mar - Theory commences

146. Preprogrammed school-bell

In the JS, MS and SS a pre programmed school-bell is used.

This ensures that the bell rings on time. It also does away with a person having to be deputed to ring the bell.

The bell has a programme that allows it to be set on manual also. In case one needs to ring the bell at a different time then the setting is shifted to auto and the bell can be rung. This does not change the original pre-set timings of the bell which will continue to ring as scheduled.

Bell Timings (auto)

Sr.No.	JS	MS	SS
1	7:25 am	7.25 a.m.	9.00 a.m.
2	7.40 a.m.	8.10 a.m.	9.20 a.m.
3	8.00 a.m.	8.25 a.m.	9.40 a.m.
4	8.35 a.m.	8.40 a.m.	10.20 a.m.
5	9.10 a.m.	9.00 a.m.	11.00 a.m.
6	9.35 a.m.	9.40 a.m.	11.40 a.m.
7	10.10 a.m.	10.20 a.m.	12.20 p.m.
8	10.45 a.m.	11.00 a.m.	12.50 p.m.
9	11.20 a.m.	11.30 a.m.	1.30 p.m.
10	11.35 a.m.	12.10 p.m.	2.10 p.m.
11	12.10 p.m.	12.50 p.m.	2.20 p.m.
12	12.45 p.m.	1.30 p.m.	3.00 p.m.
13	1.00 p.m.	2.05 p.m.	3.40 p.m.
14		2.15 p.m.	4.25 p.m.
15		3.00 p.m.	4.30 p.m.

A set of two timers are attached to the same bell. Each bell is programmed to ring 11 times. The timings are set in such a way that after one bell stops the other automatically rings from the next time. This is made by M/s Gujarat Electronics & Controls, 6-8 Amarnath Estate, Naroda Road, Ahmedabad-380025, ph 079-22202177, e mail: gelco@d2visp.com , www.gelco-in.com . Cost is approx Rs 2000.

147. Principals taking Value Education Classes

This is a weekly period taken by the Principal for all the sections, that is used as a platform to inculcate values, sharing and learning from experiences and resolving issues. Story telling and role-plays form an integral part of these interesting classes.

A Principal *must take some classes* (about 8 to 10 period per week) to be in touch with the students - this is the philosophy of Eklavya. If she takes a *particular subject* then she will be able to teach only two or three or four sections out of sixteen. This would mean a large segment of the children not being in direct touch with her. The Eklavya solution is for the Principal to take VE classes where it is possible to combine two or more sections together.

The Principal in her daily agenda of work comes across issues like bullying, rowdy behaviour, cheating and so many other diverse cases. She is therefore the right person to tackle such issues at the proper time. She does have some curriculum in mind but she allows herself the freedom to deviate from it and address the immediate cause of concern.

The issue is put forward, discussed and a conclusion is arrived at. The Principal treats children as responsible individuals and they take on the onus of rectifying their mistakes. Care is taken to see that no child is labelled. The sensitive and competent handling ensures the success of such classes.

Inspiring stories about great people are shared with the class. Often dramatizations are also done. Sharing is the bedrock of such classes.

VE classes are rarely held in the classrooms and the ever popular "duck pond," shady trees and hillocks are the favourite spots. Children sit in a circle (along with the Principal) to create a comfortable ambience.

Eklavya libraries have 43 different books / series of books on the subject of Value Education. These include: Garden of Life series (Macmillan), The Joy of Living (Frank Bros), Lets try-My book of Life Skills and Values (Madhuban), Radiant Reflections Value Education series (Allied Publishers), Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas series, and Vedic Heritage Teaching Programme. The VE curriculum is made by the Principal taking inputs from all these but the book frequently referred to is "Life"!

148. Project Topics and Guidelines

Projects are an integral part of the continuous evaluation of the students in all schools. These projects help the students to gain practical knowledge and enhance their presentation skills.

The projects are spread over the whole academic year. The planning of the names and topics is done well in advance and students are given the list of the projects and their submission dates on their first day of school.

Along with the project dates the students are also given some guidelines as to how they would proceed in the project and what things they need to keep in mind while doing the project.

For example:

The project will be evaluated on the content rather than its decoration.

No direct copying from the net

Parents should only be facilitators

The projects should be handwritten

Can refer to different books, journals and magazines etc.

They are further required to make power-point presentations in MS and SS. They are given guidelines of presentation and encouraged to use charts and models to enhance the quality of their project.

In JS the project work is a part of the Theme Subject. In the whole year, children work on four projects (2 in the 1st term and 2 in the 2nd term). The topics are selected based on some concept studied. Children make booklets, charts or models and then present their projects before the class.

149. Projection Facility of TV, DVD, OHP

Over Head Projector (OHP) is the feature of each and every class of MS and SS. It helps the educators to comprehensively place the points on the transparency and at the same time use the blackboard to elaborate it further. Classes are very content packed and recapitulation and summarizing is easier at the end of a lesson.

Some classes in JS also have an OHP. The library has a CD and DVD facility to show films.

The Hungama Hall (refer # 58) in the SS building is a LCD projector and screen facility for the MS students. 50 students can sit at a time for film and documentary viewing.

In SS some classrooms have a DVD and TV facility and a subject teacher can show some films while teaching in the class. There is also a LCD projector and screen facility in Kalpana Chawla Hall where 75 students can be shown a film together (used for combined classes) (refer # 58)

We have the Eklavya Hall where one whole class (100 students) can be shown a movie. (refer # 58)

150. PS - Circle Time

Children in PS and JS sit in a circle along with their educator either to share the happenings of the day, to play games or to get introduced to a topic and this time slot is known as 'Circle Time'.

Why is it called circle time?

The circle is the only shape that has no beginning or end. Everyone sitting along the circle is placed on the same plane and there is no hierarchy and hence no feeling of being controlled. The educator here does not don the garb of a "teacher" but is merely a facilitator. Everyone is at eye level and is facing each other. It has been proved that such a congenial sitting arrangement facilitates and stimulates the teaching and learning process.

In PS the educator arranges the children and herself in this fashion to initiate sharing amongst the children and herself. She also uses this set-up to introduce concepts as she can easily pass around materials and allow each one time to speak and also touch and feel it. This set-up also teaches children to pay attention and develop listening skills as they can directly look at the person speaking and not get distracted. It teaches children to be patient and respect her peer by allowing her to finish and also by waiting for her turn as she can clearly see the movement of the material being passed and when her turn will come. Since the flow of action is clear to all, there is less distraction as children respect and follow the pattern.

'Circle Time' is also a very apt setting for the use of a powerful TLM namely 'Flash Cards'. In PS the child can clearly see the card and can follow instructions related to it comfortably. She also learns to put it back in the proper place or pass it on to the next student. Reading skills are also enhanced when children sit in this manner. Rules of games are clear to children and enjoyment is maximized.

In JS, this arrangement is used to play multi-skill based games and also as the introductory part of a lesson. Games which require observation of peer action, comprehension and the execution of the instructions given are played well in such a set-up. Circle time can be held in the class, in the library or in the garden.

It has been observed that reading sessions are held effectively if children sit in a circle. It not only improves reading skill but also facilitates stimulating discussion afterwards.

Circle Time is also used during recess where children along with their class teacher enjoy and share their food.

No matter where and how it is used, it has always resulted in the activity being a success.

151. PS - Dirty Day

Dirty day is celebrated by PS around mid March. It is a part of their regular day that is the come to school and go back as they do on regular school days.

Pre Schoolers love playing in sand and mud. On Dirty Day the little ones jump and play in muddy plots (*Kicchad*) specially prepared for this day and enjoy themselves thoroughly.

Around three days before the scheduled date, small patches of land are cleaned – small stones, dried plants, etc are removed. Then they are filled with water to make *Kicchad*.

A note is sent to the parents asking them to send an extra pair of clothes, towel and a poly bag.

The children are divided into four batches. A mixed group of around 65 Nursery, JKg and SKg children go to each plot at a time. One section of Nursery, Jkg and Skg from one batch. They play for about half an hour. They splash mud at each other and at their educators. Sometimes educators from other schools also join the little ones. Once they came out of the plot they wash the mud off with the hose pipe in the garden. Then they bask in the sun for sometime and then change into a fresh pair of clothes.

All the dirty and wet clothes are put into the poly bags they have brought and sent home.

152. PS - Drawing Day

Drawing Day is celebrated in PS around Mid January (18th to 25th). The pleasant climate and mild sun allows to little ones to sit out in the open and draw and paint in the midst of nature. Students exhibit their imagination and creativity through these drawings which they draw and colour on the spot.

Invitation cards are made by children with the details of date, time and venue written on it. A group of two or three students of PS, along with an educator go to JS, MS and SS and invite them to the Drawing Day.

All the students of Nursery, Jkg and Skg are taken to an open area on the campus (usually the SS lawn). They carry their own pencils and eraser and the sheet of paper for the drawing. This A4 sheet of paper (cartridge paper) is stapled onto to an A4 corrugated cardboard for support. This gives children the freedom to sit anywhere they want and not on the tables only.

Children can choose their own medium of colour – wax crayons, oil pastels, water colour, poster colours or pencil colours, easel boards are also made available. Few chart papers are also stuck at their level on walls nearby – they can draw on any of them. A time of one and a half hours is given to them to complete their work.

Educators and Children from JS, MS and SS came to watch and encourage these little budding artists.

All drawing material is also made available to anybody who wants to draw – some children of JS, MS and SS also join them.

153. PS - No uniform

It's a lovely sight to see our toddlers alight the buses in their pink, blue, green, white ...name any colour and you will find one of them wearing a pretty dress of the same colour you named. They look like colourful butterflies.

Their casuals give them a feeling of moving from one home to the other, the other home is their Pre School. The years spent in PS are the most important years in a child's life. The more the child feels at home the better is the child's learning. They feel light and comfortable to be in the dress of their choice.

The little ones also pick up the skill of making a choice or taking a suggestion right from such a young age. Every morning (Monday to Friday) they either choose their own dress or wear what the parent has suggested. Thus they are able to make up their mind and also adhere to what the parent is suggesting.

On Saturdays the Pre schoolers wear a red T – shirt with EKLAVYA printed on the back. PS students go for the weekly picnic on Saturdays and the red T – shirt helps us to easily identify our students in a public place.

154. PS - Outdoor free play

As soon as children reach school they go to their respective classrooms. After exchanging 'good morning' greetings they keep their bags and bottles in the proper place. Then they form a 'train' like queue to march to the playground.

They play there for about 25 minutes. They enjoy and experiment each and every ride on the playground – the slides, the swings, the see-saw, the monkey bar and their favourite jungle gym. The little ones also play in the sand-pit making their favourite shapes with wet sand.

This play time, early in the morning, as soon as they arrive, relieves these toddlers from all kinds of school tension.

The first thing they do in the morning as soon as they come to school is a happy, play thing. So they look forward to going to school. If the first thing in the school in the morning is something that they like then their getting up, getting ready for school and bus ride has a lot of anticipation in it.

Apart from developing abilities like hopping, jumping, climbing, balancing, throwing, kicking and running, this free play is a platform for children to enhance their social skills. It increases peer interaction and also helps them learn many good values like waiting for their turn and helping each other (a value caught when they help each other master the rides).

Outdoor free play also helps to sustain curiosity and initiates and fosters discovery in the most natural way.

155. PS - Outings

Upto certain age learning is sensorial. Keeping this in mind Eklavya PS arranges for a weekly picnic for Nursery, JKg and SKg children every Saturday except the third Saturday of every month.

The more a child is “exposed” to activities related to the five senses the more they will learn. Eklavya has prepared a list of several activities to be experienced by the children. The question now arose – which is the best way to give them this exposure- preferably multiple exposures simultaneously. Where they will get opportunities to actually touch, feel, see, hear and smell and learn from the surroundings. The answer was to take them for outings or picnics. So it was decided that the Saturday agenda for the PS will be picnics!

At the beginning of the academic year the PS team along with the Principal makes a detailed list of places in and around Ahmedabad. The JS, MS and SS do not work on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays. Keeping this in mind the bus logistics are worked out so that they can go for longer hours (8 am to 12 noon) on 4th Saturdays and shorter hours (9 am to 12 noon) on the other Saturdays. The buses have to be back in school by 12.30 pm.

We have 16 regular bus-routes but for the pre-school outing some routes are clubbed together and 4 routes ply. Children are picked up from the nearby stop (may not be their regular bus stop) and dropped back there.

Apart from the sensorial stimulations provided these visits also enhance social skills in children. They learn to be in a group, share and display commendable behaviour. Children are told about the destination that day itself and are briefed about the visit while going there. The parents are informed earlier so that students wear the red ‘Eklavya’ T shirt, comfortable, light lowers and floaters. They bring light, dry snacks and their water bottle. Care is taken to see that the child *can easily* carry whatever she is carrying.

When they reach the place of the visit they are with the class teacher who shows them around. Eg. for the railway station visit a smaller station is chosen and not the main station due to the heavy rush. As the children are aware of what to see, they usually make good use of the time. After that they are allowed to eat and go to the washroom. If there is no suitable place to sit and eat they are allowed to eat on the bus.

The visit is discussed the following Monday in the “Circle Time” (refer # 150). The Nursery children talk about it and the JKg and SKg children also *draw the visit*. It is amazing to see the minute details they portray in the illustrations!

Although some of the places may have been visited by the child earlier, the ‘School Visit’ adds a different dimension to it.

Some of the places visited are:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Law Garden | 14. Sarita Udyan |
| 2. Prahladnagar Garden | 15. Kankaria Zoo |
| 3. Sola Temple | 16. Railway station |
| 4. Balvatika | 17. Parimal Garden |
| 5. Gurudwara | 18. Church |
| 6. Iskcon Temple | 19. Vaishnavdevi Temple |
| 7. Aquarium | 20. Kankaria Zoo |
| 8. Hathisingh Ni Vadi | 21. Fire Station |
| 9. Post Office | 22. Camp Hanuman |
| 10. Gandhinagar Garden | 23. Kite Museum |
| 11. Nature Park | 24. Police Station |
| 12. Gandhi Ashram | 25. Gayatri Mandir |
| 13. Dargah | 26. Farm House |

156. PS - Separate free play for Nursery

Separate free play can also be termed as 'own choice time'. As the word suggests the nursery child can use this time as per her choice.

There are around forty apparatus kept in the class – e.g. the pink tower, the brown stairs, beading set, colour tablets, scooping set, transferring water, pouring set, etc. During free play time each child takes a mat, rolls it out, takes an activity of her choice and plays with it. Once she completes one set she collects it and keeps it back from where she took it. Then she takes another one of her choice and plays with it.

This same freedom is again exercised by them once they have finished their lunch. During this time you will find children playing with the kitchen set, some busy dressing up, some busy scribbling on the board, playing with puzzles, arranging the classroom, playing in the doll house or even singing rhymes or listening to a story while flipping through the story book.

This is the time when the educator in the class does not instruct the children ...the children have to make their own choice as to what they want to do. This freedom helps children to make their choice. This activity also increases the attention span of the child because when one does what one wants to, one always does it with a lot of interest....it's true even with adults. They also learn to experiment, explore and discover many things in the process. Moving from one activity to the other also helps the child know and learn more and more on her own.

157. PS - Toy Making

Toy Making is done by Skg children in the first week of April, just before the school closes for the summer vacation.

There are many toys which can be made with simple things we see and use in our everyday life. The joy of making a toy and playing with it gives a sense of achievement and pleasure to these little ones.

This activity is spread over a period of two days. On the first day children along with their educators learn how to make the toys. They make toys like cap tap (made with bottle cap and buttons), soap bubbles, magic jar (an empty jar with a hole in its lid), cap whistle, paper whistle, parrot in the cage etc. They keep learning and making, until they make one on their own.

On the second day they display their craftsmanship and also explain how they made it. Students of PS - Nursery & Jkg, JS and MS along with their educators come and see the display and encourage the young toy makers.

158. Publications - Albums–Shravaneeyam 1, 2 & 3 and Strange

Shravaneeyam 1 is a cassette of chanting of *shlokas*, *mantras* and *subhashitas* by 25 students of Eklavya. This cassette was released at the Annual Prize-Giving and Investiture Ceremony in June 2003.

Shravaneeyam 2 is a cd sung by about 105 students and educators. The immense popularity and success of *Shravaneeyam 1* motivated the class 4 to 8 students of Eklavya to bring out a second edition in April 2006. This version is a CD and containing *Kalyanmantra*, *Prarthana Geet*, *Shubhashitani*, *Shrimad Bhagvat Gita – chapter 12*, *Desh Bakti Geet*, Rabindranath Tagore's – *Ekla Chalo Re ...* In Bengali and the School Song – *Eklavya Geet*.

India is a land with a rich cultural heritage – the land of the *Vedas* and the *Puranas*. It is the land that believes Mother, Father and Teacher to be forms of God himself. The *Shlokas* and *Subhashitas* written in Sanskrit – the oldest living language of the world – have stood the test of time.

During one academic year all educators of Eklavya went through a journey with the *Gita* in their 1–hour-weekly-sessions with Sunilbhai. In chapter 12, Lord Krishna explains the qualities of a devotee.

This led to discussions on the qualities of a student. All educators were invited to give, what according to them are the important qualities of a good student. Then a team of four educators went through all of them, removed the duplicates and found 69 net qualities. They then grouped them into clusters of similar qualities. Bhowmik Sir, our Sanskrit teacher then weaved them into shlokas that are written in the '*Anooshtup Chandh*' same as that of the Bhagwad Gita. These are enumerated and composed into 21 *shlokas* – *Adarsh Chatra Ke 69 Gun* and are part of *Shravaneeyam*. These are composed in the same rhyme and metre as the *Shlokas* in the *Gita* and can be recited in the same manner.

In the making of *Shravaneeyam 1* and 2 we realized that the learning was in the process - students coming together for practice, reciting *shlokas* and *mantras*, everyday. In a few days most of them had by-heartened all the *shlokas* and *mantras* and these they would now remember for a life-time. The entire school would reverberate with the divine and melodious chanting and students really enjoyed the learning. Many parents, after listening to the cassette have said that the chanting is soothing and refreshing.

Shravaneeyam 3 was released in December 2008. Shravaneeyam – 1 and Shravaneeyam – 2 had a concept where students chanted shlokas, mantras and sang songs. In Shravaneeyam – 3 tried to do something different. This time it was decided to throw the album open for all the students and educators of Eklavya – from PS to SS. Students were asked to prepare an item of their choice – a song, speech, poem recitation, shloka, bhajan, skit, jokes or a play in any language of their choice; or a tune on the keyboard, mouth organ, guitar or flute and beats on the tabla or drums.

Many students formed groups. Somebody sang and another student played the keyboard and another the tabla. The entire school was a beehive of songs and music and oratory and drama in the months of August and September 2008.

In a class in JS a student would practice the Tamil song he was going to sing, and in a week the entire class had learnt the sing! A lot of learning happened and students and educators enjoyed the process immensely.

It was decided to set up a recording studio in school. The entire process was new and exciting for students and educators alike. Going into a sound-proof room, wearing headphones to listen to instructions, closing the door for the recording – the total feeling of ethereal isolation was an out-of-this-world experience. Everyday students would go to the recording room in small groups and record their items. In end the announcement for each item was done (some by students and some by educators) and the cd complied.

The process of making this cd has been fulfilling and fruitful. 99% of the enjoyment was this process – the learning, fun and excitement. What you – O listener – hear in the cd is only 1% of the entire enjoyment! As is said by the wise – the process is 99% and the end-result only 1%. All students and educators of Eklavya ‘tasted’ the process. The entire process had enriched us immensely.

Strange is a cassette of self-composed, written and played English songs by the six students of the then class 9 of Eklavya released in March 2003. In October 2002, Sunil Sir recorded one of their songs and played it to some of his IIM-A students, whose comment, “sir, this is really good”! encouraged him to call the boys, give them a target of January 26, 2003 (the 2nd anniversary of the earthquake) and say, “we will release your first album”.

Hectic activity followed. The boys came up with the name 'Strange' for their group. They designed the cover of the album. They created more songs. They practiced and practiced.... The album was released by two old IIM-A students of Sunil Sir, Mr. Vikas Tandon (batch of 1993) and Mr. Apoorva Sharma (batch of 2001).

Eklavya School teaches instrumental and vocal music as an integral part of the curriculum and this provides an ample opportunity to children for exploring and honing their talents. It was wonderful to watch them rehearse and a harmony existed within the chaos that went on during the practice sessions!

The students then made a cassette of recordings of their numbers. As one hears each piece of music, which is as different as original, the vitality and boisterous nature of these boys flows through.

By releasing 'Strange' Eklavya made an attempt to encourage and give expression to creative young minds.

159. Publications – Bacchon ki Kahaniya

During our weekly HRD with Sunil Sir many educators share anecdotes of their students. These are humorous, somber and often touching. There was once a suggestion to compile these. A trial was done with about 36 anecdotes and circulated among educators and a few parents of Eklavya. The feedback was overwhelming. The anecdotes struck a chord.... The parents went down memory lane and reminisced about the childhood of their children. They laughed and cried as they read on. So we decided to bring out a small book and call it “Bacchon ki Kahaniyan”.

All the educators were very enthusiastic and anecdotes poured in. To protect the identity of our students we decided to use four names for children and three for the educators. So Aryan, Sahil, Suhani and Diya are the four characters who will take you along the journey through “Bacchon ki Kahaniyan”. *They represent all the children whose stories have been so lovingly written by their educators.* Similarly Renu Ma’am, Swati Ma’am and Sameer Sir stand for all the Ma’ams and Sirs who are a part of their laughter and tears!

It is not important to find out who the child is but the magic lies in enjoying the innocence of childhood and the challenge of the tumultuous teens.

We reproduce three anecdotes from the book here -

James Bond of Eklavya -Renu Ma’am was teaching in class 11. She called Sahil and said that she was aware of what he was doing, so he should stop doing it and start doing his sums. Instantly Aryan looked at Sahil and said, “Don’t you know ma’am is the James Bond of Eklavya.”

Dramatizing - Children enjoy drama. One day Renu Ma’am saw that her students of class 2 were sharpening their pencils in the pencil box. She had told them many times not to do so. So she thought of a plan. She said, “Wow, what a lovely dustbin you have got. It is so small and handy that you can carry it in your bag and even take it home. I have never seen a dustbin in a bag.”

Use your brain - Renu Ma’am often told the class 3 children, “Please use your brain – are you saying it for your old age?” Aryan promptly replied, “No, ma’am I am saving it for my middle age – I will be a businessman and use it to make money.”

160. Publications - Gujarati Translations

Eklavya has translated into Gujarati four well-read English best-sellers. This is a regular activity and continues even today.

The translation has been done by Eklavya using the original book that is used as a useful reference tool in English-medium teacher training courses. When it was found that neither a Gujarati translation nor an equivalent book on the same topic was available in Gujarati, it was decided to publish a translation.

The first book '*Ma Baap ane Balak*' a translation of *Between Parent and Child* by Dr. Haim G. Ginnot was released in February, 2001.

This book opened new lines of communication between millions of parents and children. Dr. Ginott is perhaps the foremost authority on the subject of child guidance and psychotherapy. Communication is the key to solving the undeclared wars between parent and child that leave both angry, confused and regretful. The book prescribes advice for a multitude of daily situations so that understanding useful interaction is achieved through proper communication.

The second book '*Baalakni Shikhvani Kshamata Olakho ane Vikasavo*' a translation of '*How to maximize your child's learning ability*' by Dr. Lauren Bradway and Barbara Albers Hill was released in July 2002.

"How to Maximize Your Child's Learning Ability" is a highly acclaimed international best-seller considered a revolutionary book that offers parents hundreds of practical things they can do to encourage and enhance their child's learning ability. Specific learning styles have been defined and methods of identifying the child's learning style have been explained. The book also tells how to go about selecting toys, activities and learning strategies that reinforce those talents and skills that a child has.

'How to Say it to your Kids' by Dr. Paul Coleman is a revolutionary book that offers parents hundreds of practical things they can do to help influence, encourage and maximize their child's learning. It's Gujarati Translation "*Tamhara Baalakne Kehveereete Kehsho*" was released in June 2003.

This book is a highly acclaimed international best-seller considered a revolutionary book that offers parents the right words to solve problems, soothe feelings and teach values. The book speaks about various issues of child upbringing like bedwetting, bullying, cheating,

conversation initiating, death in the family, defiance and how to deal effectively by using the right words. It also sets guidelines to deal with medical problems, peer pressure, school and violence and explains the difference between using the right word and a word. The book is a valuable manual for parents and very usable for dealing with children of all age groups.

The Gujarati translation of the book – “Siblings without Rivalry” by Ms. Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish was released in April, 2007. The Gujarati translation title is “*Harifaimukta bhai behan*”

The internationally acclaimed book is a must-read for all parents and educators. The Gujarati translation has enabled teachers, teacher trainees, and other interested people in Gujarat to read, understand, use and apply the principles of this book. It especially gives parents important tips on how to deal with Sibling Rivalry and the problems arising from it. It takes case studies to explain situations and give solutions for action.

Given below are excerpts from the letter written to us by the authors Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish granting permission for the translation of their book into Gujarati

*From,
Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish
Faber/Mazlish Workshops, LLC, P.O. Box 64
Albertson, New York 11507* *Date : January 8, 2006*

Dear Sir,

We are delighted to learn that you are publishing ‘Siblings without Rivalry’ in Gujarati.

We wish you luck and great success with the important work you’re doing on behalf of children and families.

You make a compelling case, one which helps us to balance our primary need to make our book available to people whose lives may be enhanced by its teachings.

We are pleased to give you permission, and our blessing, to translate our book, Siblings Without rivalry, and publish it in Gujarati.

*Sincerely,
Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish*

161. Publications - Havoc

An annual magazine is published by Eklavya titled "Havoc." Havoc is a concoction of various creative ingredients picked from every nook and cranny of Eklavya and dumped into a magazine. Havoc is a mocktail of creativity, fun and freedom.

This is a platform for both children and educators to exhibit their creativity. Six children, three from class 8 and three from class 11 comprise the editorial board. This board is involved and responsible for the entire process of printing and publishing the magazine. Three educators, one from JS, MS and SS respectively, are also there to facilitate the process of collecting and helping the board in proof reading and finally publishing the magazine.

The editors at regular intervals attend the assemblies of the various schools (JS/MS/SS) and make related announcements about articles to be written and the time of submission. Each editor takes care of a section of the school so the work is clearly allocated amongst them. The board also holds meetings at regular intervals to motivate and inspire the students to write meaningful and interesting articles. Children are asked to give drawings which are carefully matched with related articles. The beauty of the magazine lies in the fact that a story written by a class 12 student is aptly illustrated by a SKg child. Select paintings by students are also published.

An editorial team of students from MS and SS is constituted. This team goes around the schools requesting and motivating students and educators to contribute articles to the magazine. Special creative writing, poetry writing and drawing and painting activities are organized.

The first announcement about the forthcoming magazine is made somewhere around August. From then till December the work of collecting the articles and short listing them goes on. Children and educators are very enthusiastic about displaying their creative skills and contributions pour in. The magazine has three sections namely English, Hindi and Gujarati and so the collection ends up being rich and quite varied.

It is entirely the board's discretion to approve or reject an article. The chosen ones are then proof read, typed and saved in the computer under different headings e.g. essays, stories, poems etc. The three educators help the board in this aspect. As Eklavya has access to a design studio called 'Chrysalis', the next step of formatting and

working on the cover and layout is done there. Children are asked to come up with the layout of the cover and again the board chooses the one that suits the most with the spirit of the magazine. The writing of the editorial is a team effort by all the board members. The work in the designing studio commences from mid January and the entire layout and the cover designing is done. Minute details like page numbers, spellings, repetition of articles are taken care of and by the end of March the dummy is ready.

Heart warming and excellent articles or poems are awarded a rose by the jury. The jury gives consideration to two aspects – the thought and the quality of its articulation.

It is then sent for printing and about 1200 copies are printed and given to the children by the first week of April just before the summer vacation.

A school magazine ensures a sense of bonding and achievement amongst all the members of the school and our "Havoc" is no exception. Children are excited to see their names and even if it is not there they are not disheartened but get charged up for the next issue. The variety adds to the flavour. The simple four lined poems written by class 1 children match the thought provoking articles of our SS students.

In this endeavour the whole school unites to put in their best and bring out a very high quality magazine.

162. Publications – Inspiring & Responsible Teacher

Every year we have “Educator’s HRD” in Eklavya school, where we take one book and read a few pages every week, and discuss it in small school-wise groups for one hour every week. The basic purpose is self *sudhaar*. Last year we read Gandhiji’s autobiography (*The Story of my Experiments with Truth*). In the year 2006-07 we took the original Bhagvad Gita (commentary by Swami Chidbhavananda of Ramakrishna Mission) and read about 20 shlokas every week. Each teacher had a copy, they marked in it whatever they like, highlighted with a yellow pen whatever strikes them.

We requested Guruji, Shri G Narayana – one of the pioneer and author of several literatures on Indian Wisdom to take a session on the Gita. But we told him that so far he had written books where he looks at ‘leadership’ or ‘management’ through the Gita. But now we want him to see a ‘teacher’. He has written a gem of a book called *Excellence in Education*, but we said that is a *high-funda* book, when a teacher reads it, it is nice, but a simple teacher cannot implement most of those things. Please reread the Gita and give us simple ‘do-able’ things from a teacher’s viewpoint, in terms of day-to-day things. Write this book as a teaching manual and guide for Teacher’s Training.

The idea appealed to him and in a span of less than ten days he had written the manuscript! Amazing person! We truly believe that it’s not him, but *swayam* Goddess Saraswati who is writing these books!

Here is a book containing 79 shlokas from the Gita with interpretations for a teacher and a learner. These are organized into 54 ‘chapters’ starting from Chapter 1 – *Confused Learner* (1.47) to Chapter 54 – *Successful Partnership*.

163. Publications - Parenting Books

The school and parents join hands to uphold values which must endure in the face of changing times and culture. With this as the main focus, the educators of Eklavya compiled a book to help parents identify small little things and ways in which they could be a constructive part of their education and growing up.

The book 'Moments of Parenting' is dedicated to children who have a basic right to their parent's time and attention to have a – childhood.

There is no research which clearly demonstrates that parent involvement in school enhances the child's performance. On the other hand research clearly states the dramatic improvement and enhancement in the child's performance if parents are actively involved in her education, upbringing and development. According to Vygotsky, a famous educationist, 'assistance enhances development.'

The compilation carries a Foreword by Swamini Vimalananda, (Director, Chinmaya International Residential School, Coimbatore, and Director, Chinmaya Vision Programme) and is published by the Eklavya Education Foundation.

The first Moments of Parenting was written in English. Thereafter it has been translated into Gujarati and Hindi.

This book has gained immense popularity in various schools at an All-India level and many schools have taken the book from us to give to their teachers and parents.

164. Publications – School Discipline Tips

If one is asked about the essential skills that any teacher should have, Classroom Management would be an important one. A teacher may be very proficient in subject knowledge but without skillful class management, she would not be able to deliver it to her class and hence the students will not benefit from such a teacher.

Classroom management is like preparing the soil for the seeds of the teaching – learning process. Until it is done well, the result will be sub-optimal.

Discipline is not suppressing the innate curiosity of students and controlling them. In fact true discipline is when the teacher is able to create a conducive atmosphere where the students are free to ask questions and the teaching – learning process is exciting and enriching. Discipline facilitates a teacher to engage her students in meaningful activities where full freedom is given to exercise all the faculties of learning.

This is a tall order but attainable. The same set of students is happily engaged in learning, but also creating a ruckus, under two different teachers.

This book talks of various discipline tips related with issues which are prevalent in any classroom situation. They are practical and time tested. These tips empower teachers to create a win-win situation and be able to maximize the learning process where both parties enjoy.

Many years ago someone used to send Sunil Sir these (got from the internet somewhere) once a week, and he would save them and share onward with some colleagues in Eklavya as well as schools in other cities. This now is a compilation of what is there in his folder.

The strength of a school lies in having a heterogeneous set-up in a classroom. It is of course more challenging for the educator. Along with effective classroom management, another point to be remembered is time management. So proper discipline also ensures proper handling of the time allotted. This book also gives tips to help teachers manage their class time efficiently.

All teachers, no matter where and what age groups they are teaching, will be able to yield a golden harvest by implementing these handy tips.

165. Publications - Voices from Within

This book is a collection of selected poems written by the students of Eklavya School, Ahmedabad (the condition was that the poems should have been written during their stay in Eklavya). More than 500 poems were received out of which 255 have been selected for presentation in this book.

Students and educators write poems throughout the year during celebration of various filler weeks and also when inter-house competitions are held. These have no other platform for publication other than Eklavya Samachar. But Eklavya Samachar is a monthly review for parents and not really the forum for publishing poems. So Eklavya decided to publish all the poems written in the last four-five years in a book.

The book was released in a function hosted by Eklavya at The Ahmedabad Management Association Hall amidst the presence of students, parents and faculty members. The highlight of the evening was the poetry reading session by some of the budding poets.

166. Pulin Garg Room

The SS has a room named Pulin Garg room after Professor Pulin Garg who holds a special place in the heart of Eklavya. He was our Chairman, Shri Sunil Handa's mentor in many ways. He believed that the teacher is a mere facilitator of the learning process and learners (students) and facilitator (teacher) are all equal. He believed in a circular arrangement in the classroom and made sure everybody – students and the teacher sat in a circle. This room in SS is designed keeping this philosophy in mind.

Prof. Garg was a psychotherapist and worked in the field of community development before joining IIM-A. The plate outside the room in SS bears the following citation written by Shri Sunil Handa which describes the legend Prof. Pulin Garg was.

Pulin Garg Room (27.9.1927 – 18.1.2002)

Prof Pulin Garg was my professor in IIM-A. He was like a father to me. Though I was born in 1956, my 'emotional birth' happened on 2 Oct 1978, in a laboratory conducted by Pulin (and Indira) called IPR (Inter-Personal Relations), nowadays called ERI (Explorations in Role and Identity). Late that night, in an exercise done to help me confront my own reality and come to terms with it, I was reborn, I 'realised' some things - that I am good; that I will take decisions; that I will take responsibility for my actions in life. That I will commit; that I will live life to its fullest; that I will invest in myself, others and the system; that I will not blame the environment or others; and that I will be bold.

He taught us the skill to " See the Unseen, Hear the Unsaid, Act the Withheld, Own the Disowned" which has almost become a life-sustaining-motto. He taught me to accept a gift in grace, without feeling obliged. He taught us what it means to be human to each other, and discover the process of commitment to act and be proactive.

Pulin was like a father to me, a Guru, a Godfather, and much much more...he helped me to believe in myself, to be strong, to experiment, to own-up, to be human and vulnerable and be comfortable in this humanness and vulnerability...and so much more...

Pulin was a big man, he was a legend, he had done so many wild and adventurous and exploratory things in his life. He had great powers,

great insight, great compassion, he could stop the rain and make the winds blow.

He used to say:

Not to disengage, not to rage, but to engage

Not to conform, not to reform, but to set new norms

Not to adopt, not to adapt, but to enact change

Not to deny, not to defy, but to define

Not to accuse, not to diffuse, but to affirm

Not to desist, not to resist, but to persist

Taking off on this once in a Lab we made this:

Not to *kab*, not to *tab*, but to *ab*

Not to *kahan*, not to *wahan*, but to *yahan*

(past is gone, the future does not exist, the only truth is in the present, and here. I will not postpone, nor will I do wishful thinking *kaash aisa na hota...* 'here and now'¹ is the only reality, it is the truth; I will stay away from 'there and then')

- sunil handa

167. Reading Planner for children

Eklavya believes that if a student has good 'student habits' she has won 90% of the battle.

It is likely that if a student follows 'good student practices' the result is likely to be good. Some of these are –

1. Read and come what is going to be taught the next day. Mark what you have not understood and have a doubt in. Also highlight important parts of the lesson with a highlighter.
2. In the class pay attention. Concentrate 100% on what the educator is doing in the class. If you do these two, half the job is done.
3. Finish homework the same day instead of carrying it on to the day before the submission is due. The advantage is – the days work is fresh in the mind. After two days the student would have forgotten the content and will have to go through the portion again to do the homework. Also it takes half the time to complete the homework if it is done the same day. It further reinforces whatever has been done in the class that day.

This page of *sari* is on the first point – 'Read and come'.

If a student does not know what is going to be taught in class the next day she cannot read it and come. Most educators do not start with Chapter 1 and move smoothly ahead with the course chapter by chapter in a chronological order.

In Classes (9-12) a 'Reading Planner' for the coming week is used by educators and students. On every Thursday of the week the class teacher gets the planner filled in by all the subject teachers and puts it on the softboard of her class.

So there must be a forcing function on educators so that the order in which they are going is known to the students. The next one week of course of study in a subject should be very clear.

The idea to follow such a practice comes from the procedure followed by many reputed schools and colleges that plan their curriculum schedules in much detail and hand it over to the student at the beginning of each semester.

In many colleges a course (of 1 semester divided into 40 lectures) is given to the students period by period in the beginning. The professor

gives to each student a set of stapled pages called the course outline. It gives a detailed schedule of each of the 40 sessions date-wise, the time of the lecture each day and the lecture hall in which it will be held.

It also defines what are the pages of the textbook that are to be read for the day and also provides names of books from which additional voluntary reading can be done. So there is a textbook reading to be done and also suggestions for further reading if the student wishes to do so. The course outline may also refer the student to certain relevant websites. Now-a-days this is given in most universities

Students note down the page numbers they are expected to read and come to school. They attend the class with a better understanding and are able to relate to the content that is being taught. Homework is also mentioned.

This also helps the class teacher to track the regularity of the students of her class.

168. Recap to be written on the board

Before beginning the teaching-learning process for the day, the educator recapitulates the important points of the previous class and links them to what she is going to discuss on that day. She writes these on the blackboard for easy reference.

Students are expected to read and come for their classes everyday (refer # 167). They are expected to mark the important points and write out their doubts and come. Before the educator starts her class they can tell her the doubts or problems. She keeps them in mind and deals with them as the class proceeds.

Educators are expected to write on the blackboard in points the topics being covered while teaching.

Once the topic is over the educator in brief revises all the points covered in the class.

In her next class the educator asks doubts if any, on the previous class topic covered and puts them on the board and during discussions addresses these points for complete understanding of the subject.

169. Remedials

In JS remedial classes are held in subjects of Maths, English and Hindi. The remedials are held within the school hours during activity or PE periods.

Remedials in JS are usually from mid-July after observing the students for one and a half months. One period, for e.g. one period of PE from the five allotted to a class per week is taken. A remedial class of 25 – 30 minutes is held.

In MS, remedial classes are taken for the basic subjects of Maths and English. After the mid-term exams, a list of students weak in English and/or Maths is prepared. Classes are held thereafter, for such students, twice a week, for one hour each.

Maths classes are held in the Sports period, from 8:40 am to 9:40 am and the English classes are held in the Activities period, from 3:15 pm to 4.00 pm. Students are a mixed group from all the sections of one class. The group is small and the educator is able to give individual attention to each child. Remedial syllabus is a combination of whole years' topics where the students face maximum difficulties. Worksheets are given to the students as homework. These worksheets reinforce the basics taught in the remedial class.

Educators are not allowed to take private tuition whether it is for Eklavya students or others. Students are not allowed to take tuitions - from Eklavya educators or others. Eklavya believes that the best tuition is for parents and educators to work together with the child.

This policy has a positive side-effect as it increases the educator's accountability towards her students. She is aware that she is the person whom the students can fall back upon in case of difficulty, so her knowledge in the subject and her method of teaching needs to be of high quality. She also knows while teaching in her regular classes that the workload of the remedials will fall on her only, so might as well try to do it right the first time !

Remedial classes continue until two weeks ahead of the Final Exams in the end of March.

170. Report Cards

Report Cards are prepared and given to students (PS, JS, MS, and SS) twice a year corresponding with the two term system of the school. The report card reflects the holistic progress of the student. The various aspects of his involvement e.g. sports, activities, work habits, and values are appreciated in the report card.

In PS it is remark based. The skills like numeracy and language along with developmental areas like cognitive, motor, emotional etc are subdivided into subskills and the child's readiness is reflected.

In JS, Class 1 and 2 have a similar system like PS, as there are no exams. Some more areas are added on as per the level. Class 3 and 4 have grades in the report card which is a total of the Mid Term and End Term exams along with class work and home work marks, projects and orals.

In MS and SS the Report Card is given along with a Mark Sheet. Positive feedback and motivation is the essence of all the report cards where the focus is more on "I Can" with a reminder on areas which need more hard work.

In JS we faced a problem like the one mentioned in Sari # 17. As the report card had a scope for extensive remarks some educators found it difficult to frame it the way it should be. Another aspect was that each point e.g. Value was further subdivided into finer aspects and that really made remarks quite unnecessary.

To help the educators we made a Remark Bank which was a compilation of many remarks in all the areas. So an educator had to go over it and find the one which suited the student. But it did not give the educator the satisfaction of writing her own remark for her student. She was rather forced to choose a remark written by others. We brainstormed once again and it is then that we decided that there was actually no need to write a remark for everything as the subdivisions were self explanatory. So we decided to have only one general remark which helped the educator to sum up her student.

We have been following the revised Report Card for the last 2 academic years in JS and the results have been satisfactory without compromising on anything important.

If anyone wishes to have a look at the PS, MS or SS report card then do mail us.

171. Resources - Cds, Posters, Models and Statues

The libraries of each school have many cds that are related to the subjects taught there. There are also cds of movies, music, cartoons and science and literature documentaries. All these cds are numbered and kept in drawers in the library. A student or educator can issue these cds and show them in the appropriate class when doing that portion of the syllabus. There are about 2300 cds distributed in various libraries.

Movies are shown to students of each class atleast once a month. New movies are continuously added for students and educators. Many films and movies are used during the Diwali and summer HRD programmes designed for educators.

There are about 600 framed posters and paintings all over the campus in various buildings. Besides these each library contains various posters in all subjects especially geography, history, all the sciences, art and architecture.

There are numerous statues and models in the cupboards for display in all schools. These models are on the rotation of the earth, statues of Greek Gods like Horus and Nefertiti, philosophers like Aristotle and Plato, The Colossus of Rhodes the amphitheatre in Rome, Busts of Shivaji and Gautam Buddha to name a few. Educators point these out to students when they find mention in the syllabus.

172. Rotation of duties - Housekeeping ladies, Drivers & Conductors

A person doing the same job in the same place day-in and day-out without any change gets bored. After a point of time the job is monotonous. For e.g. a housekeeping lady has to clean the same building, same area everyday for years together. A driver or conductor drives the same bus on the same route every year. These jobs are not like corporate ones and there is no chance of growth, in terms of promotion or scope. For e.g. a salesman of an area can become a sales manager of a city, then a zone and then a state and maybe the country. And later add on two- three countries.

In a school this is not possible. Also the place of work is the same. We have three housekeeping ladies working in each school – PS, JS, MS & SS. Also we have two each as spare and in the crèche and one for the gym. These ladies work in the same place for years. So we proposed to them a change. The Principal of each school will choose one lady from their schools to remain with them the coming year and one for the creche and all others will rotate by a draw of lots. This was well received. Chits were made. Two chits each of PS, JS, MS, SS and spare and one each for gym and the crèche. The ladies picked the chits and each went to the school/area on her chit. If a lady drew a chit of the same place where she was working the previous year then she was mutually rotated with another who was in the same situation.

This has worked out very well. The housekeeping ladies have adjusted well. They meet and see a new lot of students of different age groups. The educators and Principal they work with is different. They enjoy the change and all initial apprehensions of adjustment and work melt away in a few weeks. Also the educators and the Principal ensure that these ladies quickly learn and adjust to the new routine.

We do the same for drivers and conductors also. Only here we go a little slow since it involves a new route and a new set of students. In the first year the drivers on each bus and route change and the conductors remain the same on a given bus and route. In the next year the conductors of the bus and route change and the drivers remain the same. So a driver or a conductor does a particular route of a given bus continuously for two years.

173. School Bus - Best Driver- Conductor Team of the month

Eklavya School has its own fleet of 17 buses that bring students and educators to school everyday and takes them back. To run these buses about 20 drivers and 20 conductors are employed by the school.

These people do their job with amazing diligence and sincerity and are often described as the 'Lifeline of Eklavya'. To motivate and encourage as well as recognize their contribution to the day-to-day smooth functioning of the school, a 'Best Driver and Conductor of the Month Award' has been instituted. This award is given away every month in the Senior School Assembly.

Educators fill out a form every month for the driver and conductor of the bus they travel on. The form contains parameters for which educators fill out the marks. These include:

- Courtesy (out of 15)
- Neatness (5)
- Dealing with students and educators(15)
- Knowing students by face(5)
- Quality of driving(15)
- Maintenance of bus(10)
- Attendance and regularity(10)
- Initiative in participation of other activities of the school(5)
- Dignity of labour(10).

Educators award out of 90 and the Admin Department awards the remaining 10 on parameters of relations with conductor/driver and co drivers and flexibility in changing situations.

These marks are then added and the driver-conductor team with the highest score is awarded a badge.

No money is given as an award.

Drivers, conductors and housekeeping staff are given an attendance incentive every month as follows –

	Driver & Conductor	Housekeeping
Zero absenteeism -	Rs.250	Rs.150
One day absent -	Rs.100	Rs. 50
Two days absent -	Nil	Nil

174. School Bus - Grills on bus windows

All the Eklavya School buses have grills on the windows. Students from Nursery to 12 travel on the buses everyday. The buses are also used for all the nature camps and visits throughout the academic year.

The grills prevent the students from putting their hands out of the windows. It also does not allow anything thrown from outside to enter the bus and hurt the children.

175. School Bus – Our own & not on contract.

Eklavya owns all the School buses. We do not ever hire buses on contract.

All the drivers and conductors are employees of Eklavya School, Ahmedabad.

There is a big advantage to the above two practices. Since the buses belong to us we are able to manage all our visits, nature camps, outings, etc, as per our need and convenience.

The fuel and maintenance of these vehicles is also Eklavya's responsibility and therefore we are able to monitor and manage our expenses well.

Also we are independent of the vagaries of the bus contractor. Our buses start on time, reach each stop on time, the drivers and conductors know all the students traveling on their bus and also the person who comes to pick-up or drop the child to the bus stop, the driver drives the bus at our stipulated safe speed and always treats the students and educators with deference and respect.

Nobody other than students, educators, house-keeping ladies and admin staff of the school is allowed to travel by the school bus. A driver cannot give a lift to anybody – even if he is a close relative – like wife or child – without the permission of the transport manager. Drivers and conductors face strict action and penalty if they violate this rule. They also never leave the bus un- attended when it is waiting for students to board from the first stop.

All these precautions ensure the smooth functioning of the school and safety of the students. This is only possible because we have our own buses and employ all the drivers and conductors.

Once the drivers and conductors reach school at 9.00 am they freshen up and then help in the upkeep of the school campus and garden. They clean their bus, water the lawns, plants and trees, sweep the roads clean and help in small day-to-day admin jobs like putting up tents for night-outs, moving and arranging furniture, etc. They do these jobs from 9.15 to 12 noon. Then they have lunch and rest for some time before starting the 1.10 pm trip taking PS and JS students home.

Since we use our own buses for all visits and nature camps our drivers and conductors are of great help to the educators accompanying the students to the trip. They line up students, help with the luggage, serve food and do many odd jobs on a trip. In fact they are so much part of the Eklavya family that they are called 'driver uncle' and 'conductor uncle' by the students.

176. School Bus - Travelling only by school bus

All students and educators travel to and from school by the School Bus.

We have about 15 routes covering a specific area that is about ¼th of the city. Since we restrict the time travelled by students on the bus to 30 minutes, we do not have any routes beyond a certain point. Parents who live beyond this have to drop their children to the nearest bus stop. We normally discourage students living too far away to take admission in Eklavya since we do not want students to commute for a long time.

In addition, when students come from a geographically dense area they can do many things together – come together for projects, study in the evenings or on holidays; mothers can car-pool for Mother's Workshops thus saving Global Warming.

Travelling by bus is essentially to ensure that –

- Everybody reaches on time.
- Travel time by the bus is a maximum of 30 minutes from the first stop. Students sit with each other and interact. Students of various classes come together. The smaller ones learn a lot from the bigger students. The elder ones are sensitized to the needs of the young ones and look after them. A lot of social and academic interaction and sharing happens on the bus.
- There is no discrepancy in the mode of transport. Students do not come in cars to school. There is no comparison of type of car, etc and uniformity is maintained
- Entry of unwanted people into the campus is restricted. Since everybody who has to be there comes on the bus, any other vehicle on campus without permission is immediately noticed and attended to.
- Educators travel on the bus. This ensures a certain amount of discipline on the bus.

If children miss the school bus, they are not allowed to come in their private vehicle. If at all the parents insist on dropping them, they are sent back.

Each bus has 62 seats including one for the driver and conductor. No bus travels without a conductor. We also have three spare buses and three spare drivers and conductors. All buses have grills on the outside of the windows.

177. School Diary

In the beginning of each academic year, every student is given a school diary that contains information about the academic year and school events. There are date-wise pages where the student notes down his daily homework. Each school has its own diary, which is designed by the educators of the respective school keeping in mind the need of the students. A diary committee is formed comprising of three to four educators who select a particular theme every year and design the diary accordingly.

The first few pages of the diary are as follows:

- My Page (a page for the child to fill in his basic information)
- Events of the Year (a page that contains dates of the camp, night out, holidays and other events to be held throughout the year)
- Cheating policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Evaluation Pattern for the academic year (dates and weightage of marks of various exams to be held during the year).

The last few pages contain a page for personal directory, Parents Educator Communication Pages (place for parents and educators to communicate with each other regarding small but important information/events about the child) and a page to write the timetable.

In between these are lined pages with the date written in a corner. Each page has 3 days and so one week is two pages. The student writes every day's homework and other points on these pages. The class teacher signs the diary everyday. A thought or saying is written on the top of each page. At the bottom of each page is a snippet of facts, information, puzzles or riddles.

Depending on the need and suitability of the age group, fun-filled filler pages are added keeping in mind the central theme that has been decided for the year.

The JS diary has more fun -filled pages with lots of activities and brain teasers.

The MS diary has English grammar rules, Multiplication tables, facts and puzzles, tongue twisters, riddles in the languages taught in school and interesting information about people around the world.

At the end of the lines for one day of the week a sub heading with 'good deed for the day' is given.

Good deed of the day:

This is to motivate students to consciously do a good deed and understand that a day has gone in vain if it has nothing worthy to be mentioned as a good deed. Many students take this seriously and write a good deed at the end of the day and their parents also have a role to play in supporting and nurturing the school's views. But there are some who escape this.

There are many funny anecdotes about the good deeds. One educator whose son is studying in our school was checking her son's diary at the end of the day. She was quite surprised when she read in his good deed done that he had given glucose water to his dadi. She felt guilty of not being aware of it and asked her mother - in- law. The grandmother said that last afternoon as she rested after cleaning the table the grandson came running and forced her to drink glucose water as he wanted to mention it in the diary. He insisted that the need was mutual, for her energy and for him a different and effective good deed.

One educator had gone for a Home Visit (refer # 94) and the student gave her a glass of water. The father chipped in that she had got her good deed for the day!

One old student once said- in a particular Sir's class they would disturb the setting of the furniture and when sir would remark that the class was not well arranged all of them would volunteer to arrange it thus earning their good deeds.

So much for good deeds. But we believe *aise mazaak mein aur shararat ke saath bhi good deed karne ki aadat padjati hai* and it becomes a habit. So good deeds continue their triumphant march across Eklavya reminding us educators that it takes a lot of perseverance to instill good habits in students

SS diary is more like a planner with filler pages on achievers, yoga, time management, etc. The idea is to make it as attractive as possible so that the child puts it to maximum use.

178. School Pets- Leo, Tortoise, Aquarium

Eklavya tries to sensitize children towards animals and their upkeep in many ways. One of these ways is to keep pets in the school.

PS and JS have aquariums. Students love to see colourful fishes. They identify and give names to them and observe their movements and eating habits.

Tortoises are kept in the JS in a lawn which is an extension of the library. The students hold them and feed them during the breaks. They observe the kinds of food they eat and also sometimes bring salad for them from home.

Leo is the school dog (golden male Labrador). He came to school when he was two months old and students have seen him grow. Leo moves around the School campus and enjoys being with the students.

Pets are considered to be therapeutic and children identify with them, talk to them and play with them in a non-threatening situation.

179. Science Labs - JS, MS and SS

The JS, MS and SS buildings each have Science Labs. The JS Lab is a General Science Lab. The MS Lab is one Lab but has equipment and apparatus for individual experiments in Physics, Chemistry and Biology. The SS has three labs – one each for Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Each Lab is equipped for conducting Practicals and Projects in the respective subjects.

179.1 JS Science Lab

Children in the JS are introduced to practical science related activities in the Science lab. It is here that children learn to make the related link between theory and practical. The thematic activities done here later take the concrete form of practical classes in MS. Children either conduct the experiments alone, in pairs or in groups of three to consolidate and internalize the learning. The educator gives a demonstration and then supervises the student's working.

The equipments are not kept under lock and key and even children of class 1 are encouraged to handle glass beakers and petri-dishes. They learn to handle the apparatus, take proper care of it, demonstrate practical skills and develop a scientific attitude.

Each section is allocated a weekly science lab period. The educators prepare a list of science lab activities to be done in the entire year while mapping the curriculum. However the activities are not restricted to text books only but the net and other books are also referred to find out more related activities. Children are also encouraged to bring their own experiments.

The lab is well equipped with necessary apparatus as per the levels of the class. Soft boards on the wall have posters and charts prepared by the children which are displayed. Shelves are there on which children keep the models prepared by them. Throughout the week this room is a hub of activities.

The science lab also has a collection of animals and plants preserved in glass bottles, like the Hermit Crab, Bat, Turtle, Pitcher Plant etc. Children find it fascinating to look at these specimens and are often heard remarking, "Is this real?"

After the experiments are performed a write up with the illustration is recorded in their Theme note book. The format is as follows:

Activity no
What I need
What I did
What I saw
What I learnt
Drawing
Was it fun? Why?

179.2 MS Science Lab

The MS Science Lab is structured to help students perform experiments in all the three sciences besides General Science. It also has a LCD Projector and Screen on which students are shown curriculum related films.

Each class has a Lab period once in 15 days. This is quite a timetabling exercise and planning has to be done in the beginning of the year to assign weeks for each of these classes.

A typical timetable for the use of the lab will show occupancy of 20 to 25 periods per week out of 40. (See Lab Timetable below). In the remaining empty period slots the lab is used to show students films related to their curriculum in the subjects of Science as well as History, Geography, Hindi and English Literature.

179.3 SS Science Labs

The SS has three labs. The Physics Lab on the Ground Floor, the Biology Lab on the 1st floor and the Chemistry Lab on the 2nd floor. The Labs are one above the other and are looked after by one Lab Assistant.

Each Lab has equipment and apparatus required for the practical and Project work from classes 9 to 12.

Students take up many other projects during the year like the Green House project, Desalination Plant, Solar cooker – difference in heating using a box solar cooker and a parabolic screen one and Collection of Insect specimens in and around Eklavya.

The aim of is to make students environmentally sensitive and capable of translating theory from the EVS text to real life projects.

Some projects taken up are –

Solar Cooking

Eklavya has purchased a Flat-Plate-Solar-Cooker (Rs 1200) and a Parabolic-Dish-Solar-Cooker (Rs 3700). The objective is to fill the students with enthusiasm for solar cooking - in harmony with nature. Many people say that solar cooking is not to be taken seriously. But countries like Israel have shown the way by harnessing a substantial percentage of their national energy requirements through solar energy. The demonstration in the garden is enough to show the incredible potential which exists.

Solar lights on the School Campus – There are four solar lights on the campus that are used for lighting at night. These lights have a solar charger at the top that gets charged during the day and then the lights are switched on at night. It is a good example of renewable source of energy on the campus.

Green House

The students of class 11 take up a green house project every year in the months from November to January. The greenhouse works by trapping heat from the sun using glass panels or plastic sheets so as to allow the light to enter and prevent the heat to escape. The class works in groups. One group studies the growth of potted plants like Lady Finger, Cabbage, Croton and Chrysanthemum in a normal external environment. Another group studies the same plants as a controlled group inside the Green House. They regulate the amount of water measure growth, flowering and time of fruit development. The two groups then do a comparative study involving growth, flowering, and fruiting in the external and green house environments respectively. The average minimum and maximum temperatures in the green house are 18°C and 43°C respectively.

Solar Desalination

The project aims at understanding the process of obtaining pure water from sea water under the effects of heat, evaporation and condensation. The saline water is placed in a tray covered by a triangular frame fit with a plastic sheet. Salt is obtained as residue. Students of class 5 to 12 and all educators were able to differentiate between the salt water and the pure water.

180. Science Park

There is Science Park of 29 items spread all over the Eklavya Campus (we had an option to put all the items together, make a boundary, put a gate with a lock, and a board saying “ Science Park “ but we decided against it. So now all the items are spread out, they are not locked; children play with them often not knowing the principle of science behind it!)

The park consists of total 29 gadgets based on various scientific principles *disguised as games*. Students from class 1 onwards - daily play with these and later when they are in higher classes they discover the principle of science behind it! Yes, science is in everyday life.

Each game has a board besides it that explains in short the scientific principle behind the game and how it demonstrates that. Educators take their students to these games during their regular teaching period to make concept learning quick, interesting and easy.

Some of the items are made in Eklavya itself while some are ordered from: M/s Ankidyne No.36, I Main Road, New Colony, Chromepet, Chennai – 600 044. Website: www.ankidyne.com

The various games are:

1. **3D Pendulum** - The varying intensity of light allowed to enter the eyes creates an illusion that is impossible to believe.
2. **Centrifugal Force** - When the rotor in the device is revolved, a person is thrown out of the seat. This gives an idea about the force acting over any particle that revolves about an axis i.e. centrifugal force.
3. **Cycloid Path** - The model demonstrates the fact that there is gaining of acceleration due to gravity in two different paths.
4. **Double ended Cone** – Explains that the equilibrium of any object is governed by its centre of gravity
5. **Friction of Speed** - The fact that friction has a hold on the speed of a moving object is explained here by varying frictional force due to different textures of the surface exerted on a rolling ball.
6. **Loop the Loop** - This game describes the phenomenon of a particle moving in a circular path acted upon by a centrifugal force. This is explained here with a ball moving in a circular path against gravitational force.

7. **Newton's Third Law of Motion** - This model can be used effectively to demonstrate that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.
8. **Periodic Table** - This innovative design of the periodic table is made of wood. Students can turn the wooden cube and observe many aspects of the element like molecular weight, atomic number, structure, symbol, physical and chemical properties, radioactivity, etc.
9. **Wave Motion** - A wave motion is created with this device. The energy transfer from one point to another and from nodes to antinodes is demonstrated clearly.
10. **World Time** - The device gives the change in local time of every country in the world with reference to the latitude of that country.
11. **How friction helps** - Equal weights can be lifted and the difference felt due to varying frictional force.
12. **Angular Momentum** - This fun filled device explains the fact that when the mass concentrated at the center is more, the angular momentum and velocity is more. A simple single merry-go-round explains this.
13. **Archimedes screw** - This device discovered by Archimedes is modeled here to demonstrate how water from a lower end can be fetched to the upper end.
14. **Sine Wave** - This device demonstrates an idea about the potential and kinetic energy acting on a ball released at the beginning of a sine wave path.
15. **Pulley and Pulley Blocks** - The leverage (mechanical advantage) obtained by coupling number of pulleys is explained.
16. **Parabolic Dishes** - An effective method to teach the property of reflection of sound waves.
17. **Gear Train** - The multiplication of speed or an increase in torque within any mechanism is achieved by a gear wheel. The phenomenon is explained by the gear train.
18. **Gear, belt and chain drive** – Power transmitted from one axis to another is explained using gears, belts and chains.
19. **Lissajou's Figure** - The resultant of two simple harmonic motions is explained here. Oscillating the funnel provided can make a pattern of your choice.
20. **Principle of Lever** - The mechanical advantage gained through a first order lever is illustrated by varying fulcrum distance from weight.
21. **The Coupled Swing** - Working of this swing is based on the principle of Resonance. Resonance, energy transfer and perpetual motion are explained here.

22. **Circus of Energy** – With a combination of paths explains potential energy, centrifugal force, transformation of energy from one form to another and work done by spending energy.
23. **Projectile** – this gadget explains the path taken by a trajectory.
24. **Height vs. Head** – The relationship between the height and pressure of a liquid filled in a vessel or container is explained here.
25. **Musical Tubes** – The pitch of any vibrating material is inversely proportional to the length of the vibrating string. This is how sounds of varying pitch are produced in musical instruments.
26. **Lift yourself** - An interactive play model where you can sit on a chair and lift yourself easily against gravity using the mechanical advantage gained through a pulley system.
27. **Bernoulli's Principle** – Is demonstrated using an ordinary vacuum cleaner turned to blower. When switched on a ball dances on the stream of air that comes out.
28. **Friction and Shape** - Sliding frictions depends on the shape of the object. A wooden box when inclined provides the same friction to differently shaped objects of the same material and weight (like a sphere, solid square, triangle, cylinder, cone, etc.) shows that sliding friction depends on the shape of the object.
29. **Shake Hands with yourself** – Two mirrors 5' in height and 4' in width are placed at right angles to each other. Laterally inverted images give an impression that you are shaking hands with yourself when you stand in the centre and extend your right hand towards the mirror!

181. Scope File

The SCOPE file is a file having the Student's Continuous Overall Performance Evaluation details from the year the student joins the school until she leaves.

The Scope file is a gateway through which a Class Teacher knows a student better. It gives complete information regarding her overall performance through various years of her school.

It contains the:

- Home visit form of every year. (refer # 94)
- Photo-card and Family-photo-card having her photographs of each year. These are very helpful when we make the Yearbook (refer # 217) in class 12.
- Report cards and Mark-sheets showing her academic performance through the years.
- Anecdotes written by the class teacher (refer # 16).
- Parents' special behaviour sheet

The Scope file is handed over from class teacher to class teacher every year, along with a personal briefing.

- Some pages of the SCOPE File are destroyed every academic year and replaced with freshly filled in ones. E.g. Medical Form.

182. Scope File – Children and Family Photo Record Sheet

Passport size Photographs of all the students are collected every year by the class teachers. These photos are pasted on the record sheet kept in the Scope File (refer # 181). These photographs are also scanned and placed in the Year book (refer # 217).

This is an interesting record as it gives a record of how the child looked when she entered school and how she has grown during the years.

Similarly the family photo is also collected every year and placed in the record Sheet. The latest family photo is also scanned and kept in the database for further reference.

183. Scouts and Guides

Bharat Scouts and Guides is a very important activity that teaches students discipline and numerous life skills. It is part of the curriculum from class 3 onwards.

For class 3 and 4, student scouts group are called Cubs (boys) and Bulbuls (girls). From class 5 onwards, students are divided into groups and are named after different patrols like cat, fox, horse, cuckoo and lion.

We give a lot of importance to Scouts and Guides and this activity is of special significance in Eklavya. On Independence Day and Republic Day we hoist the Scout Flag, National Flag and the School Flag. In MS scouts is according to the following schedule –

Class 5 – Monday

Class 6 – Wednesday

Class 7 – Thursday

Class 8 - Friday

The School uniform is so designed that too many uniform changes through the day are avoided. Students wear the Scout shirt as part of their uniform for the whole day when they have a scout's period. The shirt is the scout's shirt and they wear it over the School pant to avoid too many uniform changes. All other accessories are worn before the scouts period.

Students are trained to face different situations in life through scouts camps, parades, activities, games and hikes. Learning of Knots and Morse code is given special attention.

Students are also taught about service to community through *Kar Seva*, which is done inside the school campus and also in public places.

Scouts and Guides Activity encourage children to develop themselves as individuals, not only mentally and physically but also to develop the sense of service.

Students do all the badges as follows –

Pravesh – Class 5

Pratham Sopan – Class 6

Dwitiya Sopan – Class 7

Tritiya Sopan – Class 8

Rajya Puraskar – class 9

Rashtrapati Puraskar (President's Scout) – class 11

Given below is a table showing number of students appeared for and awarded the Rajya and Rashtrapati Scouts and Guides Badge.

Sr.No.	Year	Rajya Puraskar	Rashtrapati Puraskar
1.	2003 – 2004	15	--
2.	2004 – 2005	17	--
3.	2005 – 2006	39	4
4.	2006 – 2007	20	12
5.	2007 - 2008	44	8
6.	2008 - 2009	29	10

184. Seminars for students

On every Tuesday the SS organises a seminar period of about 45 minutes where students meet and interact with persons from various fields and professions like Journalism, Scientists, Priests, Army Officers, Doctors, Radio Jockey, Disc Jockey, Astronauts etc. The resource person makes a presentation or discusses about his life for about 20 minutes. Then the forum is thrown open for a Question-Answer session. The interaction with the faculty is an essential part of this seminar. In this way students get information and awareness regarding various fields.

The main impact of these seminars is that when students ask the professionals how they are successful in their chosen careers, each one of them has more or less the same answer – ‘By persistent hard work and effort.’ Students are at this point of time looking for guidance and when they hear successful people say that ‘Hard Work’ is the only road to success they are reassured that they are on the right path.

Students are also encouraged to conduct the seminar on topics of their own interest. Some of the in-house seminars conducted by the students were Evolution of Cars, Pyramids of Egypt, Aliens, and Fighter Planes.

185. Separate rack for shoes

In Eklavya, the students wear black leather shoes as uniform from home and change over to the sport shoes in school during their respective sports period 7.25 am for MS and 3.40 pm for SS.

So each classroom has separate racks for shoes for the students. The sticker with the name of the child is stuck on each rack. Students leave their sports shoes in the school itself.

They write their names on the shoes with a permanent marker so that they can be identified if they are lost.

186. Shankh Blowing

In Indian mythology, blowing the *shankh* (conch shell) is regarded as a sacred and very auspicious way of initiating anything. It is a major article of prayer.

In Eklavya, all the school assemblies and functions start with blowing of *shankh*. About ten students across JS, MS and SS are now trained to blow the *shankh* altogether in unison. This *shankh naad* gives a harmonious and sonorous start to all functions.

The blowing of a conch shell is said to enhance the positive psychological vibrations such as courage, determination, hope, optimism, and willpower in the blower as well as those around him. It brings in the serenity in the environment and protects from evil effects. It also strengthens the muscles due to *pranayic* exercise while blowing.

To encourage the students to pursue this activity, competitions are also held.

Two or three *shankhs* are kept in an open place in the library so that students can practice during the breaks. There is no restriction for students. They can just pick it up and practice in any of the breaks. Some children are very good and are able to blow the conch consistently and well for a long period. These students also then get a chance to blow the *shankh* during school functions which parents and outsiders attend.

187. Shloka Chanting

In Eklavya, everyday the morning assembly begins with the blowing of *shankh* thrice which is followed by the chanting of *sholkas*. The *sholkas* are related to God or based on values like hard work, responsibility, love, caring, discipline etc.

Some *sholkas* are taken from the *Bhagwad Gita*. The *sholkas* are decided by the Assembly Committee and change every year. *Sholkas* help students to improve their pronunciation. By chanting the *sholkas* students gain meditating power and can concentrate on studies. During chanting everyone is expected to sit in a straight posture with palm open towards the sky. This helps them to absorb energy from nature and surroundings. Another well-known purpose of chanting is that it creates an auspicious surrounding against the negatives or noises that may disturb or upset our mind. *Sholkas* are considered to create an auspicious beginning for any task that we undertake. They are followed by chanting of “ॐ” thrice.

Some of the famous *sholkas* are:

ॐ भूर्भुवः स्वः; शं नो मित्रः; सरस्वती वंदना ; या कुन्देन्दू

In MS students choose and attend the *Shloka* Chanting Club. Students learn *shlokas* from the scriptures and chant them together for 40 minutes.

The *shlokas* selected are रुद्राष्टकम् (a part of *Ramacharitmanas*), गोपीजन वल्लभाष्टका (a part of *Shri Vallabhacharya*).

Some of the *shlokas* are written by the Sanskrit Educators highlighting the relationship between a ‘Guru’ and a ‘Shishya’.

These students are then given opportunities to chant on various occasions like Annual Prize-Giving and Investiture Ceremony, Eklavya Excellent Educator Awards (refer # 57). Most of the celebrations in Eklavya begin with *shloka* chanting where these students play a leading role. An audio cassette titled *Shravaneeyam* I and II (refer # 158), composed and sung by students and educators of Eklavya has been released, a copy of which is given to each student.

188. Sick Room

In JS when children fall ill in school, we have a facility of two beds in the library where they can lie down. The librarian is always there and able to take care and give attention to such children. The library is centrally located and so it is possible for the class teacher to supervise the child. Children keep coming and going out of the library the whole day for their classes and this keeps the atmosphere lively.

In MS girls start menstruating and at times need to lie down and rest. So we have a separate room called the 'Refresh and Recharge Room'. It has two beds, pillows and blankets for the use of students who are not well. Some magazines and books are also kept. A first-aid box with facility like crepe bandage is available. General medicines for fever, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach ache are with the librarian, who is also in-charge of this room.

In SS two beds are kept in the *Taleem* Room (A Puzzle-cum-Activity Room). The room is centrally located on the Ground Floor so that it is possible to monitor the student who is sick.

In case the child feels sick, she is sent to the sick room for a period or two. The class teacher is informed and she monitors the child's health.

The room chosen for this purpose is well ventilated, sunny and comfortable. It is always centrally located so that children do not feel isolated.

However, use of sick room is not encouraged for longer periods. In case of prolonged ill health, the child is sent home by an earlier bus or school van after informing the parents on telephone.

The room is always kept clean. The bed sheets, pillow covers and blankets are washed regularly.

189. Small Blackboards for children

There are two blackboards in every classroom in the PS and JS. The big blackboard is a teaching aid for the educator while the smaller one which is hung at a lower height is for the children.

Children are free to write and draw whatever they want on the board. The mere scribbling of the Nursery children slowly transforms to patterns and letters of the alphabet and simple stick figures in JKg and SKg. This then comes out as reflection of what has been taught in the JS.

Children play teacher-teacher, write messages and even their complaints on these boards. It is a delight to read what is written. A lot of doodling is done which is often transformed into interesting patterns.

Peer learning and incidental learning takes place when children write on these boards. If the educator notices something on the board that she needs to address she simply writes the answer with another coloured chalk. If she sees any mistake then the same approach is taken and she brings it to the notice of the children and makes it a learning experience for them.

This blackboard is a space which belongs to the children to express themselves. It makes the day for the class teacher to enter the class and read, "We are waiting for you Ma'am."

This is an aid which works very effectively in the junior classes to help children to give vent to their creativity, thoughts and expressions.

190. Softboards decorated as per season, festivals

Softboard is a media in Eklavya for giving information, exchanging views and sharing ideas with other educators and students. Soft boards therefore form an important part of the school - in the classroom as well as outside.

Each class in the school has softboards that are decorated by the class teacher during the summer break and *Diwali* break. There is one softboard that permanently displays the photo chart of the students of that class, timetable, student-wise list of activities and sports the students will do during the year and the Self Assessment Charts that students fill in everyday indicating whether homework is complete, read and come or not, uniform, etc.

During the year, students maintain the softboard and display their project work, art work etc.

The things to keep in mind during softboard management is –

- Material on the boards must change with regular frequency (fortnightly or weekly)
- If devoted to a particular subject say careers, then admission notices should be put up. Brochures about various colleges like AFMC or IIT can be displayed.
- Notices to students and educators, about festivals, filler weeks, and activity and sports competitions in the week must be displayed.
- The softboard must be maintained well. In monsoon, it absorbs moisture and bends. Also material must be pinned properly so that the charts and papers do not come off and fly about here and there.

A softboard in the corridor is divided into various parts.

Typically in MS this is how it is done. It has a “Hello” board, which is used to display the ongoing and forthcoming events. The information of Exam date-sheet, sports and activity competitions and daily assembly is put up.

Next board has a display - something interesting from literature of famous sayings of writers, philosophers, and thinkers.

A “Festival” board has colourful paintings depicting the cultural aspect of the festival. Short stories, articles, and poems are also exhibited.

Students work is displayed in the students' corner. It contains paintings and poems by them.

"Sports" area displays current sports events, information on sports personalities and forthcoming event charts like "Football World Cup Schedule."

"Luminous Life" board celebrates the birthdays of scientists, educationists, and leaders.

In JS there is a big Theme board. This is displayed as per festivals – e.g. Christmas, New Year, Holi, etc. or as per theme – e.g. Monsoon, animals, etc.

Each class also has a softboard outside their class and it is their responsibility to do it up.

There is another softboard in the lobby titled 'Forthcoming attractions of the month'. This board has class-wise display of movies, field visits, presentation topics etc. for the month. So each student not only knows what is happening in his class but in the entire JS.

Softboard management is thus an important aspect of school and brings together the school as a community while providing day-to-day information.

191. Sports

'Everyday sports for one hour' is an important feature of Eklavya. We believe that it is essential for each child to be involved in some physical activity every day. Thus the time-table has been designed keeping this philosophy in mind. We never compromise on the sports period if the syllabus has to be rushed just before exams. Thus the sports period is very sacrosanct in Eklavya. JS, MS and SS have their own slots for sports as per their time-table.

In JS the students are exposed to various games like Kho-Kho, Kabbadi, Dodge Ball and Dog-and-the-Bone. They are also taught the skills of skating, walking on stilts and the hoopla. At this stage children learn basic rules regarding each game. Each class has five sports period in a week.

In MS students play sports for 45 minutes in the morning as soon as they reach school. Options given for Games are Volleyball, Basketball, Throw ball, Football and Yoga. A coach comes to school part time everyday for each game.

The basic idea behind having sports in the morning is that children of this age group are full of energy and hence playing an hour of sports right in the morning helps them to settle down well in the classroom for studying. They come in their house T-shirts and change into the school shirt / scout shirt at the end of sports. 15 minutes at the end of the sports period are allotted for this. There are special rooms for the girls to change and the boys are allotted rooms class-wise where they change.

SS students play an hour of sports everyday at the end of the day after completing their studies. The idea is that these adolescents are fresh in the morning to receive information packed classes. Through the day they get tired and exhausted and playing an hour at the end of the day helps give vent to frustrations and also leaves them refreshed when they reach home to once again get back to studies. In SS there is a gymnasium where students can exercise on various machines and maintain their fitness.

A student in MS or SS chooses one game out of above mentioned and pursues it throughout the year. The school organizes Inter House Sports competitions amongst the four houses of the school. School also awards certificates to the Winners and Runners Up team. Students also represent the school in various competitions at the Interschool, District and State levels. Eklavya also has some friendly matches with local schools.

192. Stage Backdrops and Props

Many cultural events like drama and talent evenings are held annually at Eklavya. As the school is divided into PS, JS, MS and SS there are 2 Talent Evenings and 3 Annual Plays (Refer Sari # 65 and 69)

An important part of these events are props and backdrops. They are designed and made by the students and educators. In MS and SS everyone does not wish to take part in the event itself but they like to work backstage, work on lights and sound or handle logistics. A team of students volunteer to prepare the props and backdrops. No readymade props are used in any of our cultural events. This group along with the three art educators brainstorm and prepare a list of props to be prepared and create time slots to get them ready. The precision with which this work goes on has to be seen to be believed. The teachers mainly facilitate the process and the students work on their own with full responsibility.

This is so because they have themselves volunteered for it and it gives them a chance to display their creativity. For the backdrop, mainly for the annual plays, the designing team of the parent company pitches in at times.

After the events are over the question arises what is to be done with them? It just cannot be dumped as they are made with a lot of care and love. Our gymnasium has a high ceiling and there is a problem with acoustics. Soft furnishings absorb sound so the backdrops are hung aesthetically to serve the dual purpose of display and absorbing the sound. It makes our gym look very colourful and artistic.

As the events in Eklavya are held in quick succession, in December and January many props are reused. After Euphoria, we have the Talent Evening and then comes the JS and SS play within two weeks. So the props are displayed in the gym and whoever needs them are free to take them and use it with or without modification. Similarly the new props made during the plays are used by the four houses during the inter house play competition of MS. Some props after being used for two or more years are not in a condition to be used and thus they are destroyed.

After all the events are over in January, two places are identified which have enough space for storing them. One of the places is an easily accessible one from where students can take the props to be used during their assembly programmes or any other celebration.

Whenever something is created there is a learning in the process but there is a greater learning in sharing the creativity. The props are made by students of the four houses and in MS Phoenix there are marks allotted for props but there is no feeling of ours and yours when it comes to sharing the props. So one can hear, "Look that is last year's Shraavan House tree that is used by Prahlad in their jungle" but all that is said in good humour.

Along with the finesse of the props, shines the spirit of sharing what you have with others that makes this aspect of our school so unique.

193. Students' Council

Eklavya has a Students' Council in existence since 1998. There came a time in the last few years when we thought that this important and already existing system should be brought into greater prominence. It comprises of Head-boy, Head-girl, and prefects. Later as the strength of the school increased a Deputy Head-boy and Deputy Head-girl were added.

The structure of the council is as follows –

1. Head-boy & Head-girl (nominated from Class 12)
2. Deputy Head-boy & Deputy Head-girl (nominated from class11)
3. Prefects – eight in number (two each - one boy & one girl – nominated from class 8, 9, 10 & 11.

The Council reports to the Vice-Principal on all issues before implementing decisions.

In the academic year 2008 2009 we had a few meetings but could not really define the role of this body. In 2009-10 the Council was constituted and given the responsibility of defining its role. They met and brainstormed on various duties and responsibilities the council would take up and made a half-hour presentation to the principals and a group of educators from various schools.

The presentation brought out their leadership initiative and demonstrated their ability to think through the entire working of the school before assigning themselves the duty. They discussed negative and positive points of all aspects and made out a charter for themselves. They also set a hierarchy which they assured will be strictly followed.

After this they set about discharging their duties and responsibility. They broadly defined their duties in three categories – Discipline, Events and Students issues.

Discipline included overall school discipline, school discipline during events, assembly checking of uniform, punishments, major punishment's discussion with Principal, Vice – principal and educators as and when required.

During events the council took the onus of the formation of student-teacher committees, planning of all details- venues, stage managing, and seating arrangements to be organized and involving students in the arrangements, making the success of the event their responsibility.

Student issues such as class discipline problems (if any!), complaints, suggestions, link between student- teacher bodies, bullying and cheating were taken up by the council.

Any student is free to approach any member of the Council at any time about any issue/ instructions/ comments/complaints/ suggestions

The Council meets once a month at a mutually convenient time, but can also meet as and when there is an event or issue that requires discussion before implementation. The Head-boy and Head-girl preside over all meetings and have an agenda. Prefects and deputies are free to add on or bring points of common interest to the meetings.

The Head-boy and Head-girl are in-charge of the school discipline, events such as inter-house activities and sports competitions, common day-to-day problems of students, house coordination during events, allotting specific duties to prefects daily and during school functions. They also assist and are part of discipline related punishments that are given to students from time to time.

The Council is assisted by class monitors (one in each section) who are appointed by the class teacher usually for a period of atleast one month or at the most for two months. They do not report to the council but will bring to notice an issue that requires intervention. Class monitors are responsible for the following aspects of classroom management – cleanliness, submissions, call teachers if class is unattended and class decorations (soft board, blackboard, etc.), Class issues will be solved by the class monitor along with respective class teachers. Council will not be involved unless asked.

Along with the Council the school also has a system of House-captains and Vice-captains. They are as follows –

1. House captains – one for each house, nominated from class 11.
2. House vice-captains – one for each house, nominated from class 8
3. House vice-captains – one for each house, nominated from class 4.

The jurisdictions of the Council and House Captains are separate. The Captains' responsibility is to ensure house discipline and that their respective houses participate in all competitions enthusiastically and win.

194. Student volunteers – ‘Happy to help’

The Student council in consultation with a coordinating educator constitutes a team of volunteers for each event that is to take place. Events like Janmashtami, Independence Day, Dusshera havan and Republic Day are handed over entirely for logistics’ management to the student council and the student volunteers.

For larger events announcements are done in MS and SS assemblies inviting students to volunteer to help in various events. Various areas are announced. E.g. for Euphoria the areas are – parking, amphitheatre discipline, helping PS and JS class teachers with make-up and looking after students, guiding parents, stage management, lights and sound management. Students give names to a council member appointed for this purpose who maybe a Prefect or Deputy Head-boy or girl. Then the Vice-Principal and the Head- boy and girl sit together and assign duties.

The student volunteers wear a ‘Happy to help’ badge which is a smiley with the caption. This helps the class teachers, students of PS and JS, educators, students of MS and SS and parents recognize them as people in charge of a certain aspect and respect their instructions and follow them.

We have realized that the student body is an extremely innovative and responsible team of workers who are able to coordinate well amongst themselves and execute events to near perfection. They have a system of keeping a tab over each other’s activities and ensuring smooth functioning along with maintaining discipline at all times. Students also respond well to their instructions as they tend to many times ‘switch-off’ when adults (educators or principal) give the same instruction.

‘Happy to help’ teams are a huge success in Eklavya. It fulfills to a great extent the education of students in learning to volunteer to fulfill responsibilities, take initiative, learn time management, deal with various discipline issues, handle unpleasant altercations and so much more. A whole new set of skills and attitudes are developed here which academics alone can never achieve.

195. Study skills class

Students in SS have one period per week called *Study Skills*.

It is mainly a class where students are taught how to study, manage time – especially before exams, make a reading schedule, concentrate and study, how to pay attention in the class among various exercises on how to take notes and how to read before a class so that maximum benefit of the teaching-learning process is gained. Through activities and worksheets they are encouraged honing the skills they already have and developing and learning new ones. Appropriate articles from magazines and newspapers are identified and given to the students to read.

The course also helps students to develop a positive approach towards study and learn good study habits. Often some counselling takes place.

Topics that are covered are –

1. Strategies for learning, Independent or Self Study
2. Note making styles
3. Group discussion
4. Decision making
5. Summarizing
6. Identifying resources
7. Why is school important
8. Use of language
9. Critical thinking
10. How to make oral presentations
11. Revision – What does it involve
12. Taking exams
13. Managing stress
14. Counselling

One example of worksheet and activities is given on the next page –

Example

This is a transparency used during the session on Why and How to make notes. It also highlights important points to keep in mind while making and organizing notes.

Transparency – Why Make Notes?

While Making Notes –

- Put your pen down so you won't be tempted to copy out of the book
- Read to answer your own questions.
- Identify and sum up main ideas
- Jot down one or two words to remind you
- Note real names and quotations exactly as they are written
- Leave space to add details later on .

Organize your notes –

- Use separate file for separate subjects
- Use file dividers for major topics
- Arrange ideas under headings or questions
- Label files and dividers correctly
- Number pages for easy re - filing
- Keep an updated contents page.

196. Table Test / Formula Test

In the beginning of the academic session every year, multiplication table tests are done from JS to SS for a period of about a month. Students learn the tables by rote and random sheets containing a fixed number of sums each are given to them – one per day. The aim of this exercise is to help students become quick at solving maths problems.

In JS students learn tables' upto15X10, in MS upto 16X16 and in SS upto20X20.

The sums are given thus –

CLASS	MARKS	NO. OF SUMS	TIME
1	20	20	10 mins
2	30	30	7 mins
3	50	50	5 mins
4	100	100	5 mins
5 & 6	100	100	5 mins
7 & 8	100	100	5 mins
9 to 12	100	100	5 mins

In MS and SS the table test consists of a format of 100 questions to be done in 5 minutes, thereby expecting the students to know them by heart and not to do it by multiplying.

It is continued till each child is able to secure 80% marks in these tests. To help the students become a master at these multiplication tables these are put in their diaries to help them memorise.

The entire purpose of this exercise is to 'exercise the mind'. If I want strong thigh muscles I have to do atleast 500 sit-ups everyday! If I want to exercise my mind I have to 1. memorise multiplication tables or poems and 2. Solve brain teasers.

In the process of doing this I also develop my will power. This is done by 'doing the things I do not like' and 'Not doing the things I like'. The spiritual mind is also developed by doing *Kar Seva*

Memorising these multiplication tables is important because when you memorise something it becomes your property and stays with you all your life. (refer Philosophical sari # 17)

197. Taleem Games (Teaching Learning Materials)

Taleem materials are Teaching Learning Materials disguised as games for children. They are made by Eklavya.

Taleem is a brand name registered by Eklavya. The T, L and M stand for Teaching, Learning and Materials respectively. We put an 'a' and an 'ee' to get *Taleem*!

They are not all original. Some are, while some are copied. For e.g. we saw an old book of Froebel (he experimented for 16 years and in 1837 made the first kindergarten, the word too was invented by him) which had his twenty 'gifts' (he designed 20 games for children to play and learn. Probably the first teaching learning materials systematically ever designed, these he called 'gifts'). We copied the gifts 3, 4, 5 and 6 which are now regularly used by JKg, SKg, class 1 and 2 children in Eklavya. They are very powerful tools to learn patterns, geometry, 3-D, and what not.

In the JS the TLMs are used as a part of the introductory lesson and later children play with them as the concept is being done which leads to reinforcement. Some of the very popular JS TLMs are Fraction Flip Chart and Circles, Place Value Card and Place Value Beads and Cubes.

In yet another book we saw a "binomial cube" and a "trinomial cube" which explains the formulae $(x+y)^2$ and $(x+y)^3$ and $(x+y+z)^3$ in a unique and dramatic fashion – the student will link the formula to an actual 3-D explanation, she will 'picturise' the formula, and of course, never then forget it !

One of our educators visited the London Science Museum and found a very nice gadget to demonstrate Bernoulli Principle, photos were taken, and later we made it in Eklavya!

The effort always is for the educators to think and create ways and means of how to convey a concept of physics, or maths, or geography to the student in an innovative and effective way. Some of these result in TLMs.

We have currently more than 300 TLMs in Eklavya.

198. Teakwood forest

Fifteen years ago when the land for setting up Eklavya was purchased it was decided to have a small forest.

We thought planting teak would be a nice option since it has lovely big leaves and offers good shade. Somebody then told us that teak does not grow in Ahmedabad. All other trees like the banyan, neem, peepul, gulmohar, garmalo, Borsali, etc. grow easily and are found in plentiful. We then decided to plant teakwood Today there are 560 teak trees that are about twelve years old.

The forest also has many medicinal plants – like amaranthus, tulsi, and adusi, fruit trees like chikoo, amla, guava, pomegranate and lemon and a vermiculture pit and the edge.

It has a road laid of rough kota stone, but otherwise it is very much like a forest.

Today it is home to nearly 1400 trees and a variety of birds and other fauna.

199. Third language

It is said the more languages a child learns at a younger age the greater is her mental development. In Eklavya, English is the medium of instruction and Hindi is the 2nd language taught that goes upto class 10. Apart from these two, children learn a 3rd language from classes 1 to class 8. They can choose from – Sanskrit, French and Japanese.

Research says that multilingual exposure in early life gives a more holistic development opportunity to children. Such children are all rounders, sober and well behaved. Take the case of a child born to a Tamilian father and a Marathi mother living in Gujarat. The child picks up Gujarati from friends at home and in school, studies English and Hindi and a third language in school. So she has an exposure to six languages.

The Sanskrit curriculum includes chanting of *shlokas*, songs, learning short stories and vocabulary development. The Japanese and French curriculum covers vocabulary development, conversation, songs.

Class 1 and 2 have two periods a week, while class 3 to 8 have three periods a week. In JS there is no written work in all the 3rd languages, the stress is on oral work and getting children familiar with the language. The evaluation is also oral, each term has 25 marks oral test and is taken 4 times. The written work starts from class 5.

An attempt is made to make the teaching of Third Language as interactive and as conversation based as possible.

Since Eklavya is a school in Gujarat many times the question arises as to why not offer Gujarati as a 3rd language? We were offering initially. Then we found that some Gujarati speaking students were opting for Gujarati as a 3rd language. What is taught is a lower level than what they know from exposure at home. Mother tongue is best picked up at home and not from a school that offers it as a 3rd language. We found out what other schools do and discovered that most schools do not offer mother tongue as a 3rd language for obvious reasons. So we removed Gujarati as 3rd language for Gujarati students and found that only one or two students were left. It was not then possible to offer the language.

We have many Gujarati parents who have returned to India from abroad. They want their children to learn Gujarati. But the level is so low that it is not a good course to teach and the expectation of exposure to culture is not met with.

200. Time Management in Functions

Eklavya strictly adheres to the timings of any function striving to remove any constraints wherever they exist.

There are different functions like Euphoria, Pheonix, Sports Day etc. which are celebrated on the school campus. The invitation to these functions along with the schedule is sent to parents much in advance.

All the programs start on the scheduled time. The function progresses as per the planning and ends on time.

Parents who are late by more than 10 minutes are not allowed to attend the function.

This ensures that parents who are on time do not end up waiting for the late parents. Also as these functions are of great importance to students who do not like to be disturbed. This also teaches students the value of time, an important learning for future citizens. What better way to teach it than practising what we preach.

All parents wait until the end of all programmes and functions held in Eklavya. If parents leave as soon as their child's programme is over there will be a small audience to cheer the students performing towards the end. Everybody has done a lot of *mehnat* for the function and this practice ensures equal encouragement and motivation for all participants.

201. Tradition of not giving flowers to guests

In Eklavya, we do not pluck and use flowers for decorations or presentations as life pervades in all living beings, be they plants or animals. Hence, they are regarded as sacred and their brief life is respected.

We instead gift a painting done by the students of Eklavya or a book.

'Give a book, not a bouquet' – This is our motto.

When we give flowers they last a day or two and are then mercilessly thrown away. A good example that demonstrates this is the day after a wedding reception. If one goes and sees the manner in which the flowers gifted to the couple and the wedding flower decorations are strewn about you will understand what we are talking about.

When you gift a book somebody is bound to read it – at home or a friend may borrow and read. Even if a book is stolen the only thing a thief can do with it is read it!

Unlike flowers, books do not have a shelf life or expiry date. They last a long time (a life time actually) and many people will end up reading it and benefitting from it. Inside the book one can write the date and to whom it was given to and by whom and for which function. So in a way a record is maintained forever. It is possible that after 20 years the great grandson reads the book and realises that his great grandfather was chief guest for a function in the same school where he is now studying!

Wonder why do people give flowers?

202. Training Programme for other schools

Eklavya School imparts training to teachers of other schools.

This training requires the visiting teachers to spend atleast a week to fifteen days in Eklavya.

Teachers could belong to any level – Nursery to class 12 and any subject.

Amongst the schools that have sent teachers to Eklavya are Nalanda International School - Baroda, Eklavya School - Jalandhar, Shishukunj International School - Indore, Central Tibetan School Administration and Satya Public School – Kakinada, to name a few.

The programme for the visiting teachers is chalked out in detail before they come to Eklavya. They are assigned the appropriate school – PS or JS for Primary School teachers and subjects in MS or SS for subject teachers. Each visiting teacher is given a mentor teacher in Eklavya. She essentially attends all classes of the mentor and a few more of other teachers.

They go through lesson plans, work sheets, books used for reference, question papers and all such academic material they may find useful. They also photocopy some material to help them when they get back. They go through the other resource material like Ankidyne (refer # 180), Science labs and Taleem (refer # 197) in great detail. They are given training by actually showing and getting them to use these materials.

They also attend any ongoing HRD programme, lectures, workshops or talks going on in Eklavya during the time of their visit.

A day or two before the training ends the visiting teachers are required to make a presentation on 10 new things they learnt in Eklavya that they will go back and implement in their respective schools.

Most teachers go back enriched and eager to come back again. The interaction benefits Eklavya greatly because our educators interact and learn many things from the visiting teachers.

203. Transition from One class to another, Skg to Class 1, Class 4 to 5, Class 8 to 9

A student becomes comfortable in one school e.g. Spends three years in PS. She is familiar with the building, educators, housekeeping helps and so on. In a nutshell, it is her comfort zone, the very smell of the place makes her feel secure. As she grows up she has to go to the next class e.g. Class 1 and hence to the next school i.e. JS. She has to leave behind her safe haven. She feels uncomfortable, maybe a bit scared too. This feeling is similar to a girl getting married and entering a new and important part of her life. She is eager but there are many questions in her heart and the pain of leaving behind all that is familiar and dear to her.

The bride's mother prepares her for this great emotional transition of her life. She indoctrinates her daughter about her new life and gives her the confidence to look forward to it. If we as educators do the same and help our students to take this transition with élan then not only do they enjoy that phase but blossom and spread their fragrance. We help them in this *ghul mil jaana* so that the next four years are more productive. The transition is not only for the students but also for the parents as they also need to adjust to the change in timings, food, teaching pattern etc. So how should it be done?

We decided on the following steps:

1. A few of Class 5 and Class 9 students go to the JS and MS assembly respectively a week before the academic year ends and speak to the Class 4 and Class 8 students. They have an informal talk sharing what they felt when they left "home" and how they coped. They talk about things to look forwards to and what to prepare for. Hearing it from peers has a very positive effect in the students.
2. A few SS and MS educators also go and speak to the Class 8 and five students welcoming them and assuring them that they will be cherished and appreciated as much as their last school.
3. To handle the apprehension of parents we call some Class 9 and Class 5 parents in Mothers' Workshop (refer Sari # 123) where they speak about their experiences and the role the parents have to play to help their children settle down in the new routine.

4. The last workshop of Skg, Class 4 and Class 8 are attended by the respective Principals of JS, MS and SS where they orient the parents about the working of the schools and also gives them tips which help them to be ready for the new school by making proper use of the two months summer vacation.
5. We also have a very experienced senior psychology faculty who addresses the parents and answers their queries.
6. The last Lavya (refer sari # 40) class of MS is devoted to the students visiting the SS and meeting the educators. They are free to ask any questions they want to and clear their doubts.

A question may arise that what is the need to do so much when the students are very much in the same campus. A unique aspect of Eklavya is that each section (PS, JS, MS, SS) has its unique flavour. Not only are the timings and set of teachers different but the entire approach towards helping students develop is also distinct in each school. As they spend 4 years in each school they get accustomed to a particular way and it is very important that they feel comfortable and ready to receive when something else is offered to them. Hence, there is a need to make the transition both pleasurable and challenging

204. Trophy - Cleanliness Trophy

This is a rotating trophy given in appreciation of maintaining cleanliness in and around the school campus voluntarily. This is a philosophy that Eklavya wholeheartedly believes in and follows.

Children are taught not to depend on housekeeping staff but on themselves to clean up any area in and outside the classroom. A committee of educators observe all the sections for a month.

The trophy is given to the class that keeps their display boards neat and updated, looks after the class furniture, maintains cleanliness during break time and keeps the corridor and the ground adjacent to the class tidy.

Each class has a broom, mop, dustpan and dustbin and the educator and children both use them as and when required.

The trophy is given in the assembly on the 1st of every month. The class teacher is called to receive the trophy and the respective class children stand up at their place and acknowledge the applause.

The trophy is displayed in the class for a month after which the educator returns it to the committee on the last day of the month. A class can win the trophy more than once.

The trophy is a small gesture to motivate children and instill in them the habit of being responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of their school without being monitored.

205. Trophy – English Speaking Trophy

The English Speaking Trophy in JS is a rotating trophy given every month. There are four such trophies which are to be won by the sixteen sections e.g. the four sections of Class 1 compete to win the trophy in a month and same with classes 2, 3 and 4. So in a month from Class 1 it can be 1 alpha, from Class 2 it can be 2 beta, from Class 3 again 3 alpha and from Class 4 it can be 4 delta. The same section can retain the trophy for two successive months also if they beat the other sections.

In Eklavya we do many things to motivate students. Often we find that mere instruction and monitoring lacks that motivational skill that makes a student spontaneously do something. We have students from various backgrounds and some of them are first generation English speakers. We found that students resort to talking in Hindi a lot. We give equal importance to Hindi but as the teaching learning programme is in English it was true that spoken English would ensure better comprehension and better writing skill.

We tried many things in JS. Some worked temporarily some did not. Then we started a rotating trophy just like the Healthy Trophy and the Cleanliness Trophy called the English Speaking Trophy. As there are 16 sections we designed 4 trophies, 1 per class.

A group of about 5 teachers were chosen who would keep an eye to judge at the end of the month which section made an effort to try and speak in English the most. The winner is announced on the 5th of every month in the assembly amidst much fanfare!(Children at times need a bit of drama) The names of the 4 sections are also written outside the library as that is the place everyone visits everyday. This stays for the whole month.

Although it is true that it has not given us 100% result but we can see students making a conscious effort and correcting each other. That was our target.

Maybe the initial euphoria will wear away after some months, as is very common with this age group. The best thing to do then is discontinue it and restart it after some time.

206. Trophy - Healthy trophy

The “ Healthy Trophy “ is a rotating trophy given each month to *that* section of the JS that has the maximum number of students present for that month, linking it with the thought if you eat healthy you do not fall sick and hence do not miss the fun-filled school days. This is another rotating trophy in the JS, along with the Cleanliness Trophy (refer # 204).

A healthy and robust body leads to a healthy and wholesome mind. At Eklavya eating any kind of junk food is strictly discouraged (for students and educators both). The tiffin should consist of nutritious diet like *roti, dal, rice and sabji*. Whole-wheat sandwiches, fruits, salads and home-made snacks like *idlis* and *dhoklas* are also allowed. Pickle, *papad* and such are not allowed.

Children are very eager to win this trophy for their class not only once but again and again! The trophy is given out in the assembly amidst a lot of excitement and the class winning it feels extremely proud. The educator displays the trophy in the class.

The trophy is made by the art/craft teacher of the school and is kept with the class for the whole month and returned to the Assembly Committee on the last day of the month.

207. Trophy - House of the Year Trophy

Eklavya School awards to the best house of the year a trophy. This trophy is awarded on the overall performance of the house in Activities, Sports, Theatre, *Kar Seva* and Assembly presentations.

A point system has been devised for the awarding of this trophy. A total of 5000 points is taken with 1000 coming from JS and 2000 each coming from MS and SS.

Effort determines the percentage contribution of marks.

For e.g. in sports a game like table tennis which is an individual game where everything depends upon one individual the points given are less (10,7,5 points for 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions respectively). In a game like football where there are 11 players and team effort and co ordination is important more points are given (40,20 for 1st and 2nd positions respectively). Team Sports are awarded more marks. Eklavya appreciates and recognizes individual talent. Team spirit and putting in your best as a team is what we want to inculcate.

In inter-house debating activity which is an individual activity less points are given (10,7,5 points for 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions respectively) and inter-house drama competition where 60 – 70 students from each house participate in direction, acting, props, costumes, music and singing the points awarded are considerably more (70,30).

A one-shot activity like *Rangoli* is given lesser marks though it is a group activity whereas assembly or *Kar Seva* that happens everyday all through out the academic session is awarded more points.

In short, the total effort is a function of the number of students involved or whether it is a one-shot or spread over many months – many students activity.

The allotment of points for activities and sports is as under:

Sports		Activities	
Type	Points	Type	Points
Individual	10,7,5	Individual	10,7,5
Group < 4	15,10,7	Group < 4	15,10,7
Group > 4	40,20	Group > 4	20,10

A Sports and Activities committee comprising of four to five educators in each of the schools – JS, MS and SS decides the competitions they would like to hold through the year. Each activity is given some points and then total points are reduced to 1000 in case of JS and 2000 each in case of MS and SS.

Care is taken to give about 35% to 40% to activities and sports and the remaining divided among Assembly, *Kar Seva* and Sports Day.

The trophy has been designed by us. It is in the form of a house with four sides representing the four houses – Shravan, Prahlad, Aruni and Dhruv. The art teachers of Eklavya made a design for each house that depicts a prominent story of the four characters. This design was then chemically etched on the sides and then they were welded together to form a house.

The base is designed so that each year has a 1" X 1" information plaque on which the year, name of the winning house, names of captain and vice captains are etched. There are 65 such squares. Assuming all houses would get equal representation in the years to come the trophy will last us 65 years!

208. Trophy - Sports Day

Sports Day is generally celebrated on December 25 of the given year from 9.00 am to 12 noon. The Sports Day is held all together for the entire school on two separate large grounds in the school. PS, JS, MS and SS are allotted tracks and separate areas on these grounds and the events are held simultaneously on all the tracks. Through a draw of lots four parents – one from each school – are invited as chief guests to give away the certificates and trophies.

There is nearly 100 % participation on this day. Races are going on simultaneously. Small bands of educators officiate on the starting and finishing lines. The results are quickly written on pre-printed strips of paper on which the names of the participants and their houses are already mentioned. The finishing judge puts in a 1st, 2nd and 3rd and the slip in 2 sets goes to the announcer and the score board. The announcer announces the result and passes the slip to a educator besides her who is writing out the certificates. As soon as the certificate is written it is distributed by the respective chief guest to the winners.

The total number of trophies and certificates given away in all schools are about 600. If these were to be given away in a separate awards ceremony it would take about 2 hours. In this way the prize giving ceremony also goes on simultaneously on 4 victory stands with four chief guests.

The atmosphere is that of a *mela* and parents cheer and encourage the students all along. Normally for all functions Eklavya is a 'no mobile zone'. But on this day parents are allowed to use the mobile.

Sometimes parents whose children have finished their item want to leave the campus with their child. If this happens then there will be nobody left to cheer the remaining participants. In Eklavya we close the gates and ensure that everybody is present to cheer everybody.

A Sports trophy is also awarded on Investiture Ceremony to the house that has scored the maximum marks on Sports Day. Marks scored by JS, MS and SS are totalled and the trophy is awarded to the house with the highest total.

209. Umang

Umang is a day club for old people in the city of Ahmedabad

About 15 *Dadajis* and *Dadijis* from Umang visit Eklavya once a month on a fixed date. Eklavya arranges a bus to pick them up from one point and bring them to school. They are then guided to different classes.

Once they are with the children, it is a pleasure to see the happiness on their faces. They tell the children stories, ask them riddles and even teach them some lovely songs. This interaction between *Dadajis* and *Dadijis* and the little ones is a unique one – it is amazing to see the children listen to them with a lot of interest. Their curious questions related to the story narrated makes *Dadajis/Dadijis* very happy and they love answering them. After the story telling session the bus takes them back to their centre.

Today's parents are usually both working and due to TV and many other reasons spend little time with their children. They are impatient and have no time to answer the many questions the child may have during a conversation.

Say for example the father is telling the children a story. He begins – 'Long ago ---- the state of Punjab was ruled by a brave king called Ranjit Singh.' A child will interrupt and ask – 'Where is Punjab?' The other will say – 'I have a friend in school called Ranjit.' Father wants to finish the story. He gets upset at the interruptions and diversions and says angrily – '*Chup karo. Baad mein bataaongaa. Abhi kahani ko aage badhne do.*' Children have a tear in their eye.

Same story narrated by the grandparents has a different flavour. They are retired people with a lot of time. While the father's interest is to tell the story in as short a time and as efficiently as possible, the grandparent's objective is to elongate the story as far as possible so more of his time is occupied. So the grandparents welcome the diversion and branches out and talks about Punjab – Bhangra, the golden wheat fields, Bhagat Singh and *Sarson Ka Saag* and what not! Then when the child says that his friend is called Ranjit, the grandparent with a twinkle in his eye says – '*Very good. Uske baare mein kya accha lagta hai tumhe?*' *Aur kaun friends hain tumhare?*'

Eklavya believes that in a family where there are 'growing up children' if the grandparents are living in the same house, those children are

'*bhagyashali*' and gain immense benefit and a particular kind of emotional maturity.

The children and the *Dadajis/Dadijis* eagerly wait for this day every month. The grandparents remind as that even in this tech savvy world the eternal magic of the words,"Once upon a time" is not lost.

During the Annual Prize-Giving and Investiture Ceremony, they are felicitated by the Eklavya family. We invite them to the ceremony and present them with a painting done by the students of Eklavya. One of them makes a small speech to the students.

210. Uniforms - Same dress code for boys and girls

Uniform for students' starts from class 1 onwards.

We have the same dress code, i.e., shirt and trousers/shorts for both boys and girls. It is very convenient for girls since they have to be extra cautious with their skirts or tunics. Secondly, the dress code being common, it gives uniformity to the school.

Sports is a daily and compulsory activity for all students. It is much easier for girls to play sports freely and fully wearing pants or shorts

211. Uniforms - Use of old uniforms

Students who have outgrown their school uniform and the uniform is *still* in good condition - they are requested to donate them to the school. This includes school shirt, pant, house T-shirt, sweaters, school shoes and sports shoes.

The school mends these items (if required). They are washed and ironed and kept at the school office. Parents who cannot afford to buy come and collect as per the need. No record is kept as to how many pairs are taken by whom.

Many parents avail this facility. Usually the collection of these items is done at the end of the academic year.

Through Mother's Workshops and Eklavya Samachar parents are made aware of this facility and they are requested to donate as well as avail the facility. Sometimes the Principal (since she knows every student and parents and family condition fairly well) phones the mother and puts a couple of shirts etc in the child's bag!

212. Use of feminine gender

Eklavya consistently and consciously uses the feminine pronouns ('she', 'her', etc.) to denote both genders. The first such use in any note may be marked with an asterisk, and explained through a footnote: "Throughout this note '*she*' denotes both genders and should be read as '*he or she*', unless the context specifically requires otherwise."

It is believed by many that language often plays a significant role in perpetuating different types of prejudices, many times inadvertently. Use of male pronouns to denote both genders is a common practice. Though the speaker or writer may not imply any kind of bias, and may use these terms simply because they seem natural, Eklavya recognises that these may serve to perpetuate prejudice in the minds of readers. We do not wish this to happen.

The use of neutral pronouns is awkward or tedious. ('*s/he*' and '*he or she*' are examples). Eklavya has consciously chosen to use the feminine gender to make a statement that we recognise that prejudice exists in many forms, and we are opposed to it in all forms.

213. Wall Painting

It is nice for children to see a wall-painting come up in front of their eyes. So, every now and then, in Eklavya we try to find a wall, make a team of some students and educators, and make a painting on the wall. The whole process may take about six months.

Other students, as they pass by every day, see the wall transform, little by little, from a simple plain white wall into a colourful painting! This whole process is very participative. Some draw, some decide the colour combinations, some paint and the students and educators passing by and watching it grow give suggestions.

Each one does a small portion of it and sees the whole thing come to life in a few months. They learn and understand the importance of doing things together in a group. They also understand that each one's contribution is as important in the final larger picture (as it is with life!)

Students take pride in their participation and work being on display in the school and gain a sense of ownership of the place where they study in. Similar exercise can be done to paint a window-pane – glass painting.

214. Web site

The official website of Eklavya is www.eklavya.org

Our e-mail id is eklavya@eklavya.org

The web site is designed and updated by the educators and staff of Eklavya.

The website contains exhaustive information about the various schools, their structure, activities and daily schedule.

The website is regularly updated with information on admissions, vacancies for educators, and the Eklavya Samachar – a monthly newsletter that reviews the past month and informs parents about forthcoming events. (<http://www.eklavya.org/mainsamachar.htm>)

215. Weekly Planning

In JS, during the summer break, class teachers do a detailed lesson-by-lesson planning of the curriculum to be followed by all the four class teachers. This is again discussed every week throughout the year.

Every Monday all the four class teachers sit with the lesson plan file of all the subjects and plan for the next six days, Tuesday to next Monday. They discuss what is to be taught on a particular day, the way to teach and the homework to be given. Field visits and projects are also decided, as and when required.

A danger of too much planning or too detailed planning is the likelihood of a rigid or boring implementation where each of the four educator's creativity and individual styles are stifled. We try to be aware of this and give space to each educator to flow as per her individual style.

Weekly planning helps all the co-teachers to be at par with each other in their syllabus coverage.

In MS and SS - while the educators do lesson planning at the beginning of the academic session, along with it they also do week wise planning for their classes.

The whole academic year is divided into number of weeks. The educator has to divide her whole syllabus to be taught 'week-wise'. For example, in class 9, 24 chapters have to be taught in the whole academic session. There are 3 periods of biology in a week. Thus on an average, approximately, 2-3 chapters must be done in a month.

During the academic year, periods unavailable due to vacation, exams etc. are eliminated before doing the weekly planning. Thus the educator has a fair idea during the session that she is progressing on time and syllabus completion is not rushed before exams.

The weekly plans are referred to every month to keep a check on the schedule. This has other advantages as well, such as; we are able to give the term exam schedule on the first day of the academic session to the students since the educator is aware in advance of the syllabus to be done. Same applies for the Unit test schedule.

216. Worksheets

Worksheets are the additional exercise sheets given to students for practice. Worksheets can be prepared for all subjects. They are an effective tool for the educator to reinforce important concepts as well as difficult topics.

In a worksheet, additional questions (not from the textbook) are typed (or handwritten) under a proper header. These sheets are photocopied and distributed to students. Worksheets are usually given at the end of a topic as homework or for revision.

Worksheets are excellent time saving tools for educators as well as students. No time is wasted in copying down the question from the black-board. The sheet can also be preserved for future reference. (a copy is filed by the concerned educator in the lesson plan file.)

A variety of questions and in different combinations can be included in a worksheet. Worksheets for JS are more creative and emphasis is on asking the same content in different interesting ways. In JS every class gets worksheets on all subjects every week. It can be CW/HW sheet. Weekend work sheets which are a combination of the 4 subjects are given before the 2nd and 4th Saturday which generally covers the work done the previous fortnight. We give some space in each worksheet called "This is what I found out" where children find out more about the topic of the worksheet.

For MS, the emphasis is more on the content.

Worksheets are an effective way to reinforce the areas where students mostly make errors. (refer # 33)

217. Year Book for passing out class 12 batch

'If only we could hold on to the golden moments that passed by.' The 'Year Book' of Eklavya strives to do just that by presenting to the students a kaleidoscope of their past fifteen years in school.

The year book is a compilation of feelings and thoughts put together by the outgoing batch of class 12 students.

Every year when class 12 comes to an end, it is an emotional moment for the students and the educators since they have had a long association with the school. The school and the students wish to carry with themselves some memoir, which keeps the memory of their school years alive.

So all the students of class 12 are asked to write down good points/ things they like about each student in the class. When all the students finish writing these points are compiled together for each child page wise. A passport size photograph is also put along with the comments. A thorough editing is then done and a final draft is shown to the students before sending it for a final print. Thus all these good feelings and what my classmates think of me is put together for all students of class 12 together and named as a year book. At the end of the book is a page where the photo of each child from the time she has taken admission in Eklavya to Class 12 is printed. The Principal and one or two senior teachers also write a foreword for the students.

A copy is given to each child of class 12 and a copy is put in the school library.

Philosophical सरी

1. How the motto came to be

If you read the Eklavya Slogan (refer # 60) it will give you the philosophy behind the name. Then we were searching for a motto.

We saw that every educational institution has something in Sanskrit or Latin. IIMA has *Vidya Viniyoga Vikasaha* (through knowledge progress). Somebody has *Apo Deepo Bhavaha* (Be your own light). Something taken from Buddha, something from the *Gita*, or the *Upanishads*, and so on.

We wanted to make our own motto, not 'lift' it from somewhere, something like a 'designer' motto! We were lucky to find a great Sanskrit Pandit in Ahmedabad itself. Pandit KK Shastri. (In 1947 Nehruji asked Pandit Raghunath and Pandit Shastri, two very eminent Sanskrit scholars to 'create' new words in Hindi, but based upon Sanskrit, for the hundreds of English words which were now in the normal vocabulary, like – railway station, superintendent, etc) Ke Kaa Shastri, as he was fondly called, was 94 years old (he passed away a couple of years ago at age 102!).

I did not know him, but I went straight to his house, he was sitting (squatting actually) on the high verandah outside his house. I touched his feet, he blessed me, I introduced myself in brief and said- *mujhe aap ki madad chahiye* (I want your help). He was encouraging, so I explained about the school, the concept of Eklavya, the statue of the boy carving himself out of stone (showed him a photo) and then with folded hands said that I have come to seek his help to make a motto in Sanskrit, a self-made one, not picked up from one of the ancient texts. He agreed.

I asked, when I can come to do it, he said - just now! and jumped up from his perch and led me to the inner room, where he sat on a chair and I on the ground near him, and a low table next to us.

I repeated the philosophy again, he took the pad from my hand and in his not-at-all-trembling hand wrote – *swayam darshanam, swayam jyotih, swayam marg darshanam*. Then he explained the meaning to me. I said very nice, but *swayam marg darshanam* says that I will find my own path, meaning the path is already there, all I have to do is search and find it. While what I want is some *khoon-pasina*, the path is not there, I have to cut the trees, fight with the animals, make the path, in the process do a lot of *karma*, hard work, adventure, danger, etc etc. I said – *mehnat ki khushboo nahin aa rahi*. So he took the paper from me, cut out *darshanam* and wrote *karanam*. That was it!

As I was writing the motto thus designed onto another paper, he scolded me for not knowing how Hindi is written (I was writing a word and then in one stroke putting the line on top, he said no, each letter to be written and the line to be made, then the next letter...!)

Later Walter, a well known artist from Ahmedabad, and a very good friend of Bimalbhai (who is the architect of Eklavya) made the drawing which became the symbol.

2. Importance of struggling

Once I was invited to visit a school and 'guide' them. During the round I was happy to see that they were using a lot of Montessori materials like – buttoning, shoe-lacing, pink tower, etc.

During discussions the Principal of the Pre-school said that they were planning to switch over to shoes with velcro straps because that is easier for the small students, who find difficulty in managing shoes with laces.

I was reminded of a friend who was a 'couch potato'. He would slouch on the sofa and watch TV. Even for a glass of water he will shout or ring the bell for the servant. He rarely ventured out for morning-walks and was lazy in his personal habits. But (maybe due to Doctors orders) he had enrolled in a gym, paying Rs 500 pm and travelling few minutes everyday in his air conditioned car to do 'work-out'! Diya tale andhera!

What is the use? If this man were to become active, in the morning he should make his bed, whenever he wants water he should get up go and take it himself, small small things in the house and office he should do himself, then most probably he will not need to go to the gym and do 'work-out', he will save Rs 500 pm, he will save travelling time, and he will be a role model at home!

So I shared this thought with the Principal, and said let them wear lace shoes, and then they'll learn faster. If we give them velcro shoes, and they learn 'lacing' in school to improve fine-motor-coordination, then we are giving a message that what we learn in school is not what we have to follow in real life, it is only *naam-ke-vaaste!*

She was very happy with the thought, the logic; and decided not to introduce velcro shoes. We also decided that bus conductors will not help small children to get-up and get-down from the bus, they will only stand nearby and be available, but the struggle the child will do; they will be there and encourage, patiently.

Another story – 'The Importance of Struggling' explains this concept well. A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared in the cocoon through which the butterfly was trying to come out. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through the little hole.

Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had pushed itself out of the cocoon as much as it could and could not go further. Observing this, the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped the remaining bit of the cocoon.

The butterfly could then emerge easily, but it had a swollen body and shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly with the expectation that at any moment its wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. But to his dismay it did not happen. In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and deformed wings. It was never able to fly.

The man in his kindness and haste did not understand that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the small opening, help to force fluid from its body into its wings. The passage of fluid from body to wings results in making its wings stronger and also in containing its swelled body. The process makes the butterfly ready to fly after coming out of the cocoon.

Struggles are exactly what we need in our lives.

If we incorporate this concept of struggle consciously in the school activities like Night Outs, Camps, Excursions – in fact everywhere, then the students will grow up to be able to 'handle' struggles nicely.

3. Are you giving your best?

In the same school, we were discussing in the library, sitting on durries, in a circle – all educators, principal, and me. We got to talking about showing films to students. Something with which I am in wholehearted agreement – they love watching films, their language skills improve, they get an ‘exposure’ to so many other things of the world, and if a discussion is held later on then there is much more fun and learning (e.g. before seeing *Chak De* ask them later on to describe the most memorable and touching scene, each student separately; such assignments can be apriori given, of different levels to different class students).

We discussed how the old Indian tales like *Vikram aur Vetaal* were very good, they taught situational aspects to children, there is no one ‘clear’ *dharma* or duty, it depends upon the situation. That is why *dharma* or righteousness is so difficult to teach. *Vetaal* tells a story to King *Vikram* - there was a King, he had four daughters, and so on...and at the end he asks the King- *Bol Vikram, is situation main Raja ko kya karna chaheeye*. In this situation.....

So we decided and told the librarian to get a full set of these video tapes (someone said the full set is six cassettes). Next week when I went on my weekly visit, I asked, and the librarian said, “I went to Crossword, they do not have it.” That’s it!

So I asked him suppose your mother was in hospital and the doctor asked you to bring a particular medicine without which it would be difficult to treat her what would you do?

He said, ‘I would go to a medical shop and ask for it and buy it’.

I said, ‘Suppose it was not available in that shop. What would you do?’

He said, ‘I would go to the next medical shop’. Then I said, ‘What if you did not get at the next shop and then at the next shop and then at the next shop?’ He said, ‘I would keep going to another shop.’

I asked, ‘What after the twenty ninth shop?’

He said, ‘I will go to the thirtieth shop. I will then get desperate and wake-up people and make sure that I get the medicine from anywhere.’

I asked him, 'May be I am expecting too much or exaggerating. Did you not think it is important to try the same for the video? Would you have gone back and told your mom that the medicines are not available, sorry? The children who come to your Library would have enjoyed and benefited so much from watching those movies and learning from them. Why did you give up so easily? Have you not heard of – try, try, try till you succeed and so many other statements like this?

If one searches *until* one finds, if one struggles *until* one achieves, if one pursues *until* one gains, the struggles of the process prepare us for life. Never give up easily. You will get what you want.

4. Brahma-Astra of Eklavya

Eklavya has many many unique aspects, or we can say 'special' aspects. We have an entire presentation on Unique Points of Eklavya. It is not fair to say that some points are more important than others, but actually it is true. It does not mean that small small points are not important, collectively they become the most important thing!

Here are the *brahma-astras* of Eklavya:

- Euphoria
- Phoenix of MS
- Play of JS/SS
- Home Visits
- Class 11 free-elective project
- Mother's Workshops
- IPEMs
- Campus- beautiful and infrastructurally high quality and well-equipped
- Four schools, each resourceful
- No tuitions
- No coaching classes. Do Class 10 and 12 well in school.
- PS visits every Saturday
- Visits in JS, MS and SS – atleast 6 per academic year for each class
- Nature camps – build up from 1 day in class 1 to 4 to 5 days in class 7 and 8 to Aadhyatmic (Spiritual) Camp in class 11
- Educator's HRD with Sunil Sir.
- Sports and Activities – daily 1 hr

5. Learning from each other

In Eklavya we expect that everyone will improve every year.

It will not happen all of a sudden on its own in a year. Everybody needs to be pushed, so a teacher would think that she will work hard on her own to improve herself but does not improve largely. In the beginning of the year, a teacher would consciously and systematically analyze and identify her weaknesses and works on it. For example, a teacher may tend to loose her temper in the class and would shout frequently to gain the discipline of the class thereby she finds her class in a total mess and students tend to become unruly.

Having found her flaws, a teacher would try to improve her classroom management skills by going through various aids like reading books and articles of school magazines, watching films, attending workshops and learning from peers. Learning from each other is one of the best methods to improve the quality of a teacher.

Every teacher is somewhere or the other found to be *adhura* and a *sampoorna* teacher, who is good in every aspect, is rarely found and it is very difficult too. It is a challenge in running a school as the challenge is not to find extraordinary teachers which are rare, but the challenge lies in finding ordinary teachers who put in extraordinary efforts and reap extraordinary results. A group of teachers is found to be *sampoorna* as compared to an individual teacher being perfect and *sampoorna*. When a teacher tries to improve herself by adopting various methods like viewing cds or reading books, it is mostly found to be a passive way of improving oneself. Human being is not a perfect entity and on reading *Bhagavad Gita* if one would have become perfect then all would have become perfect.

It has been found that the proper way to improve one self is to learn from other teachers by attending their classes. There are two methods for learning.

In the first method, a teacher should identify any five teachers and attend their classes, atleast one period preferably three in a week teaching various classes. The more periods she attends the deeper she goes into, and can analyze her style of conducting and managing the classes. If one attends three periods in the same section having same students and the same subject then one would benefit to develop the method of building rapport and approaches to classes.

Ideally, a teacher should attend all the classes and this activity will take around one full term starting from June up to *Diwali*. When a teacher begins her project of self-improvement, she should have a high improving drive and should choose the teachers who she thinks are good at various skills and attend their classes over next two months. She should give an assurance to the teacher about her self-improvement project and all information genuinely would remain confidential and will not be sharing with any one, as she is not spying for the Principal! She should sit in a corner without any hindrance, take notes and observe the classes in minute detail. Then over a period, she may analyze, reflect on her notes, try to improve and implement them in her classes by chewing and digesting what she learnt.

In the second method, a teacher should identify five teachers and ask them to attend her (either same or different) classes. At the end of the activity, ask them to give a detailed and critical feedback. One should listen to it without uttering a word (put a scotch tape on the lips!) One should not be in a defensive mode or reasoning out their action by giving their explanation or any justification. One should respond only with a comment "That is very interesting." At the end of the feedback, a teacher should show gratitude by the statement "Thank you very much, I deeply appreciate your feedback and assure you to work on the suggestions made by you." It is important to make a speech at the end because the other person has spent a number of hours without expectations so the only *Guru Dakshina* is one's sincere thanks.

Sincere assurance and implementing them would definitely improve one's skill. If every teacher does this then there is a rapid improvement and reach a rare pedestal of a great teacher.

Video recording a class, then the teacher sees it – alone, with colleagues helpfully critiquing – has been found to be really effective. Nobody thinks they do something, unless they actually see themselves in the video doing it!

6. It is important to exercise self-restraint

Good educators instinctively know how to 'handle' a class.

If the educator asks a question and many students blurt out the answer, *nahin chalega*. At that moment itself the educator should stop the class, discuss and clarify 'rules' once again (if a question is asked they have to raise their hand and ma'am will select, they can't even shake their hand vigorously and shout ma'am ma'am ! if they want to ask a doubt raise the hand, ma'am will notice and then come to you. But it's not necessary that that doubt will be clarified 'instantaneously', she may just note in her mind, ask the student to lower her hand, and later on come to that point). We have to avoid this new modern disease – instant gratification!

In the beginning of an academic year, in the first couple of periods, this rule (and others) should be repeated again and again. After that, a gentle 'punishment' to anyone not observing the rule, maybe a not-so-gentle one too! After that things always fall in line and life is smooth. (high hopes, teacher's life is never smooth, *kuch na kuch to hota hi rehata hai*)

Standing in line, not pushing the guy in front of you, dispersing from the assembly in reasonable silence....all these things are important, and we in India are very poor in training our children on these aspects (witness the way a person pushes and piles on the person in front in a queue on an airport or anywhere). Being law-abiding is a fundamental sensitivity to other fellow human beings. You are ahead of me, you finish *araam se*, and my turn will come. In orderliness all of us will finish earlier and nicely too.

Noise level in the school has to be controlled.

7. Concept of Job vs Responsibility

Job sounds very technical and lifeless, without any warmth or attachment. E.g. it is my job to do it. As if somebody is forcing me to do it but my heart is not in it, I am doing it as I am paid for it.

When we say it is my responsibility to teach English to Class 11 students, I make it sound more voluntary and accountable. It gives it a different perspective. The coldness of the job melts away by the warmth of the concern I feel towards my students. The limitation is not my working hours and the premises of my office/school.

When I do a job it ends when I leave the area or the classroom but when I look at it as a responsibility I carry it with me not as a burden but as opportunities to facilitate the teaching / learning process. e.g. I might be watching a film and a scene comes across where I feel I must share this or I pick up something from it to instill in me...that to me is the broader horizon of responsibility .

Job makes it limited, restricted and cold.

When I say responsibility I mean doing things which may not be a part of my job. When I am responsible I am proactive, I collaborate and am always ready to do things in more effective ways. I take up responsibilities on my own and carry them out with fondness. A job sounds like being thrust upon. E.g. a teacher may condition herself that it is my job to keep that grass patch clean. She will never enjoy doing it. She will feel that nobody should see her doing it because she herself does not believe in dignity of labour. As she does not respect the given job, she is ashamed of it and waits for the burden to be given to another teacher.

Teacher B treats it as her responsibility. She is happy that she has been given a chance to keep part of the campus clean. She thinks that this would motivate her children to keep their neighbourhood and surroundings clean....a topic which we teach in civics as our Fundamental Duty. She will feel excited that she can make the dead lines come alive. She will do it in her innovative way and not restrict herself to once or twice. The happiness will actually be evident and when her turn is over she will take up another area on her own and continue to do it.

Just doing what is assigned is a Job. That must be done. Doing what is required by the situation is Responsibility. That is an opportunity to

add value. Doing what will help others to complete their work in a better way goes beyond Responsibility – it is an offering.

This, according to me is the difference between Job and Responsibility. It is in our hands what we want in our lives.

I feel responsibilities make you productive, proactive and a happy person. One should not confuse it with power...if at all then yes, being responsible gives you the power to make a positive difference. In fact the Sri Sri Ravishankar Art of Living theme says that 'taking more responsibility gives one more power'.

Sad is the person who does a job but blessed is she who turns every job into a responsibility and humbly accepts being the chosen one.

8. Develop people from within

(dated 1992 !)

At Core, we believe in promoting people from within the Company. Why?

Many years ago when we started, we were very small and good people were not willing to join our organisation. It was necessary to have good people to grow. Therefore, we said that if good people do not join us then we are left with no alternative but to give birth to good people. Thus started the system of identifying young, hard working and ambitious people (generally coming from middle class or lower middle class families, at times possessing nominal educational qualifications) in whom we saw an urge and desire to come up in life.

So we picked up these people and trained them gradually over a period of time to take on higher and higher responsibilities in our organisation as we grew.

We have examples in Core of people having started at the lowest possible position and enjoying highly respectable positions today. There is a different sense of belonging and pride in such people. It is the difference between our feelings towards a rented house and a house we have slowly built over a period of time. People who grew with the organisation have also made the organisation grow. They have seen the troubles. They have experienced the pangs of growth. They understand.

Thus started the strong emphasis on training and development of Human Resources in Core which is a legacy which still continues. (Although now Core commands a high premium in the market and is able to easily attract its own share of talent from the market, we still and would continue to prefer to groom internal talent for promotions).

This system works extremely well for us. It is interesting to note the definite pattern when you make the round and talk to so many of our people at different managerial levels, A typical job history reads:

"Joined the company in 1981 as Office Clerk; in 1983 became Admn. Asstt; in 1985 became Asstt. Admn. Officer, in 1986 Admn. Officer; in 1987 Distribution Officer". Or

"Joined the company in 1985 as Finance Executive; in 1986 became Finance Manager; in 1987 became Financial Controller and in 1988

was promoted as Finance Controller-cum-Group Company Secretary" or

"Joined the Company in 1986 as Medical Representative; became Field Sales Officer in 1987, became Field Manager in 1988", or

"Joined Core in 1981 as a peon; became Trainee Data Entry Operator in 1983; Data Entry Operator in 1984; Trainee Computer Operator in 1986; Computer Operator in 1987; Machine Operator in 1988".

It is exciting and fulfilling to observe how an individual's salary has gradually increased from Rs. 400/- per month when he or she joined Core to Rs. 3,000/- or more today.

During all this time we also emphasised (and pressurized!) for continuing higher studies and obtained additional skills and additional qualifications. So it is not surprising to find many people at Core undergoing different types of courses designed to improve their career prospects in the long run. These work out normally either in the form of postal courses or evening/morning colleges, in addition to in-house programmes.

While a person is undergoing such a course, normally there is a pressure on him to do justice both to the job as well as studies and there is a sense of frustration also. It is not easy to manage. The struggle is there and at the end a sense of fulfillment. It is satisfying to observe over a period of time, the results of such individual struggles combining and contributing to total organisational growth.

Such opportunities for individual growth create a healthy climate that encourages employees to think in terms of a long career with the company. Thus it is clear to those beginning that they do not have to stay at the bottom forever. So someone working as a PSR or a clerk will not be there five years from now unless he wants to be. A packer in the warehouse, clerk in accounts or a PSR in the field can find responsibilities and promotions within the company if he is willing to sharpen his skills and increase his knowledge.

It is just a matter of looking around to see what jobs he can handle. This system reduces the turnover of personnel to a minimum. After spending months training an employee to be productive on the job, we feel that losing him is too costly.

This system also has a chain effect. For instance, when a managerial position opens up, 8 people may be eligible for it and if somebody is

chosen that person's job is sought after by 11 people and when that position is filled perhaps someone in the lower position fills the second job and so on. Therefore, movement of one person automatically creates movement for several other people. As one job is filled other vacancies get created.

At Core we rotate and cross train our people so that they are capable of doing several jobs instead of one. Thus it is easier for somebody to be already qualified to do the work of another job. In manufacturing for example, all Chemists are rotated regularly from job to job so that eventually everyone can perform any job in the department. The boredom of doing the same job day after day, year after year is also eliminated. Absenteeism is reduced and when somebody is ill or on leave, we have the flexibility of rotating other people.

Within a year of joining, a new employee can work his way through several jobs and develop a reasonable level of competency for each job. If a person assigned to a certain machine or job is absent for a period of time, we can assign someone else to the job. Also if a person suddenly leaves, there is always a backup available.

In the Marketing area, we have a Human Resources Development Programme. The assumption of this programme is: Good/successful people are not born but they are made. The objective of HRD programme is to train and motivate our people to become successful; and to pull out hidden potential of our people and to make them shine.

Basically the programme operates as follows:

Every 6-10 months about 10 PSRs are selected on the basis of certain criteria. Then for a year they are given special training programmes both at Head Office in Ahmedabad as well as in the field. They are given special targets and special tasks and through an extensive programme of training and motivation they are developed into future Field Managers. The entire process takes about one year.

A good Manager trains his replacement. For a Manager to be promoted there should be a backup person to replace him. Every Manager must realize that his advancement depends to a large extent upon how well he trains people under him.

In a well run company that offers good advancement opportunities to its people, the cream always rises to the top. In fact we must have a system and structure which guarantees that the good performers are always rewarded and promoted to higher levels. Everyone in Core

must know that the measure of advancement is only individual performance. They must be secure in the knowledge that if they excel they deserve to be promoted and they will be. Using the same logic they must also realize that as their value to the company increases, company itself grows - because without growth, opportunities for advancement are limited, and business cannot remain stagnant. When growth ceases, the company cannot offer new job opportunities unless people leave, or retire, or die. In such an environment the people most likely to stay back with the company are the least productive ones.

Good people need opportunities and challenges. That is what causes excitement and keeps a company going at a fast rate. Every Manager should have a feeling that he is at the right place at the right time, you can evaluate your own feelings by asking yourself the simple question; "After a full day's work do you feel happy and satisfied; and after a full night's sleep, do you rise afresh again to tackle an interesting problem with brand new ideas next day?"

9. Just now only I will do it

This is actually a line from a famous poem “Goodbye to Miss Pushpa” by Nissim Ezekiel. But it reflects a very fundamental attitude I have in life, probably that is also one reason why I like this line so much.

Last week my wife Divya asked me to accompany her to the ENT doctor Jawahar Talsania (she has a sinus problem and it seems the infection and the inflammation have increased and gone into the Eustachian tube). She is suffering since about 3 weeks and the normal medicines have not brought much relief. So we went (she had asked a person from our office to sit at the doctor’s waiting room and phone her just a few minutes before, when her turn will come ! this is a trick she has picked up from me !)

The good doctor saw everything, then said that he would like to do a small procedure, it’ll take about 15 to 20 minutes, he will insert a probe (endoscope) into her nose and see, when would we like to schedule that? Divya looked at me, and with her eyes asked – when? Just now, I said, if possible! So that’s what we did. I waited outside. He gave her some nasal drops. A few minutes later he did the procedure and put the video on a CD, then called me in and showed me a thriller- journey through Divya’s nose! Fifteen minutes! Thereafter he prescribed some medicines. Happy to report Divya is now 50% better and improving.

But the point of this story is – *just now only you please do it !*

Now is the time. *Na bhooto na bhavishyato*. There is no past, it was, but is not now. There is no future, there is only the present. Now. And Here.

10. Originality – creative thinking

Once some Nirma students came to me seeking sponsorship for their play. I am a great believer in the theatre as a pedagogical tool. What the students learn by putting up a play, it cannot be 'taught' ever in any classroom.

So I believe that theatre should be an integral and important part of any education – nursery, primary school, high school, college, post-grad, whatever! Even for corporate executives when a one-week programme is there, theatre should be a part of it, somehow.

I told them in principle I will be happy to sponsor. I do it for plays put up by students of IIMA, NID and MICA. So Nirma too. I asked them about the play, what is the name, who is the playwright, etc. To my shock and horror, the students told me that they have 'hired' an expert director from Mumbai, who will direct the play, he will also 'manage' everything, the actors will be all professionals, so too the musicians etc etc. Nirma students will only 'co-ordinate' and also be the audience! *To phir 'learning' kaise hogee?*

Obviously, I said sorry about the sponsorship. They went away.

In Eklavya we try that as much as possible the students, with some help from educators, do everything. Quite often they write the play themselves (in such a case, the script and dialogues 'evolve' with each rehearsal, and it is great fun to watch this happening! An example is the play *Kal Aaj aur Kal*).

Sometimes they will take an already existing play, but give themselves the license to twist the story, to change the scene, to redo the script. Most plays have songs (maybe in the background) written, put-to-music and sung by the students). All sets, light, sound and costumes are designed and executed by the students.

The same concept extends to Edison – the annual science exhibition. Instead of taking standard experiments and just doing it (which in itself is really not a bad thing) why not ask students to 'solve' some contemporary problem. For e.g. the small boy Prince who fell into a well – how will you rescue him, come up with innovative methods. For e.g. – simulate a stomach - we purchased a Disintegration Unit machine to do this, with motility, pepsin, HCl etc, then put chewed food like roti and sabji, put chewed chewing gum, and see which is 'digested' earlier ! For e.g. give six soaps, ask students to figure out how they will test which one is best for a certain type of *daag*?

For the projects also students are encouraged not to take help of their parents and do their own research from different sources and make presentations (sometimes power-point) in the class. For e.g., in Class 8, one project in English is – choose any one painting of an artist of your choice, write the biography of the artist and interpret the painting.

11. Every 'problem is an 'opportunity' to educate

A school is a unique place, because every problem is an opportunity to 'educate' which is the basic objective of the organisation!

In a company, lets say Hindustan Lever; they conduct 'training programmes' for salespeople. Someone can say that HLL is doing 'education'. But that is not its primary purpose. If conducting training would (just imagine, somehow) reduce sales, then they will never do it! They are conducting a training programme because they believe it will help in increasing sales. If, for e.g., standing in the hot sun on one leg and chewing neem leaves would help in increasing sales, then that is what they would be doing !

But in a school, *education is the primary and possibly only objective*. By education, obviously we do not mean only academics, but also (and more importantly) issues like – ability to work in a team, sense of fairness and justice, sense of responsibility and so on.

If a child would lose her sweater, and then 'find' it in the place in the library kept for 'lost-and-found-property' then we have lost an opportunity to educate the child about the importance of having a sense of responsibility. This is a common trait of successful people. When they go on a foreign tour, they take many precautions, and have a heightened sense of awareness, that they keep safe their passport/money/tickets, their luggage, and so on.

Successful people are generally methodical and systematic. They generally find a paper they are looking for, they file their papers systematically, they always write down a list of things to do, they generally do not 'forget' (they do things which help them remember), they take something, use it, and put the thing back in its proper place, and so on..

Where do these 'traits' come from? In the 1980s a US priest Robert Fulgham delivered a sermon, "All I really needed to know I learned in Kindergarten" listing nineteen nuggets of advice that every school-going child hears, such as: Share everything, Play fair, Don't hit people. Fulgham summed up saying, "Take one of these items and extrapolate into sophisticated adult terms and apply it to your family life or work or your government or your world and it holds true and clear and firm." Fulgham's insight - that we acquire all the wisdom that we need early in life – was so compelling that this sermon became very popular, then an article in Reader's Digest, a best-seller book which sold more than 11 million copies, plays and a movie.

Therefore, any incident which takes place in a school is a fantastic opportunity to help the child develop some of these traits, and insightful and visionary educators will not let such a chance go by.

In management schools, they realise that teaching of management is a lot of common sense, and very very situational. There can be no 'formula' for handling a situation. Depending upon the situation the approach will vary. How to 'teach' this? Very difficult. So they have invented a pedagogy called 'case studies', where actual real-life situations from companies are converted in the form of a 'story' and written up as a case. While reading and discussing the case, the students are expected to transport themselves mentally into that time and space.

A similar pedagogy is used in schools – stories and examples. We use stories from the *Panchtantra*, *Akbar-Birbal* stories and so on. But we also use a very powerful traditional Indian set of stories called *Vikram-Vetal*, where the *Vetal* tells a story to *Vikram*, there was a King, he had four daughters, etc etc and at end asks – “ Tell, *Vikram*, in this particular situation what should the King do ?”. Situational dharma is being conveyed, in this particular situation, with the background and so on, what should the King do?

But you know, real-life situation is real-life, and a case study can never come near it.

So, if the under-14 football team loses a match and comes back, and complains that the other team had class 12 students (whose ages were wrongly put as under-14) playing, then this is a fantastic real-life opportunity to discuss and educate them on what is meant by fairness, on the unfairness in this world, will we also start succeeding by becoming 'like them' or will we draw a line but still take the challenge and succeed?

12. Educators get too much emotionally attached to their students – good and bad

Sometimes an educator comes to me and says – sir, I taught class 2 this year, next year also I want to teach the same group, please give me class 3.

I understand where they are coming from. If they have done a good job, then all the more probability that they are attached to their students and vice versa. And to parents of these children and vice versa. Even parents sometimes say – please let my child have Xyz ma'am next year also, *sirf woh hee ise sambhaal pateee hai !*

While I appreciate this, and understand the feelings behind it, the question is – is this the right thing to do from the student's point of view?

In Eklavya we 'mix-up' the sections every year. This is done purely randomly. Care is kept that in each section almost equal representation is there of – houses, girls/boys. We never see who is a very good friend of someone, or 'bright' students, or 'difficult' students.

This helps students make new friends and develops socialisation skills. It also teaches them from a young age, that one will have change continuously in life. Students learn to accommodate and adjust to a new class teacher, new friends, and a new method of the teaching-learning process. Their growth is *actually more* in this method.

In fact, students in Eklavya look forward to and relish this change each new academic year!

13. Lost property

Lost-and-found property is a recurring theme in schools. Things like T-shirts, jackets, sweaters, bottles, TT/Badminton racquets and shoes. These are collected and kept in one fixed place (often the library) and every now and then an announcement is made in the morning assembly. Almost 80-90% find their way back to the rightful owner, rest is never reclaimed. When it becomes a lot, the school 'gives it away'.

During winter, students wear woollens and while on the playground feel quite warm, remove the sweater and keep it somewhere, then forget to pick it up. This is missed by them next morning, when they are getting dressed to catch the bus!

When a child 'loses' something like this, and then 'finds' it in the library – the issue is over, the 'problem' seems to have been solved, but we as educators have *lost* an important *real-life* opportunity to take this incident as an educational vehicle to help the child inculcate a sense of responsibility.

In the first place, students should not lose anything, so that becomes a focal point – helping them learn how not to lose. Further, in case of a loss, how to identify – so maybe write the students name, by a marker pen, in a nice manner, in an unobtrusive place.

If we ask a small group of educators to sit for an hour, take this concept of lost-and-found thing, they will surely come up with dozens of ideas on things to do with the students – in the assembly, in the home period, some fun things to do, some sort of a competition, what not.

14. August 15 and January 26

It is important for a school to celebrate August 15 and January 26, irrespective of the dates falling on a Sunday. The teachers and the students should attend the school and be a part of the unfurling of the flag, sing *jana-gana-mana*, do a small *karyakrama* on *desh bhakti*, sing together patriotic songs as proud Indian citizens. No sacrifice is enough for *Bharat-mata*.

Someone may ask, am I unpatriotic if I do not attend the August 15 function. Of course not, but some things have to be *expressed and shown*.

Someone may ask, if I do not touch the feet of my parents or teachers or elders does it mean that I am disrespecting them. Of course not. But in our culture it is done, as an expression. There are some things which are 'done'. We can of course question them, we can even change them, but always there will be some things which are done and not questioned.

We should have some things in life with which no one can argue, they are beyond, they are 'non-negotiables'. It is possible some people may disagree, whatever one does there will always be people who disagree (!), we are not saying we should not listen to them or be closed minded, but you know, some basic things cannot be questioned and reviewed every week, just because some new person is questioning it. In the Jesuit organisation, they have a 'congregation' once in 25 years, where they sit and question and review everything, after that for the next 25 years, some fundamentals are not questioned, just followed!

15. Involve students in the organisational and logistics aspects of school programmes

Students develop many latent abilities by being involved in the organisational and logistics of school programmes.

A team of students who are a part of the Parking Committee, they get parents to park their vehicles nicely, in an orderly manner. Some parents argue, the students use all their wit and charm to get such parents to re park their vehicles! Some parents come late and are refused permission to enter school; the students have to 'handle tempers' in such situations. There is a lot of learning which cannot come otherwise from any class or other activity in school (developing confidence, teamwork, communication, management, and impartiality).

Students come up with their own solutions, give many suggestions, and the entire thing becomes more efficient. When asked for suggestions for inter-house competitions they suggested 'face-painting' something educators would never have thought of !

Senior students can be involved in programmes of junior students as referee, judges, mentors,...

We can start by letting students sit beside educators while making decisions.

Students are good at organizing activities like the Sport's Day. Groups of 4 to 6 students are assigned one track say the PS one. Students distribute themselves to take duty on the starting line, finishing line, carrying the name chit of winners to the announcers and the scoreboard and helping the educators take the winners to the victory stand for the prize distribution as soon as the event is completed.

December 'farewell party' is always completely managed by students.

Such involvement trains students in logistics and people management skills. It helps them to anticipate and solve small working problems they face while executing the event. Later in college and life these are valuable learnings to fall back on.

16. Spending quality time with your children

Ma'am, *aajkal aap story nahin sunaate to yeh burden mere upar aa gaya hai!* Once a father said this to an educator, in an IPEM.

Burden? Why, this is a blessing in disguise! Now the father has an 'oppurtunity' to spend quality-time with his son/daughter telling stories, and *isee bahane*, doing soooooo many other things!

Once I was talking to a girl of Class 7. I asked her, what is the best time of a normal day for you? Without hesitation she said – sir, in the morning my father comes to drop me at the bus-stop. It is a walk of about 5 or 6 minutes from our house. It is a time I enjoy. Sometimes we talk, sometimes just I hold his hand and we walk. *Papa poore 100% mere hote hain!* Sometimes if he gets up late, then he drops me on his scooter, then I don't like it.

Later on I phoned the father, told him that there is something interesting I wanted to share with him, would he please drop by my office in Core House in the evening. Initially he was anxious, why does Sunil sir want to meet me, has something happened? I assured him that its something nice but I want to personally share with him.

He came; I told him what his daughter had shared with me in the morning. He started crying. He promised me that he will remember and value this, and always go and drop her and never never get up late. Barbie dolls, toys, frocks, ipods – all these are of no importance, those precious invaluable 5 minutes every morning – *bas wo hee keematee hai!*

Once a class 9 girl told me about her dad – “playing tennis in the evening is more important to him than talking to me”.....sad.

17. Multiplication Tables

At Eklavya, all students appear for multiplication-table-tests during the beginning of each academic year. In JS, these tests are also conducted at regular intervals during the year and are incorporated as a part of curriculum. All students learn multiplication tables till a particular predecided series:

- Class 1 learn multiplication tables till 2, 5 and 10x10
- Class 2 learn multiplication tables till 10 X 10
- Class 3, 4 learn multiplication tables till 15 X 10
- Class 5 learn multiplication tables till 18 X 18
- Class 6-10 learn multiplication tables till 20 X 20

Why memorize multiplication tables? In this age of advanced technology, with computers and calculators, forcing children to memorize multiplication tables seems to be a bad idea.

How does one develop whatever one wants to develop?

A basic law of nature is that if you want to improve and strengthen some muscles or part of your body you need to exercise that part. You have to give pain to that muscle or that part. Suppose if someone wants to play football, he should have strong thighs and legs. He has to do push-ups, several times. If the coach says, do push-ups 30 times, and after 10 the student says, sir I have done 10 times can I now stop? By the *student* doing push-ups the *coach's muscles* do not develop! If the student does 30 times, he only will benefit. If he does 31 times he will benefit more. If he does 29 times he will benefit less. *No pain, no gain.* It is so obvious.

There is a trend to regard 'rote learning' as being primitive and schools following it are looked down upon. But we need to know what form of rote learning is being propagated by the school. Going further, if you want to develop your brain, you need to give pain and exercise to your brain cells. Memorizing is one of the best ways to do this. And what can be better than multiplication tables? Or poems. Another method is to do brain-teasers, solving puzzles, etc.

Just to take the logic a little bit more, first physical (exercise the muscles) then mental (memorise multiplication tables and poems and do brain-teaser puzzles to exercise the brain) then spiritual - how does one really develop 'will-power'? The answer is actually very simple - by doing it, by exercising! India has a simple way of doing this - self-denial. Something you like- don't do for a day. Something you don't like- do for a day. Then increase to a week. Then to a month. Fasting is a powerful way to do this.

Here is something we wrote in the 'preface' to our first poetry book 'Voices from Within' (a collection of 250 selected poems of students and educators of Eklavya):

Why should we memorize poems?

Often people ask this question, not only for poems but also for multiplication tables. Whenever the memory is mentioned in most education circles, the adjective "mere" precedes it, as though "mere memorization" was somehow something to be ashamed of. Classical educators, however, treat the memory as a fundamental faculty of the human mind and therefore train it.

So the question is not whether children should be made to use their memories. They do so naturally. The question is what they should exercise their memories on. The reasons for memorizing the multiplication tables, the states of the nation, etc should be obvious enough. We are daily called upon to make use of such facts on the spot, without having time to look them up.

Why should children memorize poetry? The simple answer is that poetry speaks directly to the soul. By memorizing certain great poems, we keep them as possessions for all time. It is true that a twelve-year-old might not understand perfectly all the themes canvassed in Kipling's "If." Yet she will be able to call upon this poem for solace and for inspiration whenever she does confront the challenges of the world. We can think of no better preparation for the long, arduous march into adulthood.

Listen to this real story – Sunil sir once invited an old IIMA student who was doing very well in USA to come and share his life experiences with the current students. This is what he shared - he is the son of a labourer in a village in Tamil Nadu. In class 4 he asked his school teacher what will become of him in life, will he also be like his dad, a poor labourer. The teacher said most probably yes. He asked how do I get out of this, the teacher replied- only by studying hard. Next day the boy went to the teacher and said what do you mean study hard, how do I study hard, the teacher asked him to memorize multiplication tables upto 20x20. The boy went a few steps further, he memorized multiplication tables upto 99x99 ! He became good in studies, he was one of the top students in Tamil Nadu in class 10, he was one of the toppers in class 12, he got admission to IIT, Chennai where he topped, then IIMA where again he topped, then he joined McKinsey, then joined WHO, and now he is in World Bank, Washington in a very senior position. It all started by memorising multiplication tables.

18. Concepts are like a cloud – need to 'pin' them down

Whenever a concept is taught, it is nebulous – like a cloud; and unless it is 'nailed' to an anchor, it will float away.

This 'nailing' is done by 'linking' - like we do cross-linking of long polymeric chains, to give strength to the material. Link the concept to an example from everyday life - in the classroom, in the kitchen, driving a car, doing shopping, in a factory. Link the concept to concepts/examples of other subjects being taught. (In Julius Caesar he says "I am as constant as the Northern Star" then link it to the position of *Dhruv tara* as the centre of a celestial dial, where the whole dial moves except the centre, the north star. Talk for a moment about Ursa Major and Ursa Minor).

The educator can further integrate this concept of being firm, standing determined, one man with courage is a majority, ask students if there is someone in their family or friends who can be compared to the North Star.

While teaching Levers, F-L-E (Fulcrum in the middle, Load in the middle, Effort in the middle) one can take things to a class which we use day-to-day like - scissors, nailcutter, betelnutcracker, chimta-used on a tava to flip rotis, etc and this gives the students a clear idea and the 'cloud' of the lever principle is replaced by a very solid understanding linked to actual things.

This is applicable from pre-schoolers to high school students. Everyone learns faster and better when the topic is co-related nailed) to an existing piece of knowledge, or to something they can visualise/see/touch/relate to.

19. Friendship band

Once an educator asked me – sir, why can't we allow students to wear 'friendship band'?

Sure, it's a good thing, and a school should not come in the way, and make too many rules. But consider for a moment what one of my favourite Profs used to say again and again – please consider the 'unintended consequences' of your decisions/actions.

Imagine a student, she gives friendship bands to her three best friends, there is another girl, who *expects* to receive a friendship band from this girl, but does not receive, what will be happening to her?

Students in Eklavya come from different economic strata. One may be so privileged to afford many such friendship bands and the other may not be able to bring even one.

For the same reason there are no Birthday celebrations in school. The child wears her uniform to school on her birthday. She is wished by the entire school in the daily assembly and a hand-made card is given to her. There is no sweets distribution and no cakes or any such fancy celebration in school. (refer # 21)

Sometimes, some of these things may not be a very good idea, even though it may be the 'fashionable' thing to do!

20. Main pahooncha ya nahih I don't know lekin koshish to puree kee ! Bhagwan zaroor mere se khush honge

Why are people in this world so limited, so seemit? Why don't they go beyond, whatever....

One way they are saying – *main saadhaaran hoon, main saadhaaran school main kaam kartee hoon, main saadhaaran padhaatee hoon, main great teacher nahin hoon, aur na hee banana chahatee hoon, main saadhaaran neend sotee hoon.....*

I am not in favour of this. I want to say – *main saadhaaran hoon, lekin a-saadhaaran banana chahata hoon, unique kaam karna chahata hoon, special banana chahata hoon, main great teacher banoonga, main mehnat karoonga, main apne aap ko improve karta rahoonga karta rahoonga.....*

Going beyond the call of duty, doing more than expected, going the extra mile....it will come from striving. This will not happen on its own, or just by wishing. An action plan should be made, in small small portions, small small achievable daily or weekly targets...then move ahead. Detailing will be required.

21. Here and Now

Raghu has made a nice *sher* on this which I have adopted as the LEM slogan (Laboratory in Entrepreneurial Motivation, a second-year-optional-course I have been teaching in IIMA, since about 17 years):

Not to *Kab*, Not to *Tab*, but to *Ab*
Not to *Kahaan*, Not to *Wahaan*, but to *Yahaan*

This slogan has gone on T-shirts, posters, what not, and has in a way become a LEM slogan.

What it says is – don't say *then* I will do it, don't say *when* I will do? Say *just now I will do it*. Don't say *there* I will do, *where* I will do, say *here only, just now only, I will do!*

Take the Nike slogan – Just Do It, and add 'Just now only, here only' to it!

22. Na rahe baans na baje bansuri

This is a very popular and old Indian folklore. What it says is that if the cause is not there, then how can there be any effect?

In day-to-day management we are often faced with problems. Subordinates and colleagues tell us this is the problem or that is the problem. In our management studies, we are taught that almost half the time spent in a problem solving situation is actually to identify the cause, identify what is the problem. Quite often we confuse the cause and the effect, the problem and the symptom. Quite often we call the symptom the problem. This happens because the symptoms tend to manifest themselves at various levels and so even if we are able to "peel away" the first and the second layers of the symptoms, what we may get may be yet another layer of symptom and the problem may still remain unidentified.

Therefore it is extremely important to go deep into the heart of the matter (the 'core' of the matter so to speak) and identify the true problem (the cause). In any problem solving situation we can look upon it in two ways :

- There is a problem. Once we have identified it, how to solve it,
- Having solved it, can we brainstorm and come up with an action plan which will ensure that such a problem will never come up again for the rest of our life?

It is the second aspect which is the crucial one. As we solve the problem can we also simultaneously identify ways and means which eliminate the chances of the problem developing again? Thus, one by one, very systematically we are making life simple. Soon a situation will come when most problems of a recurring nature have been permanently eliminated and we, as managers, in our department of areas of work are relaxed and can spend our energies towards new ideas and developmental efforts.

So, the question is how to eliminate the problem (the cause) permanently? How to ensure that it never ever crops up again?

There is a legendary story of the well known Chanakya, who was pricked by a thorn of a plant in the evening while going home from the palace. He goes back to the palace and picks up a spade and begins the homeward journey again. On the way he digs each and every thorny plant from its roots and puts *dahi* (curd) into the hole. This ensured that the root is eliminated and if still anything is left behind,

the *dahi* will destroy it. Therefore never again will there be a thorn on that route to prick Chanakya ! *Na rahe baans na baje bansuri*

The learning from this story is as follows :

- Identify the problem (root of the plant, not the plant, nor the thorn).
- Eliminate the cause forever (dig plant from its roots)
- Ensure the cause cannot be born again (curd)
- Be very thorough, meticulous and ruthless in this whole operation

Therefore *Na rahe baans na baje bansuri*

How can we apply the theorem learnt in the above paragraphs to our day-to-day managerial life? Let us see some examples from our Company which will illustrate this:

The Problem of lumps :

In early 1988, we encountered the problem of lumps of Lupolen which come out from Rommelag machine whenever we start it or shift to a new batch. We tried many ways, to cut it into smaller pieces so that we can put it in the grinding machine. We tried to cut with a saw, we tried to slice it with a butcher's knife, we tried so many things. All our ideas failed and we started selling the lumps as they were at a low price.

After a few months, we picked up the subject again. We thought of purchasing a bigger grinder and went to see one grinder in a company called Co-Ex. Even that big knife never accepted the lumps and when we explained the problems to the production manager of that company he made a very simple statement 'there should not be any lumps'. This was a very philosophical statement he made and it is important to understand it.

If we say there is a problem, the solution is that there should be no problem. This seems to be a bit foolish at the first instance but if we go deeper and analyse, what is being stated is to identify the cause (the problem) and eliminate it forever.

When we apply this principle to the problem of lumps we realised that when the parison comes out hot from the Rommelag machine, if we cut it into small pieces while it is hot, it will be very easy (like a hot knife cutting through butter).

So the butcher's knife was brought back and a small chopping plate made. Now as soon as the hot lump comes out from the Rommelag

machine, one person chops it up with the butcher's knife into small pieces which are later-on put in the grinding machine.

Therefore there are no lumps! *Na rahe baans na baje bansuri*

The problem of Potassium Permanganate:

We were using PP (a black coloured powder) to heat IPA for fumigation purposes. Once the PP got mixed up with Activated Carbon (it is difficult to identify as both materials look similar) and we had to drain a whole batch. So we said that the problem should not be there and therefore decided to eliminate the use of PP. Now to heat the IPA into vapours instead of using PP we use a heating mantle.

If there is no PP it can never get mixed up with charcoal. If there is no cause how there can be an effect? *Na rahe baans na baje bansuri*

The problem of mixing up envelopes:

Quite often envelopes in our post department got mixed up and confused. Papers pertaining to Pharma Traders in Jabalpur got posted to Pharma Agencies, Nagpur. The party obviously will not tell us. The mistake could only be realised when many days pass, and we telephone the party for payment and he says that he has not received any documents.

Now it would not be desirable to have one clerk put the papers in the envelope and another clerk rechecking whether it is correctly put or not. Similarly, it would not be a good idea to ask an officer level person to do this, because that would be underutilising his capabilities. When we applied the theorem of *Na rahe baans na baje bansuri* we realised that the answer is very simple. We used a window envelope whereby the name and address typed by the computer on the invoice was folded in such a way that the address appears in front of the window for the postman to see.

Whatever is the address inside the envelope, is seen outside. There is no separate address on the envelope. The envelope outside and inside is one. Remove the problem by its roots. *Na rahe baans na baje bansuri*

We can go on and on and on and on with many such examples, but I think the basic idea is clear. Do you have any examples to share: I would love to put them on record.

Na rahe baans na baje bansuri.

23. Books I have read this year

Everyone should read books, more so an educator. A person who can read but does not read is to be pitied because she is worse than a person who cannot read.

Reading may be broad-spectrum and not limited to one's subject. Read everything - film, fiction, poetry, science, literature, philosophy, technology - whatever; including but not limited to magazines. When an educator reads books, she becomes a role-model for her students and brings in her class a whole new and exciting universe.

Reading will not happen by wishful thinking. One needs to push oneself to read. An educator may make a rule to visit the library frequently – say, spare at least one period in a week for browsing. She may make a list of books which she wants to read in the year. She should also keep a record of list of books read along with their author's name and date read; and give stars out of five.

Educators should read books which their students read, and see films which the students see – this will keep them 'in touch with the pulse' of their students, and they will not become 'out-dated'. This is an advice Narayanmurthy of Infosys gave in an interview.

24. Enriching your lesson plans

When I am coming back after taking a class (or giving a speech somewhere) I get many thoughts – *arre*, I could have said this; *aah*, I forgot to give this example; *oh oh* this point I completely forgot ! This often happens to educators when they take a class and come back to their seat and take a pause. Especially due to certain questions some student asked.

That is the time to write down these things, in small bullet-points, on the lesson plan page itself (maybe at the bottom, in small handwriting, in a different colour pen) while it is fresh in the mind.

Usually during summer, educators prepare (or update) the lesson plans. They do a good job by working in detail, lesson by lesson, period by period, for the entire next academic year. By adding to them, on a daily basis, these lesson plans get enriched, and next year when educators sit with the lesson plans, they will be greatly able to improve upon them. Do this for three years, and you have very high quality lesson plans – a great treasure!

In JS the educators have been practicing it since a year and it has greatly helped them. All the 4 co-teachers and 3 Hindi teachers sit for 8-10 minutes at 1:20 pm and reflect over the plan that was done. Feedback/Suggestions written are on the page with different coloured ink. In April / May when we plan for the next year the suggestions really helped in enriching the plan.

In MS and SS, on Saturdays, all teachers of a certain subject meet, discuss how the syllabus is going on, share some ideas, materials, resources and experiments. This greatly helps enhance lesson plans and build team spirit.

25. Add more qualifications to yourself

It is important for an educator to keep studying. It's also important to be well-qualified. As far as possible, all educators should try to be "Postgrad-BEd." Eklavya encourages its educators to do courses through IGNOU or other universities along with their jobs. In certain cases Eklavya also provides financial help. Some people say that once the educators become BEd they will leave Eklavya, so we should not encourage. While this may be partly true, it is Eklavya's basic philosophy and it just can't help encouraging people to learn more and more!

One more point. The desire to get 'qualifications' should not become an obsession. If there is an educator who is BSc, and she works for a few years and gets MSc and BEd then that is enough. There is no need then to keep obtaining qualifications, just for fun. If she is a SS educator and wants to do MPhil or PhD that's understandable. But we should not become a prisoner of 'just getting qualifications'.

Once such an educator came to me and asked, sir now I am post-grad BEd, now what should I do? I said – now practice and become a good teacher!

That is the main thing! *Usko bhool na jaana !*

One teacher did not have much faith in the IGNOU BEd. She thought what would it teach her that she is already not aware of. It will only be bookish and full of old theories. But she joined the course and after the first workshop confided in Sir, - "I was mistaken. Though the faculty was not excellent, they did teach us some aspects of teaching e.g. micro teaching skill, which is very much needed in a classroom. I was not aware of many small things."

Bottom line - Teachers should be open to learn even from the most unlikely situation or person.

Professional training helps – it sharpens the saw.

26. Tu to doosare house ki hai, phir yahaan kyon madad kar rahee hai ?

Once I overheard one educators saying to another – *tu to Prahlad House ki hai, to Aruni House ki madad kyon kar rahee hai ?* I felt very bad.

In Eklavya educators are expected to be as much part of small parts and events of the school as of the school in-toto.

This can be illustrated thus. Every two years a teacher is assigned a new house. She is expected to be loyal to the House, identify new talent and see how the house can do better. But she can go beyond this defined role and suggest or help other houses where her talent is of much help. For e.g. Prahlad House may not have a teacher good in singing and so a teacher from Aruni House can help the House prepare for a singing competition or presentation in the assembly.

During Phoenix (our inter-house play competition held in MS) we invite parents as Jury members. Their own children may be acting and taking part in the play of their house. Yet we believe they will judge in a fair manner – rising above any petty mindedness due to the same and rise to the occasion and give a fair judgment.

We see fragmentation in our country. There is state-wise fragmentation – one is a Gujarati or Marathi or Punjabi or Tamilian. Then within a state there is further fragmentation – for e.g. in Maharashtra – one is a Maratha or a Kokanastha or a Brahmin and so on ...

The question is can we have multiple identities and roles simultaneously and do justice to each of them. In Eklavya we try to do this in our way by encouraging teachers and students to look and go beyond their defined roles.

27. Sensitivity of 'coordinators'

Once an educator, who was a coordinator for something told me that educators do not listen to her and in such a situation how can she do a good job of coordinating. I asked her to give me some names of educators who do not listen, at first she hesitated saying she does not want to tell, I told her that I will keep it confidential and no harm will be done, finally she told. I called some of those whose names she had given, almost all invariably said – sir, after taking 5 continuous periods she asks us to attend something, it is not possible, we need a break, why can't I do it some other time, I will still do the work, etc etc

So I called that coordinator educator and explained – if you will be sensitive to the time-tables of the people who you want to contribute, adjust so that they are also ok and *tumhara objective bhee poora ho jata hai.....*

Only by doing does one learn how to do.

28. Some incidents and reflections...

I am busy – I have no time

Once Smita ma'am told Reema ma'am come let us make the list for Investiture her reply was "I am busy"; next day Smita said let us make invigilation schedule for the UT – reply again was "ma'am – today I have not time at all". Sometime later she said would you help me in typing exam syllabus reply by Reema ma'am (as usual) was "I have still not taken my lunch - I will definitely do it tomorrow." Q - *How long a teacher should wait for work to be done with some other teacher ?*

I was absent so no one informed my class students.....

Parents were supposed to come for a meeting on Saturday. But we cancelled the meetings due to rain. Reema was absent on Friday when it was announced that the meetings are cancelled. Next day when she came to school she realized that the parents have not got the message - she had to call up from school to inform the parents. Q - *what is an educator expected to do on the day she is absent ? What will she tell a student who does such a thing - could you not have telephoned a friend and tried to find out aaj kya kya hua, kya homework mila, etc?*

I will learn on my own and do a good job

This year Smita had volunteered to teach Geography. It is not her subject. She had a hope that she will get help from other educators teaching the same subject. She went with queries to those subject teachers - but they (due to some reasons) could not help her. Smita decided to learn on her own. A true Eklavya. She spent much time searching and clearing her doubts. Finally she got satisfaction of doing a good job by learning on her own.

On the spot problems

Before every exam the Examination Committee puts up the schedule for the invigilation duty. Educators are asked to check and inform if there is any problem. Reema was invigilating in the class. Smita passed by - she called her and said next period I have class and my invigilation duty is also there what shall I do?

Some teachers go to class for invigilating without taking necessary things like red pen, stapler, pins etc and then ask what to do? Thus they create on the spot problems for other teachers.

Student come early.....

Reema ma'am wanted to have an extra class for Biology so she called students early - but she only forgot to come!

Class 10 first term exams were approaching and economics syllabus was lagging - so Smita ma'am called her students early on Friday and she missed her bus !

In Class 12 a difficult chapter was going on in Chemistry. Reema told students to come for CDS and students were waiting...

29. Do you know the names of driver/conductor/housekeeping lady?

When asked this question, and the educator does not know the answer, I feel sad. Eklavya *main aisa nahin hona chaheeye*. But the good news is – this rarely happens!

The educator is ultimately the key person in Eklavya, ultimately all we are providing to the child is essentially through her. But her effectiveness is greatly enhanced by a huge machinery which works behind the stage - and it includes drivers, conductors, housekeeping ladies, gardeners, *chowkidars*, *majoor*, and many many others, including her own colleagues and Principal.

One simple expectation is to know these people by name, to call them respectfully by name, and to cheerfully wish good-morning every day!

30. People leaving, head held high

Riya (name changed) was a very good educator; we had known her for two years. She came and told me that she will not be able to continue in the next academic year.

We have a system in Eklavya that by end-Dec educators let us know whether or not they will be continuing in the next academic year. The rule requires all educators to undertake that they will not leave the School during an academic year (i.e. during the period June 1 – April 30, March 1 – Feb 28 for Senior School). Rather they must plan by December end every year (September end for SS) and inform if they would be discontinuing from the subsequent academic year. This allows Eklavya to identify a replacement who can take over after a period of working parallel and handing over.

Riya came and told me that her father is shifting to Surat for some health reasons and that there is no option for her but to shift to Surat; and that she was very happy here but...and so on. I tried to ask her to wait for a few weeks and see if the transfer to Surat actually takes place, she came back again after a week or so and said no, this is final, she will not be continuing next year.

She was a good teacher, I did not want her to go, I felt sorry to see her go, but there was no option. So I wished her all the best, gave my blessings, and also told her that I'll pray that soon she will get married to a very good boy who is settled in Ahmedabad and who lives conveniently on one of our bus routes ! This is my standard prayer on such occasions ! She laughed and appreciated my prayer.

A couple of weeks later I got a phone call from a company (I knew the company, also knew well the person who phoned me) asking me if I had any objections if they recruited Riya for a certain position. I know that if I had objected, they would have selected another candidate and left Riya alone. But of course I did not do this, I said she is a good girl, and I am sure she will be an asset to the new organisation, I feel sorry to lose her, but that I wish her all the best. I did not think it appropriate to confront Riya with this detail, so I kept quiet.

On 14 April, after the end of the academic year, after the last HRD, she came to me and told me that shifting to Baroda is cancelled (Baroda ? I thought it was Surat ! But you know, when people lie, they do not remember what they said, so they are quite easily 'caught') and that she has taken up a job in such-and-such company. I told her that I knew this; they had asked me several months ago. I wished her all

the best, blessed her, and suggested that this is a small world, things get known, lies do not work, why not leave holding your head held high, instead of like a thief. Why not leave in goodwill. After a good innings, leave nicely, with friendship, people should think well of you, and not talk bad things behind your back. I think she understood. I hope she did!

Another case. Chitra gave her Principal some story about shifting to Chennai. We tried our best to retain her. But she was very clear. Then a teacher from another school in Ahmedabad (who had worked with Eklavya earlier and had some loyalty feelings) sent us a message that Chitra is joining that school. So going to Chennai with her husband was really not true! It was just a story! I called her and confronted her with this information, she flatly denied this and said sir, this is not true. A month later she left us, and a week thereafter we heard that she has joined that other school! What did she achieve? Now about a hundred teachers in Eklavya know her story, think of her as an untruthful person, etc etc. Could she not have told us straight that she wants to join that school, that she will complete the academic year and then leave? She need not even have disclosed the name of that school, could have just told us, sir I don't want to name the school, but I will leave after the academic year.

Why do people do this? Do they not realise that it actually hurts them and their reputation? On the other hand, some teachers have left us very nicely. They have told the truth, they have completed their commitments, and then nicely left. We even gave a farewell to such teachers. Sometimes they telephone, or send an email, or even come and meet. And it feels good. Old colleagues meeting, remembering shared times. It's nice.

Being transparent is a good thing, it is in their favour, and it adds character.

It is important that people in your workplace look up to you and hold you in high regard. But it is even more important that people think highly of you and remember you with fondness when you are no more a part of the school 'physically'. The second part is difficult to strive for. In today's selfish world we are all into some 'transaction' – give and take. When I praise a colleague it is but obvious that she will feel good and may do the same for me (this is in general, there are always exceptions- internal locus of control types). But to be remembered and loved when you are not going to return the gesture needs a lot of hard work.

31. Buying books

In Eklavya we love books, so we love buying books!

Any educator is allowed to buy any book she wants to read (later on make a voucher and claim the money and put the book in the library). It is enough that one person wants to read a book!

Educators and Principals go on a 'shopping-spree' a couple of times in a year, and buy books! Whatever they like, whatever they want to read, whatever they think students will like to read.

During functions, we never give flowers as a gift while 'welcoming' someone. What is the use? In a few hours the bouquet will be dead, and the flowers will be thrown in to the gutter. A book will be read, and re-read. It may be loaned or given away. It will still be read and re-read. It does not have an 'expiry date'.

Reading is very important. Students must read as many and as varied books as they can lay hands on. Something read in a book that strikes you or forces you to think becomes a part of your memory and at the appropriate occasion can be quoted in a speech, presentation, or essay.

The more one reads – different kinds of books and literature – historical, informative, biographies, novels, essays, fiction, science, poetry and classics – it goes a long way in improving and honing language skills.

Also when one is a voracious reader it develops in oneself the ability to understand and grasp various viewpoints since one can fall back upon occasion that they have read earlier. The ability is also enhanced because they have read, chewed and mulled over various similar and contradictory thoughts and views, opinions and actions in a non-threatening manner – i.e. by reading books!

Just before summer vacations, educators should encourage students to borrow many many books for the holidays – library *khaali ho janee chaheeye* !

32. I have finished my work, can 'I' go home?

Once all the educators were asked to stay back (it was a Saturday, they were scheduled to go at 1, some work was not done as per requirements, and we thought it was important that we all *finish this work and then* go home). Around 12.50 one educator telephoned me – Sir, I have finished my work, can 'I' go home?

I felt sad upon hearing this. There is something called – *maine apana kaam khatam kar diya, ab main doosaron ki madad kartee hoon.....*

One individual in the organization completing her work is not work done! The school community is an institution and until all work is complete – hers or theirs – work is incomplete.

During and after the first term or final term exam the educators sit and fill in report cards and make the computerized mark sheets. Some class teachers finish their job quickly and then help the others by calling out marks to be fed into the computer, rechecking the computer mark sheet with the manually filled register to see all entries are correct and coordinating with various subject teachers who fill in the remarks in the report card.

Thus everybody pitches in and actually the process becomes systematic and organized – each one helping the other and also teaching one another. They also discover loop holes and difficulties and take care of them the next time such work has to be done.

Once an educator in JS told me that when they have to stay back, they make a positive thing out of it and say to each other – *aaj stay-back stay-back khelainge?* Nice!

33. Old extra books in the library-giving away-never knew it will be so much appreciated

Every year, various book publishers send to Eklavya the latest edition of many of their text-books, from class 1 through 12, in the hope that our educators will go through them, like them, and convince the school to prescribe that one as the text book.

This is a healthy practice. Even though we can prescribe only one text-book, it is interesting for educators to go through other text-books, gives them many ideas. And every 2 or 3 or 4 years, we do change a text-book, and switch over to something else and try it out.

These copies then pile-up in the library (there is a separate shelf for 'publisher's copies') and then, about once every three years, we pull it out and throw the old ones away. Nowadays we do this exercise every year.

Instead of 'throwing away', we display them in one large hall for a day, and invite everyone in Eklavya (educator or staff) to go there and pick up as many books as they want, to be used for children in their homes or relatives or friend's children. Whatever are still left, are displayed in Core House and everyone invited to take away whatever they want.

This is very much appreciated. Many people come and tell me- sir, thank you very much, etc etc

34. Principal ke paas le jaaongi.....

Once a student told me about her class teacher - “Sir, woh baar baar dhamaki detee hai, Rajal ma’am ke paas le jaaongi....”

Educators sometimes threaten a student (to take them to the principal or some such thing). Threats do not work. They reduce the educator’s authority and signal her weakness and helplessness. They may increase the student’s misbehaviour.

All of us know the story of the boy who shouted – *sher! sher!* The whole village came to save him, but he said he was only joking. The second time the same thing happened. But the third time the *sher* (tiger) actually came but no villager came to help the boy who was eaten alive.

Nuclear weapons are called ‘deterrent’. *They are to be used by not using them!*

If a teacher consistently threatens the students, she is actually giving away her autonomous power of the classroom and exhibits helplessness. They are saying- I am helpless, *yeh mere se nahin sambhalte*, I am not capable of handling this...and so on. Over time, the students get used to these threats, and develop ‘coping strategies’.

Once I asked a class 9 student about interactions with his dad, he said – Dad *to office se late aate hain, aate hee chillate hain, kyon TV dekh raha hai, and homework kiya? Nahin kiya? To TV kyon dekh raha hai, chalo pehale homework karo...* When I asked, then what do you do, he coolly replied, “nothing, *thodee der ke baad chup ho jaate hain !*”

When a teacher assertively defines her classroom rules, and takes immediate action when they are not followed she sends a message that rules are to be followed. A quiet and sure method where she established that she is in control, without resorting to shouting or threats works wonders and is a better, long term solution.

35. Staff-room *main bada shor hai*, I can't work there!

Once an educator told me this, I was sad. Why do people talk loudly in the staff-room? Why should a staff-room become a 'common-room'? This happens more so to the one on the ground floor. Is there a way out?

36. Special children – take to camp?

Once Gayatri ma'am went to Jambughoda camp and was wondering whether to take Priya (name changed- a Down syndrome special child in Eklavya) or not, and whether to take a 'special educator' or not.

If we take a special educator then we are saying – this girl is not my responsibility, let one person specifically take care of her, I am too busy with all kinds of other things.

If we don't take Priya with us we are saying – you are a special child, it will be very bothersome to take you with us, we will have you only in school, sorry!

We should take Priya to Jambughoda, all students and educators should be addressed together before going – this is what we are going to do, everyone is expected to chip-in and help, and we will try our best that she takes part in every activity, including rock climbing!

37. Three anecdotes from Leena Sarabhai

Leena Sarabhai is the sister of Vikram Sarabhai and no less an illustrious person herself, co-founder (along with Madame Maria Montessori herself) of the finest school for children of the age group 2.5 to 5.5 years – Shreyas. Madame Maria Montessori stayed here for a year.

Leenaben was born in 1914 and is now old. Very few people go to meet her today. She likes me a lot and I like her a lot. She loves to talk - many things - her experiences - her life - many things. When I go to her she makes up her quota of talking! Many of the things she says I have heard often - repeated maybe as many times as I have met her- yet these stories and the experience of meeting her have touched me deeply.

J Krishnamurthy once spent a month in the home of the Sarabhais when Leenaben was 14 years old. Later she wrote a booklet recollecting that month. She gave me a copy to read. I read it and went back to her wanting to ask her a question. I had folded the top-of-the-page which was related to my question. As I asked her my question she took the book and lovingly unfolded that fold and with a lot of pain in her voice asked me - 'you do this to books do you?'
"Yes", I replied. (It did not hit me then)
'It must be hurting the paper, isn't it?' she said.
I just gaped at her!

Hundreds of times she has asked me - 'Sunilbhai, how can a teacher *shout* at her students asking them to *keep quiet*?' And I have seen this happening in hundreds of schools and hundreds of classrooms! And every time I remember Leenaben !

Once I was visiting Shreyas with her and saw a wooden-board about 2 ft X 3 ft in a corner. On the board were written numbers vertically from 1 to 10 and then 11 to 20 and so on upto 91 to 100. The board was dusty since out of use. I asked her - 'Why don't you use it?'

'Don't you see? It is not a square, it is a rectangle', said Leenaben.

I did not quite realise until lightening struck! When you are teaching 1 to 10 and 11 to 20 and so on the board needs to be a square matrix. Or else you are telling the students that 1 to 10 horizontally is different from that vertically or vice versa.

38. Taking photographs by parents in school functions – encouraged

When my daughter was in school and we would attend some functions, we were, as parents, not allowed to take photographs. I tried to 'explain' this to myself by saying that so many parents will get up and take photographs, make a nuisance of themselves, come in the way of other parents, block the view, etc etc. But I felt bad too, since it was quite cumbersome to go to the school, see the photos on the notice board, fill-up a form and order.

Once my daughter was a 'sunflower' in a play, and I remember I took a photo *chupke-chupke*, I was quite scared (imagine me, adult – scared!). It is one of the very few photos we have of her school programmes.

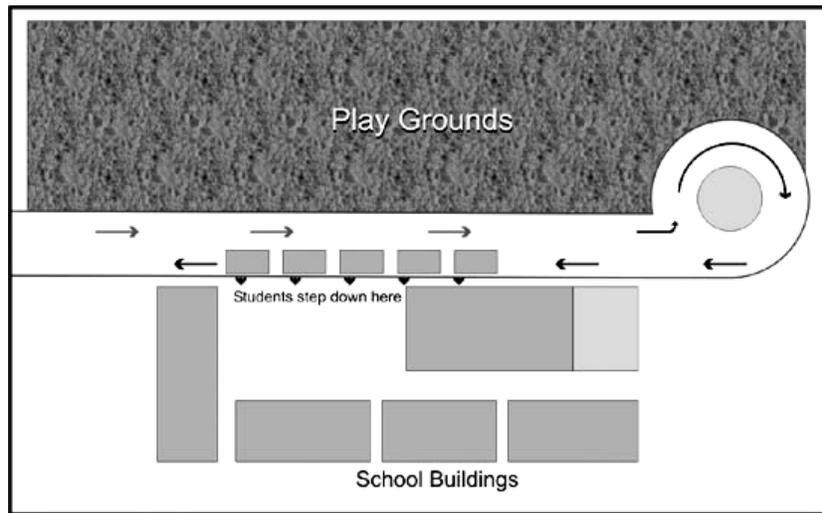
In Eklavya, for all school programmes (Sports Day, Euphoria, Phoenix, Prize-giving and Investiture ceremony, SS/JS Play etc) we make special arrangements for parents to go near the stage, take photos/videos and come back. All this, without much disturbing either the audience or the programme. A special team of educators oversees this and takes immediate corrective action (sometime being a bit strict with certain parents) on-the-spot.

We think it's not worth hiring an official professional photographer to photograph/video the entire function, and then 'sell' the photos/Cds. Each parent is interested in a couple of minutes footage, not the whole thing, so might as well let them do it themselves. The parents also feel a sense of being a 'part' of the programme rather than mere spectators.

39. Buses not reversing

When we designed the architectural and campus layout of Eklavya, one of the conditions to be satisfied was that buses will not reverse. So the whole campus is longitudinally cut into two. As the buses come in, they go straight, take a u-turn on a roundabout, and come back and stop. The students get down from the left of the bus and go to their respective buildings (all buildings are on one side of this internal road, and play-grounds on the other side)

Buses reverse after 10am, after all the three morning 'shifts' are over, and the students are inside the classrooms. Buses reverse in their parking positions. The drawing and photograph below clarify.



40. Educator's parents visit

Normally on 14th November (or a Saturday near that date) the parents of educators are invited to visit the Eklavya campus. They are often curious to see the place where their daughter works, its safety aspects, meet her colleagues, etc. Their need to know and ask questions is a valid need and should be addressed.

A bus leaves from Core House at 9.00 am, reaches school by 9.30, parents are greeted and welcomed, divided into smaller groups each accompanied by an educator who shows them around the school campus and answers all queries and doubts. This is followed by light snacks and departure at 1.00 pm.

One can see a sense of pride in their eyes when they leave. They now have a greater understanding towards the noble and challenging work their daughter or daughter-in-law is doing.

Of course, the school is open round the year and parents of educators can visit anytime.

41. Experience---Reflection---Action---Change---next Experience

How to find God?

Guru Nanak was never in favour of giving-up this world, leaving wife and children, becoming a *sadhu*, going to a *gufa* and meditating. He said we have to be in this world, in this *ghar-grihasthi*, we have to do *vyapaar*, and then we have to realise God.

Certain event occurs, we get angry, later on we regret, *aisa nahin karna chaheeye tha*, we promise to ourself that we'll improve, then the next event occurs....Only like this will we ever become 'wise' and slowly slowly realise the myth of this *sansaar* and while being in it we will yet be not of it.

So, all events and experiences are actually good – provided we 'reflect' and are able to be honest to ourselves. Of course *galatee uskee bhee thee*, but we have only to see what was 'my' role in it and how can I *sudharo* myself.

The more experiences we have, the more broad-spectrum (variety) the nature of these experiences, the more we reflectbetter it is!

42. Basic philosophy cannot be reviewed everyday!

We have some fundamental beliefs and philosophies in Eklavya. Some may not agree with them, that is ok. These are *our* set of beliefs. They include:

- No tuitions, they cause harm, dependence, etc etc
- Punctuality
- First day Last day of school
- Presence of both parents in IPEM/Home Visit

One new parent (or a new educator) disagrees with this, points out arguments. They are the *same arguments* again and again. We have gone through them, *after which* we have decided what we have decided.

We cannot discuss with every new parent all the arguments all over again. It is physically not possible. Then they say that you are closed minded, would you not like to review? Fair enough, but we cannot review basic things every day!

43. Open Debates on concerns and issues.

Many issues that are a part of the daily life in Eklavya or those reported in the media as 'current topics of public concern' are discussed and debated in an open forum during the Home period and the assembly. Sometimes a special open debate session is held in Eklavya Hall and educators and students across schools participate. . Such an 'open debate' leads to better understanding of the issue and a general awareness about its importance is created.

Some such issues in the last few years have been – Wood carving, Cutting a tree, Womb Renting and Use of a public Domain like Facebook.

Cutting a tree - A tree was cut in the Eklavya amphitheatre, to make way for a 100 more seats. In the morning it was there, happy. During the day it was cruelly cut and the dismembered pieces carted away in several trolleys and tractor trips. Next morning the area had already been concreted ! People were walking on the place totally unaware that just yesterday the tree was alive and happy ! Some students noticed and then this became an issue since some were disturbed and some took it in their stride as a part of necessity and modernization. Students debated in the assemblies, wrote poems and write-ups.

Wood Carving - The Ahmedabad Mirror (19 June, page 8) carried an article on three craftsmen from Ajmer (Puran brothers) who carve felled trees into sculptures. We thought it was a good idea, so we invited Pappu Puran to visit our school. He could not find any felled tree, so the idea generated was to do carving on a 'living' tree! We negotiated the prices etc and invited him to do one- if we like it we'll proceed further with the project; and if we do not like it, then we pay for that one, and story is over.

When the carving was being done on a tree outside MS, children visited the site to watch -but our environment friendly students were aghast! Though they appreciated the skill, they said that to carve out a figure from a living tree trunk is appalling.

"Stop the carving" they pleaded. The educators saw this as an opportunity to trigger off a debate. We asked the students that just because a stone is lifeless it is fine if it is carved and a tree being a living thing should be spared but *agar hum maante hain ki bhagwan kan ,kan mein base hain to patthar mein bhi to woh hain*. God is omnipresent so why this divide of living and non living- such points were raised to fuel their thinking.

They debated this for two days in the Home Period and then across the three schools i.e. JS, MS, and SS, students debated this issue in the assembly and took a vote. Some of the arguments given were:

Some said that as the bark is the dead part of the tree and since it really does not hurt the tree the carving is fine. Another counter argued that none of us have entered the soul of the tree so we really do not know the truth. One said that even dead cells, if someone will cut your hair without asking you and not the way you wanted it - will you like it? Is it the physical pain only or is there an emotional aspect also?

On and on it went - a very lively debate indeed! Children used their oratorical skills to the fullest thereby leaving us in a dilemma as what was to be done. It was a real *Dharma Sankat* and we searched for a Vikramaditya. According to the poll, about 80% wanted the carving to stop and 20% said that when there is a need for a certain action to be taken then at times we need to be cruel and as God is everywhere the argument does not hold good.

Both arguments are correct. They are strong. As is written on a poster in the SS garden - "In a well-trimmed garden, we see the 'restraint' of the Lord; and in the primeval forest we see His grandeur and freedom"

Finally Eklavya decided that carving on a living tree is not acceptable and should be stopped.

Womb Rental – In the recent past womb renting has become a much debated and conscientious issue.

A city called Anand, near Ahmedabad is supposed to be the 'womb renting centre' of the world. There is more debate and talk in Ahmedabad on this issue since it is so close.

We had a debating activity in Senior School that lasted two weeks. Almost all students from class 9, 10, 11 and 12 participated in this discussion. The debate was held during the morning assembly and the home periods and also during the day whenever possible.

Many students explored the internet and studied the moral, ethical, spiritual, social and economic aspects of the practice in great detail and did wonderful research and deductions.

Finally some students were selected and 16 of them debated in front of an audience of 150 students and educators.

It was a pleasure to listen to students deal with this issue with appropriate sensitivity. The atmosphere was emotionally charged due to the ethical and moral aspects and yet students were able to debate with dispassionate rationality. The comfort and ease was evident in their manner when they dealt with the subject that could many times be quite embarrassing to discuss in a public forum.

The entire process was an extremely stimulating and thought provoking experience. Some of the thoughts presented were -

One of the surrogate mothers in Anand said that the money she earned by renting her womb was used to cure her son's heart problem and the other used it for the dowry in her daughters marriage.

As far as legality is concerned it has been made legal by the law and the surrogate mother knows that she is carrying the child under a legal agreement so she won't get emotionally attached to the child.

If we take the example of a butterfly then its greatest difficulty is breaking open the cocoon. The same way a women's greatest difficulty is giving birth to a child after keeping it for 9 months. If a woman does not give birth to a child then she won't be able to bring up the child properly. Also I think that the woman giving her womb on rent can earn money in other ways than this.

My personal view is that adoption is better than surrogacy as it provides a ray of hope to orphan children.

Instead if controls, our laws actually promote surrogacy. For eg. The implanting of embryos into the womb of a surrogate mother is permitted as many as five times, compared to a maximum of two times in most other countries.

The womb rental business is flourishing in India because:

- It is banned in foreign countries; low cost of mothers on rent, In India mother can breed 5 fetuses, Easiest and fastest way of developing wealth.

Surrogacy in principle is not wrong, though it can be abused but I think that is where regulation and control come into play.

Among the students presenting the view, participants were selected by a Jury based on the comprehensiveness of their views; the sensitivity to the topic, the social, moral, legal repercussions & presentation for the final debate which was held in Eklavya Hall.

44. Mixed classrooms enhance learning

Some schools put all the academically brilliant students in one class, the not-so-intelligent ones in one class and the academic non-achievers in one class.

It is a well established theory by researchers and well known educationists like Shri Aurobindo, Jean Piaget and Krishnamurthi that mixed groups enhance classroom learning. Students in mixed groups – by religion, caste, economic status, intelligence, academic orientation, capability in sports, music, dance and emotional adjustment receive a wholesome exposure to all kinds of situations. At the end of the academic year total learning is more than in a case where the same types of students are together.

In Eklavya we mix the students as per the above criteria. We also change the class sections every year. Theor class-teacher also changes every year. In many schools the same set of students is with one class-teacher for four years. We believe it is important for the child to have many new experiences and know a new teacher every year. The child then has more adjustment capacity, looks forward to change – which is so essential now-a-days and is capable of accepting a new situation easily and working his way through it.

We therefore divide classes on a more or less random basis and every class has a healthy mix of intelligence, emotional adaptability, leadership qualities, and so on.