

ONLINE TEACHING SESSIONS

Online Teaching Sessions for a student belonging to the economically weaker section of the society. (Sep – Oct 2020)

ABSTRACT

Ongoing Online Teaching Sessions are being conducted by Volunteers, Legal Aid Centre, SLS Noida. The student belongs to the economically weaker section of the society and is unable to attend school due to the current pandemic.

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1. Concept Note:

At Symbiosis Law School, Noida, the Legal Aid Centre (LAC) undertakes various activities pertaining to legal awareness over the course of the year. In order to follow the same footsteps during our summer internship break, we decided to conduct online teaching sessions.

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown that followed, it has been difficult for people to go out and one of the biggest effects of this has been on the education system, with students unable to access school and learning material.

During this time, it is technology that has played a major role as it has been able to connect students and teachers from different parts of the country via online video lectures, live or otherwise.

2. Object:

The concept of online classes works well for private schools as well as for some government schools but we can't forget there might still be a particular segment of the society where not everyone has access to smart phones and laptops or even if they do, there are not enough for each child in the family, or maybe internet connectivity is an issue for them.

Keeping this in mind, there are different NGOs and non-profits as well as individuals who are working to facilitate virtual learning for such children, generally from economically weaker sections who either have no access to online classes or are unable to learn from them effectively. One such non-profit is Robin Hood Army, a zero-funds organization which operates all over the country and works towards various causes, including educating children. The lockdown could not dampen their spirits at all as they looked out for volunteers who could take virtual classes to ensure that there is no impediment to education and learning. We were a part of one such team of the Greater NOIDA chapter.

Classes are undertaken either via WhatsApp video calls or through normal phone calls depending on the availability. Preliminary Preparation:

After getting apprised that the aforesaid organization was looking for volunteers, we applied for the position through an online application at the official website of Robin Hood Academy. Soon we were contacted and within a week or so, they had provided us with the information of a 3rd grader who lives in Greater Noida and has not been able to start the new academic year at all. After talking to his mother who explained how for the last 3 months, he hasn't been studying at all as they weren't given books or syllabus by the school, we also talked to the student himself.

Conducting the programme:

The sessions started from 14th July and have been going on since then. Thrice a week, we do video calls where we discuss different topics relating to English, Hindi, Mathematics, E.V.S and G.K. Generally, these sessions are about an hour long, from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Though since he hasn't been given the actual text books for class 3 by his school yet, we follow the general outline of class 2-3 which at times seems more effectively as there is no set pattern that we have to follow.

3. Response of the target population:

The best part of this initiative is that the sessions are one on one which means that we are able to pay extra attention to just one person and see their growth. The student with whom we have been conducting these sessions is very interactive and doesn't shy away from asking questions.

At the same time, since it's not really a classroom and something more informal, it means that we are able to make the session more interactive and enjoyable for us and the student both by making a game of learning different things. For instance, when we wanted to explain the meaning

of "summary" and tell him how to make it more interesting while narrating it to others, we decided to make it a summary of one of the cartoon shows that he really enjoys. So, all he had to do was watch an episode of the show "*Little Singham*" and give us a summary the next day.

4. Future plan of action:

At the moment we are trying to learn the states and the map of India, as the idea of travelling is something he looks forward to. And while we are looking at the map there are so many other things that can be dealt with at the same time like the spelling of capitals in both Hindi and English as well as the four directions.

The future plan is to continue taking such sessions regularly to ensure that there is constant learning and all round development of the child.

5. Suggestion/Feedback:

We think that this is just one of the children out there who have been losing out on their fundamental Right to Education due to this lockdown, and as comparatively privileged ones, it is our duty to do something about it. The number of hours that a person can devote to such a cause is up to oneself, but if even three hours a week can make some difference someone's life then maybe we should try to take out that much time out of our schedule. More and more people should engage in such initiatives and come together to make education accessible to everyone as it has the potential to shape lives.

6. Conclusion/Remarks:

At first, this whole teaching experience was something that we were not familiar with as this was the first time that we were doing anything like this but over time, it has become a part of our week that we actually look forward to. There are times when we are the ones who are talking less and he is the one who is actually telling us fact about coconuts in

Kerala that he read somewhere. Those are our favourite parts because they go on to show the positive impact we have been able to create on the life of a child and at the same time also reminds us that there is still scope to do a lot more.

ANNEXURE I

