

## Meeting at Nehru Children's Museum

### Updating on the 3 workshops held till date

3 January 2018

Present: S Das Mollick, S Raman, R Banerji, D Kar, Debasish Mondal, Shankar S, R Sachdev, S Mukherji, Soma Dutt, Jayanthi Srikant, Deborina Roy, Ipsita Dutta, Kamal Banerji, Sayantan Mukherji, Mini Joseph, Partha Bandyopadhyay, Supratik Sur Roy

Invitees: S Bhattacharya, Mrinal Mukherji, Suman Majumder, Supratik Sur Roy, Paramita Mukherji

1. The meeting began with Asst Secretary, coordinator of the Vigyan Prasar Project, Cinema in the Classroom giving a brief recap of the preparatory stage for the workshops and the process followed in planning and executing the workshop.

- She spoke of how the project was initiated through a dialogue between Nimish Kapoor of Vigyan Prasar and the Secretary S Das Mollick after a successful Workshop for science teachers using Vigyan Prasar films during the 7<sup>th</sup> National Science Film Festival in February 2017. 53 teachers from across educational boards attended and were interested enough to demand a video editing workshop to enhance their skills and subsequently a workshop was held in Mach at Satyapriya Roy college of Education and separately for Kendriya Vidyalaya teachers in April.
- A proposal was sent in May for conducting workshops in 5 districts of Bengal and received approval in June with the final official sanction in September 2017.
- Meanwhile Partner organisations were contacted and venues finalised:
  - i. Krishnath College School, Berhampore,
  - ii. Ahead Initiatives in Bagmundi, Purulia and Kalchini, Alipurduar,
  - iii. Loreto Day School, Dharamtala, Kolkata
  - iv. Dept of Education, University of Bankura

The Puja vacations saw a flurry of activities with several meetings to finalize the program schedule, the sessions to be included, the teacher profile, drafting of letters to officials and to school principals, and resource material development.

- i. Rupali Sachdev was instrumental in developing a Ice Breaker Activity which focused on the visual medium and demonstrating how the AV medium can elicit multiple responses
  - ii. The workshop would be in 3 phases: Phase 0 would be demonstrating a film based lesson plan to the teacher participants with a live student audience, Phase 1 would be skill building of teachers and developing TLM using the VPfilms, the actual workshop process; Phase 2 would be videography in some of the teacher's classrooms after a few months.
  - iii. A rubric was developed to guide the teachers on how to develop TLM using film clips
  - iv. Vigyan Prasar films arrived and were viewed, discussed and selected. Certain films which were selected for the student interaction session were translated and dubbed in Bangla.
  - v. After due deliberation resource material was prepared, translated, printed and copied for distribution at the workshops. Selected films were copied and files prepared.
- We were extremely lucky to have located some excellent resource persons for the teams: S Bhattacharya a retired school Principal and decorated educationist, Dr M Mukherji, a

proponent of educational pedagogy, S Majumder science teacher and promoter of TLM using AV medium and S Sur Roy, a film studies teacher.

- Coordination was set up with the Govt Department of Education, meetings set up and letters officially given to the authorities informing them of the proposed workshops. Local level education and other Govt dept were contacted by partner organisations.
- A visit was made to Berhampore in early November to finalize and check the venue and to coordinate with the local school principals to ensure sufficient participation from their teachers.
- The 3 workshops were conducted successfully and the detailed reports would follow. D Kar ended saying that as a Pilot Project of what may become a national project this stage was extremely crucial and important in setting the right path ahead.

2. S Das Mollick thanked individuals who had contributed to the project: Mr Partha Bandhopadhyay for his translation work, the new resource persons for their contributions in planning and executing the workshops, Rupali for selecting the activity to demonstrate the power of the audio visual medium, Supratik for coining the name 'Boi theke Beriye', D Mandal and S Shankar for continuing to lend their support and ready participation, Sayantan for his painstaking and diligent technical support and all members for their moral support.

3. There were then 3 detailed video presentations of the workshops conducted at Berhampore, Purulia and Kalchini.

4. Our new resource persons were asked to share their experience:

- a) S Bhattacharya spoke of how she had gained as an educator from the experience. Doubts on how one could fulfil the needs of the present day students, children of the millennium, were put to rest with this experience as technology based learning is indeed the way forward. She expressed surprise that there were only 26 participants from 10 schools and said that phase 2 was all important to see if the training imparted was translated into action in the classroom. There is a need to convey the importance of this workshop to school principals to ensure the teachers have proactive support from school authorities and hence inviting principals to attend the workshop was also important. Mrs. Bhattacharya reiterated that we should not ignore the fact that in Berhampore we did not get 30 participants. This little figure points to the fact that either principals do not yet realize the importance of a session like this or teachers are not yet keen to pick up the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills. Hence the Berhampore workshop does not really reflect the bigger picture in the field of education.
- b) Mrinal Mukherji spoke of how this was not ICT or even AV in the classroom but cinema in the classroom and hence gave the workshop an added dimension. He felt the recreation of a classroom in the workshop was a unique and effective tool. The choice of activities and films for all the workshops seem to be appropriate and one needs to be able to sustain the interest of the teachers and concretize their enthusiasm into action. The workshop was unique in that it taught, unlike other workshops conducted by Govt department, not only the use of ICT in the classroom but how one can use ICT to develop TLM. MM promised to organise a successful workshop and arrange for the suitable teachers for the same.
- c) Suman Majumder had a pictorial collage of his Kalchini workshop experience and urged BP to ensure that there should be either a WhatsApp group or Mail group to keep the teachers and resource persons connected for regular feedback and encouragement. He suggested a system of rewards to keep the teacher's morale up and to urge them to take more and more lessons using AV based TLM.

- d) Supratik Sur Roy commented on how parents earlier disapproved of reading, then TV and films and now it was social media and 'screen time'. The project is unique in showing how this screen time can be used effectively by students and teachers both. There was a time when teachers, especially in Govt schools didn't give much attention to the electronic medium but they had to re educate themselves as today all official communication is by means of mail and apps.
- e) S Shankar spoke of his experience in arranging for the technical sessions in 2 of the 3 workshops and it was a difficult exercise as one had to adjust to the equipment and AV arrangements and learn to be innovative and fire-fight crisis situations.
  - Ipsita Dutta, teacher with Loreto Day School, Dharamtala, the venue of the upcoming workshop on 12-13 January shared her expectations for the workshop stressing that the teachers wanted something concrete related directly to the subjects. The rubric was shared with her to explain how the teachers would locate suitable portions themselves in the given films.

It was proposed by Subha Das Mollick that Mrs. Sharmistha Bhattacharya be offered the post of the second Vice President of Bichitra Pathshala. This post has been vacant almost ever since the inception of this organization. Mrs. Bhattacharya said that she has to become a member first before accepting the responsibility of Vice Presidentship.

Mr. S.V Raman, the Vice President of Bichitra Pathshala gave the vote of thanks and expressed gratitude to Nehru Children's Museum for allowing us to use the room for the meeting.

The meeting ended with some New Year sweets and promises of better things to come in the year ahead.

- Report prepared by Devika Kar