

Vasudha Kilambi

APNA Experience Essay

Hi! My name is Vasudha Kilambi, I'm 15 years old and I am attending John Jay High School. This summer I was fortunate enough to be able to volunteer my time to teach 7th grade students English in India. Since we were in India for such a short period of time, I was only able to spend one day with all the students, but even in this one day I learned so much about the culture of life the students endure and I hope to have taught them as much as I could've. The school I chose to volunteer is Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya in Markapuram, Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh.

The night before my workshop, myself, my mother, and my uncle who is a chemistry teacher at the JNV School met up with the principal, Mrs. Rukmini Devi to go over the schedule of the events and took a small tour of the school. I was pleasantly surprised by the openness of the whole campus when compared to our US schools. The morning of the workshop I was terrified. I had a million thoughts running through my head. Would the students like me? What if they didn't learn anything? What if they didn't like the activities I had planned, what then? I threw all these thoughts to the side, hoping they wouldn't affect my teaching. Every morning, the students had an assembly, so I thought I'd go watch to see what exactly happens. Compared to the school I go to where the sophomore class itself consists of at least 600 people, the entire school, which is grades 7-12, has only 350 students.

Since I was only able to do a one day workshop, I decided to teach the students grammar and English language skills. I chose the 7th grade because they were youngest students in the school and I felt I would have the biggest impact on them. There were a total of 80 kids in the 7th grade and due to the school not having a classroom big enough to hold all 80 at once, we decided to do in 2 sections of the grade.

In order for me to get to know everyone, I asked them all to introduce themselves and tell me something that they like to do. I found out that most of the kids who studied and boarded at this school came from small villages, but in order to get into the school, they had to learn English so they all knew how to speak but it was very minimal. I made it a priority to get the kids to speak a little more English so I made a rule for them to only speak English in class that day. I noticed that every student kept calling me ma'am, so I told them to call me Akka instead, since I wasn't that much older than them anyways. Prior to leaving, I picked and printed out 2 passages, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s, I Have a Dream Speech and Washington Irving's, and Rip Van Winkle. I created a couple of guided questions for the students to answer so that they can follow along in case they didn't understand. I was taken aback by how eager they all were to learn. After we went through the passages, I played and taught a lot of educational games to the students. The first game we started with was Hangman. I started out with short and easy words but as they got the hang of it, I chose complicated words that I thought they may not know so they'd learn new words along with having fun.

After this we took 45 minute breakfast break and got right back into the classroom. The kids had a lot of questions about the life in USA and how the school systems are here so we had a small Q&A session as and segue back into the lesson. The next game we played was called scrambled sentences. I divided the students into groups of 10 people each and handed them a stack of index cards. Each card had a word on it and the students had to put the words in a specific order to form a sentence. This exercise taught them organization with their words as well as grammar/spelling skills and working as part of a team. Following this game, we started to close our first session up with Taboo. We split the room up into two teams: boys and girls and had them pair up. One team of two from the boy's side and another team from the girl's side came up front to the board. One person from each team would stand facing the class and the other person would be in front of them facing the board. To start the game, I would write a word on the board in English and the teammate facing the board had to describe that word in English to their partner without saying the actual word. Whichever team says the word first wins a point for their overall gendered team. We played this for a while as the kids really enjoyed it and put their English skills to the test. Once this was over, we ended the session by giving each student a little goodie bag that had a book, pencil and a pack of gummy bears in it. The students were very thankful and I felt really good that I was able to make an impact on them. After the first session was over we took a lunch break and moved onto the second session of students. I asked for constructive criticism from my mom and cousin who were in the room along with me during the first session on what I could do better in the second session and they told me I had to speak louder and slower as the kids from the first session had a little trouble understanding my fast speaking English. Taking this into consideration, I did the second session in the same format as I did in the first one and was given the same overwhelming/exciting response. Once we left the classroom from the second session a huge number of students came and thanked me for the fun day they had and for the books they had gotten. It felt really nice to give back to these students.

We brought a couple of games from the US for the kids to play and donated a bag full of books to the JNV School's library which we hoped the students would enjoy reading and playing with on any free time they have. I want to thank my mom for giving me tons of support throughout this whole journey, and Ms. Nagaveni Puttaraju from NSF for helping and guide me with the process, and my uncle Mr. Venu Gopal for helping to setup the event at the school and lastly Mrs. Rukmini Devi who is the principal of the school for allowing me to teach at their institution. This whole experience has been a very rewarding one which I will never forget. I'm already looking forward to next time!

Photo Journal of my time at the School – July 20th 2018

School Assembly in the morning.



Goodie Bags for Kids



In the classroom, exercising the activities.



7th grade Section A&B Class Pictures



Meeting with the Principals of Prakasam District JNV School.



With Mrs. Rukmini Devi and my uncle Mr. Venu Gopal





జవాహర్ నవోదయ విద్యాలయ-2, కల్సుజువలపాడు, ప్రకాశం జిల్లా, ఆం. ప్ర.
JAWAHAR NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA-No.2: KALUJUVVALAPADU-PRAKASAM (Dist.) -
ANDHRA PRADESH - 523241

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NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA SAMITI - HYDERABAD REGION

An autonomous Organization under Ministry of Human Resources Development
(Dept. of School Education. & Literacy) Govt. of India

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F.No:2-14/JNV2/Prakasam/2018-19/

Date: 20.07.2018

To

APNA Coordinator
North South Foundation
USA

Sub: - English Language Workshop - reg

Dear Sir/Madam,

Kum.Vasudha Kilambi conducted English Language Workshop at our Vidyalaya to teach 80 kids for NSF Organization as part of APNA Programme on 20th July 2018. Our Kids had a great privilege in having interactive sessions with literary discussion and enjoyed fun filled vocabulary improvement and word games.

We are thankful to Kum.Vasudha and her family for their contribution and making the day successful. We are also thankful for their donation of books and games to our current library collection. We wish to have more such workshops for our students in future.

Thanking you.

R. Rukmi 20/7/18
(Smt.R.Rukmini Deve)
Principal i/c

JNV-2, Prakasam dist

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Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya-No. 2

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