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# SCHOOLASTIC NEWS

IMPACT-FOCUSED SCHOOL COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

Theme of the Month  
The Storyteller: Anish Victor

Educator Focus on Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

Beyond the Cubicle:  
A Career in Telling Stories

Student Voice  
When Stories Build Empathy

## The Power Of A Story

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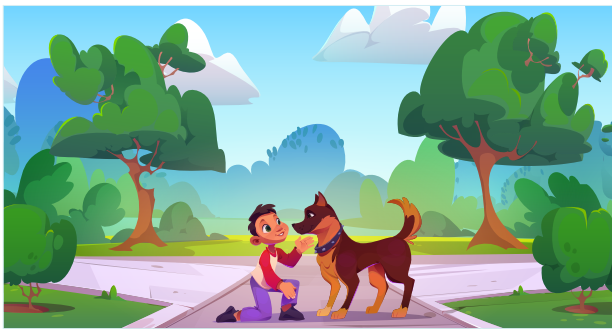
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# Editorial

## Dear Readers,

Have you ever noticed how a single story can stay with you long after you've finished reading it? That lingering thought, that quiet feeling that's where the true power of storytelling lies.

As we crafted this April issue of FairGaze Schoolastic, centered on The Power of a Story, we discovered that stories are not just written they are experienced. And this time, our students did not just participate; they created something truly memorable. The theme of the month explores this power of storytelling and its significance for students in an exhilarating interview with theatre person, Anish Victor.

In our Student Voice section, each piece brings its own spark. When Stories Build Empathy shows us that listening can be just as powerful as speaking. The Boy Who Swapped Colours takes us into a vivid world of imagination and self-reflection. Meanwhile, The Magical Bark and The Car Crash: A Lesson in Kindness remind us that even the simplest moments can hold meaningful lessons. Together, these stories show how words can build bridges between thoughts, emotions, and people.

Our Educator Focus highlights the inspiring journey of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. His vision continues to remind us that education and ideas have the power to shape a better future, and the classroom showcases the stories of democracy.

In Beyond the Cubicle, we bring you our conversation with Ms. Swati from Saitan Theatre Group who has chosen creativity over convention. Their journey reflects courage, passion, and the power of following one's own narrative.

Adding a playful touch, our Creative Crafting DIY—Stress Ball: Squish, Squeeze, and Smile! invites you to create something with your own hands, reminding us that creativity is a stress buster.

The Canvas section, Tales in Colour: Storytelling Through Art, celebrates expression beyond words, while The Power of a Story Quiz encourages you to think, explore, and engage.

As you move through these pages, we hope you discover not just stories, but ideas that stay with you. Because stories are more than words, they are moments, lessons, and possibilities waiting to unfold.

We invite educators, students and parents to engage with this Issue and its theme and let us know what you think about it.

Warm regards,

**The Editorial Team**  
**FairGaze Schoolastic News Magazine**

# From Fables to Folklore: The Story Continues

Sidhi Arora



Picture Credit: [www.freepik.com](http://www.freepik.com)

When we hear the word “story,” many of us recall evenings with grandparents, listening to tales of clever animals, brave kings, magical forests, or wise travellers. These moments were more than entertainment; they carried culture, values, and history across generations. In India, stories have always grown from everyday life, long before modern media, travelling through voices, songs, and performances that shaped how people understood the world.

Stories in India are closely connected with the environment and changing seasons, with festivals marking these transitions. Celebrations like Lohri and Makar Sankranti welcome longer days and harvests, Pongal honours the Sun and Earth, Baisakhi marks the wheat harvest, Holi celebrates spring, and Onam in Kerala celebrates harvests with feasts and boat races.

These occasions often become moments of shared cultural expression, where traditions and

community life come together through celebration and storytelling.

A significant part of this tradition lies in fables and moral tales such as the Panchatantra and the Jataka Tales. These stories use animals, simple situations, and everyday settings to communicate ideas about wisdom, ethics, and human behaviour. While they are easy to understand, they carry deeper moral lessons about values like honesty, compassion, and good judgment, making them meaningful across generations.

Across regions, storytelling has developed in many different cultural forms, reflecting local traditions and ways of life. These regional variations show how stories are shaped by communities and passed down through diverse cultural expressions.

Another important aspect of storytelling is its presence in creative and material expression. Stories often appear not only in spoken or written form but also through art, design, and craft. Patterns, symbols, and

imagery found in textiles, paintings, and handmade objects reflect ideas drawn from memory, imagination, and daily life, turning everyday objects into cultural expressions. Over time, storytelling has also adapted to newer forms of communication. With changes in technology and media, stories have found new platforms such as illustrated works and visual storytelling formats. These shifts have expanded how stories are shared and experienced, helping them reach wider audiences.

In the present day, storytelling continues to exist in many forms, spoken, written, visual, and digital. While the mediums evolve, storytelling remains a way for people to share experiences, express ideas, and connect with one another through narratives that reflect their world. In essence, storytelling remains a living and evolving form of expression, shaped by culture, creativity, and human experience across time.

# The Storyteller

## The Schoolastic Editorial Team

As the Schoolastic editorial team brainstormed the theme for April, we were as always spellbound to discover the vast forms of storytelling that have evolved with humans. We had recently heard theatre artiste, storyteller Anish Victor, who was preparing for a storytelling journey. It has now transformed into a performative-storytelling for children called An Old Man and a Cat, bundled with a fun-filled workshop for the little audiences called We are all stories.

We connected online for an interview. Anish's work in the last decades has woven text, dance, sound, and song to bring forms of storytelling to a diverse audience. His work for children shares the magic of storytellers and storytelling and unfolds another way of imagining the world of the future and the power of stories.

We are happy to bring to students, teachers and schools, this story with the hope that it is another learning experiences to unlock student potential. You can find out more about Anish's workshops at <http://www.quietrivers.in>, and reach out to him at [victoranish@quietrivers.in](mailto:victoranish@quietrivers.in).

### Schoolastic Team: What made you take to professional storytelling?

**Anish Victor:** I stepped into the world of performances, more specifically Theatre, when I was 19. Around the same time, I also started teaching the guitar in a small school in Bangalore. While working there I started helping out in the performances that the students

would put up. This helped me build a love and imagination for working with children and slowly over time, I began to earn a living by creating performances and storytelling sessions. While my theatre performances are for all ages usually, I do not offer storytelling for adults.

### ST: How old is performative storytelling? Where in India would you find these?

**AV:** I think performative story telling is as old as civilization itself. It has been there from the time we began gathering around a fire or around some food after hard day's work - to sing, dance, share our experiences, our stories.

The length and breadth of India is filled with many different forms of performative storytelling... these forms combine song, music, movement, and narration. For example, there is the Kaniyan Koothu, a form in Tamil Nadu, which combines song, rhythm, and narration to tell stories of Sudalai Maadan, believed to be the deity who guards graveyards.

Then there is the Patua the storytellers in West Bengal, who combine stories and singing along with long scrolls of paintings. These are just two examples; every State of this country has its own varied forms of performative storytelling. While the examples above are from traditional practices that go back several hundred years, currently, there are hundreds of contemporary storytellers traveling across towns and cities sharing stories with the young and the old.



**ST: Stories are meant to fire your imagination, and it is personal to you when your point of reference merges and transcends the author's and storyteller's point of view. In your performances is there a space for this and do you see that happen with your audience?**

**AV:** Imagine your being as a three-piece band comprised of body, mind, and spirit. The body feels/senses, the mind thinks/imagines, and the spirit connects/provides purpose.

For a piece of beautiful music to happen, all three need to listen to each other and play together. To do that they have to be healthy and happy. A story does just that.

So, it is a little more than firing up imaginations or merging and transcending points of views. I think it also provides pause, joy, and nourishment to the body, mind, and spirit.

In my own work, that is the attempt, but how much am I succeeding in

doing so? You will have to ask the audiences.

**ST:** At a time when education is easily substituted by schooling, children are primarily students, and learning is defined as subjects, tuitions and percentages, what can stories and storytelling offer children?

**AV:** Possibilities with high degrees of probabilities. I think that is what stories and storytelling ought to offer children. Just not any random possibility, but the things that are connected with their present realities and their present concerns. And in doing so, offer children many ways to sense their world and transform it in ways that benefits humans and the planet as a whole.

**ST:** We are in a time of nugget-sized 5-minute reads. How do you engage children and young adults for a longer time?

**AV:** The past three urban generations (including mine) have been living in, and adapting to, a world of quick deliveries... be it a Insta reel, or a YouTube short, or a news headline. So, this is not new or sudden.

There are different kinds of engagement. Imagine one scenario, in a classroom a teacher can go on talking about a subject and a student becomes a passive listener (or a non-listener!). Now imagine another scenario where the teacher creates a participatory, exploratory space for students to engage with a subject.

My efforts are towards the second scenario, the audience is invited to slow down, to participate in their own ways, and soak in the experience. So, in the current performative storytelling sharing (we do not call it a 'show') called



'An Old Man and a Cat', Winnu, my co-performer and I spend a little time to prepare the audience for the sharing. Simple conversations, a bit of laughter, some silences, a little music... helps. All things nice, like ice-cream, need prep-time, the right ingredients in the right amount, and the right space. I can't make ice cream in a hot oven.

The sharing creates a space where everyone is comfortable to participate and hence not engaged just as a passive receiver.

**ST:** What was that one performance where the audience reaction took you by surprise?

**AV:** Every performance (and I have been performing for 26 years) the

audience takes me by surprise. I think it is because both of us are ready and happy to be surprised!

**ST:** If you had to reimagine the school curriculum, what would you include and why?

**AV:** Every curriculum has clear intentions and prescribes ways to achieve those intentions. For instance, the school curriculum, broadly speaking, aims to shape the people and hence the world of the future. To tell you a truth, I am not interested in re-imagining school curriculums, I am more interested in re-imagining the world of the future. Curriculums will follow suit.

# When Stories Build Empathy

Kritika Kamboj, Class – 12th, St. Theresa’s Convent Sr. Sec. School, Karnal

We often forget how much of our current selves is woven from words put together that has made its way into our temporal lobe. Empathy is one of the quintessential feelings that makes us human and grows quietly between two people: the listener and the speaker.

The connection they share is through storytelling, which is one of the oldest human traditions and helps to be open about one’s feelings, hopes and experiences. To listen is to be possessed by words, and it involves not only waiting for your turn to reply but also understanding.

One can put oneself in the shoes of others and experience life through their memories; for example, by listening to a refugee’s story, you may understand what it feels like to lose your home and your identity.

Empathy begins with curiosity, and in today’s fast-paced world of ephemeral posts, it helps us to understand what lies on the other side. It also helps differences that once seemed large to turn smaller.

In a world that often feels divided, the simple acts of telling a story and truly listening may be among the most powerful tools humans have to understand one another.

Empathy becomes a lived experience when listening and storytelling remind us that behind every emotion, culture, or identity is a human story.



## The Boy Who Swapped Colours

Karmann Veer Singh, Class - V, Kulachi Hansraj Model School, Ashok Vihar

*“I chose to write about Arjun,” writes Karmann, “because sometimes children think they are too small to make a difference. This story shows that ‘The Power of a Story’ can inspire us to make ethical choices, like being fair to our classmates. I hope my story reminds people that the world is much brighter when we share our ‘colours’ and look out for one another.”*

Arjun loved his art class, but he noticed something unfair. Every time they drew ‘The World of Tomorrow,’ the teacher only gave the bright gold and silver markers to the students with the highest grades. The rest of the class had to use stubby, broken grey crayons.

‘It’s not fair,’ Arjun whispered to his friend, Maya. ‘How can we draw a bright future if we only have grey?’ That night, Arjun read a story about a king who shared his harvest so his kingdom would not go hungry. The story gave him an idea. The next day, Arjun, who had won the gold marker did not start drawing. Instead, he walked to the back of the room.

He broke the ink sponges inside his gold marker into three pieces and shared them with the students in the ‘grey’ row. Seeing this, Maya shared her silver. Soon, the whole class was swapping colours.

The ‘World of Tomorrow’ moral wasn’t just gold or just grey anymore. It was a rainbow of colours they had never seen before. Arjun realised that the best stories are not just the ones we read in books; they are the ones we create when we choose to be kind.

# Whispers of Stories, Waves of Empathy

Mythri Gottipati, 11th pass out, P. Obul Reddy Public School, Hyderabad

Storytelling has existed long before there were any laws, books, or media to explain what the world is like. By sharing stories through ballads, folklore, novels, films, and even animated series, these days, storytelling has always been one of the strongest ways for humans to connect with one another. One of the most significant parts of storytelling is that it creates empathy, which is the capacity to understand and share the feelings of another person.

The ability to feel empathy does not come easily from statistics alone. While statistics may give us information, they usually do not affect how we feel. Stories, on the other hand, do something completely different. They allow us to share and learn about other people's lives. When you read a novel or watch a film, you live and see what it is like to be that character. You can experience the character's fears, hopes, and the struggles they have. At this point, you cannot differentiate between your life and the lives of the characters.

Through storytelling, we can learn about experiences and people we will never meet. As a result of reading a book or watching a film, you can know the pain and suffering of a stranger, the bravery of someone who stands up to injustice, or the quiet courage of someone who has had to deal with great hardships. These experiences allow you to view the world through someone else's eyes. After you learn to see through another person's eyes, you can begin to understand the reasons for their actions. Stories can also help challenge our biases. The emotional bond formed through

storytelling leads us toward more compassionate thought patterns about inequality. We are reminded that there are actual human beings living these experiences, rather than only discussing these social problems as they relate to a larger issue.

It is equally important to listen to stories. When individuals share their personal experiences, whether through memoirs, conversations, or documentaries, they invite others to understand realities different from their own. Listening with patience and openness allows empathy to grow. It reminds us that every person carries a unique story shaped by their experiences.

In a world often divided by culture, belief, and background, storytelling has the power to bring people together. It allows us to see beyond our own perspectives and recognise the shared emotions that connect all human beings.

Stories entertain us, but their influence goes far deeper than entertainment. They expand our understanding, challenge our prejudices, and nurture compassion. By helping us see life through another person's eyes, storytelling builds empathy and encourages us to imagine a kinder and more understanding world.



# The Magical Bark

Atharva Yadav, Class V, Jaypee Public School, Noida



*“The Magical Bark” is a heartwarming story about a little boy named Rohan whose act of kindness changes his life forever” writes Atharva. “When he helps a hungry stray dog, he discovers that compassion has a magic of its own. Through his friendship with Zephyr, a dog who can talk, Rohan learns that even small, good deeds can spread happiness and inspire others to care for all living beings”.*

Warm winds were blowing as the golden rays of the sun peeked through the clouds in the town of Willow Hood. Ten-year-old Rohan loved watching butterflies and playing on swings.

It was dispersal time, and he was playing with his friends. Suddenly, one of his friends mistakenly threw the ball into a bush. Rohan went to fetch it.

Just as he was about to pick up the ball, he heard a soft bark. Moving closer, he saw a small, weak dog under a tree. Its ribs were visible; it

looked hungry, and its fur was dusty and unclean. Rohan’s heart melted. He quickly brought his lunch and gave the dog his favourite tomato-cucumber sandwich without thinking twice. The dog sniffed it and gobbled it up quickly. ‘You must be starving, poor dog,’ said Rohan. The dog gently licked his hand, as if saying thank you.

He told his friends about it and asked, ‘What should we name it?’ After many suggestions, Rohan liked the name ‘Zephyr,’ meaning a gentle breeze. His parents, being kind-hearted, allowed Zephyr to stay with them until they could find his owner. Rohan took him home, gave him a bath, some milk, and even made a small silver collar for him.

That night, Zephyr slept in the garage, which Rohan had made cosy for him. At midnight, Rohan heard a voice say, ‘Thank you, Rohan.’ He froze and asked, ‘Who are you?’ When he turned on the light, he saw Zephyr. ‘You can talk?’ he gasped.

Zephyr wagged his tail and said, “Yes, but only when someone shows me real kindness”. He explained that he was once a magical dog who helped teach kindness to people and animals but lost his powers when the world became unkind. Rohan’s gentle heart had brought it back.

From that day, Rohan and Zephyr became close friends. The next day, they found an injured bird and took it to a veterinarian, who healed it. After a few days, the bird flew away.

One day, they saw a child throwing stones at a cat. Rohan stopped him, saying, ‘Don’t hurt it—it feels pain just like we do.’ Zephyr barked to scare the child away. Together, they continued spreading kindness, helping animals, assisting people, and guiding others.

They even started a ‘Kindness Club,’ teaching children to be kind to animals and each other. Willow Hood slowly became a happier, more caring place.

One morning, Rohan woke up and found Zephyr missing. Searching everywhere, he returned to his room, where Zephyr's silver collar lay on the table with a folded letter attached.

Rohan opened it with trembling hands. Inside, in neat paw-shaped handwriting, was a message.

**Dear Rohan,**

*Thank you for showing me what real kindness looks like. You gave me food when I was hungry, love when I was lonely, and hope when I lost faith in people.*

*My mission on earth is now complete. You have reminded me that kindness does not need magic- it is magic. Promise me that you will continue helping others - People, plants, and animals.*

*Teach your friends to care, share, and smile often. Whenever you see someone being kind, know that I am wagging my tail happily somewhere in the sky.*

*Remember, Rohan - A kind heart is the strongest magic of all.*

Tears rolled down Rohan's cheeks,

but he smiled. He carefully placed the letter in his diary. Zephyr might have gone, but his message would live in his heart forever.

This story became a legend in Willow Hood. Whenever anyone asked Rohan about the start of this club, he would tell them that it was because of a magical dog who made him realise how kindness could change people.

**MORAL: Kindness is the truest form of magic; it makes hearts shine and makes the world a happier place.**



## The Car Crash: A Lesson in Kindness

Pinank Sharma, V-G, Kulachi Hansraj Model School, Delhi

Once upon a time, there was a boy named Rohan who loved travelling. He had visited many countries with his family, but there was still one country he had not visited yet: the United States.

Rohan was very excited because it would be the last country on his travel list. One day, his parents finally told him that they were going to visit the United States. Rohan could hardly sleep the night before the trip because he was so excited. The next morning, everyone got ready quickly. His parents booked a taxi to take them to the airport.

When the taxi arrived, they placed their luggage inside and started their journey. Rohan looked out of the window happily, thinking about the places he would see in the United States.

Suddenly, another car came from the side of the road and crashed into their taxi. Everyone was shocked. The taxi stopped suddenly, and for a moment, everything was quiet.

Rohan felt scared, but he quickly remembered something his parents had always taught him: to care about others. Instead of only worrying about himself, he asked, "Is everyone okay?" He saw that the people in the other car looked hurt and frightened.

Rohan and his parents got out carefully and helped them. His parents called for help, and they stayed with the other family until the ambulance arrived.

Even though their trip was delayed, Rohan learned an important lesson that day. He realised that helping others and showing kindness are more important than reaching a destination quickly.

Later, when everything was safe, Rohan told his friends about the accident and how important it is to stay calm, care for others, and drive safely. From that day on, Rohan always remembered that even a difficult moment can teach us something powerful: that kindness, empathy, and responsibility can make the world a better place.

# The Classroom as the Heart of Democracy: Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

Mangla Dwivedi

## Where Equality Begins

What does a truly equal classroom look like? It is a place where no child feels less, where every voice matters, and where learning builds dignity along with knowledge. This was the dream of B. R. Ambedkar, who believed that education is the foundation of a just and democratic society. For him, education was a force of change. His call “Educate, Agitate, Organize” was not just a slogan, but a path: learning creates awareness, awareness builds courage, and courage leads to transformation.

## Early Years

Ambedkar’s ideas came from lived experience. As a child, he faced discrimination in school forced to sit separately and denied basic respect. Yet, he refused to give up. Instead, he turned education into his strength. His journey took him to institutions like Columbia University and the London School of Economics, where he became one of the most educated leaders of his time. He believed deeply that, cultivation of mind should be the ultimate aim of human existence. For students, this means education is not just about marks, but about building confidence, character, and independence.

## Learning to Think, Not Just to Score

Ambedkar believed that real education teaches us how to think, not what to think. A good school does not only produce toppers; it creates individuals who are curious, logical, and compassionate. He reminded us that, “A great man is different from an eminent one in that he is ready to be the servant of the society”. Education, therefore, must prepare students not



just for careers, but for responsibility toward others.

## Why Education Matters in a Democracy

Ambedkar saw a deep link between education and democracy. He said, “Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of its social democracy”; and social democracy based on equality and respect can only exist when people are educated.

For schools, this means classrooms must practice equality every day. Students should learn not only subjects, but also values like fairness, respect, and justice. In this way, schools become the training ground for responsible citizens.

## Future India

Ambedkar believed that the future of India depends on its classrooms. His vision was clear:

- Every child must have access to education
- Schools must be free from discrimination
- Learning should include science, reasoning, and critical thinking
- Education must build self-respect

and awareness of rights

Through his work on the Constitution and efforts like the People’s Education Society, he tried to turn this vision into reality creating opportunities for those who were long denied them. He urged young people to live with purpose, saying, “Life should be great rather than long”. Ambedkar believed teachers shape the future of the nation. A true teacher does more than complete lessons they inspire students to think, question, and stand for truth. For students, his life offers a powerful lesson: no matter the obstacles, education can be your greatest strength. It is the path to self-respect and freedom.

## A Classroom that Builds the Nation

Even today, not every child experiences equal education. Ambedkar’s vision reminds us that classrooms must open doors, not close them. If schools follow his ideas, they will not just produce successful individuals they will nurture aware, courageous, and humane citizens. And that is where democracy truly begins.

# Where Art speaks from the Heart

A Report by The Schoolastic Editorial Team

Storytelling is not limited to words alone; it finds expression in colours, lines, and silent spaces as much as it does in books or films.

To explore how stories can be told beyond language, we spoke with **Ms Monika Chawla** an art teacher at **DAV Public School Sec – 14, Faridabad**, who brings over 10–12 years of experience. Monika ma'am's journey with creativity began in childhood and evolved into a deeper way of understanding people and emotions.

For her, art is not just about technique or visual appeal, but about noticing the unseen, expressing the unspoken, and interpreting the world through a personal lens.

Through her experiences as both an artist and an educator, she offers valuable insight into how every artwork carries a story, how students learn to express themselves through visual narratives, and how art becomes a powerful medium for empathy, reflection, and storytelling in its own unique form.



**Schoolastic Team: What first drew you to art, and how has your journey shaped the way you see the world, your students, and their work?**

**Monika Chawla:** I was first drawn to art because it gave me a way to notice things more deeply about light, textures, emotions, and small details that people often overlook. Over time, art stopped being just about making something look good and became a way of understanding people and experiences.

Art has been an important part of my life since childhood, and gradually this interest became a serious passion that continued through my school and college years. As I learned and grew, my connection with art became stronger and more meaningful.

As a teacher, this journey has made me more aware of how differently each student sees the world. I do not just look at what they create; I try to understand why they made it that way. It has taught me to value the process more than perfection and to respect every student's perspective, even when it is still developing.

**ST: How do you approach a technically skilled student who is playing it safe?**

**MC:** With technically strong students, the challenge is not their skill but their willingness to take risks. I usually begin by asking thoughtful questions instead of giving direct instructions, such as: What do you care about? What are you trying to express? What might happen if it does not work out?

Often, these students are so focused on being perfect that they become afraid of making mistakes. I encourage them to step out of their comfort zone by giving open-ended assignments where there is no single correct answer. Sometimes, I even ask them to break certain rules or try new techniques.

I also create a supportive environment where mistakes are seen as a natural part of learning. When students feel safe, they become more confident in exploring their ideas. The goal is to help them shift their focus from impressing others to expressing their true thoughts and creativity.

**ST: Is there a student artwork that genuinely moved you or caught you off guard?**

**MC:** Yes, those moments tend to stay with you. One student who rarely spoke created a quiet, simple drawing of a figure sitting alone in a crowded room, but the way they used space and body language said everything about feeling invisible. It wasn't flashy or technically perfect, but it felt honest. What made it powerful was that it revealed something the student had not been able to say out loud. Art can sometimes carry emotions more directly than words, and that piece was a reminder of that.

**ST: Do you think every drawing tells a story? Can you share a memorable example?**

**MC:** I think every drawing can tell a story, even if the artist did not consciously plan one. Sometimes the story is emotional rather than literal. I remember a student who created a piece about a tree growing through cracks in concrete. On the surface, it was about nature, but when we discussed it, it became clear it represented resilience and growing through difficult circumstances. The strength of the artwork came from that layered meaning, whether the viewer immediately recognized it.

**ST: How do you use art to discuss contemporary issues without making it feel like a lecture?**

**MC:** The key is to start with questions and exploration, not conclusions. Instead of saying "today we will talk about identity or fairness," I might show a range of artworks and ask students what they notice, what they think is being communicated, or what feels relatable. Then I invite them to respond through their own work. When students choose their own angle whether it is environment, culture, or personal experience, it feels authentic rather than forced. Art becomes a space for thinking, not just agreeing.

**ST: How do you help students see that art connects to many professions?**

**MC:** I try to expose them to real-world examples as often as possible, showing how drawing skills apply to animation, game design, architecture, fashion, product design, medical illustration, and more. I also design projects that mimic these fields, like creating a character for a game, designing a product, or illustrating a scientific concept. When students see that art is not just about galleries but also about solving problems, communicating ideas, and designing experiences, they begin to understand its versatility.

**ST: What would you tell a student torn between art and a "practical" path?**

**MC:** I would first acknowledge that the pressure they are feeling is real and often comes from a place of concern for their future. Then I would help them see that the choice is not always as narrow as it seems. Many careers combine creativity with practicality. I would encourage them to explore options where art is part of a sustainable path, and to keep developing their skills seriously if it matters to them.

As for addressing the source of pressure, it depends. If appropriate, I might have a respectful conversation with parents or guardians not to argue, but to broaden their understanding of what creative careers can look like today. Ultimately, though, the goal is to help the student make an informed decision they can stand behind, not one driven purely by fear.



# A Career in Telling Stories

A Report by The Schoolastic Editorial Team

For generations, storytelling was often seen as a simple art, found in bedtime tales, folk songs, or illustrated books. While these forms remain meaningful, they are only a part of what storytelling has become today. In the modern world, stories move across screens, pages, and stages, shaping how we understand empathy, justice, and change. They are no longer just a source of entertainment, but powerful tools that question, provoke, and inspire.

At the heart of this evolving landscape are storytellers who give voice to ideas that matter. Whether through books, films, or performances, stories help us explore fairness, challenge perspectives, and connect with experiences beyond our own. Among these forms, theatre stands out as a space where stories are not just told, but experienced, bringing emotions, conflicts, and human connections to life in real time.

## The Courses

Courses such as BA/MA in English Literature, Creative Writing, Journalism, and Mass Communication provide strong foundations for such careers, offered at institutions like University of Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and Jamia Millia Islamia.

Visual storytelling adds another powerful dimension. Illustrators, comic artists, and graphic novelists translate words into imagery that can evoke deep emotional connections. Through children's illustrations, editorial cartoons, or socially driven comics, artists communicate complex ideas in ways that are accessible and engaging. Degrees such as Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), Applied Arts, and Animation Design are offered at premier institutes like National Institute of Design and Sir J. J. Institute of Applied Art, where creativity meets communication.

Animation and film have emerged as some of the most influential storytelling mediums of our time. Animated films, series, anime, and digital content often tackle themes of identity, justice, and human connection in compelling ways.

Careers in this field include animators, character designers, storyboard artists, and directors who bring stories to life frame by frame. Professional programs such as BSc in Animation, Visual Effects (VFX), Filmmaking, and Multimedia are available at institutions like Film and Television Institute of India and Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, preparing students to create impactful visual narratives.

The digital age has further expanded storytelling into interactive spaces. Video games, virtual reality experiences, and digital platforms now rely on narrative designers and content creators who build immersive worlds where audiences actively participate in stories.

Degrees such as B.Tech in Computer Science, Game Design, UX/UI Design, and Digital Media are offered at institutions like Indian Institute of Technology Bombay and National Institute of Design. These careers combine technology with creativity, allowing stories to evolve beyond passive consumption into interactive experiences.

## The Power of a Story

Storytelling also plays a vital role in education and social impact. Educators, curriculum designers, and communication specialists use stories to teach values such as empathy, fairness, and respect for diversity. NGOs and social organisations rely on storytellers to highlight real-life issues, advocate for rights, and inspire change. Degrees in Education, Social Work (BSW/MSW), Psychology, and Development Studies, offered at institutions like Tata Institute of Social Sciences, equip individuals to use storytelling as a force for social transformation.

Performance and oral storytelling continue to hold timeless significance. Theatre artists, playwrights, and spoken word performers bring stories to life on stage, often addressing contemporary issues and challenging societal norms.

Training in performing arts through courses in Theatre, Drama, and Performing Arts at institutions such as National School of Drama allows individuals to engage audiences directly and emotionally.

Cultural research and media analysis form another important dimension of storytelling careers. Researchers, critics, and scholars study how stories, from folklore to modern media, shape beliefs, identities, and social attitudes. Academic paths in Cultural Studies, Media Studies, and Anthropology help individuals explore how narratives influence society and how they can be reinterpreted to promote inclusivity and understanding.

What connects all these diverse paths is the power of storytelling as a catalyst for empathy and change. Stories help us imagine different realities, understand diverse perspectives, and question long-held beliefs. They highlight not only fairness and rights but also the complexity of human choices, sometimes ethical, sometimes imperfect, and sometimes delightfully unconventional.

In today's world, storytelling is no longer confined to a single profession or medium. It exists across books, screens, classrooms, and communities, offering endless opportunities for those willing to explore their creativity and curiosity. Instead of asking which career feels conventional, students can begin asking what stories they want to tell and what impact they wish to create.

Beyond the traditional paths lies a vibrant world where imagination meets purpose. Whether through words, visuals, performance, or technology, storytelling careers invite individuals to shape narratives that inspire justice, empathy, and change, proving that stories, in all their forms, remain one of the most powerful forces in understanding the world and transforming it.

### Professional Perspectives

In the world of storytelling, theatre holds a unique space where stories are not just told but lived in real time. As part of our Beyond the Cubicle series, we spoke with **Ms Swati, a passionate theatre practitioner associated with SAITAN Theatre Group**, who brings stories to life on stage through performance, emotion, and human connection.

With her deep understanding of the craft, she highlights how theatre goes beyond entertainment to become a powerful medium for exploring themes of fairness, equality, justice, and empathy.

Through her journey, Ms Swati offers a compelling perspective on how storytelling in theatre creates shared experiences, challenges societal norms, and encourages audiences to reflect, feel, and question the world around them.



**ST:** Theatre is often called a powerful storytelling medium. How do you think stories performed on stage can help audiences reflect on issues like fairness, equality, justice, and ethical choices in society? What role do you see theatre playing in shaping conversations around these topics in the future?

**Swati:** Theatre is powerful because it brings real people, real emotions, and real conflicts right in front of us. When a story unfolds on stage, we do not just watch it, we feel it. We see characters facing questions of fairness, equality, and justice, and somewhere, we begin to ask those same questions ourselves.

The strength of theatre lies in its honesty. It does not preach, it shows. It allows us to understand why someone feels or acts a certain way. This understanding creates space for reflection, and slowly, for empathy. Theatre also creates a shared experience. People from different backgrounds sit together, watch the same story, and often leave with new

thoughts or questions. It sparks conversations, sometimes quiet, sometimes uncomfortable, but always important.

In the future, theatre can continue to be a space where difficult topics are explored with sensitivity and courage. It can challenge norms, give voice to unheard stories, and encourage people to think beyond fixed ideas. More than giving answers, theatre asks the right questions. And sometimes, that is where real change begins.

**ST: Many stories challenge the way we see the world. Can you share a play, performance, or story that changed your perspective or helped audiences rethink an important issue?**

**Swati:** Some theatre and literature do not just entertain; they quietly change how we see the world. For me, *A Woman Alone* and *Maa* have done exactly that.

*A Woman Alone* is a monologue, carried by a single woman on stage. Yet through her voice, we see an entire life, her loneliness, her unspoken desires, her humour, and her silent strength. It made me realise how one honest voice can hold so many untold stories.

*Maa*, written by Manav Kaul, comes from a son's perspective. But as the story unfolds, we begin to see the mother not just as "maa," but as a person with her own identity, choices, and inner life.

What connects both works is their deep understanding of womanhood. Their forms are different, one is direct and performed, the other reflective and written, but their emotional truth feels the same. Both made me pause. Both made me look again.

And somewhere along the way, they changed how I see women not just as roles they play, but as complete, complex individuals. Maybe that's why these stories stay. Because they do not just speak, they make you feel, and quietly, they make you see differently.

**ST: Empathy is at the heart of storytelling. In your experience as a theatre practitioner, how does performing or watching a story help people understand lives and experiences different from their own?**

**Swati:** Empathy is at the core of theatre. As an actor, you do not just play a character; you understand their emotions, choices, and struggles. You find shared human feelings, and that naturally builds empathy. As an audience, live theatre feels real and immediate. You connect with lives different from your own. Theatre slows you down. It helps you feel before you judge. It simply asks: What if this was me? And that's where empathy begins.

**ST: Young people today encounter stories through many forms, films, books, cartoons, anime, and social media. What makes theatre storytelling unique or special compared to these other mediums?**

**Swati:** The beauty of theatre lies in its process. Before the audience arrives, there are countless rehearsals, actors working through impulse, action, and reaction. But once you step on stage, there is no going back. No retakes. You perform with a plan, trusting it completely, and if something goes wrong, you adapt in the moment.

For me, theatre feels like being in the mountains. You do not just see it; you feel it with your whole being. Can a screen ever give you that same feeling? Probably not. That is what makes theatre so real, so human.

**ST: The relationship between storyteller and listener is very important. How do you keep audiences emotionally connected and engaged with the story being told on stage?**

**Swati:** For me, a storyteller must first truly understand and believe in their story. If you don't connect with it yourself, it is hard to connect with others. That emotional bond is what makes the story feel real.

Along with that, there are the basics, your voice, body, gestures, and the way you choose to tell the story. In the end, it is this mix of honesty and craft that brings any story to life.

**ST:** Women’s voices have historically been underrepresented in many narratives. As a female theatre practitioner, how important is it for you to bring women’s perspectives and stories to the stage?

**Swati:** If we talk about its importance, the answer is simple, it matters a lot. We grow up being taught to think about society before ourselves. Even small choices, what to wear, what to eat, what to become, often come with expectations.

In many places, people do not even have the freedom to choose for themselves. Many women are not even aware that they are free. And even today, in modern spaces, limits are still placed on women in the name of safety. That is why theatre becomes so powerful. It gives space to question, to reflect, and to see things differently. Through stories, it can gently shift how we see women and how women see themselves.

**ST:** What advice or message would you like to share with young audiences and aspiring theatre artists about the power of stories and the impact they can have on individuals and society?

**Swati:** Theatre and storytelling are powerful because they help us see the world through someone else’s eyes. As a young artist, always remember that your story matters. The stories you choose to tell can make people feel, think, question, and even change.

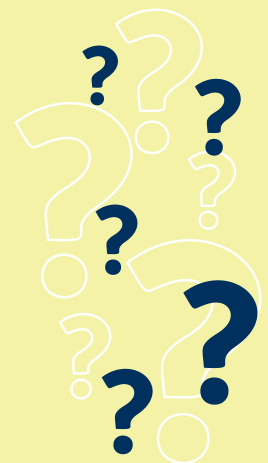
Do not focus only on performance, focus on honesty. When you truly believe in your story, the audience will connect with it. Be curious about people, about society, and about different experiences.

This curiosity will make your work deeper and more real. Stories have the power to start conversations, challenge wrong ideas, and bring empathy into the world. Even a small performance can touch someone’s life in a big way. So, keep learning, keep observing, and most importantly, keep telling stories that matter.



## Quiz The Power of a Story

- 1. Which ancient Indian book uses animal characters to teach moral lessons?
- 2. What is the traditional puppet storytelling art of Rajasthan called?
- 3. Which ancient Indian collection of moral stories was written to teach princes lessons about wisdom and leadership, different from Panchatantra?
- 4. Which dance-drama from Kerala uses colorful makeup and gestures to narrate stories from Indian epics?
- 5. Which folk storytelling style from Chhattisgarh uses ballads and instruments to narrate the adventures from Mahabharata?
- 6. Which Indian comic series turns mythology and history into illustrated stories for children?
- 7. I am a famous storyteller from Indian folklore who told magical tales to King Vikram. Who am I?



1. Panchatantra 2. Kathputli 3. Hitopadesha 4. Kathakali 5. Pandavani 6. Amar Chitra Katha 7. Vetala

# Stress Ball: Squish, Squeeze, and Smile!

The Schoolastic Editorial Team

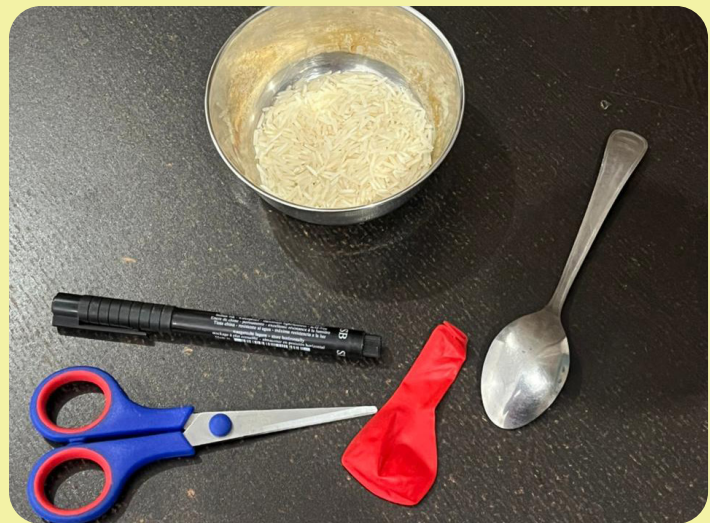
*Making your own stress ball is not just fun; it is creative, hands-on, and super satisfying. Unlike buying one, you get to customize its firmness, color, and feel, which makes it uniquely yours. It's exciting because:*

- It's instant stress relief squeeze it during study breaks or when feeling tense.
- It's a safe, tactile toy for fidgeting, improving focus, and calming nerves

*Stress balls are great for students because they help release tension, improve concentration, and even strengthen hand muscles all while being fun to make.*

## Materials Needed

- **Balloon(s) (strong and thick)**
- **Rice, dry beans, or lentils**
- **Funnel (or small bottle)**
- **Spoon (optional)**
- **Marker (optional, for decorating)**



## Step-by-Step Instructions

All the goodies you need to make your Stress Ball!

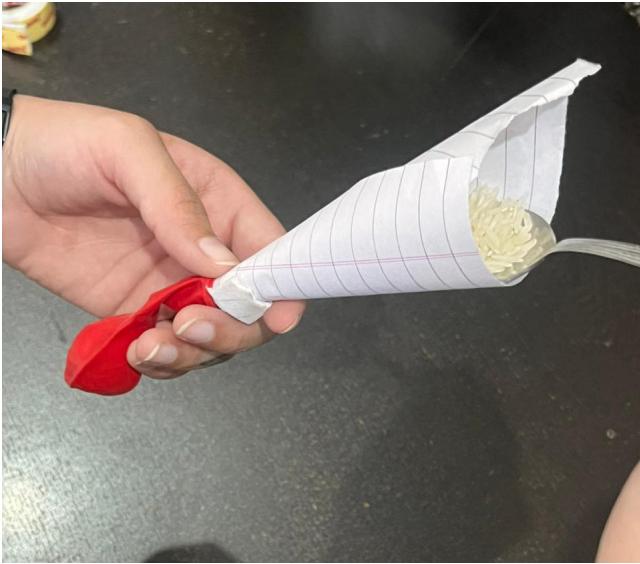


**Step 1: Stretch the Balloon**  
Gently stretch your balloon a few times before filling. This makes it more flexible and less likely to burst.



**Step 2: Fill the Balloon**  
Insert a funnel (you can either use a paper cone, bottle or funnel) into the balloon's neck and pour rice or beans into it. Fill it to your preferred firmness:

- More rice/beans → firmer stress ball
- Less rice/beans → softer and squishier



### Step 3: Tie the Balloon

Carefully remove the funnel and tie the balloon tightly. For extra durability, you can place the filled balloon into a second balloon and tie it again.



### Step 4: Squeeze and Enjoy

Your stress ball is ready! Squeeze it to relieve stress, improve focus, or just have fun.

## Extra Tips & Tricks

- Use different coloured balloons or draw faces on them to make it fun.
- Try small beans or lentils for a smoother texture.
- Keep a few spare balloons on hand in case of accidental bursts.

## Fun Fact

- Stress balls are also used in therapy and classrooms worldwide to help improve hand strength, motor skills, and concentration, so your DIY project isn't just fun, it's educational too!



## Share Your Creation!

If you have made a stress ball, send us a picture along with your steps!

Email us at: [schoolasticeditorial@fairgaze.com](mailto:schoolasticeditorial@fairgaze.com)

Picture Credit: AI Generated

*Happy DIY-ing!*

# The Way We Include

Anna Chandy

Who are the students in our classrooms? How much do we as educators know the strengths and constraints of each child? What experiences will help them thrive in the classroom? What do we do to include all students, every day, and in every space in the school? What supports and scaffolds are built to ensure that every child grows strong wings and soars to find their place in the Sun.

## **Inclusion-Exclusion**

Historically, to 'include' rests on the premise that there is an acknowledged exclusion. This exclusion of people or, and practices ranges from gender, language, ability, class, caste, race, religion, beliefs, ethnicity, or geographies, to name a few reasons. To exclude means to be aware of the way a society imagines itself and thus what is 'right' for it. It may be argued that exclusions are based on similarities and dissimilarities- the quintessential 'us' vs 'them'. The criteria for exclusion build grounds for invisibility, under-representation, or misrepresentation of those that are dissimilar. It is a case of injustice.

Exclusion has evolved over time through being an outcaste, to segregation, systemic denial of rights, resources, participation, and recognition. These significant steps build a case for privilege and exclusivity for those who consider this as natural, the norm. To include means to imagine beyond the socio-cultural and politico-religious constructs and base one's understanding on the natural world. In this latter world every being has the right to exist. It acknowledges both diversity and individual uniqueness to argue its case. Interestingly, the recognition of the homogeneity and heterogeneity of all being rests on the premise that both are significant to build an inclusive world. To see the micro and the macro as quintessential to existence; none greater or lesser to the other.

In a democracy, the way we include rests on not just how we acknowledge the diversity around us, but also on who and what we see, and why we must know the basis for our prejudices, biases, and assumptions. To include means to recognize equity, or to know that the levelled playing field is a work in progress; to identify what scaffolds must be constructed for those who are now learning to walk, to breathe outside confinement, and shine in the light.

## **How does this unfold in our classrooms?**

Learning is a two-way street, there is much that we learn from each other as humans without the barriers of gender, language, ability, class, caste, race, religion, beliefs, ethnicity, or geographies.

The moment we say inclusion and schools, the conversations veer only towards children with disabilities, challenges and the gifted children. However, it is a space where typical children also learn to work, play and learn together with a diversity of people, perspectives and thinking; they too unlearn and relearn to thrive with their peers. Inclusion rests on constructing a space and support for ALL to unlock their potential. It is a space where empathy is a must to put in measures to create an equitable environment for ALL to thrive and grow. It is space where the marginal, disadvantaged, differently abled and the typical learn to live, laugh, play and learn together.

Inclusion works when all stakeholders in a school system recognize their share in the responsibility to create opportunities, awareness, empathy, and practices to address sources of marginalization, vulnerability, and disadvantages. What policies and law mandate becomes a reality when it is translated in spirit and letter in the field; in this case the classrooms.

If one was asked what way do we include, the answer would be we are learning every day as we listen to and learn more about the diversity around us. That would mean active listening, without judgement. It would encourage every educator to use the language of support; plan lessons that detail out measures to support every child; carry out conversations that enquire and offer, not dictate; build interactions and infrastructure that back up ability in all, and design playgrounds and celebrations to include the diversity that thrive around us.

The way we include supports a space where social and emotional skills are essential in powering a democratic classroom; where unlearning, and re-learning thrive every day for all stakeholders.

# Tales in Colour: Storytelling Through Art

Schoolastic Editorial Team

Storytelling has been a part of Indian culture for long in different regions of India. Some examples of these are Pattachitra (Odisha and West Bengal), Tholu Bommalata (Andhra Pradesh), Kathputli (Rajasthan), Kavad (Rajasthan), Harikatha (Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh), Yakshagana (Karnataka), and Nautanki (Uttar Pradesh) to name a few.

Here is a storytelling design for you to colour.



# CALLING FOR SUBMISSIONS

## May 2026 Issue

Thank you for being a part of FairGaze Schoolastic! Your stories, reflections, ideas, and artwork continue to make our platform a vibrant space for curiosity, creativity, and thoughtful learning. As we step into May, we celebrate the many journeys of learning that go beyond the classroom from textbooks and maps to experiments, museums, and real-world exploration.

Theme  
The Many Ways to Learn  
Deadline  
15th April 2026  
Email  
[schoolasticeditorial@fairgaze.com](mailto:schoolasticeditorial@fairgaze.com)

Learning doesn't only happen from textbooks. It happens when you explore, observe, experiment, and interact with the world around you. This May, we celebrate learning that goes beyond texts, where curiosity meets real-life experiences; and what better time than the summer break when you have ample time to think of these. **Choose any one of the topics below.**

- ❖ You can write or create about hands-on experiments at home or school, describing your question, materials, observations, and what you learned. Examples include making a water clock, balloon rocket, growing plants from kitchen scraps, magnet experiments, or baking soda and vinegar reactions, or any other.
- ❖ Share experiences of field and museum visits where real objects and interactive displays helped you to be curious, and you learnt something more than what a textbook taught you.
- ❖ Did maps, globes, graphs, real-world data like reading the census deepen your understanding of the world and your own country. Share with us how that learning was.
- ❖ Describe school trip to another city, farm, or science trips, noting what you saw, what questions you asked, and what you learned. Create artwork, posters, comic strips, to showcase your learning.
- ❖ Interview a classmate, teacher, or parent about how they learned outside textbooks, what helped them understand better, and reflect on experiments, trips, discussions, or practical work.

Send in your original (**we do not accept AI generated content**) articles, poems, stories, interviews, or artwork (JPEG preferred). You may illustrate your article as per the theme.

**Please mention "May Theme" in the subject line and include:**

**Your name, Grade, School name, Address**

**THINKING ALOUD – May 2026 Book Suggestions**

**For Students and Teachers**

Arvind Gupta's Science for the Child and Little Experiments

Krish Ashok's The Illustrated Masala Lab

Chakmak Magazine.

Khel Khel Mein Vigyan (STEM storybooks in multiple Indian languages)

A Children's History of India in 100 Objects by Devika Cariapa

Let's Go Time Travelling by Subhadra Sen Gupt

Wishing all our readers a month filled with curiosity and discovery  
Keep exploring, experimenting, and learning!



## GGHS MUN 1.0 – Shaping the Future of Diplomacy

Gurugram Global Heights School proudly presents GGHS MUN 1.0 powered by FairGaze MUN, the inaugural edition of a large-scale thematic Model United Nations conference.

This conference brings together young leaders to explore how Artificial Intelligence is transforming politics, economy, and global governance, through structured debate, collaboration, and innovation.

### Event Details

- 9th – 10th May 2026
- Eligibility: Students from Grade 6 and above
- Mode: Offline Conference
- Venue: Gurugram Global Heights School, Dwarka Expressway

### Theme

AI Shaping Politics, Economy and Global Governance

### Focus Areas

- Impact of Artificial Intelligence on global politics
  - Economic transformation and innovation
  - Global governance and ethical challenges
- Diplomacy, security, and policy-making in an AI-driven world

### Conference Structure

A free pre-conference training session will cover:

- Junior Committees
- Beginner Committees
- Advanced UN Committees
- Indian Parliamentary Simulations
- Special/Dynamic Committees

### What Makes It Special

- Strong thematic integration across all committees
- Interconnected debates and resolutions under one central global issue
  - Diverse committee experiences for all skill levels
- Focus on diplomacy, critical thinking, and responsible innovation

**GGHS MUN 1.0 is more than a conference it is a platform where ideas, innovation, and diplomacy converge to shape the future of global dialogue.**

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