

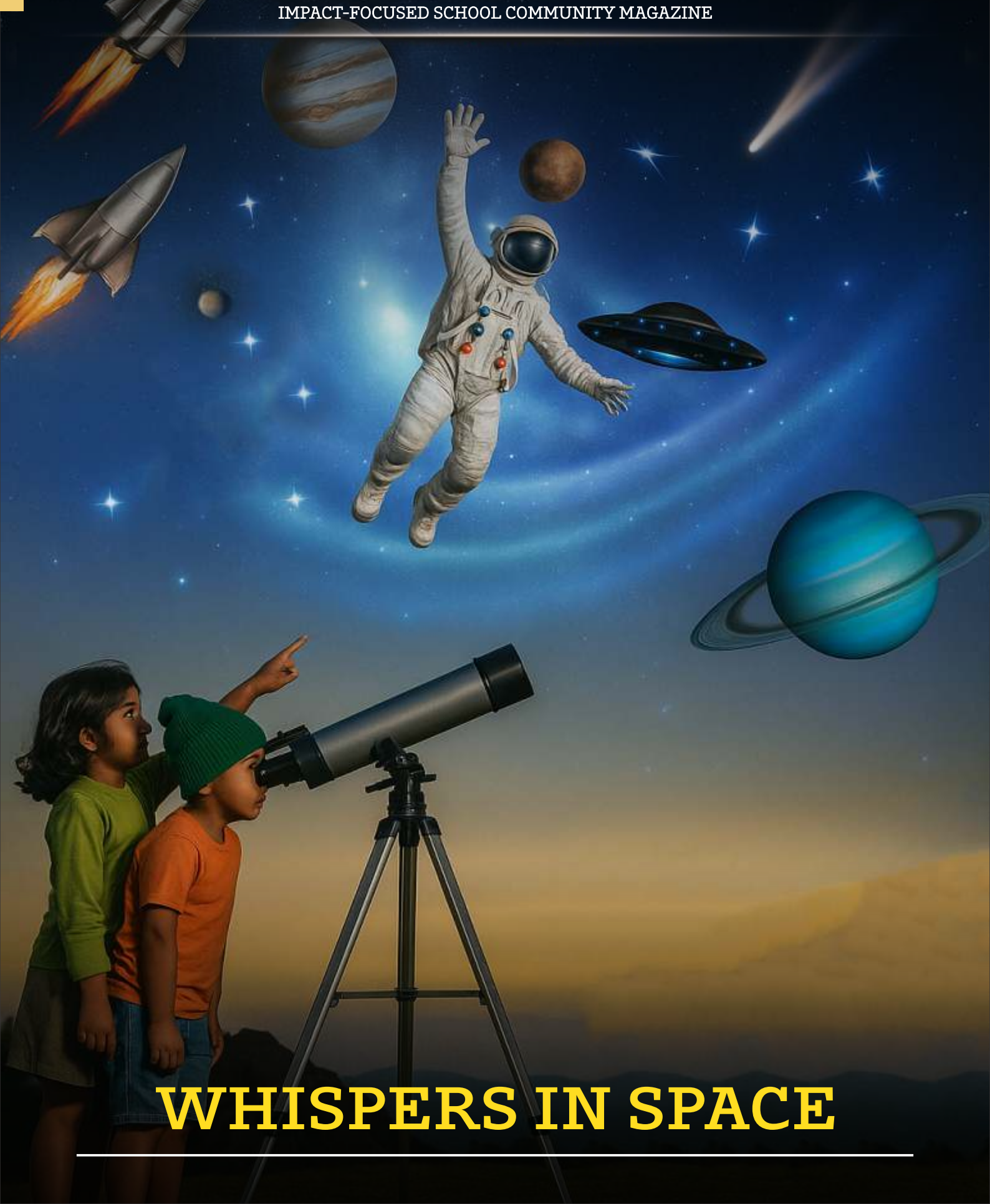
VOL.5 ISS.09 | RNI: DELENG/2021/86376 | 1 SEP. 2025

FAIRGAZE

PAGES 32 | COMPLIMENTARY COPY | NEW DELHI

# SCHOOLASTIC NEWS

IMPACT-FOCUSED SCHOOL COMMUNITY MAGAZINE



## WHISPERS IN SPACE



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#### IMPRINT LINE:

Published and printed by Mookola Lakshman Sudheer on behalf of FairGaze Skills Pvt Ltd.  
Printed at: JK Offset Graphics Pvt Ltd. B-278, Okhla Industrial Area Phase 1, New Delhi 110020.  
Published from 1412 Chiranjiv Tower 43, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019, India.

Editor: Mookola Lakshman Sudheer

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# Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the September 2025 issue of FairGaze Schoolastic Magazine. This month, we journey into the cosmos with the theme “Whispers in Space”, an exploration of how discovery, imagination, and education intertwine when we dare to look beyond our world.

Space has never been silent. From ancient stargazers tracing constellations to astronauts floating aboard the International Space Station, every mission has carried whispers of curiosity, courage, and hope. India’s achievements— Chandrayaan-3’s historic landing, Mangalyaan to Mars, Aditya-L1’s quest to study the Sun, and Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla’s proud presence on Axiom-4, remind us that these whispers now echo with our nation’s voice on the global stage.

In this edition, we reflect on the scientific, cultural, and human dimensions of space exploration. Student writers connect astronomy lessons to popular films, demonstrating how stories inspire science. We also bring you glimpses of India’s proud milestones in space. Alongside this, students write wonderful features on a topic closer to home Teachers’ Day.

There was a flood of events that we got to cover this month— the National School Awards celebrating changemakers in education, vibrant theatre expressions at Thespian Fest’s #TragiVerse, youth leadership through YS FairGaze MUN 3.0, the inspiring journeys of students at IAYP, and the Biosphere Reserve initiative. Together, these stories remind us that education is not only about reaching the stars but also about building compassionate, creative, and responsible communities here on Earth.

This issue also carries something interactive: our Space Quiz, designed to spark curiosity about astronomy and exploration. The winner will receive a prize turning curiosity into celebration.

As always, we invite schools across India to join hands with us. Your stories whether about cultural celebrations, innovation in classrooms, or acts of kindness bring life to our pages. We encourage students to write, reflect, and share their experiences with us.

Looking ahead, the October 2025 theme, **“Healthy, Wealthy and Wise —Mind and Body Matters”** addresses mental health and wellbeing. We welcome student articles, poetry, artwork, and teacher reflections that showcase how young people are shaping a better tomorrow. Send in your submissions to be part of next month’s issue!

We thank our partner schools, educators, contributors, and readers whose voices carry the heartbeat of this publication. Together, you remind us that learning is both an inward journey and an outward adventure.

As you turn the pages of this issue, listen closely to the whispers in space—for they are not distant sounds, but invitations. Invitations to wonder, to question, to collaborate, and to believe that the future belongs to those who are willing to dream beyond boundaries.

Warm regards,  
The Schoolastic Editorial Team

THEME OF THE MONTH

# WHISPERS IN SPACE

SANIYA GARG, CLASS 11-D, JAYPEE PUBLIC SCHOOL



From the first-time humankind looked up at the night sky, space has never been silent. To some, it whispers questions: what lies beyond, are we alone, and how far can we go? To others, it whispers challenges: how much can we learn, how much can we risk, and how much courage do we have to venture into the unknown? For India, these whispers have steadily grown louder with each mission, from the launch of Aryabhata in 1975 to Chandrayaan-3's gentle landing on the Moon. The Axiom Mission 4, launched in early 2024, carried those whispers into the International Space Station, and for Indians, it marked a new kind of pride.

Ax-4 was not just another flight to the ISS. It was a privately funded mission led by Axiom Space, a company building the world's first commercial space station. What made this mission unique was its international crew, representing countries that rarely get the chance to send their citizens into orbit. Among them was an astronaut of Indian origin whose presence symbolized how India's

influence in space science now extends far beyond ISRO's own rockets. The crew spent nearly two weeks aboard the ISS, conducting more than thirty experiments in microgravity. These were not abstract exercises; they were carefully chosen to answer human needs: how to make better medicines, how to grow food in weightless conditions, and how to design materials that can withstand the extremes of deep space.

One of the most fascinating studies during Ax-4 focused on stem cell research. On Earth, gravity interferes with how cells grow and divide. In the microgravity of space, scientists can observe cells behaving in ways impossible in laboratories on the ground. This helps researchers develop new treatments for diseases such as cancer or Parkinson's. Another set of experiments tested new alloys and advanced materials. When metals solidify in space without the pull of gravity, they form in purer structures. This has implications for industries ranging from electronics to renewable energy. Imagine more efficient

solar panels or lighter, stronger components for aircraft - discoveries made while floating hundreds of kilometres above Earth. The astronauts also tended to tiny agriculture experiments, testing how seeds sprout and plants adapt without soil and under artificial light. With missions to Mars and long-term stays on the Moon being planned, this kind of research whispers directly about humanity's future: we must learn how to grow our food beyond Earth.

Sceptics may ask what a private American-led mission has to do with India. The answer lies in how interconnected modern space exploration has become. India's own astronauts, training for the Gaganyaan mission, will face many of the same challenges: surviving weeks in orbit, conducting experiments, and preparing for longer interplanetary journeys. Every result from Ax-4 adds to the shared global knowledge pool that India can draw from. Moreover, the involvement of an astronaut of Indian origin in Ax-4 carried



symbolic weight. It reminded the world that India is no longer a developing space nation but a key partner in humanity's collective quest. When Chandrayaan-3 touched the Moon's south pole, the world applauded India's precision and cost-effectiveness. When Aditya-L1 launched to study the Sun, it was clear that Indian scientists were asking not just national but universal questions. Ax-4's success resonates with these milestones, placing India in the middle of global collaboration rather than at its edge.

Perhaps the most important whispers are not heard in mission control centres or laboratories, but in classrooms. Across India, children discussed Ax-4 as if it were their own triumph. Teachers encouraged students to debate: how do astronauts talk to each other when radio signals take time to travel? How does the human body cope when it floats for days? Can India build its own space station one day? These conversations are seeds. Every question asked by a student is a small satellite launched into the imagination, and some of these satellites

may one day become full-fledged missions. Ax-4 was a reminder that space is not the property of a few superpowers; it is a classroom open to all of humanity.

As Ax-4 returned to Earth, parachuting down into the ocean with its capsule glowing from the heat of re-entry, the whispers continued. They were no longer only about technical achievements. They were about values. Spaceflight teaches cooperation, humility, and vision. No astronaut can survive alone in orbit. No country can answer the mysteries of the universe single-handedly. For India, these lessons are particularly relevant. Our space program has always been about more than prestige. When India launched satellites for weather forecasting, it saved farmers from droughts. When it developed cost-efficient rockets, it gave developing countries access to space. When Chandrayaan mapped water on the Moon, it offered humanity a new hope for settlement beyond Earth. The whispers in space, therefore, echo with India's voice: practical, inclusive, and deeply curious.

In the silence of space, sound cannot travel, but whispers can still be imagined. They are carried in data packets, in images of Earth seen from orbit, in the journals of astronauts, and in the dreams of children sketching rockets in their notebooks. The story of Axiom Mission 4 is not just about one set of experiments. It is about humankind learning to listen carefully to these whispers, and about India learning to respond with confidence and creativity. When the next Indian astronaut boards a spacecraft — not as a guest on another nation's mission, but as part of Gaganyaan or even a joint lunar base — the whispers will grow into voices. They will tell us that space is not distant anymore. It is part of our shared human neighbourhood. And when that day comes, we will look back at missions like Ax-4 and realize that the whispers we once strained to hear were guiding us all along.



THEME OF THE MONTH

# THE CELESTIAL AND THE CELLULOID: IDEAS FROM SPACE EXPERIMENTS

SCHOOLASTIC EDITORIAL TEAM



The universe has always fascinated humankind. From ancient sky-gazers drawing constellations to modern scientists sending telescopes deep into space, astronomy continues to inspire wonder and discovery. For students, learning about space is not only about facts and figures it is about imagination, curiosity, and problem-solving. Lessons on space and astronomy can be made even more engaging when connected with real examples and even popular films that bring these ideas to life.

## Understanding Bone Loss in Space

Astronauts lose bone strength when they live in microgravity for long periods. This challenge is often studied to prepare for future missions. In class, students can explore how gravity helps bones stay strong through models or experiments.

The Celluloid Connection: In *The Martian* (2015), the main character's survival depends on maintaining his health on Mars. It highlights how space travel affects the human body and why such research is essential.

## Growing Food Beyond Earth

One of the most important questions for long-term space travel is: how can astronauts grow food in space? Classroom experiments with hydroponics or soil

substitutes allow students to imagine farming on Mars or the Moon

The Celluloid Connection: *The Martian* also gives an inspiring example of space farming, where an astronaut grows potatoes on Mars showing how science and creativity go hand in hand.

## The Search for Exoplanets

Scientists study stars to find planets beyond our solar system, known as exoplanets. These are often detected by small changes in a star's brightness. Students can model this in class to understand how discoveries are made.

The Celluloid Connection: In *Interstellar* (2014), astronauts travel through a wormhole in search of habitable planets, connecting directly with the scientific search for worlds beyond Earth.

## Satellites and Earth Observation

Satellites orbiting Earth constantly collect data about weather, climate, and natural changes. These observations help protect our planet and prepare us for challenges such as global warming.

The Celluloid Connection: *Gravity* (2013) shows both the importance and fragility of satellites, while also reminding us how space technology is essential for communication and safety on Earth.

## Astronomy and Human Culture

Stars have guided farmers, sailors, and civilizations for thousands of years. From mythological stories about constellations to modern scientific explanations, astronomy has shaped human culture. Classroom discussions on this theme connect science with history, literature, and art.

The Celluloid Connection: *October Sky* (1999), based on a true story, shows how a student inspired by space exploration

pursued his dream despite challenges, an excellent reminder that astronomy belongs to everyone, not just scientists.

## Simple Tools for Learning Astronomy

Astronomy can be introduced with simple models, foldable booklets, or small activities that make complex concepts easier to grasp. Students can create solar system models, chart star maps, or present short lessons to their classmates.

The Celluloid Connection: *Hidden Figures* (2016) portrays how mathematics and simple tools helped scientists and engineers make groundbreaking achievements in the early days of space exploration.

## Inspiration from Space Exploration

Modern space missions, from astronauts aboard the International Space Station to probes exploring distant planets, remind us of the importance of teamwork and innovation. Discussing these stories motivates students to think of careers in science and technology.

The Celluloid Connection: *Apollo 13* (1995) shows how teamwork, problem-solving, and determination helped astronauts return safely to Earth. It connects directly with the values students can learn from space science.

Astronomy lessons open doors to curiosity and imagination. By studying space, students learn about human health, sustainability, scientific discovery, and the future of exploration. When connected with powerful examples from cinema, these lessons become even more relatable and inspiring. Films like *The Martian*, *Interstellar*, and *Hidden Figures* remind us that exploring space is not just science—it is a story of courage, creativity, and the endless human spirit to reach for the stars.

THEME OF THE MONTH

# TO SPACE AND BACK INDIANS IN SPACE

SHASWAT, GRADE X A, INDIRAPURAM PUBLIC SCHOOL, CROSSINGS REPUBLIK

Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4), a collaborative effort between Axiom Space and SpaceX, launched on 25th of June, marked a historic milestone for India as Mission Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, an Indian Airforce Pilot and ISRO Astronaut represented the nation aboard the International Space Station. During his 18-day stay in the station, Shukla experimented and investigated various physiological processes, including the impact of microgravity and various forms of radiation that come from the sun and other cosmic sources. Unlike Earth, space has no atmosphere or magnetic field to block these out on sprouting of salad seeds and its relevance to crew nutrition, the effects of metabolic supplement under microgravity, and even the resilience of tardigrades are in the extreme conditions of space. These tests, designed by an array of various Indian Institutes and co-ordinated by ISRO serve as a vital operational test bed for upcoming long-duration crewed missions by giving us the necessary insight on astronaut well-being and system behaviour.

Aboard the "space island," the nation's own 'Gaganyatri'. Shubhanshu Shukla also deliberated and discussed the mission with Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji through a video call, stating it to be a matter of national pride and unity. He carried a selection of the finest of Indian handicrafts and the tastiest of Indian cuisine and to the space station attributing it as a tribute to India's rich and varied cultural heritage. Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla had a video call with Prime Minister Narendra Modi from the International Space Station. The PM asked him, "upar se Bharat kaisa lagta hai?" (How does India look from above?). Shukla said India looks beautiful and bigger than on a map. The PM congratulated him for hoisting the Indian flag in space. Shukla talked about the challenges of living in zero gravity and the experiments he is doing to help people on Earth.

The PM encouraged young people to dream big and praised Shukla's hard work. They also discussed India's future plans in space. The call ended with Shukla saying proudly, "Bharat Mata Ki Jai."

Ax-4 not only strengthened India's collaboration with global space agencies but also laid vital groundwork for ISRO's upcoming Gaganyaan mission, bringing India a step closer to independent human spaceflight.

## Quick Facts

Indian cosmonaut and former Indian Air Force officer Rakesh Sharma was born on 13 January 1949. He is the first Indian citizen to travel in space. He flew aboard Soyuz T-11 on 3 April 1984 as part of the Soviet Interkosmos programme. Along with Shubhanshu Shukla (Axiom-4, July 2025) he is one of the two astronauts of Indian citizenship to travel to space.

Three astronauts of Indian American origin, Kalpana Chawla, Sunita Williams and Raja Chari have also made significant contributions to space exploration.





THEME OF THE MONTH

# INDIA'S BIG TECHNOLOGY LEAP IN SPACE PROGRAM

NEIL, XII-A, INDIRAPURAM PUBLIC SCHOOL, CROSSINGS REPUBLIK

Recent years have been no less amazing for India in terms of our space programs. It started in 2024 with the Ladakh Human Analogue Mission conducted in collaboration with IIT Bombay and University of Ladakh. It simulated extraterrestrial conditions to prepare for future endeavors on Mars and the Moon. SpaDex Docking Mission that was launched on 30th December 2024, completed its autonomous rendezvous, docking and undocking on 16th January 2025. This was followed by GSLV-F15 launch in the same month that carried NVS-02 satellite to boost NavIC navigation. This is a giant step forward in the work on larger docking systems which will impact the upcoming Gaganyaan and Bharatiya Antariksha Station.

The ISRO chairman Dr. V. Narayanan's statement that India's reply to the Pahalgam Attack through Operation Sindoor highlighted the Indian Satellites' flawless functioning to help the armed forces. To top it all, our second astronaut has been to ISS via the Axiom-4 mission and back; Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla has made all of us proud and respected in the global space.

## HOW DO ASTRONAUTS COMMUNICATE FROM SPACE?

MIVAAN RANA 5-B, JAYPEE PUBLIC SCHOOL NOIDA



One evening, two friends, Mivaan and Atharva, were gazing at the night sky. The twinkling stars sparked their curiosity, and soon their conversation turned into a little science discovery.

"Atharva, have you ever wondered how astronauts communicate with us from space?" asked Mivaan.

Atharva thought for a moment. "But wait! Space has no air. And without air, sound can't travel. Then how do we hear them?"

Mivaan smiled. "That's where science comes in! Astronauts do not use normal sound waves. Instead, they use radio waves. These are electromagnetic waves that can travel through the vacuum of space at the speed of light."

Atharva's eyes lit up. "So, like FM radio?"

"Exactly!" replied Mivaan. "When an astronaut speaks, the microphone converts their voice into an electrical signal. The spacecraft's antenna converts it into radio waves. Satellites and ground stations on Earth receive those waves and convert them back into sound." Atharva was amazed. "Wow! That means if someone says 'Hello' from the Moon, it will reach Earth in just 1.3 seconds!"

Both friends laughed, pretending to be astronauts: "Hello Earth, this is Atharva and Mivaan from space!" And together they concluded, "Science makes space communication possible!"





## CALLING EARTH: COMMUNICATING IN THE UNKNOWN

NISHTHA SHRIVASTAVA, XI C, INDIRAPURAM PUBLIC SCHOOL, CROSSINGS REPUBLIK

Human curiosity has long been captivated by space. Astronomy has served as our link to the unknown since ancient times, when early societies used it to trace constellations. Today, sophisticated telescopes are used to discover galaxies located billions of light years away. It gives us perspective on the size of the cosmos and the potential significance of every discovery. Concerns about exoplanets, black holes, and the potential for extraterrestrial life continue to spark interest in science and in popular culture.

Among all the wonders of space, communication is one that presents a special difficulty presents a unique challenge. On Earth, messages travel quickly via the internet or phones. In contrast to the same, radio waves moving at the speed of light are used for space communication. However, distances extend this limitation: a signal to the Moon requires 1.3 seconds, whereas a message to Mars may take from 4 to 24 minutes, depending upon orbital positions. This gap demands accuracy, preparation, and faith in technology.

Reaching new worlds is just one aspect of space exploration; another is it also involves developing endurance, and learning patience, creativity, innovation, and collaboration across vast cosmic distances. Ultimately, space does not just test our technology, it tests the very spirit of human curiosity and resilience. Exploration not only tests our technological capabilities but also challenges the very spirit of human curiosity and resilience.

STUDENT VOICE

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A TEACHER

SHASWAT, GRADE X A, INDIRAPURAM PUBLIC SCHOOL, CROSSINGS REPUBLIK

**H**ave you ever thought, “What does my teacher do all day?” We see our teacher smiling, writing on the board, and helping us. But a teacher’s day starts much earlier and ends much later than ours. Let’s walk through one whole day in the life of a teacher.

**Morning Time:** The day begins very early. While many children are still dreaming, the teacher wakes up. She gets ready quickly, eats breakfast, and checks her school bag. Inside are books, lesson plans, pens, and sometimes even colorful charts or flashcards. She thinks, “Today I will teach something new and fun.” By 7:30, she reaches the school. The classrooms are quiet, but soon they will be full of laughter, chatter, and learning.

**Before the Bell:** The teacher enters the classroom first. She looks around. Are the desks in order? Is the board clean? Is everything ready? She writes the date and subject on the board. Sometimes she even adds a smiley face or a short message like “Good things are going to happen today!”

The big bell rings. Students line up outside. With a bright smile, the teacher says, “Good morning, children!”

“Good morning, ma’am!” the class answers loudly. The school day begins!

**First Lesson:** The first lesson is special. Everyone is fresh and ready to learn. If it is Math, the teacher writes sums on the board and asks, “Who wants to solve this?” If it is English, she may read a story aloud. Children listen carefully, imagining the characters. If it is Science, she may bring a small experiment or a plant to show. She walks around, helping one child with a sum, answering another’s question, and clapping when someone gives the correct answer.

**Different Subjects:** A teacher teaches

many subjects in one day. In Math, she explains numbers, shapes, and word problems. In English, she teaches poems, stories, and new words. In Science, she shows the wonders of plants, animals, and the sky. In Social Studies, she talks about our country, maps, and festivals. Every subject is like a new adventure. The teacher changes her way of teaching each time so children stay happy and curious.

**Small Challenges:** Teaching is fun, but it can be a little tricky too. Sometimes children whisper and talk during class. Sometimes they forget homework. Sometimes they feel sleepy. The teacher does not get angry easily. She stays patient and calm. She may clap three times to make everyone quiet or say, “Let’s all take a deep breath and start again.” Teachers know many little tricks to keep the class cheerful and disciplined.

**Break Time:** Finally, the bell rings for recess! Students run outside, open their tiffin boxes, and play in the ground. But the teacher’s work is not finished. She often eats quickly and then checks notebooks. Sometimes she talks with other teachers in the staff room. Other times, she helps a child who finds a subject difficult. Even in break time, she thinks about her students.

**Afternoon Classes:** After break, classes continue. But now children feel a little tired. Some even yawn! The teacher understands. She brings back energy with fun activities. She may play a short quiz, tell a funny story, or ask children to come to the board. In Science, she might say, “Do you know water can climb up a plant’s stem?” Then she shows an experiment with colored water and a flower. Children open their eyes wide in surprise.

**Extra Duties:** A teacher does more than just teach lessons. She also checks

attendance every morning, keeps the class clean and safe, prepares report cards, talks to parents during meetings, trains children for plays, songs, or competitions. On some days, she stays after school to guide practice for Sports Day or Annual Day. She claps for her students, corrects mistakes, and cheers, “You can do it!”

**School Ends:** At last, the final bell rings. Students pack their bags, wave goodbye, and run out happily. But the teacher does not leave yet. She still has work. She checks homework, writes comments, and plans what to teach tomorrow. She thinks, “Today my children tried their best. Tomorrow, I will teach them something even better.”

**Evening at Home:** When she finally reaches home, she feels a little tired but also happy. She relaxes, talks with her family, and has tea. But even in the evening, she often works. She prepares worksheets, looks for new stories, or reads something interesting for the next lesson.

**Why Teachers Are Special?** Teaching is not just a job. It is love, care, and responsibility. A teacher’s day is long and busy, but it is also full of smiles and joy. She is a guide, a friend, and sometimes like a parent. She teaches, helps, corrects, and encourages. Without teachers, there would be no schools, no learning, and no future. The next time you see your teacher, remember how hard she works every single day. Even a small “Thank you, ma’am” can make her smile brightly.

**Conclusion:** A day in the life of a teacher is full of lessons, notebooks, and planning. But it is also filled with love, laughter, and kindness. From the morning bell to the evening rest, a teacher gives her best to her students. That is why teachers are the real heroes of our lives.

# STUDENT VOICE

## CINEMA REVIEW

### DEAD POET'S SOCIETY

TANEESHA MUKHERJEE CLASS XI -A JAYPEE PUBLIC SCHOOL NOIDA

Teacher's Day is celebrated every year to honor the hard work, patience, and dedication of teachers. Behind every lesson plan, assignment, and classroom lecture lies a teacher's true mission, shaping lives and inspiring young minds. The movie *Dead Poet's Society* beautifully captures this essence through the unforgettable character of Mr. John Keating, played by Robin Williams.

A teacher's day is not just about teaching chapters or checking notebooks. It begins with preparation, but it extends far beyond textbooks. Teachers motivate, encourage, and sometimes become a source of strength for students facing struggles. Similarly, in the film, Mr. Keating goes beyond traditional methods. He makes his students stand on desks to see the world from a new angle, tears out pages of rigid textbooks to break free from conformity, and reminds them to "Carpe Diem – Seize the Day."

*Dead Poet's Society* (1989), a powerful story about unconventional teaching and inspiring students to "seize the day." Directed by Peter Weir, it is a timeless classic set in an elite boys' boarding school. It follows a group of students whose lives are transformed by their English teacher, Mr. John Keating (played by Robin Williams).

**Plot in Brief:** Mr. Keating encourages his students to think beyond textbooks, challenge conventions, and live with passion. He introduces them to the idea of "Carpe Diem", seize the day, inspiring them to find their own voices and pursue their true dreams. However, the clash between youthful aspirations and rigid traditions leads to both uplifting and heartbreaking consequences.

**Highlights:** There are certain recurring themes in this movie.

- **Individuality vs. Conformity** – The movie highlights the struggle between following one's heart and obeying societal/familial expectations.

- **Power of a Teacher** – It beautifully shows how a teacher can shape lives, not just through academics but through values and inspiration.

- **Courage and Expression** – Poetry becomes a metaphor for expressing one's identity, creativity, and inner fire.

It Inspires as it urges us to think differently, take risks, and live fully. It shows how education can be about nurturing curiosity and self-expression, not just grades. The ending is emotional yet powerful, reminding us that true teaching lives on in the hearts of students.

Robin Williams delivers an unforgettable performance, warm, witty, and deeply moving. The young cast, including Ethan Hawke, bring authenticity to the struggles of adolescence.

The film beautifully explores themes of individuality, courage, and the impact a teacher can have beyond textbooks. Though emotional and at times tragic, the movie leaves us with a powerful lesson: education should inspire us to live fully and follow our true passions. *Dead Poet's Society* is a timeless reminder to make our lives extraordinary.

True education is not just about memorizing facts but about learning to think, question, and live meaningfully. The climax of the movie is both heartbreaking and unforgettable. Without giving away too much, it shows the cost of suppressed dreams, but also the lasting influence of a true teacher. The final scene, where students stand on their desks to honour Mr. Keating, is one of the most iconic in cinema history.

*Dead Poet's Society* is relevant even



today. It reminds us that education should not be limited to rote learning and rigid rules. Instead, true learning should inspire creativity, confidence, and the courage to follow one's heart. It teaches us to question, to dream, and to live life with purpose.

#### A Short Poem dedicated to All my teachers

*You stand before us,  
chalk in hand,*

*Planting visions like  
seeds in sand.*

*Not just lessons,  
but paths you show,*

*A way to think, a way to grow.*

*You teach us courage,  
voice, and choice,*

*To speak with heart,  
to find our voice.*

*Rules may bind,  
yet you set us free,*

*To see the world as it can be.*



STUDENT VOICE

# FROM APOLLO TO MARS: HUMANITY'S EXPANDING HORIZONS IN SPACE

MANGLA DWIVEDI

*"Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known." - Carl Sagan*



**The First Giant Leap** When Neil Armstrong placed his foot on the lunar surface in July 1969, the world witnessed more than just a technological achievement. The Apollo 11 mission symbolized the height of human curiosity, courage, and ambition. The program that followed demonstrated that humankind could cross the boundaries of Earth and survive on another world, opening an era where space was no longer a dream, but a destination.

The Apollo era also spurred innovations in computing, materials, and communication - technologies that continue to shape our everyday lives. More importantly, it ignited imaginations worldwide, planting the idea that humanity's future was not limited to Earth. As Armstrong himself said: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

## From Earth's Orbit to a Permanent Presence

The decades after Apollo brought a new vision - not just reaching space but

living there. The Space Shuttle program allowed reusable spacecraft, revolutionizing how humans accessed orbit. Shuttles carried satellites, telescopes, and laboratories, turning space into a platform for science rather than a battlefield of the Cold War.

The construction of the **International Space Station (ISS) in the 1990s** was another turning point. A joint project involving the United States, Russia, Europe, Japan, and Canada, it remains the most ambitious cooperative engineering project in history. The ISS continues to serve as a microgravity laboratory, advancing medicine, climate research, and robotics. As astronaut **Peggy Whitson**, who spent **665 days** aboard the ISS, once explained: "Living on the space station is the closest thing to being on another planet."

## A New Era: Artemis and Mars

Today, humanity prepares for a return to the Moon with NASA's Artemis program. Unlike Apollo, Artemis is designed for permanence. Astronauts will not only

visit but establish infrastructure to support longer stays. The Moon will act as a training ground, teaching us how to build bases, extract resources, and sustain life in hostile environments.

Mars is the goal. Its thin atmosphere, freezing temperatures, and distance from Earth pose unprecedented challenges. Yet the potential rewards—discovering signs of past life, testing human endurance, and perhaps one day building a second home for civilization—make Mars exploration central to global space agencies. As astronaut Buzz Aldrin famously said: "Mars is there, waiting to be reached."

## Messages Across the Stars: Voyager's Golden Record

While astronauts ventured outward, another mission carried Earth's message into the cosmos. In 1977, NASA launched the Voyager probes, each carrying a Golden Record—a time capsule with greetings in 55 languages, sounds of Earth, and music spanning cultures and centuries.



**T**he project was led by astronomer Carl Sagan, who described it as “a bottle cast into the cosmic ocean.” Decades later, the Voyager probes are now over 22 billion kilometres away (it takes any communication a full light day- to reach the Voyagers), silently carrying humanity’s story into interstellar space. For students, the Golden Record is a reminder that exploration is not just about science, but about identity: who we are, and how we wish to be remembered by the universe. As Voyager I and II navigate the interstellar in all its mystery and magic, we in India can say with pride that a voice from India floats the expanse too; the Golden Record carries the rendition of **Jaat Kahan Ho Akele Gori** by Kesarbai Kerkar

#### India’s Rising Role in Space

In recent years, India has emerged as a major force in space exploration. The Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan) of

2014 made India the first Asian nation to reach Mars orbit and it did so on a budget smaller than many Hollywood movies. In 2023, Chandrayaan-3 successfully landed near the Moon’s south pole, a region untouched by previous missions.

India’s upcoming Gaganyaan mission will carry Indian astronauts into orbit, placing the nation among the few with independent human spaceflight capability. These milestones are not just national achievements; they inspire millions of students across the country to dream of contributing to global science. As former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam reminded us: “Dream, dream, dream. Dreams transform into thoughts, and thoughts result in action.”

#### Beyond Technology: Lessons from Space

The evolution of spaceflight is not only about rockets and astronauts. It is about values curiosity, perseverance, cooperation, and vision. From the

competition of Apollo to the cooperation of the ISS, from the audacity of Artemis to the message of Voyager, each mission reflects humanity’s broader search for meaning and possibility.

#### The Future is in the Classroom

The story of human spaceflight is still being written. The footprints on the Moon, the spacecraft bound for Mars, and the Golden Record drifting among the stars are all chapters in a narrative that stretches across generations. Today’s students may very well author the next chapter.

Every great explorer once sat in a classroom, wondering what lay beyond the horizon. Today, those horizons extend to planets and stars. For students, the challenge is not only to learn about these achievements, but to imagine where they might take us next.

*“Exploration is really the essence of the human spirit.”*  
- Frank Borman, Apollo 8 Commander.

EDUCATOR INTERVIEW

# "THEATRE IS A MEDIUM OF CHANGE"

IN CONVERSATION WITH MUSICIAN,  
THEATRE DIRECTOR ANINDYA KALRA

THE SCHOOLASTIC EDITORIAL TEAM



**M**usician, theatre director, writer, teacher, facilitator, and co-founder of the Takhleeq Theatre Group, Anindya Kalra wears many hats. For him, art is not just performance but a way of learning, healing, and transforming lives. In this conversation, he reflects on his journey, the Performance Arts Curriculum, and the power of theatre in classrooms.

### Finding His Path

**Schoolastic Team:** You wear many hats - musician, theatre director, writer, teacher, and facilitator. How did your journey into theatre and the arts begin?

**Anindya Kalra:** My journey began at

home. My mother was a theatre artist and a music teacher, and my father also loved the arts. I often say art runs in my blood. From Ramleelas at Lal Qila to summer workshops at the National School of Drama (NSD), theatre was always around me.

At NSD, I met a facilitator who was fun, approachable, and still pushed us to learn a lot. That's when I thought "this is what I want to do". By the end of my first year in college, I had directed my first play. That play became the seed of the theatre group I would go on to form. Since then, I have been creating plays and workshops with schools and colleges across Delhi.

**ST:** Who has been your biggest inspiration?

**AK:** My father. He raised me alone, balancing work and home, and taught me resilience. Even now, whenever I face difficulty, I ask myself, "What would he do?" That thinking has shaped me both as an artist and as a person.

### Theatre as Learning

**ST:** You co-founded Takhleeq Theatre Group. What's the vision behind it?

**AK:** Theatre is not just performance it is education. We use it to make learning fun and meaningful. For example, I once used a breathing exercise with odd and even numbers, inhale on odd, exhale on





even. Suddenly, maths becomes physical and engaging. Our bigger aim is to help students build confidence, empathy, teamwork, and expression skills just as important as academics.

**ST: How does theatre help students grow beyond academics?**

**AK:** Through games and activities. Without them, there's no theatre. These playful exercises reduce stage fright, teach collaboration, and give children the courage to express themselves.

**ST: Why are art and theatre as important as academics?**

**AK:** Because they open a child's voice and viewpoint. Theatre teaches us to observe people and society. That observation builds empathy, which academics alone cannot provide.

## Inside the Performance Arts Curriculum

**ST: You have worked with the Delhi Government's Performance Arts Curriculum. How did this initiative use theatre to make learning meaningful?**

**AK:** This was a pilot project in some government schools. Its aim was to expose children to all major art forms — dance, music, theatre, and visual arts (including digital). It helped students realize that art is bigger than a Bollywood dance or a painting class.

I worked in one of the twelve pilot schools. It wasn't easy, teachers worried about exams, but it was a start. For children who had never thought of art as "serious" learning, this opened new doors.

**ST: Have you seen transformations through this work?**

**AK:** Yes, many. In one case, fifty Class 8 girls built a full musical play from scratch. The stories came from their lives and communities. What amazed me was how they took ownership, preparing at home, teaching each other. By the end, they were running the project themselves. That's the kind of change theatre brings.

## On Stage Fright and Expression

**ST: Many students struggle with stage fright. How can they overcome it?**

**AK:** Stage fright has two sides. Some students simply do not want to be on stage and that's fine. Theatre has equally important roles in lights, sound, costumes, props, stage design and backstage.

But for those who want to perform but feel blocked, we start with self-awareness. How does your body react in front of fifty people? Can you control your breathing? Then we move step by step: work in pairs, then in small groups, then the whole class. Slowly, expression becomes natural.

*If a hesitant student says even one word on stage, that's a win."*

## Theatre in a Digital Age

**ST: In today's digital age, how can theatre bring balance?**

**AK:** Our attention spans have shrunk to 30 seconds. Students go outdoors less, and observation has suffered. But theatre depends on observation how someone walks, eats, talks. It trains children to notice nuances that screens cannot teach.

## Keeping Art Free

**ST: What's your vision for the future of arts in schools?**

**AK:** Art must remain a choice, not a pressure. Sadly, today parents push children into five activities a day, turning art into another race. That defeats the purpose.

Art should be a safe space to think, to reflect, to express. Historically, art has been a medium of change think of Van Gogh's *Starry Night* or Faiz Ahmed Faiz's

poetry. They came from struggle, from personal vision. That is the freedom art must continue to give.

**ST: If you could redesign school timetables, what would you change?**

**AK:** Don't make arts another 40-minute period squeezed into a class of fifty. Instead, create flexible, choice-based slots where students can explore music, dance, theatre, or public speaking and drop what doesn't interest them. Exposure matters, but so does freedom.

## The Power of Stories

**ST: How do you see the link between storytelling and leadership?**

**AK:** Leaders are storytellers. Every great speech has a beginning, a conflict, and a resolution. In theatre workshops, we practice this through improvisations and story arcs. That practice builds leadership skills too.

**ST: What is one myth about theatre you wish parents and students would stop believing?**

**AK:** That theatre cannot provide a livelihood. Yes, there is struggle but that is true of any field. Theatre can lead to films, direction, education, writing, or facilitation. The bigger barrier is society's mindset that the arts are "lesser" than science or commerce. That must change.

## Message to Students

**ST: Finally, what message would you like to give our readers?**

**AK:** Read more. Not just about theatre, but across disciplines and viewpoints. Don't copy someone else's vision, instead analyze, deconstruct, and then form your own. Education should not produce machines who work twelve hours a day. It should produce thoughtful, sensitive human beings. That's what society really needs.

**P.S:** Anindya Kalra brought immense wisdom about working with children. We at **FairGaze Schoolastic Magazine** are reminded that art in its myriad forms is not just a subject, but a way of life one that builds empathy, confidence, and creativity in young minds. It is a vital component of the teaching-learning process students engage with every day.

FAIRGAZE INITIATIVES

# YS FAIRGAZE MUN 3.0

## ◀ YOUTH LEADING THE WAY IN ▶ DIALOGUE AND ACTION

BHAVNA SHARMA AND VANSH TYAGI



On the 26th and 27th of July 2025, the YS Group of Institutes, Barnala, came alive with the voices of over 450 young delegates from across the region. The occasion was the YS FairGaze Model United Nations 3.0, a two-day journey of ideas, debates, and youth leadership supported by **India Is Us** and **EaseMyTrip**. As the organizing team of FairGaze, we had the privilege of witnessing not just an event, but a celebration of the power of dialogue.

The conference was inaugurated in the presence of the Chief Guest, **Mr. Mohd. Sarfaraz Alam, IPS, SSP Barnala**, whose thought-provoking words set the tone for the days ahead:

**"Literature is not just about stories; it's about shaping thoughts, nurturing empathy, and building responsible citizens."**

His message echoed through every committee room, reminding delegates that every debate and every resolution was a step towards shaping their own leadership journeys. The MUN 3.0 was a seamless blend of academic rigor and youthful enthusiasm.

### **Committees and Agendas: Where Youth Became Diplomats**

The heart of MUN lies in its committee spaces where students step into the shoes of global and national leaders. This year's nine committees reflected the urgency of the world's most pressing issues:

**United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** – Impact of Climate Change as the Most Significant Threat to Future Generations. Beyond discussion, delegates carried their cause into action with an environment awareness rally across the campus proving that words can, and must, move into deeds.

**United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** - Role of Social Media in Threatening Individual Privacy and Cultural Integrity.

**United Nations Security Council (Novice Forum)** - Responsibility of Nations in Ensuring Protection and Support for Refugees.

**Lok Sabha** - India's Readiness for a Cashless Economy: Opportunities and Challenges.

**Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)** - Regulating Surveillance Drones: Balancing National Security and Individual Privacy.

**All India Political Parties Meet (AIPPM)** - Integrating Financial Literacy into Mandate School Curricula for Sustainable Development and Economic Empowerment.

**World Health Organization (WHO)** - Inclusive Mental Health Policies for





Individuals with Physical Disabilities and Chronic Illnesses like COPD and Alzheimer's Disease.

**United Nations Security Council (Senior Forum)** - Responsibility of Nations in Ensuring Protection and Support for Refugees.

**International Press (IP)** - Chronicling the debates through the lens of young reporters and photographers

Each committee was not just a platform for debate but a laboratory of solutions. Delegates clashed in argument,



collaborated in drafting resolutions, and learned the art of negotiation skills that will stay with them far beyond the conference halls.

#### **Youth Power-The Energy of Debate**

What stood out in YS FairGaze MUN 3.0 was the intensity and sincerity with which participants approached their roles. Whether it was a novice delegate nervously raising their first point in the UNSC, or the Lok Sabha delegates passionately debating India's digital future, every voice mattered.

The International Press captured these moments, ensuring the stories of determination, persuasion, and leadership reached every corner of the campus.

#### **Beyond the Committee Rooms**

What makes a FairGaze MUN unique is its blend of debate with action and awareness. The climate rally led by UNGA delegates became a highlight, a reminder that the responsibility of

addressing global issues begins with local actions. Equally, the camaraderie built among students, strangers on the first morning, but friends and co-learners by the closing ceremony made the event memorable.

#### **Shaping Future Leaders**

YS FairGaze MUN 3.0 was not just an event; it was a training ground for future leaders. The experience gave young people a voice, a platform, and the confidence to tackle challenges that even world leaders find daunting.

As organizers, we believe that such platforms are vital in today's times. More than knowledge, they give students the skills of diplomacy, empathy, and critical thinking. The two-day event concluded with applause, awards, and a deep sense of achievement but more importantly, with the conviction that the youth of today are ready to lead tomorrow.



EDUCATION EVENT

# THESPIAN FEST #TRAGIVERSE

## A CELEBRATION OF SHAKESPEARE IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

A Schoolastic Editorial Team Report



What happens when timeless Shakespearean tragedies meet the modern world of smartphones, motivational videos, and new-age dilemmas? That's exactly what this year's Thespian Fest, titled #TRAGIVERSE, set out to explore and the result was nothing short of brilliant.

Now in its second edition, Thespian Fest brought together passionate performers and storytellers from various schools to dive into the world of Shakespearean drama, but with a crisp, creative twist. The name "Tragiverse" a fusion of Tragedy and Universe captured the spirit of the event perfectly: a universe where classic tragedies were not only performed but reimaged with alternate endings in

today's context. Imagine Romeo and Juliet saved by a text message. Or Macbeth pausing to rethink his ambition



after watching a YouTube video on leadership. These were just some of the

fresh take audience witnessed on stage; a blending of old-world literature with modern-day sensibilities.

To understand the heart behind the performances, we spoke to the students, their teachers, and theatre mentors who shaped these powerful renditions. Teachers shared how the idea of blending Shakespeare with contemporary scenarios sparked deeper engagement and creativity among students. From scriptwriting to character development, the process was a learning journey in emotional depth, collaboration, and the art of performance.

Students, too, reflected on their experiences not just of acting, but of stepping into characters' shoes, understanding their motivations, and then turning those stories on their heads. Many said they felt more connected to Shakespeare than ever before, proving that even centuries later, his work continues to inspire and evolve. The Schoolastic Team interviewed participating students and teachers to hear their perspectives. Teachers shared how this unique format deepened students' connection to the plays, while students reflected on learning to adapt, perform, and understand Shakespeare in a whole new light.

**In Conversation with Mrs. Renu Sharma, Principal and Assistant Director, Indirapuram Public School, Crossings Republik**

**Schoolastic Team:** Do you believe theatre serves as a platform for students who struggle to excel in traditional



classroom settings?

**Renu Sharma:** Yes. See, if I talk about tradition, the scenario has changed over the last few years. Theatre can be one of the tools of teaching, right? Suppose I am using a book in the classroom to teach a particular concept, because we have all kinds of concepts, we use a story, or a drama to teach. So, of course, it will help. On the stage, you cannot afford to have hesitations. The confidence building, the expression, I think students who are not good at speaking, whose communication skill is not that strong, who are not that expressive while they speak, maybe through acting, through emotions, they can do that through theatre.

Therefore, I believe it is a very strong tool that teachers can use in almost every subject.

**ST:** In what way does drama, particularly with complex texts like Shakespeare, help students emotionally mature and express themselves better?

**RS:** Using a Shakespearean text today, a text which is very complex, you need a lot of effort and focus to interpret it and sync it to the current scenario. Students must have gone through that, to select a drama and do this. So that would have given them a lot of exposure with respect to Shakespearean writings. I must interpret that complex text, so that develops a very important life skill-critical thinking. When I interpret anything on the stage, creativity has come into the room. Both creativity as well as critical thinking are 21st century skills. So, I am sure it would help.

**ST:** What does "success" look like to you in this festival? Is it measured by applause on stage, teamwork behind the

scenes, or something deeper?

**RS:** Of course, the purpose is not only applause, but also not only appreciation. It is about everything. When we do an event, you know, there is so much happening backstage. I mean, when we plan an event, we do it two or three months prior. So, a lot of planning, a lot of energy and time goes into execution of that. So, we kind of believe in PD. I am sure she has helped with the scriptwriting, but there she was not visible. There were only students talking, you know, on the mic, on the podium. So again, students are getting a lot of exposure. Props is another example. So, all this, throughout this month have taught a lot to both the students and the teachers. Our parents do not send the children to school just to study. Study could have happened at home also; we have seen it during COVID. Bring in systems in place and everybody who is involved in the process would benefit.

**In conversation with the organiser of TragiVerse, Ms. Deepanshi Agrawal, Indirapuram School, English Teacher**

**ST:** What was the core idea or student need that inspired the TragiVerse format? Why choose Shakespeare, and why reimagine his work?

**Deepanshi Agrawal:** As the organiser of TragiVerse: Thespian Fest 2025 and an English teacher, I frequently ponder how to help students understand literature. I have watched them struggle with Shakespeare for years; they are impressed by his reputation but get put off by his language and settings. This gap gave rise to the concept of TragiVerse. In addition to reading Shakespeare, I wanted my students to leave him out and apply his moral lessons to their own lives. We therefore requested that they set his tragedies in modern environments, such as a Macbeth in a glass office tower, a Hamlet struggling with digital isolation, or a Juliet imprisoned by hate speech online rather than her family.

**ST:** In your opinion, what happens when students are empowered to question and reinterpret classic texts, especially tragic ones?

**Deepanshi Agrawal:** When they were granted that freedom, a miraculous thing occurred. Shakespeare was questioned and reinterpreted by students who had previously viewed him as a burden. They asked bold questions: What if Othello had trusted Desdemona in an age of instant messaging? What if Lady Macbeth was a powerful CEO? Suddenly, the tragedies stopped being about distant kings and queens and became mirrors of the very conflicts my students face every



day, jealousy, ambition, loyalty, betrayal, identity. By reimagining the text, they were not just studying literature; they were creating it anew.

**ST:** How do you see performance-based extracurricular activities changing students' personalities over time?

**Deepanshi Agrawal:** In the process, their personalities transformed. Performance is never just about memorizing lines, it is about finding your voice. On stage, the bashful student who whispered in class exuded strength. In directing a scene, the reluctant student found leadership. When the quiet ones put themselves in other people's shoes, their empathy blossomed. Drama imparts qualities that textbooks cannot: self-assurance, teamwork, resilience, and the willingness to take chances.

**ST:** What does it personally mean to you when a student says, "Now I actually like Shakespeare"?

**Deepanshi Agrawal:** The simplest statement, "Now I actually like Shakespeare," was the biggest reward for me. That little admission has enormous significance. The fact that literature has reached them where it counts most, the heart, and indicates that the barrier of fear surrounding "difficult English" has been broken.

**ST:** What message would you like to convey to schools that still view extracurricular activities as 'extra' rather than essential?

**Deepanshi Agrawal:** I would say this to schools that continue to write off extracurricular activities as "extra": they are necessities, not extravagances. They impart abilities like creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence that are impossible to gauge on an exam. The memory of standing under stage lights and expressing truth through someone else's words will last a lifetime, even if a formula is forgotten. Performance, art, and literature are the essence of education, not just its adornments.

**ST:** Today it is Shakespeare, will tomorrow widen its ambit to other folk theatre forms like Jatra, Bhavai, Koothu, Attom, or Yakshagana?

**Deepanshi Agrawal:** TragiVerse was never limited to Shakespeare. It served as

a reminder to all of us, teachers, students, and schools that stories never go out of style and that education changes when we give young people ownership over them.

**We spoke to teachers to understand their perspectives on the Theatre-Fest**

**Mr. Gurjeet Pathak, Sapphire**



**International, Crossings Republic, Theatre Facilitator**

**ST:** What made you decide that you want to teach your kids through this Shakespeare production?

**Gurjeet Pathak:** In this competition, students from classes 9 to 12 participated. Most schools had representations from these classes. The only reason for me to participate in this event was not just to perform theatre or perform Shakespeare. Shakespeare is all about tragedy; even in the comedy, there is tragedy. Through all his plays, we know him as the king of tragedies. During my school years there was a gap after completing school; that is when we could go outside and participate in activities. But today, with this generation things are different. They are exposed to many things at a very early age like depression, overthinking, etc. So, it is important to understand what a tragedy is actually. And this is going to happen anyhow, in each and everyone's life. Not only with a person, but with your process, with your things, with your studies, with your profession, wherever you are going. It will be a little less, it will be a little more, but it will happen. Eventually, you have to get out of this. And this makes us a little normal. We got to know the things. They should be aware, because each and every tragedy is all about betrayal, or jealousy, or competency. There is much that today's children deal with.

**Ms. Ayushi, St. John's School, Theatre**



**In-Charge**

**ST:** Do you believe theatre serves as a platform for students who struggle to excel in traditional classroom settings?

**Ayushi:** Firstly, I have been somebody who has been reserved all my life as a student. Though right now, I have been a theatre student for six to eight years. I have been performing theatre. So, what I try is, even if my children are not there in the theatre club, I make my classroom like a theatre where they express themselves freely. If there is a certain chapter where they feel that the story is something which is very emotional, they seriously perform it in the class. They cry their emotions out. They are performing as characters. This is what we do in the theatre also. In theatre, it's all about emotions. It's all about how we express ourselves, our tone, our tenor. The student who is sitting very silently in the class is the one who is emoting the best in theatre because they do not have any place where they can vent their emotions. A theatre is one such place where they can actually, without talking to the audience, without talking to anybody, they are just saying their dialogues and they are emoting themselves freely. So, theatre gives that much space and freedom to their emotions to express themselves.

**We spoke to the participating students and this is what they told us.**

**Sophia School**

**ST:** Before this festival, what did Shakespeare mean to you a challenging chapter in English class or something else? Has your perception changed now?

**Srishti Divya:** When I used to read about



Shakespeare before I entered this competition, I felt Shakespeare's English was not for us, because we usually speak English that is more with an Indian accent. Meanwhile, Shakespeare's English has complicated words let it be "thy," "thee," "thou," or any other word. So, for us, it was more like a challenging chapter, which we were not too interested in reading. We used to read only some well-known stories, like Romeo and Juliet, the story that everybody knows. After we came here, our perspective changed. We came to know that it is not about one story that Shakespeare is known for. There are numerous stories which he wrote, which are really very beautiful. Some are even more beautiful let it be Othello that we are playing today. We feel like Shakespeare is not just about English, it is about emotion, it is about drama that is related to the medieval period, the period he lived in. It is related to luxury, yet the misery that was there. And our perspective changed, we became keen to read more, and we actually developed interest Shakespeare.

**Student 2:** Shakespeare always felt like a puzzle, you would never understand the joy of understanding that puzzle in a complete sense. But now that we are here, we are able to crack the puzzle and feel the joy that comes out of it.

**ST:** Rewriting a Shakespearean tragedy is a bold move. How did it feel to put your own twist on such an iconic work?

**Student 3:** So, it was very different and, as they both said, it was something that we were not really aware of.

**St. John's, Greater Noida**

**ST:** What personal qualities did you discover or develop through this process, such as teamwork, voice modulation, or overcoming stage fright?

**Student 1:** We developed many qualities, for example the coordination among our team members and the voice modulation we had to portray during the tragic scenes, and various others. It is a very hectic task to bear all these voice modulations and things.

**Student 2:** I think for me, I really overcame my stage fright, and it has helped me gain confidence that I can do more of this stuff in the future also.



**Student 3:** I have enhanced my voice modulation and reduced my stage fear. I play Tabla. I have been playing it for thirteen years and whenever I perform, I feel anxiety, I get nervous, my hands get shaky, something I could not overcome till now. Today, I enhanced my voice modulation. Our teacher-in-charge recorded our play, so I will see how it is and try to improve it more. If we had got more time, I would have done very well.

When the final act ended and the applause rang out, it was not just the success of a performance that echoed through the hall it was the triumph of creativity, courage, and collaboration. Thespian Fest's #TragiVerse was much more than a competition. It was an exploration of what happens when young minds are trusted with great stories, and when they are given the freedom to break, bend, and rebuild them in their own voice.

For students, it was a journey of self-discovery: overcoming stage fright, building confidence, and learning to work as a team. For teachers, it was a reminder that education is not confined to classrooms or textbooks, it is also in emotions, expression, and imagination. And for everyone watching, it was proof that Shakespeare still lives, not as a dusty chapter in English class, but as a vibrant, dynamic force capable of bridging centuries.

As one teacher beautifully said, "**Theatre is not just about acting, it is about transformation.**" Thespian Fest proved that transformation happens when tradition meets innovation, when literature meets life, and when students are allowed to dream beyond the script.

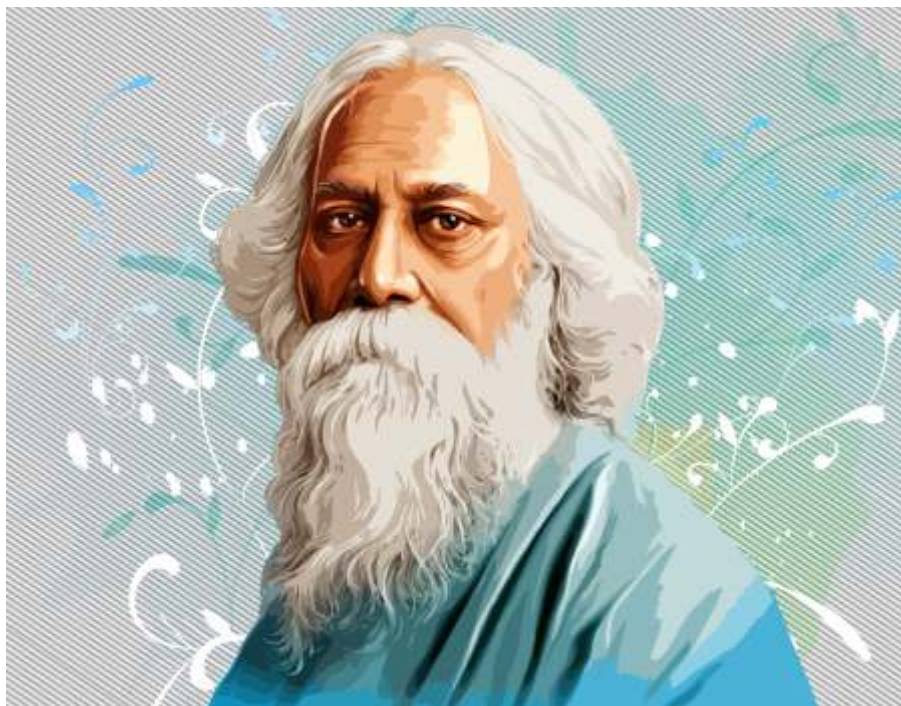
Shakespeare once asked, "**What's past is prologue.**" At #TragiVerse, the past truly became the prologue, to stories yet untold, to voices yet unheard, and to a generation ready to write its own future.



EDUCATOR FOCUS

# RABINDRANATH TAGORE: A NEW VISION OF EDUCATION

SIDHI ARORA



**R**abindranath Tagore was born on May 7, 1861, Bengal. A remarkable thinker and creator, a literary genius, philosopher, musician, and social reformer, Tagore made lasting contributions across many fields and left a deep impact not just on Indian society but on the world at large. His collection of poems, *Gitanjali* (Song Offerings), earned him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913, making him the first non-European to receive this honour. But his genius was not confined to literature. He also composed the national anthems of India (*Jana Gana Mana*) and Bangladesh (*Amar Shonar Bangla*), reflecting his profound influence on South Asian culture and identity.

At the heart of Tagore's life's work was a strong commitment to education and societal reform. He believed education should be more than a preparation for

work, it should nurture the mind, heart, and soul. He envisioned learning as a natural, joyful process rooted in creativity, self-discovery, and a deep relationship with the environment.

Tagore was critical of the rigid, exam-driven colonial education system that prioritized memorization over understanding. Instead, he believed that children should grow through freedom, exploration, and artistic expression. He saw nature not as a backdrop, but as a teacher, encouraging learning that was organic and alive. To bring this philosophy to life, he developed Shantiniketan meaning "abode of peace" which was founded by his father Maharshi Debendranath Tagore in 1863. It was a prayer hall with marble flooring and was named 'The Mandir.' The classes here were held under trees and followed the traditional Guru-Shishya

method of teaching. Starting as a small experimental school, Shantiniketan eventually became Visva-Bharati University, a unique institution where learning took place in open spaces, under trees, and where art, music, and discussion were as important as academic study. This area is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site as of 2023, celebrating its unique blend of art, culture, and education.

Tagore's model created a space where students could think freely, value culture, and grow into thoughtful, responsible individuals. His ideas challenged colonial mindsets and helped revive Indian cultural pride, inspiring generations of artists, writers, and educators. By encouraging creativity, empathy, and a global outlook, his approach helped shape a more open and progressive society.

**"The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence"**

This reflects his belief that teachers must be inspired and awakened themselves to truly educate others. Even today, Tagore's vision of education stands as a powerful reminder of what true learning can be, an experience that builds not only intellect but also character and compassion.

Rabindranath Tagore challenged the British Colonial, mechanical, exam-centric system that existed during his time. He brought the change in the Indian Education system by believing that education is not a tool to produce obedient clerks for the British Empire; instead it was a way to free the mind, nurture the spirit, and connect with both nature and culture.





*"Don't limit a child to your learning, for he was born in another time."*

He believed in 'Learning in Harmony with Nature' and brought the completely new idea to Shantiniketan. Before Shantiniketan, schools were typically closed, rigid spaces with strict discipline. Students sat in dark classrooms memorizing textbooks but at Shantiniketan, students learned outdoors, under trees and it laid the foundation for experiential learning in India, where students learn through experiences and observation, not just passive reading.

### **The child should learn from the environment, through natural experiences, not just through books.**

Rabindranath Tagore was not fond of rigid academic settings or formal education. He preferred to learn in a more open and self-directed manner. He described schools as prisons, which led him to leave both the public school in Brighton and the University of London, where he had initially enrolled to study

law. Instead of following a conventional curriculum, he chose to explore literature on his own, immersing himself in works like Shakespeare's **Coriolanus** and **Antony and Cleopatra**, as well as **Thomas Browne's Religio Medici**.

The British colonial system focused only on English, Mathematics and basic science but Rabindranath Tagore made music, painting, dance, drama, and poetry core parts of the curriculum as he believed that imagination and emotions were just as important as intellect and instead of forcing knowledge, Shantiniketan encouraged asking questions, discussions and play based learning without any strict punishments or exams. This idea inspired progressive education models that prioritize student well-being and curiosity over rigid discipline.

During his visits to many countries, including Japan, the United States, China, England, France, the Netherlands, Germany, and Southeast Asian nations, he delivered lectures on education,

nationalism, spirituality, identity, and cultural harmony that inspired many intellectuals. Tagore also shared deep conversations with Elbert Einstein on science, spirituality, and reality. Romain Rolland, the French writer and Nobel laureate, admired Tagore's ideas and saw him as a symbol of Eastern wisdom. W.B. Yeats, the Irish poet, helped publish *Gitanjali* in English and wrote the preface to it. Yeats was enchanted by the spiritual and lyrical beauty of Tagore's poetry. Chinese thinkers like Liang Qichao and Hu Shi were moved by his messages during his visits to China. He was seen as a bridge between Asian cultures as well.

In the end, Rabindranath's idea of education was simple, yet revolutionary. He believed that children should not be forced to learn in a particular way, instead they should be free and have their own will about what they want to study. To him, learning was not just about facts it was about becoming whole.



EDUCATION EVENT

# CELEBRATING CHANGEMAKERS NATIONAL SCHOOL AWARDS 2025

IN CONVERSATION WITH MS. SHIKHA DHILLON, FOUNDING MEMBER, NATIONAL SCHOOL AWARDS



**E**ducation is more than lessons and examinations, it is about shaping lives and preparing young minds for an ever-changing world. To honour the schools and educators who carry this responsibility with vision and dedication, the National School Awards 2025 was held on 3rd August at Radisson Blu, Dwarka, New Delhi. From thousands of nominations across the country, over 150 schools and individuals were recognized for their outstanding contributions.

In an exclusive conversation with FairGaze Schoolastic News, **Ms. Shikha Dhillon, Founding Member of the National School Awards**, shared the purpose, process, and lasting impact of this initiative.

**Schoolastic Team:** Please tell us a bit about your organization and the core reason behind giving these awards.

**Shikha Dhillon:** The National School Awards Association is one of India's most respected and authentic platforms dedicated to recognizing excellence in the education sector. NSA is committed to honouring schools, educators, and institutions that set benchmarks in innovation, academic excellence, and students' holistic development.

The core reason behind these awards is to celebrate and acknowledge the real changemakers in education those who go beyond routine teaching to shape future leaders. It is the most authentic way of giving them the recognition they truly deserve and inspiring others in the education community to strive for excellence, upgrade the Indian education system, and prepare students for the abruptly changing environment.

**ST:** What was the criteria for distributing the awards?

**SD:** National School Awards' selection process is rooted in transparency, authenticity, and merit. Each nomination undergoes a rigorous evaluation based on five parameters for each category, including Innovation in Teaching and Learning, Student Achievement and Development (Academic and Extra-curricular), Infrastructure and Resource Utilization, Community Engagement and Social Responsibility, and Sustainable Practices in Education.

There is a four-step selection process: Application, Documentation, Re-verification, and Final Selection. Every awardee is recognized purely on merit and contribution, not on popularity or commercial interests.

**ST:** What was the impact of giving these awards?

**SD:** The National School Awards has created a ripple effect of motivation and pride in the education community. Schools and educators have felt encouraged to further raise their standards, adopt new practices, and collaborate with peers. The recognition

has also strengthened their reputation among parents, students, and society, while creating a national network of progressive educators who share the vision of uplifting the quality of education in India.

**ST:** How many schools received the award?

**SD:** This year, in the 11th Edition of the National School Awards, held on 3rd August at Radisson Blu, Dwarka, New Delhi, we proudly recognized over 150 schools and educators from across the country for their outstanding contributions in diverse categories, chosen from 7,408 nominations nationwide.

The National School Awards 2025 was not just a ceremony of recognition it was a celebration of vision, perseverance, and the quiet determination of educators who believe in making a difference. For students, teachers, and institutions alike, the awards stand as an inspiration a call to keep striving, to keep creating, and to never stop believing in the power of education to transform lives. And as these stories continue to unfold, one truth becomes clear: the future of our nation will always be written in the classrooms of today.



## EDUCATOR FOCUS

# THE SPIRIT OF GROWTH

## ◀ KOTHARI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ▶ STUDENTS AND THEIR IAYP JOURNEY

A SCHOOLASTIC EDITORIAL TEAM REPORT



In 2025, the International Award for Young People (IAYP) will continue to empower young minds around the globe. Rooted in the philosophy of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award founded in 1956 by Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh and husband of Queen Elizabeth II, this program has enriched the lives of millions of young people worldwide. The Duke, envisioned a framework that encourages youth to go beyond academics, discover their strengths, and develop resilience and leadership qualities.

The Award was introduced in India in 1962 as part of the Commonwealth's efforts to promote youth development among its member countries. It has since been known as the International Award for Young People (IAYP) in India. For more than six decades, it has offered Indian students an opportunity to explore their potential, contribute to society, and connect with a global spirit of service and adventure. India's role as one of the largest member nations of the Commonwealth remains vital in sustaining the Award's mission of empowering youth beyond borders.

At Kothari International School in Noida, this vision is taking vibrant shape. Students have embraced the challenge with energy and determination, engaging in projects focused on community service, animal welfare, environmental action, and social awareness. Their efforts not only demonstrate their commitment to personal growth but also reflect their empathy as global citizens. To gain a closer understanding of this journey, we spoke with some of the participants, who shared their experiences with sincerity and pride.

### Student Voices: Their Journey with IAYP

**Madhya Bhatnagar (Bronze Award recipient):**

"Through this award, I've been able to connect more deeply with the community. Whether it was working with non-profit organizations or joining school-led initiatives, I have learned lessons that go far beyond textbooks. The Bronze Award is just the beginning for me."

**Siddhant Singh Shah (Head Boy, Kothari International School, competing for the Silver Award):**

"Our journey has been about responsibility and service. We worked with foundations for social welfare, joined cleanliness drives, and focused on issues like women empowerment and animal welfare. Each step made us realize how important it is to be a global citizen."

### Lessons Beyond the Classroom

We asked the students about the

activities they had undertaken as part of the Programme. The students highlighted their work as, volunteering for animal welfare, feeding stray dogs, and spreading awareness about compassion for animals; organizing cleanliness drives in and around their school and residential areas; hosting a blood donation camp at their school to support healthcare needs, and working with non-profit organizations to contribute to wider social causes.

These experiences not only taught them practical skills but also instilled empathy, teamwork, and leadership. As one participant reflected, **"We have gained not just certificates, but life skills empathy for nature, responsibility towards society, and the courage to take initiatives."**

The journey of Kothari International School students with the International Award for Young People is more than a list of activities - it is a story of transformation. In their own words, the award has given them confidence, empathy, and purpose. It has taught them that leadership is not about titles but about service, and that true education is not confined to classrooms but lives in experiences. As these young learners continue to grow, they embody the spirit of IAYP to serve, to learn, and to lead with compassion. Their journey stands as an inspiration, reminding us that the future lies in the hands of those who dare to give back to the world.

EDUCATION EVENT

# BIOSPHERE RESERVE CHAMPIONS 2025: FROM CLASSROOMS TO CLEAN STREETS

A SCHOOLASTIC EDITORIAL TEAM REPORT

In 2025, the United Schools Organization of India (USO), in collaboration with UNESCO, launched the Biosphere Reserve Champions: A National Competition for a Sustainable Future. The initiative was designed to ignite environmental responsibility among students of Classes 6 to 12, blending scientific knowledge with hands-on community action.

On 13 August 2025 Kothari International School (KIS), Noida, joined this global

movement. To celebrate India's 79th Independence Day, the school organized a Cleanliness Drive in Sector-50, along with a vibrant Health and Hygiene Awareness drive in the local market area. The campaign, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aimed to promote Swachh Bharat and encourage the segregation of wet and dry waste.

The initiative was led by Principal Dr. Sangeeta Arora and Vice Principal Ms.

Nidhi Kapoor. A team of more than 70 students and 9 teachers conducted surveys, held a rally, and performed a Nukkad Natak to engage shopkeepers and residents. Special guests Ms. Shalinee Singh (Environmental Consultant) and Prof. Parthasarthi (University of Delhi) inspired and motivated the participants with their guidance.

The drive was further strengthened by partner NGOs Mr. Raghav from Carbon







Fusion and Mr. Rajiv Thakur, Founder of Asharfi Foundation. Students from the International Forum, Interact and Community Club, and IAYP contributed actively as part of their community service. The event survey findings are to be shared with the Municipal Corporation of Noida for actionable planning.

### The Voices Behind the Movement

**Dr. Sangeeta Arora, Principal**

**Schoolastic Team:** What motivated your school to actively involve students in a hands-on environmental initiative like this?

**Dr. Sangeeta:** Namaskar, I feel that to

make good citizens, you have to give first-hand experience to all the students. And the first experience is to move out from a protected environment. School is a protected environment. When you go out into the market, you see reality. They are looking at reality as such also. But what can we do? Because most of the time, we think, what else can I do? I am just one person. So, we want to tell our student community that you are not just one. You are a force. So, let's build up that force. And that's what Kothari International School wants that the student community should be a force to make a cleaner India, a stronger India, and a proud India.

**Ms. Nidhi Kapoor - Vice Principal**

**ST:** How does such an event foster qualities like leadership, problem-solving, and civic responsibility?

**Nidhi Kapoor:** It is an initiative that the children themselves thought of. We have very empowering counselling, which keeps telling the children that although they are in a protective environment, they have to be sensitized to the need of the hour. Putting up this rally was completely our school council's initiative.

Right from the head boy to the class representative of Grade 6, everyone was involved in designing the banner. The stickers that you are seeing on the t-shirts were designed by our own club students. International Forum students





put up the street play, and IAYP students created the slogans.

The Interact Club conducted interviews and spread awareness. And as you have seen, there is a QR code with a Google form attached, which the local vendors are filling in to show how aware they are about cleanliness. While planning these activities, the students definitely collaborated with each other.

In this process, they are leading by example. And that's what we have always fostered in our school, that a leader is one who creates more leaders. In this way, the council members are creating more leaders by taking on so much responsibility.

### Student Voices: Aditi Gupta, Grade 11 (Vice Head Girl)

**ST:** How did it feel, and what skills did you gain from organizing, planning, or participating in this campaign?

**Aditi:** As a Vice Head Girl, organizing this event taught me that leadership is not just about giving instructions, it's more about inspiring people to take active action. Moreover, it taught me how important planning and coordination are when you have so many students, teachers, and participants involved. Our main objective for this drive was to lead by example and inspire people as much as we could, and I couldn't have thought of a better way.

### Ekaksh, SDG Club

**ST:** What inspired you to join this clean-up and awareness drive?



**Ekaksh:** The thing that most inspired me about this awareness drive was that we would get to clean up areas and spread awareness among people, that we should clean India and make it a Swachh Bharat. I was very happy to participate in this drive, especially in the nukkad natak.

### Sara Verma – Vice Cultural Head



**ST:** How did it feel to take action for your own community instead of just learning about the environment in class?

**Sara:** Learning about the environment in class gives you knowledge. But when you are actually out there, when you are the one making a change, cleaning the space, and watching people feel inspired to do the same it is a feeling that stays with you far longer than a lesson in a textbook.

### Shivam Sharma – Grade 11

**ST:** Has this event inspired you to make any personal changes in your daily habits?

**Shivam:** Yes. As the student council prefect of my school, it is my job to lead all my peers to do greater things in our



surroundings, including our school and classrooms. Our students do not always follow up on cleanliness in classrooms, so our school announced this campaign drive in our neighborhood Sector-50 to pick up litter. It was meant to teach all students to make a change in their daily lives.

### The Larger Impact

The combined efforts of the school, partner NGOs, and community leaders ensured that the initiative was not only symbolic but also actionable. The waste collected was responsibly disposed, and survey findings will inform the Municipal Corporation of Noida for better planning in the future. By stepping out of their classrooms to take responsibility for their neighbourhood, KIS students discovered that true education lies not just in learning, but in applying knowledge for the greater good. The Biosphere Reserve Champions 2025 program was proof that when schools, communities, and organizations join hands, they can nurture a generation of eco-warriors. Kothari International School's campaign was more than just a cleanliness drive it was a pledge by young citizens to take ownership of their environment and their future. In every broom lifted, every slogan shouted, and every conversation sparked, the students carried forward the true essence of Independence Day - **freedom through responsibility, pride through action, and progress through unity.**





### THINKING ALOUD

## Calling all budding student writers, artists, poets, reviewers to send in their submissions for October 2025 Theme!

Thank you, students, teachers, and schools, for contributing so generously to our September Issue 'Whispers in Space'. We are overwhelmed by the many articles. We loved reading your perspectives and hearing your unique voice.

Send us your original articles, poems, reviews for October. Send us **any copyright free photos, even better if it is your original illustration or drawing in jpeg file.**

**October Theme:** Healthy, Wealthy and Wise--Mind and Body Matters'

**Deadline:** 15 September 2025, 6 pm.

**Email:** Send your submissions to [schoolasticeditorial@fairgaze.com](mailto:schoolasticeditorial@fairgaze.com)

Our October theme 'Healthy, Wealthy and Wise-Mind and Body Matters' addresses mental health and wellbeing across gender. We are wondering why is nutrition an important talking point in schools; what does it have to do with learning? What does a counselling department do in educational institutions? How healthy is your canteen/ cafeteria? What do schools across the world serve in their cafeterias? Do you know of any country that invests positively in school nutrition- what has their journey been; what has India's journey been? Is health and wellbeing the same for all children across gender; what is your understanding of this? How inclusive are our schools; and why is it so important for children's wellbeing? Do you think sports has anything to do with wellbeing? Tell us about the benefits of sports for all?

The festival season spills into October too. Write to us also about the festivals you celebrate. Read up, find out, let us know what your take is on any one of these. As always, if there is a movie or show you loved watching, a song/ playlist you think is wonderful, a podcast that inspired you, or a play that moved you write about it, we will be happy to publish it.

## October 2025 Review Suggestions

Hope you enjoyed the September book suggestions Here is a list for October based on our Theme 'Healthy, Wealthy and Wise-Mind and Body Matters'. Do read and send us a review by 15 September 2025 at [schoolasticeditorial@fairgaze.com](mailto:schoolasticeditorial@fairgaze.com)

We have a separate list for teachers and encourage our fearless teachers to take some 'me' time out to read and review.

### For Students

*Movies: Dear Zindagi, Inside Out 1 and 2*

### For Teachers

*Krishna Kumar: What is Worth Teaching?*

*Ross Greene: Lost at School*



# EaseMyTrip Space Quiz

Think you know Space? Prove it!

Join our Space Quiz and get a shot at winning a ₹2,700 EaseMyTrip discount voucher! It is first come, first WIN! Only the first person who gets ALL answers right grabs the prize! The answers will be published in the October 2025 issue. Take the quiz and send it to us at [schoolasticeditorial@fairgze.com](mailto:schoolasticeditorial@fairgze.com)

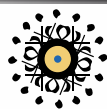
- Q1. When was ISRO established?
- Q2. What is the name of the first Satellite launched by India? When was it launched
- Q3. India's Chandrayaan-3 landed on the moon recently. Where on the moon did it land?
- Q4. Name the first Indian to travel to space. In which year did he travel?
- Q5. Recently, an Indian travelled to the International Space Station (ISS). What is his name?
- Q6. How many satellites have been sent into space by India so far?
- Q7. Where are India's Launch pads located?
- Q8. What is the Indian designed rocket that can carry the heaviest payload known as?
- Q9. Where is the farthest in space that an Indian spacecraft has travelled to so far?
- Q10. What is arguably the greatest achievement of ISRO so far?
- Q11. Name the Astrophysicist of Indian origin who was awarded the Nobel prize for his far-reaching work in 1983.
- Q12. Which was the first nation in the world to send a rocket into the space?
- Q13. Which was the first nation to land on the moon?
- Q14. How far has any spacecraft travelled in space so far?
- Q15. What is the name of the imaginary line that marks the end of earth's atmosphere and the beginning of Space? What is its distance from earth?
- Q16. What is the color of Space?
- Q17. How many Humans have travelled to the space so far?
- Q18. We know Laika was the first dog to be sent to space. Who were the first Chimpanzees?
- Q19. How many countries have their own capability to launch rockets to space?
- Q20. Who was the first man to land on moon? When?
- Q21. How many people have walked on the moon so far?
- Q22. What is Lagrange point?
- Q23. India is one of the very few countries to have placed an observatory at a Lagrange point. What is its name?
- Q24. How far can James Webb Space Telescope see?
- Q25. What is the largest Earth-based Space Observatory called? Where is it based?



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and our mission stronger.**





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