

Bal Vihar Presents

i AM

iNDIA

May 14, 2016





*I practice Indian Heritage
I enshrine Indian Values & Ideology
I represent all Indians no matter where they are*



EVENT
SCHEDULE

Event Launch

Reeya Kamath & Aditya Arora

‘Invocation Song’ a Song by Reeya Kamath

*Mahā-bhūtāny ahaṅkāro buddhir avyaktam eva ca,
indriyāni daśaikam ca pañca cendriya-gocarāḥ
Icchā dveṣaḥ sukṣam saṅghātaś cetanā,
dhr̥tiḥ etaś kṣetram samāseṇa sa-vikāram udāhṛtam*

Introduction to Values Class Presented by Reeya Kamath & Aditya Arora

‘Aneka me Ekta’ (Unity in Diversity) skit by Chota Balvihar (Age 3-5 yrs)

Participants

Aadrit Sharma, Abhisri Kadambi, Akshita Vinodhkumar, Anaya Mahapatro, Arin Joshi, Arjun Waghmode, Augustya Varma, Ayush Bharati, Gautham Yuvaraj, Harsha Maradana, Indrayani Patwardhan, Jashan Mishra, Manya MuntimaduguKummara, Ovee Prabhu, abinthe Kathiresan, Sanchit Samshettiwar, Shalmali Shelar, Shraddha Balaji, Spoorthi Kiran, Sreya Kamineni, Srihan Gorantla, Sripranav Gandikota, Swara Shenoy, Viaan Talreja, Vihaan Sandeep

Choreography

Aditi Prabhu, Nukta Mishra

Distribution of Awards for Mythology Quiz competition to Students of Chota-Balvihar

Recipients

Aadrit Sharma (I), Indrayani Patwardhan (I), Ovee Prabhu (I), Abhisri Kadambi (II), Gautham Yuvaraj (II), Jashan Mishra (II), Swara Shenoy (II), Sanchit Samshettiwar (III), Shalmali Shelar (III), Sripranav Gandikota (III), Vihaan Nair (III), Arin Joshi (P), Arjun Waghmode (P), Harsha Maradana (P), Anaya Mahapatro (P), Akshita Vinodhkumar (P)

‘Color Song’ a song by Hindi Starter Class (Age 4-7 yrs)

Participants

Abhisri Kadambi, Advithi Baddam, Nishanth Reddy, Sanchit Samshettiwar, Sparsh Chavan, Satvik Daber

Choreography

Rachita Samsettiwar

Distribution of Awards for 'The Spirit of Balvihar' T-Shirt design Contest – Panchatantra, Jataka Tales, and Puranic Tales Classes

Recipients

Srivas Kadambi, Nirvan Kulkarni, Chaitanya Jhaveri, Omkar Mysur-Gokhale, Raghavi Sethi (P), Sanchit Samshettiwar (P)

Community Service with Trees for Life by Values – 'Seva' Class

Presented by

Divya Padmati & Varun Verma

'The Dullard' a Skit by Panchatantra Class

(Age 5-7 yrs)

Stories of Panchatantra teaches you life's wisdom in the form of simple stories. Here is story of a dullard and three wise Brahmins, which talks about how smartness is equally important in addition to your talent. Let us ask our Panchatantra team to tell us what brings them to the Panchatantra class.

Participants

Aditi Dhananjay, Advithi Baddam, Ananya Gandikota, Kaushik Balaji, Sneha Kamineni, Sparsh Chavan

Choreography

Santosh Samsettiwar

Distribution of Awards for Mythology Quiz competition to Students of Panchatantra, Jataka Tales, and Puranic Tales

Recipients

JATAKA TALES: Ashwatth Jagadeesh (I), Chaitanya Jhaveri (II), Akul Mahapatro (III), Shivani Hebsur (III), Srivas Kadambi (III), Devesh Goel (P), Nirvaan Kulkarni (P), Vidhya Yuvaraj (P)

PANCHATANTRA: Ananya Gandikota (I), Sneha Kamineni (P), Advithi Baddam (P)

Puranic Tales: Omkar MysurGokhale (I), Avyay Sharma (II), Raghvi Sethi (II), Akshath Shastri (III), Janmejay Patwardhan (III)

'Host A Shocker' by Values – 'Seva' Class

Presented by

Amit Bhosale

‘The Value of Friends’ Skit by Jataka Tales Class (Age 6-8 yrs)

We have learned “Bird Stories” where the heroes of these stories value their friends and their families. They teach us to be brave and selfless. We present to you “The Value of Friends”.

Participants

Ashwath Jagadeesh, Akool Mahapatro, Chaitanya Jhaveri, Devesh Goel, Nirvaan Kulkarni, Shivani Hebsur, Srivas Kadambi, VidhyaYuvaraj

Choreography

Madhuremya Jagadeesh

Distribution of Awards for ‘The Spirit of Balvihar’ T-Shirt design Contest – Ramayan, Mahabharat and Values Classes

Recipients

Moukthika Padamati, Tanisha Kulkarni, Tejas Muntimadugu Kummara

‘Hum Toh’ Song by Hindi Beginner Class (Age 6-8 yrs)

Participants

Aashvi Gangakhedkar, Ashwath Jagadeesh, Devesh Goel, Gaurish Sridhar, Laasya Tiruveedhula, Omkar Mysur-Gokhale, Sahana Sivakumar, Srivas Kadambi

Choreography

Mira Bhosale

How Learning about Other Religions Helped Ground my Faith in my Birth Religion

A short speech by Sabarish Ravi giving his take-away from participating in the ‘Sarvadharm Samanvaya’ Essay competition

Distribution of Awards for ‘Sarvadharm Samanvaya’ Essay competition

Recipients

Ramayan: Vaishak Sandeep (I)

Mahabharat: Nitya Jhaveri (I), Shlok Prabhu (II), Arya Bhosale (II), Sabarish Ravi (III)

Values: Joyleen Balram (I), Aditya Joshi (II), Reeya Kamath (III)

‘WSU International Students Benefit Drive’ by Values – ‘Seva’ Class

Presented by

Bhavani Mahapatro & Joyleen Balram

‘Vishnu Avatar’ skit by Puranic Tales Class (Age 7-9 yrs)

‘Dashavatar’ the 10 incarnations of Vishnu was one of the main topics discussed in class, and the children are playing their favorite Avatar of Vishnu.

Participants

Akshath Shastri, Avyay Sharma, Janmejey Patwardhan, Omkar Mysur-Gokhale, Raghvi Sethi

Coreography

Amruta Patwardhan & Ashwini Mysur

Report on Programming Class by Srinivasu Maradana and Game Demo by Students

Participants

Balvihar: Parents, Students, and Teachers

Report by Nalini Gangadhar on ‘Building Blocks Program’ by Values – ‘Seva’ Class

‘Ram Ram ...’ Dance by Ramayan Class (Age 7-9 yrs)

This skit involves the children dressed as different characters from Ramayan and acting out the parts that teach values that carry a lot of meaning to the students. This skit is comprised of several short plays in which the kids act out scenes.

Participants

Avi Yendru, Gaurish Sridhar, Moukthika Padamati, Tanisha Kulkarni, Vaishak Sandeep, Yashas Burra

Coreography

Ashwini Mysur & Manasi Kulkarni

Report on Balvihar Sports by Pravin Kulkarni

Distribution of Awards for Summer Cricket Match

Recipients

Avyay Sharma, Ayush Sharma, Chaitanya Jhaveri, Harsha Maradana, Janmejey Patwardhan, Nitya Jhaveri, Omkar Mysur-Gokhale, Raghavi Sethi, Reeya Kamath, Sabarish Ravi, Sakchyam Giri

‘Breakfast Service’ at Interfaith Inn by Values – ‘Seva’ Class

Presented by

Aryan Waghmode & Tejas Muntimadugu Kummara

'Bap, Beta aur Gadha' play by Hindi Intermediate Class (Age 8-11 yrs)

An old parable of a father, son and their donkey. The story illustrates about what happens when you try to please everyone around.

Participants

Amit Bhosale, Arya Bhosale, Sabarish Ravi, Vaishak Sandeep

Choreography

Santosh Samsettiwar

Report on Values & Seva Classes Presented by Piyush Jhaveri

Leadership Awards

Presented by

Drs Parula Raghavan & Raghavan

Recipients

Amit Bhosale for '*Demonstrating Initiative and Social Responsibility*'

Divya Padmati for '*Supporting the Team and Helping Others Succeed*'

Shlok Prabhu for '*Taking on Responsibility*' Leading '*Hindu Mythology*' Quiz

'Packaging Meals' at Kansas Food Bank by Values – 'Seva' Class

Presented by

Aditi Kiragi & Aditya Joshi

'Humility Complements Strength' play by Mahabharat Class (Age 9-11 yrs)

The mighty Bheema finds a frail old monkey laying across his path when he is on his quest for the sougandhika pushpa.

Participants

Arya Bhosale, Nitya Jhaveri, Rahul Madhavan, Sabarish Ravi, Shlok Prabhu

Choreography

Meghamala & Girish Shenoy

Report on Balvihar 2015 - 16 presented by Shashikiran Mysur

Introduction of Balvihar Teachers and Volunteers

'Hum Honge Kamiyab' Song by Balvihar

Participants

Balvihar: Parents, Students, and Teachers

Hindi Lyrics

Honge kaamyaab, honge kaamyaab
hum honge kaamyaab ek din
ho ho mann main hai vishwas
poora hai vishwas
hum honge kaamyaab ek din.

hogi shanti charo aur, hogi shanti charo
aur
hogi shanti charo aur ek din
ho ho mann main hai vishwas
poora hai vishwas
hogi shanti charo aur ek din

hum challenge saath saath, dale haathon
main haath
hum challenge saath saath ek din
ho ho ho mann main hai vishwas
poora hai vishwas
hum challenge saath saath ek din.

Nahi darr kisi ka aaj, nahi bhay kisi ka aaj
Nahi darr kisi ka aaj ke din
ho ho mann main hai vishwas
poora hai vishwas
nahi darr kisi ka aaj ke din.

English Lyrics

We shall overcome, We shall overcome,
We shall overcome, some day.
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.

We shall live in peace, We shall live in
peace,
We shall live in peace, some day.
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.

We'll walk hand in hand, We'll walk hand
in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand, some day.
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.

We are not afraid, We are not afraid,
We are not afraid, today
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.



THE YEAR
WITH
BALVIHAR

Balvihar

The HTGW Balvihar program from its humble beginnings in 2006 has burgeoned into the current enrollment of 68 students, and three branches of study: Mythology, Language and Programming. The purpose of the Balvihar program; since inception, has been to create an immersive experience in Hindu Culture and Heritage, principally for children of Indian ethnicity, helping them understand what it means to be a Hindu, and an Indian at large.

The Balvihar program sponsors a six course study in Hindu Mythology aimed at children in the age groups of 3 through 14. A five level Hindi language course catering to children 5 years and upwards was instituted in 2012. The goal of the course is to enable children to talk, read and write in Hindi. A two year Computer programming course; launched in Jan 2015, is aimed at children 10 and upwards, and differentiates itself from other programming courses through the use of game development projects grounded in Hindu mythology. The programming class offers a novel method of combining the information from the Mythology classes, with current technologies, in it presenting the children with a fun opportunity to learn a new skill while retaining the core principles of Balvihar.

Balvihar program is structured to promote holistic development in children. Art and writing have been incorporated into the syllabus to go hand-in-hand with the scholastic requirements. Balvihar sponsored competitions: 'Spirit of Balvihar' T-Shirt design, 'Sarva Dharma Samanvaya' essay writing, 'Hindu Mythology' a Quiz and Sports – 'Cricket', all of which attracted immense participation. Balvihar Sports aims to introduce children to games and sports popular in India.

The Values class 'Seva' introduced in fall 2015 focused on inculcating a culture of 'Giving' amongst children through participation in charity or service events has been a tremendous success. The students developed an initiative 'Host A Shocker' to invite Indian students of WSU to their homes to celebrate festivals with their families. An initiative that speaks volumes of their sense of community responsibility.

Updates 2015 & 16

Classes

A new class titled "Jataka Tales" has been included. This class is positioned between the Panchatantra and Puranic Tales classes. The class caters to children in the age group of 6 to 7 years. The two year Panchatantra class was reformatted to be a one year class to accommodate the new class. The introduction of Jataka Tales has helped improve the Teacher-Student ratio, and facilitate balanced flow between the classes.

Panchatantra, Jataka Tales, Puranic Tales are now using Amar Chitra Katha for learning the various stories. These being picture books authored using the comic style have proved to be very engaging for kids, and especially valuable to those who are unable to read as yet.

Ramayan and Mahabharat classes are using Amar Chitra Katha as supplemental reading. We have introduced a Balvihar Library for these classes, and they check out books each class. Children have responded very enthusiastically to this initiative.

Values class is now composed of two parts "In Class Lecture", and a "Service Class". The two sessions are held alternately. Children go out to different organizations and institutions in various communities in Wichita to perform service activities. Their first activity was to collect material of daily use to help fresh Indian students at WSU. The second activity was to serve Breakfast at the Interfaith Community Center. These activities help the children accumulate service hours through actual community involvement. This has been greatly appreciated both by the children and parents. It has proved to be of exceptional value to Parents who do not have sufficient connection in Wichita, to be able to independently identify community involvement opportunities. Nalini Gangadhar and Bharati Ramanan are leading this effort, and have put in a great deal of thought and effort in ensuring that the program delivers value.

Summer Session

Starting in Summer we introduced "Grandma Stories". Mrs Raj Bajaj graciously volunteered to recite stories based on Hindu mythology. The kids received this part of the program with great enthusiasm and look forward to her sessions.

The sports program that we initiated last year has now expanded and caught the imagination of the children, especially Cricket. A Cricket match was organized at the end of the Summer Session. The event attracted enthusiastic participation from children, and cheers from the Balvihar parents and Temple devotees.

During the Summer session we introduced a Gardening class where the children learnt weeding, preparing the area, making a raised bed, sowing & transplanting, irrigation & tending to plants. They planted beans, tomatoes and flowers. Their garden on the north side of the Temple has been doing very well, with ample help from Pandit Sriramji, who has taken the responsibility of keeping the garden watered.

Anand Bazaar which is a great attraction was facilitated at the end of the Summer Session in the Temple basement. The children cooked and served various dishes that they had learnt over the summer cooking class.

Competitions

"The Spirit of Balvihar" T-Shirt design competition saw such enthusiastic response from almost all age groups, that we decided to create two different T-shirts one for the little kids, and another for the Ramayan class and beyond, in recognition of their efforts.

The Mythology Quiz lead by Shlok Prabhu was very well received both by the children and the parents. We thank our parents for taking the time to coach their children for the Mythology quiz. We have received several requests to continue and expand on the quiz.

Children of Ramayan, Mahabharat and Values classes participated in the Sarva Dharma Samanya Essay competition. All participants with no exception exceeded expectations in both the spread of their research, and in delivering their perspective on how the various religions came together, while continuing to be different. One of the key aspects that some of them highlighted was "how, learning about other religions helped ground their faith in their birth religion".

Administrative

The program is now Semester based rather than annual, with sessions starting late Aug and in Jan. This makes it more convenient for families that are either returning to India permanently or just coming in to Wichita. The purpose was to make it more convenient to families employed with Infosys & Mahindra Tech.

Fee is now \$31 per semester (Fall & Spring) and \$45 for the Summer. This has made it possible to order the Amar Chitra Katha books which we hope will make learning more fun.

Registration and Enrollment is now web-based. This has helped streamline the process and also enabled us to start class from the very first day without having to devote time and resources to registration during the session. Enroll at <https://www.balviharhtgw.org>

Balvihar 'A-Meet' Host a Shocker Initiative

The 'A-Meet' Host a Shocker initiative is all about providing a Home Away from Home for the WSU Indian Student Community. The Indian Students at WSU as all of you know, and many of you have experienced are far away from home, and miss on continuing to participate in the various festival celebrations. Inviting them to our homes during the festivals helps improve morale amongst the students, and eases the pain of being apart from family. The initiative was launched in coordination with WSU Indian Students Association. Balvihar Seva Class students took the lead and coordinated with Wichita Indian families to solicit volunteer hosting families and pair them with Indian students from WSU.

We would like to thank all of the families who volunteered to host the students. We look forward to continued support and participation of families in this initiative. You can conveniently signup to participate in this program during Balvihar registration or email Balvihar.htgw@gmail.com. You will be contacted later to understand your needs, and help invite the students.

Chota-Balvihar

Chota Balvihar is the youngest group that attends Balvihar where children under 5 years of age are introduced to different aspects of the Hindu culture, deities and festivals. Our principle goal at Chota Balvihar is to lay a good foundation of values early in the life.

Over the course of the year, the children were introduced to different deities using "The Big book of Hindu Deities", an illustrative book by Sanjay Patel, emphasizing specific features of each God/Goddess that children of that age can comprehend and remember. The children were also taught to identify different deities at the altar, inside our temple.

Beginning of every class, the kids were taught to greet each other in the classroom and introduce themselves to help them build self-confidence. They also meditated by chanting Om and learning deep breathing techniques, followed by chanting Shlokas like Om Gana Ganapataya Namah, Om Namah Shivay, Gayatri Mantra and Ganesha Vandana: Vakratunda Mahakaya.

Throughout the year, our class engaged in various craft activities like coloring Ganesha idols during Ganesh Chaturthi, making 10 headed Ravana for Dussehra, making working Aakaash Kandil (lantern) for Diwali, celebrate Spring with Cheerios Rainbow, making Kites for Makar Sankranti and so on. Teachers shared short stories to educate kids on different festivals using puppets and props. For Republic Day, our children were introduced to some fun facts about India. Volunteer teachers also served festival specific snacks like Modak for Ganesh Chaturthi, Matheri and Mithai for Diwali and Sesame Ladoo on Makar Sankranti and so on, to introduce them to cultural traditions.

Hands on activities like dressing up as deities or different characters helped them engage with mythological characters and remembering the stories. On occasions, our kids learnt counting in Hindi with the help of songs and sang rhymes like "machali jal ki rani hai". This year the kids were also introduced to kids yoga with modified asanas that were toddler friendly and fun, which our little kids looked forward to. The year ended with the class practicing and performing on the old Indian classic "Ek Titli , Anek Titliyaan..."

Jataka Tales

The collected tales of the life of Buddha in his previous incarnations are called the Jataka Tales. Buddha was born several times before he was born as the Siddhartha Gautama that we all know. In his previous lives he was born in both human and animal forms. In his previous births Buddha was sometimes a King, at times an Outcast, a God, an Elephant, a Bird etc. The stories highlight his virtues in each of his births irrespective of the form.

The Jataka Tales class uses a set of five Amar Chitra Katha titled 'Monkey Stories', 'Deer Stories', 'Elephant Stories', 'Jackal Stories' and 'Bird Stories' to illustrate various virtues like bravery, compassion, leadership, patience, responsibility, selflessness and wisdom.

Monkey stories rely on the naughty carefree nature of monkeys; much like that of our children, to impart lessons in leadership and common sense. Murderous crocodiles, powerful kings and fearsome ogres are easily outwitted by them. The deer are often portrayed as gentle bodhisattvas who are noble, selfless, wise and virtuous models of right thinking and right living that strongly advise a life of non-violence and peace for ultimate happiness. The Elephants grace matches his size and is the personification of patience, kindness and generosity. Brave and selfless birds fight for their honor and to save the lives of their families and friends. The birds exhibit a rare mix of wisdom and cunning to outwit their enemies. Jackals the devious, selfish, dishonest and boastful animals are used in these stories to demonstrate the fleeting nature of dishonest wins, and their eventual fateful consequence.

The stories aim to teach the value of moral behavior both to the individual and the community by using animal characters, which the children find both captivating and insightful.

Panchatantra Class

We all grew up with Panchatantra stories. Panchatantra stories are known to teach the values with the help of interesting stories of animals and trees. Panchatantra is a collection of attractively told stories about the five ways that help a human being succeed in life. 'PanCHA' means five and 'Tantra' means ways or strategies or principles. These strategies are:

1. First Strategy: The Loss of Friends
2. Second Strategy: Gaining Friends
3. Third Strategy: Of Crows and Owls
4. Fourth Strategy: Loss of Gains
5. Fifth Strategy: Imprudence

We have learned stories from each of these strategies. For example "True Friendship" story from "Gaining Friends". In this story four friends help each other by utilizing each other's strengths to save the life of a friend in danger. Students learn to say "Thank you" when someone helps, recognize when someone needs help and ask for help when they need help. At the same time stories like "Sneaky Stork" from "Of Crows and Owls" teaches us how not to trust strangers and look after our friends.

At this age, it is important for kids to learn when to speak and when to stop so that they can listen better. That is why the only rule in this class is "listen". We practice this "only rule" when we are listening to a story, when someone is speaking or answering a question etc. These simple but interesting stories when brought to life with dialogues and enactment have sparked the imagination of the little ones. All that while having fun and learning valuable life lessons.

Puranic Tales

We started the year with 11 students of which 3 discontinued at various times as parents relocated out of Wichita. Periodic comprehensive tests were used to assess the progress of the students. The students took turns to read aloud in class, which helped them stay focused, and also, practice pronunciation of the names of characters and Sanskrit words used in the stories.

Over the year we explored various concepts like Listening to Parents, Actions and Consequences, Art of Giving, Valuing Friendship, Humility in Service, Faith in God, Essence of God in all of Creation, and Appreciation of Hardwork, through a wide variety of mythological stories. Of these concepts 'Actions and Consequences', was further discussed from the perspective of 'Repentance & Forgiveness', the question 'Did Kamsa have to die?' was explored by trying to understand his actions and the available alternatives. The class concluded that the prophecy that Kamsa would be killed by Devaki's 8th child, was really a warning, and not necessarily meant to be the only end. The real intent of the prophecy was to provide Kamsa a chance to repent and reform, by informing him the consequence of continuing along his chosen path. Had his reaction been one of introspection, and to seek forgiveness for his prior actions, had he treated his subjects with compassion, been the provider of their needs, respected his friends and peers, he could have ruled as a mighty King who was loved and respected by one and all, however, he continued to choose the path of terror, and rule by inciting fear, which led to his eventual death. Kamsa could have saved himself, not by trying to kill Devaki's 8th son, but by changing his own behavior. The class concluded that 'Kamsa did not have to die'.

As a class we instituted self-governance using 'Student Leaders'. The students were given a chance to lead the class for a day, and choose the leader for the next class. The students were objective in recognizing the efforts of other students, and fair in choosing the next leader. It was a fun year with stories, coloring, and a lot of friendly chatter, accompanied by recognition of character building ideals that should last a lifetime.

Ramayan Class

The class focuses on the life of Rama and the insight to be gathered from his response to various life events. Eight children were enrolled in the class. The sessions began with meditation and chanting of 'Om'. The recitation of 'Omkara' promotes calmness of the mind, and bears the children to focus during class. In general the sessions included reading a story, followed by discussion, quiz and/or games. The class discussed the situations presented in the story, and the values that it represents as would be applicable in the current context.

The stories helped teach the children values pertinent to everyday life. The class learned about implicit obedience and the meaning of a promise from the story of Rama going into exile. Queen Kaikeyi had saved King Dasharatha's life, and the King had granted her a boon. In return she requested that Rama be sent into exile. Rama unquestioningly fulfilled this request, and went to live in the forest for a period of 14 years. Duty and loyalty are amongst other important morals imparted by this lesson; with Sita and Lakshman voluntarily going to the forest with Rama, for it was Sita's primary duty to attend to the needs of her husband, and that of Lakshman to guard his brother the Crown Prince from all potential harm.

Quizzes and games were used over the course of the year to test student comprehension, and improve retention. The use of games helped promote a friendly & fun atmosphere that was more conducive to learning and enhanced student understanding of the concepts. Guess the character a charades game; where one student acts out a character, and without speaking has the rest of the students guess the character that is being portrayed, was one that the students enjoyed immensely. The class was subdivided into teams for the quiz sessions, and the buzzer sessions were fun. The students eagerly looked forward to this portion of the class.

Overall, interpreting Ramayan was interesting and fun. The children learned many values as applied to everyday life, and had many exciting days filled with laughter and learning. They will be presenting a skit at the 'I Am India' event to share some of what they had the opportunity to learn.

Mahabharat Class

Mahabharat the great Indian epic, a story of the consequence of greed & jealousy, and the rewards of righteousness is discussed over a period of two years. The class opens with Bhishma's vow of celibacy, discusses the various events leading up to the great war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, and the eventual victory of the Pandavas, triumph of the righteous.

The sessions commence with friendly banter amongst the students discussing their experiences over the week. The discussions are normally instructor led with the students reading aloud from the Balagokulam book, followed by group discussions of the facts, the actions of the various characters and their eventual impact. The class also uses selected videos from the Mahabharat tele-series to supplement classroom reading and make the discussions more effective. The students were required to complete the various exercises provided in the work book. Memory cards, and games involving matching of character names with descriptions are some of the methods that were used in class to ensure learning and promote retention of the material.

The 12 students exhibited immense enthusiasm, and deep interest in both knowing the story and also, in understanding the motivation for the actions of the various characters. They appreciated and identified the greatness of each character, even the anti-hero. The year began with Krishna's effort to negotiate a peace treaty with the Kauravas. While the Mahabharat war in all its glory with the multitude of characters awed the students, they learned to appreciate the phenomenal effort made by Krishna and Yudishtara to negotiate a peaceful solution. The devastating effects of the war between the princes on the families of the warriors, their friends, and everyone at large, helped make a case for preservation of peace.

The class ended with a discussion of the Bhagwat Gita. A children's version of the Gita was to aid the discussion. The eventual triumph of good over evil, and the hand of God in guiding us all along the path of righteousness was greatly emphasized in the discussions.

Values Class

The class is aimed at the student who has progressed through all of Balvihar's class offerings and is ready for exploration at a deeper level. It is a Capstone class encompassing both Spiritual and Seva components.

Spiritual section of the class explores topics about our origin and existential relationship to all of Creation. The class begins with the concept of Panchbhoota (five elements), and goes on to explore the five levels of consciousness. The relationship between body and mind, in both a physical and a meta-physical context is discussed. One of important and actionable concepts discussed are the 6-enemies of the mind, with special focus on desire and anger. The class discusses the effect of these on both the mind and body, and effective strategies to manage and overcome them. Exposure to: various sects of Hinduism their traditions and practices, and other religions, their key beliefs, similarities and differences is one of the core objectives of the class.

Seva section of the class aims to provide a very gratifying experience through meaningful community service. Staying in tune with Wichita's needs and making the Indian community a valuable thread of Wichita will result in a rich cultural exchange. The objective of the "Seva" component is to have our students be an integral part of the Wichita community and make a difference in it. The instructor and students brainstorm ideas and plan field trips for hands on approach in making a difference. Each project or field trip focused on addressing ways of impacting local organizations that help empower students, especially through education. Two new programs were introduced based on student feedback.

1. We kicked off with a "Back to School: WSU Drive" in the fall and spring semesters. Both drives were very successful in helping our new International students from India settle down with basic essentials. Not only were these projects successful, they initiated the idea for a new program.
2. "Host a Shocker" program was conceptualized by our own student, Amit Bhosale. Welcoming international students into our homes and making them part of our lives while extending friendship and a hand when needed was the goal of this program. It has been the beginning of a wonderful exchange between Balvihar families and Shockers. Providing a connection for a home away from home has been really appreciated by the students.

3. Anna daan is a vital component to Seva. Our students visited "Interfaith Inn" and got to prepare breakfast for the 20 families residing there. They also got a taste of what it is like to be displaced from one's home and dependent on the mercy of charitable organizations.

4. Helping package meals for the poorest Kansas students at "Kansas Food Bank" was eye opening and gratifying. Our class had the honor of preparing packaged meals for fellow students to eat over the weekends while school was out of session. These meals helped keep them nourished so that they could return to school on Monday with a focus on learning rather than hunger.

5. Education is the best gift to pass on to a child. Our visits to "Teach for Life" were inspiring. We made one educational video that could be used to teach addition concept to pre-school students. Thanks to Balvihar's programming courses, our own students were able to produce the lesson. Defeating poverty through education has been a goal for the organization, and we were fortunate to make a small impact.

6. Based on popular request by our own student, Varun Verma, we incorporated a music concert, a means of sharing joy through music and uplifting seniors at Chaucer Estate's retirement home. Our class marveled them with their instrumental and vocal performances. Seeing the elderly light up was a highlight for us.

7. Last but not least, remembering the plight of millions of impoverished children in India is important. We are proud to announce that Balvihar is once again the proud sponsor of "Aishwarya", a student of Building Blocks schools in the slums of Bangalore, India. Malala Yousefsai, an advocate for children's education, has been a true inspiration for our class. Educating the poor and empowering them is the only way to break the cycle of poverty. These experiences enrich our students' lives and influence them in incorporating strong values such as compassion, empathy, integrity, and community involvement in their adult lives.

Hindi Class

अ, आ, इ, ई, ... और एक, दो, तीन, कितना आसान था तब! पर अब इन बच्चों को इतना मुश्किल कैसे लगता है?

We quite understand this concern of parents in greater Wichita area and that is why we took upon a challenge to provide a platform for our kids to become familiar with Hindi script writing and reading. From here we hope to expand to speaking as well.

Back in India, everyone around us spoke Hindi and that helped us to learn quickly. Around here, we hardly use Hindi unless kids are speaking to their grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins. We have partnered with Hindi USA, NJ to procure specially designed coursework for school going kids in US or US born kids.

We currently have 3 different levels of classes viz Starter, Beginner and Intermediate. Starter level class learns vowels, simple poems, body parts, colors, animals and numbers up to 10, pretty much KG level coursework. Their course work includes a text book about Hindi alphabets along with CD and an activity book to assist with practicing letters, numbers and colors. They are pretty much amazed when they learn how to write their own name in Hindi. Beginner level class learns consonants, matras and working with simple words. This helps them build on to the basics from Starter level and improve on Hindi vocabulary. At this level they are able to read simple words, sentences and simple stories. Their course work includes a text book on forming simple words without matras, with matras and an activity book as well to assist with practicing those principles. This is when they learn how to form simple sentences too!

Intermediate class assists kids in building on Hindi fundamentals. They are introduced to simple grammar, how to put together simple sentences apart from reading fluently. Their course content includes a text book on grammar, a story book for them to relate to grammar and an exercise book. Kids interactively go through the stories that help them to build on their Hindi speaking ability, written Hindi proficiency and the overall understanding of the Hindi language.

Balvihar Sports

Cricket and Lagori were introduced into the curriculum, as Balvihar Sports, in Fall 2014, and the children responded with tremendous enthusiasm. A team of enthusiastic volunteers who are themselves avid players of cricket, helped teach the game, however, we quickly realized that we needed to re-strategize. Given the sheer number of interested children we did not have enough equipment and volunteers to go around. In response the volunteers created a Lagori set, and the children enjoyed playing the game. The Children were grouped by age and the youngest group was assigned to play to Lagori. While, this did help divide the children, and reduce the pressure on need for Cricket equipment, the situation continues to persist. The team is currently exploring various strategies to improve the game experience, and coach interested children. The team has identified this as an area where there is a need for allocation of greater resources, and the need for more volunteers. To donate equipment, or volunteer to coach, please, contact the Balvihar Team.

Programming Class

Programming class covering Html5, CSS, JavaScript and animation started in January this year with 10 students. Every class started with a quiz and followed up with new material and hands on exercise during the class. Students practiced writing code along with learning syntax of Html and Cascading Style Sheets.

The students have been able to learn basic building blocks of web programming. They learnt about various html elements, attributes and styles. Students practiced code on codepen.io and utilized w3schools tutorials as reference material. They have also started to practice CSS and the concept of clean code and reuse.

During the course of the class students were sharing their experience and knowledge about projects that they have done utilizing tools like scratch, which inspired others to learn and practice. Along with learning about basic coding elements they have also started to develop logic using the animation building blocks on scratch.

Balvihar Class 2015 – 16

Chota-Balvihar

1. Aadrith Sharma
2. Abhisri Kadambi
3. Akshita Vinodhkumar
4. Anaya Mahapatro
5. Arin Joshi
6. Arjun Waghmode
7. Augustya Varma
8. Ayush Bharati
9. Gautham Yuvaraj
10. Harsha Maradana
11. Indrayani Patwardhan
12. Jashan Mishra
13. Manya MuntimaduguKummara
14. Ovee Prabhu
15. Sabinth Kathiresan
16. Sanchit Samshettiwar
17. Shalmali Shelar
18. Shraddha Balaji
19. Spoorthi Kiran
20. Sreya Kamineni
21. Srihan Gorantla
22. Sripranav Gandikota
23. Swara Shenoy
24. Viaan Talreja
25. Vihaan Nair

Panchatantra

1. Aditi Dhananjaya
2. Advithi Baddam
3. Ananya Gandikota
4. Hasti Parmar
5. Kaushik Balaji
6. Sneha Kamineni
7. Sparsh Chavan

Jataka Tales

1. Akul Mahapatro
2. Ashwatth Jagadeesh
3. Chaitanya Jhaveri
4. Devesh Goel
5. Nirvaan Kulkarni
6. Shivani Hebsur
7. Srivas Kadambi
8. Vidhya Yuvaraj

Puranic Tales

1. Akshath Shastri
2. Avyay Sharma
3. Devanshi Parmar
4. Janmejay Patwardhan
5. Omkar MysurGokhale
6. Raghvi Sethi

Ramayana

1. Avi Yendru
2. Gaurish Sridhar
3. Moukthika Padamati
4. Tanisha Kulkarni
5. Yashas Burra
6. Vaishak Nair

Mahabharat I

1. Arya Bhosale
2. Nitya Jhaveri
3. Rahul Madhavan
4. Sabarish Ravi
5. Shlok Prabhu

Values I

1. Aditi Kiragi
2. Aditya Joshi
3. Aditya Arora
4. Amit Bhosale
5. Aryan Waghmode
6. Bhavini Mahapatro
7. Joyleen Balram
8. Reeya Kamath
9. Tejas MuntimaduguKummara
10. Varun Verma

Values II

1. Divya Padamati

Programming I

1. Aditya Joshi
2. Aditya Arora
3. Akshath Shastri
4. Bharathi Ramanan
5. Khushi Kapadia
6. Manas (Hari) Madanambedu
7. Rahul Madhavan
8. Reeya Kamath
9. Seenu Madhavan
10. Shlok Prabhu
11. Sree (Rudra) Madanambedu
12. Tejas Muntimadugu Kummara
13. Varun Verma

Hindi Starter

1. Abhisri Kadambi
2. Aditi Kargutkar
3. Advithi Baddam
4. Augustya Varma
5. Avi Yendru
6. Ayush Sharma
7. Nishanth Reddy
8. Sanchit Samshettiwar
9. Satvik Daber
10. Sparsh Chavan

Hindi Beginner

1. Aashvi Gangakhedkar
2. Ashwatth Jagadeesh
3. Devesh Goel
4. Gaurish Sridhar
5. Laasya Tiruveedhula
6. Omkar Mysur-Gokhale
7. Sahana Sivakumar
8. Srivas Kadambi

Hindi Intermediate

1. Amit Bhosale
2. Arya Bhosale
3. Sabarish Ravi
4. Vaishak Sandeep

Balvihar Awardees 2015 – 16

'Spirit of Balvihar' T-Shirt Design

Group 1: Chota Balvihar, Panchatantra, Jataka Tales, Puranic Tales

Chaitanya Jhaveri
Nirvan Kulkarni
Omkar Mysur-Gokhale
Raghavi Sethi
Sanchit Samshettiwar
Srivasa Kadambi

Group 2: Ramayan, Mahabharat, Values

Moukthika Padamati
Tanisha Kulkarni
Tejas Muntimadugu Kummara

'Sarva Dharma Samanvaya' Essay

First Prize

Joyleen Balram (Values Class)
Nitya Jhaveri (Mahabharat Class)
Vaishak Nair (Ramayan Class)

Second Prize

Aditya Joshi (Values Class)
Arya Bhosale (Mahabharat Class)
Shlok Prabhu (Mahabharat Class)

Third Prize

Reeya Kamath (Values Class)
Sabarish Ravi (Mahabharat Class)

'Hindu Mythology' Quiz

First Prize

Aadrit Sharma (Chota Balvihar)
Ananya Gandikota (Panchatantra)
Ashwatth Jagadeesh (Jataka Tales)
Indrayani Patwardhan (Chota Balvihar)
Omkar Mysur-Gokhale (Puranic Tales)
Ovee Prabhu (Chota Balvihar)

Second Prize

Abhisri Kadambi (Chota Balvihar)
Avyay Sharma (Puranic Tales)
Chaitanya Jhaveri (Jataka Tales)
Gautham Yuvaraj (Chota Balvihar)
Jashan Mishra (Chota Balvihar)
Raghvi Sethi (Puranic Tales)
Swara Shenoy (Chota Balvihar)

Third Prize

Akshath Shastri (Puranic Tales)
Akul Mahapatro (Jataka Tales)
Janmejay Patwardhan (Puranic Tales)
Sanchit Samshettiwar (Chota Balvihar)
Shalmali Shelar (Chota Balvihar)
Sripranav Gandikota (Chota Balvihar)
Vihaan Nair (Chota Balvihar)

Participation

Advithi Baddam (Panchatantra)
Akshita Vinodhkumar (Chota Balvihar)
Anaya Mahapatro (Chota Balvihar)
Arin Joshi (Chota Balvihar)
Arjun Waghmode (Chota Balvihar)
Devesh Goel (Jataka Tales)
Harsha Maradana (Chota Balvihar)
Nirvaan Kulkarni (Jataka Tales)
Sneha Kamineni (Panchatantra)
Vidhya Yuvaraj (Jataka Tales)

Leadership Awards

Amit Bhosale
Divya Padamati
Shlok Prabhu

Balvihar Sports – Cricket

Fielding

Avyay Sharma
Janmejay Patwardhan
Omkar Mysur-Gokhale

Batting

Harsha Maradana
Nitya Jhaveri
Raghavi Sethi

Bowling

Janmejay Patwardhan
Nitya Jhaveri
Reeya Kamath

Catching

Ayush Sharma

Most Dedicated

Ayush Sharma
Sakchyam Giri

Attitude

Chaitanya Jhaveri
Sakchyam Giri

Most Improved

Nitya Jhaveri
Sabarish Ravi

Balvihar Volunteers 2015 – 16

Teachers

Chota-Balvihar

Aditi Prabhu
Amruta Patwardhan
Ashwini Bharati
Kirti Nalawade-Shelar
Lavanya Vijayaraghavan
Nukta Bhatia
Shobra Singh

Panchatantra

Anant Bhosale

Jataka Tales

Santosh Samsettiwar

Puranic Tales

Shashikiran Mysur

Ramayan

Geeta Bhargava
Shashikiran Mysur

Mahabharat

Meghamala Shenoy
Girish Shenoy

Values & Seva

Arti Joshi
Bharathi Ramanan
Nalini Gangadhar
Piyush Jhaveri

Hindi

Anant Bhosale
Mira Bhosale
Rachita Samsettiwar
Santosh Samsettiwar

Grandma Stories

Raj Bajaj

Programming

Srinivasu Mardana

Sports

Dhanajay Joshi
Kishore Shelar
Nishad Prabhu
Pravin Kulkarni

Accounting

Shilpa Hebsur

Lunch Hindi Class

Deepak Ballal
Dhanya Nair
Shruti Ballal
Ramya Kadambi
Sandeep Nair
Shanmugavalli Elangovan
Sharmila Ramanathan
Sivakumar Varadharajan
Sridhar Elangovan
Sriram Kadambi

'A-Meet' Host a Shocker Volunteers

Hosting Families

Aditi & Nishad Prabhu
Ashwini & Dhananjaya Nagaraj
Geetha & Anil Bhargava
Manasi & Pravin Kulkarni
Mira & Anant Bhosale
Nalini & Dasa Gangadhar
Nukta Bhatia & Nilesh Mishra
Ranjitha & Bharath Rao
Santosh Samshettiwar
Vrinda & Piyush Jhaveri

Participating Students

Anand Kumar
Bharadwaj Bejjavarapu
G Veerasena Reddy
Harish Sekhar
Harshavardhan Chede
Jani Dipal K
Jaymin Shethwala
K S Surya Teja
Kiran Kumar Surapathi
Komal Koushik
Krishna Mohit Valiveti
Kushal Gandham
Lakshmi Sundaram
Maneesh Daduvai
Obuli krishnaraj
Sai Prakash
Shramana
Shriram Nematikanti
Shrirekha Tippa
Siddharth Patel
Sivarama Krishnan
Somu Bharath
Vaidehi
Vishnu Kumar Sharma
Vyuha Reddy Kalalota

I Am India Organizers 2015 – 16

Anand Bazaar

Apoorva Karmarkar
Manasi Kulkarni
Amruta Patwardhan
Anishma Balram
Apoorva Karmarkar
Aruna Muntimadugu Kummara
Barnaly Mahapatro
Beena Sharma
Deepak Ballal
Devi Gandikota
Jyoshna Burra
Kalyani C Ramalingam
Kavitha Gorantla
Kusum Ramane
Lakshmi Ravi
Lavanya Vijayaraghavan
Mani Padmati
Mira Bhosale
Namita Acharya
Nandini Chandrawadi
Neha Joshi
Nital Andy Ghosh
Praveena Gorantla
Priya Patel
Priyatharshini Manikandan
Ranjitha Rao
Renuka Waghmode
Rithika handa
Shanmugavalli Namasivayam
Shilpa Hebsur
Sriram Kadambi
Sujatha Gururajan
Thivya Selvam
Vasavi
Viji Nateshan
Vinaya Kini
Vinny Sethi
Vrinda Jhaveri
Yogesh Parekh

Cultural Event

Amrutha Patwardhan
Ashwini Mysur
Madhuremya Jagadeesh
Manasi Kulkarni

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Rajasekhar Lutikurti

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Wichita's Indian Cuisine Restaurant

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Website: <http://www.mykababs.com/>

Location: 3101 N Rock Rd, Wichita, KS 67226



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