

UNENDING STORYTIME!

Children felt the power of stories during the Kathotsava 2012, a festival aimed to promote the dying art of storytelling



Not just educators, but even the parents engaged themselves in listening, voice modulation exercises, body movements and much more during the Kathotsava 2012 recently. Organised jointly by Redbricks Education Foundation, Ahmedabad and Kathalaya, Bangalore, the event got overwhelming response as the people from all walks of life delved deep to find their hidden storytellers.

The festival ended with children and adults from these workshops performing self-selected stories in front of a group of more than 200 people. The final performances by Geeta Ramanujan and her colleagues left the audience wanting for more. Truly, Kathotsava- a celebration of stories will now continue in the homes of all the participants and their families.

In a span of three days, the festival touched more than 500 people-both children and adults. It has generated immense interest and excitement amongst everyone regarding stories and its power.

The festival was launched for general public on January 26, the republic day. Children of 3 to 10 years of age with their parents enjoyed listening to stories from Kathalaya facilitators at Sundervan Centre. They also got an opportunity to take a nature trail in the park, and came back to listen more nature stories from the facilitators. Day II was packed with workshops for children of various ages. 3 to 5 year



olds, who listened to stories narrated with puppets and then made their own small stick puppets. 5 to 8 year olds listened to a story of a young Indian orphan girl "Chhoti and her cat" which sparked their emotions and imagination. Later they represented the story on a white wall (white chart papers) through drawings and gave their own titles to the story.

Children in age group of 8 to 10 years listened to a humorous story of "A belly-button monster" and another chain story of "When the sun did not rise" which taught them about cycles in nature and systems thinking. They created their own animal puppets and in small groups created and enacted stories using their self-made puppets.

STORY TELLING

Storytelling is an age-old tradition that has remained evergreen, moulding the core of society in any part of the world. It has been a subtle yet powerful medium of passing on knowledge and learning across generations but with great aesthetics. From the moment of creation to the rise and fall of empires to social customs and values, all have found places in the art of storytelling. Stories have a profound influence on the minds of young children as they contribute to lifelong learning and socio-emotional development.

