



The ongoing lockdown has been a testing phase for all of us, and teachers are no exception. But our gurus have risen to the occasion, showing grit and determination, in ensuring that education does not come to a pause and the academic year is as 'normal as it possibly can be'. Their challenge has been multifold: engaging students, making classes interesting and completing the syllabus on time. How did they wage this battle? On the eve of Teacher's Day, TIMES NIE talks to these unsung Covid Warriors on how they turned the tide in their favour with limited resources and a packed schedule...

STUDENT EDITION

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WEB EDITION

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TUNE IN TO THE BUDGET CLASS



Well, we are not talking about the FM's Budget speech, but preparing our students to learn the nitty-gritty of a budget from an economics chapter, which at times can become boring and too technical to explain. With students not being physically present, it has become a daunting task to explain the important subject in a way that can make learning fun without any tension, uncertainty or panic. So, I converted the budget chapter of economics for class XII students to a Malayalam song, with a rhythm and tune that will make children sing, dance and learn.

PRAMOD MALIANKARA,
SNV Sanskrit HSS, North Paravur, Ernakulam

THE INNOVATION

'Oru sambathika varsha kalayalvil Munkooti kanakakki thayarakunu varumanatheyum, chelavinayum' kannikkunna sambathika rekhayathra' Budget...Budget...(for one fiscal duration; calculating anticipatory income and expenditure, this financial record is, Budget... Budget...)

CAMERA, ACTION, ZOOM!



With the pandemic being the hot topic of discussion everywhere, I thought to add some drama to my virtual class by bringing in role play to explain a topic. It not only led to an increased attention span among students, but also added the fun element to the classroom. Students understood the topic better and bonded well too. Importantly, such an endeavour made students understand and retain a subject better than a typical 30-minute lecture.

MEENAKSHI DEV SHARMA, Tilak Public School, Mumbai

THE INNOVATION

A group of students are selected and given a topic; they explain the topic through a short enactment. For instance, to explain the ongoing economic downslide, I asked a few students to enact a skit to depict the cause and effect of the economic crisis. The students donned the hat of an industrialist, supplier, a wholesale dealer, etc, to explain the demand and supply chain, and how their functions are affected by the economy

LAB IN THE KITCHEN

It's not easy to conduct classes online, especially ones with a practical component. Chemistry is one such subject that is heavily dependent on experiments. So, the challenge has been manifold — to explain, make it interesting and conduct experiments — to make students feel involved. Therefore, I decided to make my students perform experiments by using simple things from their daily lives.

SHUBHANGI SHARMA, Doon World School, Raksha Vihar, Dehradun



THE INNOVATION

I explained each topic by giving them a real-life example. To explain them about acid and base, I asked them to perform indicator experiment themselves, by using turmeric (as an indicator), lemon as an acid, and soap as a base. Similarly, while explaining the concept of hard and soft water, I used tap water and distilled water by dissolving soap and detergents in both types of water to show them the different qualities of hard and soft water, and their effects. For orbital hybridisation (the concept of mixing atomic orbitals into new hybrid orbitals), I used cake made from flour and egg in a specific ratio

APP-SOLUTE SOLUTION

Online classes can be monotonous. So, it was essential for me to think something innovative to connect with my students, and that led me to create a digital story telling app to make my classes interesting.

MAHAFFREEN JAMBUSARWALA, Zebar School For Children, Ahmedabad

THE INNOVATION

The 'Digital Story Telling App', Sway, converts the PDF of a lesson into something fantastic that can be done at the click of a button. Recently, I explained the poem, 'Amanda' through this app, by adding texts and images to discuss the tone, setting, poetic devices, etc. I could even include videos like that of Rapunzel to give the story a different feel



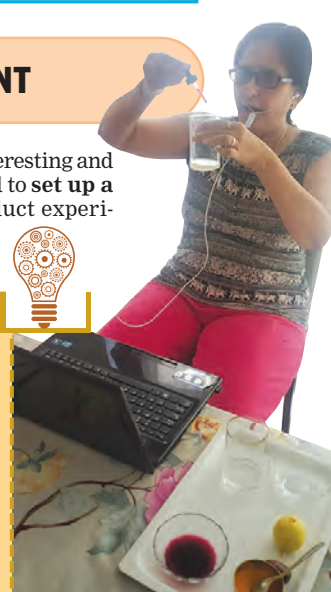
LET'S EXPERIMENT

To make chemistry lessons interesting and easy to understand, I decided to set up a small lab at home to conduct experiments, while teaching online.

SUKHVINDER KAUR, GGIS, Pune

THE INNOVATION

From toiletries to various spices that are readily available in the kitchen, I conducted experiments using utensils as apparatus to perform experiments. It was a unique experience for students, as they explored, performed and understood the concept clearly.



WHEN GURUS BECAME INNOVATORS

Illustration: Ajit Ninan



VIRTUAL-LY!

FROM BLACK BOARD TO SMART BOARD

When the lockdown began, a communication gap developed between teachers and students. To fix this, I created a classroom-like situation with the Raptor smart board that was provided to me by the school. Additionally, I invested in a good quality webcam, wireless headphones, a projector, and a bluetooth dongle to give a look and feel of a classroom.

JOSUVA ABRAHAM V,
SBOA Global School, Chennai



THE INNOVATION

Thanks to the screen-sharing feature on the Zoom app, the smart board not only acts like a blackboard, on which one can write lessons, but also helps me in accessing files and make PPT presentations that can be displayed directly to students. The web cam helps students to view their teachers and the classroom clearly, which in turn makes the experience more interactive. The bluetooth headset helps me to pick up things that I can display through the webcam

MARKETING FUNDAS

With marketing becoming one of the basics to survive in this market-friendly world, I came up with the idea to use marketing as a tool to teach my students. This allowed my students to learn research and presentation skills, and also persuasive language features.

SURYA SUBHA BANERJEE, Calcutta Int'l School, Kolkata

THE INNOVATION

I divided students into groups, who in turn, were asked to do extensive research on the features of persuasive language, such as the application of ethos, logos and pathos. Once the concepts got clear to them, each group was asked to adopt a cause or a product to market it. In groups, they applied the persuasive techniques to come up with a marketing strategy, and sell / promote the product / cause. The students created websites, digital posters, ran social media campaign to suit the purpose. The lesson not only enabled me to teach them on the essential language skills, the techniques of persuasion, but also helped me in connecting the topics with the real world

GAME FOR CLASSES?

We may be missing the laughing gas sessions (read lab) in these testing times, but I realised we shouldn't miss out on the student-teacher bonding moments. To motivate kids, I created a few fun games.

SANGHAMITRA BASU SENGUPTA, Aavishkar Academy, Bengaluru

THE INNOVATION

Recently, for a chapter, I messaged each student, two questions, and two answers, but the catch was that the answers to one student's questions were with another student. For example, Lahari of class X received a message, saying, 'I create a lot of sound on being heated, and give a yellow residue. Who am I? Another student, Mithilesh, had the answer to this— 'Lead Nitrate'. It continues like a chain reaction, and a topic is explained in a fun way



Let it be

By the Beatles who are great for feel-good music!
Why this song? The opening lines sum it up "When I find myself in times of trouble mother Mary comes to me, speaking words of wisdom: let it be... Exactly what we want to tell our teachers - promise yourself - to invest in yourself, your health and happiness... and if you are tired, let it be.

DEAR TEACHERS, WE HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY...

MISS YOUR PRESENCE...



KHYATI TAPADIA,
class XII, DCIS,
Ahmedabad

I miss staying back after school, just to talk to my teachers. I remember vividly how my madam's eyes teared up after teaching a poem, how my sir actively debated on current affairs with us. I miss them shouting my name from the balcony during recess, carrying messages from one teacher to another, laughing together at the chaos that used to be school in all its glory. The feeling of those desks and asking for a pen, apologising for mistakes... I miss them all.

YOU ARE OUR EQ

I have lately begun to miss the environment of the classroom. The physical presence of a teacher surely makes a difference in the way we are taught. What really matters is the interaction I have with my teachers. Personally, I am missing the spirited conversations that I usually had with a teacher in the classroom after the class. Regular schooling allows for an emotional connection between teachers and students.



LIKITH N GOWDA,
class X, DPS
North, Bengaluru

ONLINE IS FINE, BUT MISS YOU

I miss each one of you: the loving smiles, warmth, caring glance, your scolding too! I miss the feel of being in the classroom, chatting with friends, being caught by a teacher, being told how to make my science experiments better. Tiny pieces of advice that helped me improve and become better.



AVANI PANDIT,
class IX, Apeejay
School, Nerul



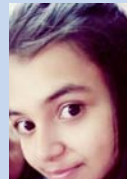
NAOMI DEWICKA,
class XII, Delhi Public
School, RK Puram

MISS YOUR SMILE :-)

Although teachers are trying their best to interact with us, I miss their warmth. I miss the interaction, occasional jokes and the fun of classroom. I feel that online classes offer limited scope as compared to classroom teaching. We were more comfortable sharing our personal experiences with our teachers face to face than through mic and camera. I miss their advice, appreciation, affection and smile.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

This Teacher's Day - I wish my teachers tons of happiness in these testing times. They have tried to keep us in good spirits despite their struggles, and I request them to be nice and compassionate to themselves. Extend kindness to yourself first as you deserve it the most - for keeping the light of knowledge on in the darkness of an uncertain future.



ANUPAMA SHARMA,
class XII, Indus
Valley Public
School, Noida

We are the champions

Is a song by the British rock band 'Queen' (1977), written by Freddie Mercury.

Why this song? It tells us why be ordinary when you can be extraordinary? Read on

SECRETLY GENIUS TEACHERS FROM CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

A fantastic academic experience depends on a great teacher who likes to do things differently. They have a unique way of teaching or talk funny or are secretly devious...But all in all... they are warm, kind and wonderful beings who aren't afraid to try something off-beat. Here is a list drawn up by authors

MAD EYE MOODY

Says Reshma Barshikar, author of 'The Hidden Children' and 'Fade into Red'



These days I seem to be repeating the words of the nutcase genius that was Mad Eye Moody, Tonk's mentor and teacher from the 'Harry Potter' series. Notwithstanding his turn as a villain when he was Harry's teacher, I found his presence firm yet warm, his spinning eyes always catching the insides of people and sussing them out, apart from when he wanted to kill Harry-of-course. He was the perfect foil to Lupin- another wonderful teacher; a powerful auror with diametrically opposing avatars, one a villain and the other a death-eater; a walking testament to children on the fine line that the very powerful walk.

CHIRON

Says Bijal Vachharajani, author of 'A Cloud Called Bhura'



Chiron is his belief in his students and his ability to push them to do better, equipping them with the necessary skills.

Given a choice, I'd love to have a centaur as a teacher. That is one centaur - Chiron, who first made an appearance in the Percy Jackson series by Rick Riordan. No, don't go by the film avatar; go by the book one and you will know why. Chiron was the activities director at Camp Half-Blood, also the son of Kronos, but we cannot hold that against him. In the human world, Chiron is Mr Brunner, Percy's Latin teacher (he folds his hooves into a wheelchair). What I find amazing about

Music is enlightening. It has the power to take you to the very core of your consciousness. There are some that provide "relief", some that send you good "vibes" but then, there are others that teach you a lesson about life. These special songs are like dialogues that help you begin a conversation with yourself. **This Teacher's Day, we want our teachers to begin their day on the right note...**

It's a beautiful life, Oh Oh Oh...

By Swedish band Ace of Base (1995). **Why this song?** It tells us when life throws an opportunity, it's up to us to step up and take it, even if we don't think we can do it. Our movies have shown this too. Read on

LESSONS FROM REAL-LIFE SITUATIONS

Every situation in life teaches us that it is our attitude and outlook that brings out the best in us. Read on as teachers talk about some movies that proved helpful in handling youngsters

'Sister Act 2': Believe in yourself, anything is possible

The teacher influences and changes the entire class in a positive way. She teaches students the importance of team work and guides them to achieve what they felt impossible. Be who you want to be rather than what the world wants you to be, is the one key wisdom she imparts to her students. **ANJU RACHABATTULA**, English teacher, Vista School, Hyderabad



'Stuart Little': Adaptation is the key

When the 'Little' family adopts a mouse, George is not willing to accept Stuart because he is so different. This movie teaches us to be more patient, observant, to give children space, and learn to accept every person or situation. It teaches us that adaptation is crucial. **MANPREET KAUR JUDGE**, teacher, Aavishkar Academy, Bengaluru



'Life of Pi': Believers are true survivors

This is an ode to man's faith in himself. It makes you realise that life is happening all the time and whatever happens is a learning experience. Life is the best teacher. Life teaches love, hope against all odds. The movie holds a wealth of wisdom. **SWARUPA CHAKRABORTI**, teacher, Vibgyor High, Malad East, Mumbai



Everything I do, I do it for you

By Canadian rock singer Bryan Adams. The song was released on June 18, 1991. **Why this song?** A way to let our teachers know that we are thankful for everything they have done

STUDENTS GIVE PROPS TO TEACHERS

Amid exams, online classes and the lockdown, these students engineered the best "props" for their warrior teachers...



Books and pens are treasures forever, just like you teachers are always by our side forever and ever."



PADMASRITHA, class XI, P Obul Reddy Public School, Hyderabad



I will send you a mask painted with a rainbow of hope. You have made our life normal and colourful, while painstakingly, adjusting yours to the new normal. Stay safe"

SUSHIANA SONDHI, class VIII, Mother's International School, Delhi



Some cup cakes for you, for adding much-needed sugar and spice in our life during this boring lockdown"



NIHARIKA BAKSHI, class V, Wynberg Allen School, Mussoorie



Even in tough times, you reach out to us with kind words, building our logic with reason and numbers, helping our dreams soar high!"

NAYONETA (LEFT) and ANAHETA NAMBIAR, class II and class X, St Mary's School, Pune



For sowing love, happiness and hope in our lives. For nurturing us even at hardest times."



PAVNI SHAH, class VIII, Zebar School For Children, Ahmedabad



Hope that the fruits of labour are always recognised. Here's a water-melon grown in our home-signifying - success is possible."

THEIA JACOB, class V, Sanskriti School, Delhi



If I had a magic wand, I'd cast a spell against Corona virus, send you a virtual hug that shall forever dwell!"



AADI MAHAPATRA, grade II, The Shri Ram School, Aravali



Thank you for being our superhero, picking us up even when we feel low. Making our dreams come true, what would we do without you."

SARA PURI, class IV, DPS, Vasant Vihar, Delhi