

Vidyalaya Newsletter

Chief Editor: Anil Dadheech

Editor: Sonal Kumar

Edition: 2013-14

Message to Parents by Asmita Mistry, Principal, Vidyalaya Inc.

We, at Vidyalaya, value the contributions that our teachers and volunteers make every week to enhance the education and the fun factor for our students. To ensure a positive and an effective learning environment, we strive to keep our classrooms small. Our culture classes have an average of 17 students per class and the student to teacher ratio is less than 5 students per teacher. Our language classes have an average of 10 students per class and the student to teacher ratio is less than 4 students per teacher. Additionally, we offer many other enrichment programs after school to help the children grow into successful members of the society. However, despite all that we do at school

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Meet some of our valued assets: Our student teachers



They assist our lead teachers in preparing teaching materials, delivering the instruction and being a source of support in the language and the culture classes, including Kindergarten. We also have student volunteers who help with publications, technology and other areas. This is a great way for the students to collect community service hours for their high school graduation requirements. We look forward to having more students join us in the same capacity. Students in picture (left to right) Jahnavi Joshi, Shagun Vashisth, Eshan Saran, Priya Tailor, Shreeya Sawant, Amish Patel, Megha Rath and Rajeshri Joshi. Students not in picture: Rohan Iyer, Vinayak Kumar, Keshav Sota and Abhigjnavasu Tadakamalla.

Thank you!!!



We would like to acknowledge our benefactor Mr. Bhalilalbhai and Kantaben Patel for their generous donation. They have offered to donate money to cover one year's expenses for snacks for our students. They are the parents of one of our volunteers Mr. Jayesh Patel, and the grandparents of Devak and Jayak Patel. A heartfelt thanks to the entire family for their thoughtful gift to our students, and for supporting Vidyalaya.



(Left) Vidyalaya students showcase their art work prepared during Vidyalaya Art Festival.



(Right) Vidyalaya volunteers perform prayers during school opening ceremony

Extra-Curricular Activities Update by Shalini Mehrotra

This has been another fun-filled year for the Extracurricular Activities team at Vidyalaya. We appreciate the enthusiastic participation of students and are thankful for the dedicated team of volunteers who make these events enjoyable for all of us. Some highlights:

- Diwali Art Project – Our students decorated gold and red "thalis" with gemstones and glitter this year. Creative talent was colorfully demonstrated by them.
- Garba/Dandiya Raas – Garba and Dandiya Raas dances are a unique and integral part of Gujarati/Indian culture. This has become a tradition at Vidyalaya.

Continued on page 4

Publications update by Sonal Kumar

The publication team would like to invite all parents and students to peruse the newsletter, and read the wonderful articles submitted by the students as well as the updates by different team leads. The theme for this year's newsletter was 'Indians in Science and Sports - past and present'. We would like to encourage even more students to submit their articles as well as art-work. The annual newsletter and yearbook are great ways to showcase your writing talent.

If you haven't received your copy of the handbook or newsletter, please send an email to publication@vidyalaya.us.

**Contact Us: Website: www.vidyalaya.us, Waitlist: waitlist@vidyalaya.us,
For volunteering and sponsorship opportunities or general information: info@vidyalaya.us**

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Mela Update by Ravi Saran

Vidyalaya will be presenting another rich and colorful annual event 'Mela 2014'. This Mela (carnival) will be held at Parsippany High School, Parsippany, NJ (at the crossing of Vail and Baldwin Roads) on Sunday, June 1st, 2014 from 9:30AM-1:00PM. The theme of this cultural celebration is 'Vibrant India'. Come and join us for this unique extravaganza as Parsippany High School gets transformed into mini-India where each culture class will prepare a booth based on their class curriculum. The highlight of the event will be the unbelievable effort and talent of the children of Vidyalaya performing various classical Indian and Bollywood dance and music items. Henna tattoos, face painting, karaoke, sports like Cricket and Kabaddi will be a treat for kids and adults alike! There will be raffle prizes, food and much more...

We have limited space available for sponsors. For advertising and sponsorship opportunities at the Mela, please send an email to spa@vidyalaya.us. We encourage everyone to help organize it. Please send us an email us with your area of interest and we will coordinate with the team lead for that task to involve you.

This event is open to community and we encourage everyone to bring friends, families and neighbors. Please join us in discovering India, its long history & culture and a representation of Vidyalaya. What a great way to have a fun, educational morning with activities to share with your whole family! We look forward to welcoming you on June 1st, 2014 at Parsippany High School for the best show in Parsippany!

**Student Parent Affairs a.k.a. SPA
by Rajiv Gupta**

Student and Parent Affairs team encourages all parents and teachers to read the weekly newsletter. The link for the e-newsletter is sent every Wednesday morning following Sunday our school is in session. The e-newsletter contains lots of important updates regarding our calendar and upcoming special events. The e-newsletter also contains class updates sent by language and culture teachers for the students including homework assignments and tests.

If you are not receiving email broadcasts from spa@vidyalaya.us please email us and we will add your email to our distribution list.

SPA team--Rajiv Gupta*, Monika Gupta, Sarika Agnihotri, Rakesh Shah

VIBRANT INDIA**VIDYALAYA MELA 2014**

Come with your family and friends to explore the diversity and richness of Indian Culture!!

*A carnival style extravaganza with
food & fun
Bollywood music & dances
Henna & Face Painting
Cricket & Kabaddi
Fashion Show
Raffle prizes and much more...!!*

**Sunday, June 1st, 2014
9:30AM – 1:00PM**

**Parsippany High School
309 Baldwin Rd,
PARSIPPANY**

FREE ADMISSION!!

Language Recruitment Team by Niti Jatkar*Continued from page 1*

The Language recruitment team is responsible for recruitment of language teachers. We have three language classes Hindi, Gujarati and Telugu.

Language classes in Vidyalaya run for 1 hour, 10 AM to 11 AM. Each language class has three assigned teachers one of them is the lead, all the three teachers work together to decide weekly class assignments, home work, class presentation and tests.

Every language level has a defined curriculum with set objectives that helps teacher make lesson plans. Just like other staff of Vidyalaya language teachers are volunteer parents who work very hard to teach the kids.

This year too, language classes were given the task of doing class presentation in the morning, this gives, kids the opportunity to practice verbal presentation skills. All the classes have performed excellently so far, and continue to amaze other students and parents.

Language teachers also get the opportunity to share their experience and learn from other teachers and experts, through workshops and periodic meetings organized by language curriculum teams.

The language recruitment team co-ordinates with language curriculum team for various activities throughout the years for further enhancements and development of teachers to improve learning at Vidyalaya

Parents' feedback and participation is a key to any school's growth and development. We encourage all the parents to continue to be involved in their child's learning by volunteering and providing feedback to the school.

Extra-Curricular Activities Update by Shalini Mehrotra

- This year, the festival was brought alive at the school with over 250 students and parents dancing to foot-tapping music. The traditional snacks, "garma- garam chai, pakora, and jalebi" were well-loved.

- Pongal/Lohri – This was a very successful second edition of celebrating the harvest festivals of Southern and Northern India together. Colorful rangoli welcomed all to the event; it had presentations, Telegu students' live performances. The popular "Gobbiyyallo" dance had everyone tapping their feet. We moved on to "Sundri-Mundriye" Punjabi folk song rendition, followed by a session of live dhol beats. These happy drums got the crowd pumped up and we had a half-hour of Bhangra dancing.

- Traditional hot and cold Pongal snacks and "Rewari/Laddoo" sweets were served in the end. Such events of cultural immersion and bonding are invaluable for our students.

- Orators R Us – This popular public speaking class started its fourth year edition at the end of January. We are thankful to Vineeta Khanna ("Coffee Tea and Me with Vicky – EBC radio" fame) for teaching this class.

- This year we added a new enrichment class, called "Beyond the GPA" – this is an information sharing class in a peer-support-group format, being taught by Kevin Bhatia. This popular class got a very positive feedback. It is being offered to 7th graders and above only; it will run the whole year round.

- Look forward to Holi Hangama in March and Annual Picnic in June for more fun with the Vidyalaya family.

Actress Pallavi Sharda***Annika Sharma, Age 12***

It all started in Perth, Australia on March 5, 1998. Pallavi Sharda was a little baby who didn't know that she would have a "cool desi job" one day. Her mother is Prof. Hema Sharda, and her father Prof. Nalin Sharda. Both had their PhDs in engineering and science, but Pallavi knew she wanted to be more than that. At an early age she discovered her love for dancing. She trained in Bharatanatyam, which is a classical Indian dance. Pallavi went to the University of Melbourne where she got her LLB and BA and Diploma in Modern Languages for French! She studied law, but she remembered that early dream of wanting to be more. She realized that her true calling would be in Bollywood, so she packed her things and moved to Mumbai, India!



Pallavi Sharda began her Bollywood career in Karan Johar's "My Name is Khan" where she played the small part of a woman on a train in 2010. In that same year, she got an amazing title that our whole family is proud of her for. She was crowned Miss India Australia! She was crowned in Sydney, Australia. She starred in many more movies such as "Dus Tola", "Walkaway", "Love Breakups Zindagi", and "Save your Legs". Pallavi also starred in a musical called Taj Express, which toured and played in many cities. Then, she recently starred next to Ranbir Kapoor in the movie "Besharam". I am proud that Pallavi Sharda is my cousin!

Maanasa Tadakamalla, Age 11

Vinod Dham is known as the father of the Pentium Chip. He is also the CEO of Silicon Spice Inc. He arrived in the U.S in 1975. He graduated on a engineering scholarship at the University of Cincinnati.

Riya Sawant, Age 11

Science is the systematic knowledge of the physical or material world gained through observations and experiments. Math and science were very important subjects for Indians (your parents included.) Many of the first Indian immigrants came to the U.S. in the 1960's and 1970's as doctors, scientists and engineers. Many Indians turned out to be very famous scientists. Therefore, science is very important for India.

Prathi Patel, Age 11

Saoumya Jatkar, Age 11

Sachin Tendulkar made his name in India. He was known for playing cricket. He started his career in cricket in 1989 and ended it in 2013. He played for about 24 years. He resides in India. Cricket fans' hearts. Sachin Tendulkar was known for playing batsman. He has etched his name in cricket history.

Many Indians have contributed to science. 38% Indians are doctors working in the U.S.A. 34% are Microsoft employees. For example Jagdish Chandra Bose a bengali physicist from India who pioneered the investigation of radio and microwave. He also was the first Indian to get a U.S patent in 1904. Therefore India has contributed to science in the past, present and will do a lot in the future.

Abhishek Bhagat, Age 11

Amar Bose was the creator of Bose Bose is a great brand. I have Bose headphones and I love them. They are so good. Bose is awesome.

Mann Pandya, Age 11

Amar Gopal Bose was the founder of Bose speaker technology. ^{When} Amar Gopal got his first head phone it wasn't good so he thought when he grows up he will create a machine that makes a lot of sound.

We asked our culture 6 scholars about India's contribution to Science and Sports. This is what Vidyalaya scholars have to say.

Many people say good things about the Indians. For example - Albert Einstein said we thought that we are the cradle of human race, the birthplace of human speech, and even the mother of history. But, there is more, we are said to be the grandmother in addition to! India is known across the world for a lot of things.

Raghavi Patel, Age 11

India contributed to today's world. Sabeer Bhatia is the creator and founder of Hotmail, the world's first web based email system. Evidently this was a useful creation, as Hotmail is extremely popular and it plays a great part in today's society. People depend on Hotmail for numerous reasons, and we wouldn't have it without Sabeer Bhatia, an Indian. This man from India has contributed tremendously to technology and so have many others from India. Our world would not be what it is today without incredible India.

Anonymous, Age 11

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'દિવ્ય ભાસ્કર' નું નામ ગુજરાતમાં ખ્યાત છે. ગુજરાતનું ઊંડાણપૂર્વક કવરેજ, ફીચર, સમાચાર, ગુજરાતનાં પ્રત્યેક ભાગનો અહેવાલ આવરી લેતું ભારતનું સૌથી વધુ વેચાતું ગુજરાતી દૈનિક છે. 'દિવ્ય ભાસ્કર' ના વાચકોની મરજીનું સમાચાર-સંસ્કરણ પુરું પાડે છે. તમારા સંબંધીઓ અને મિત્રોનો અભિપ્રાય મેળવીને જાણો કે તેમનું પ્રિય અને વિશ્વાસનીય અખબાર કયું છે. બનવા જોગ છે કે તેઓ 'દિવ્ય ભાસ્કર' ને જ પસંદ કરે.

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Famous Indian Scientists Now and Then*Karthik Kundurthy, Age 10***Sir C.V. Raman**

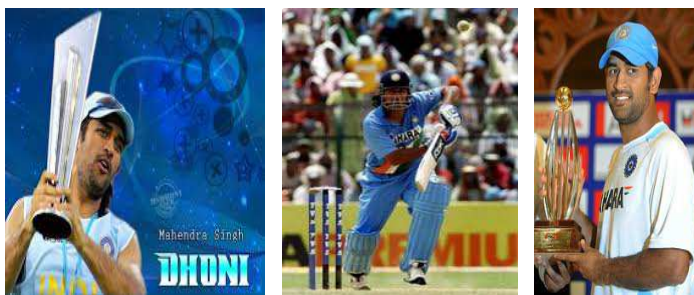
Sir C.V Raman was born on November 7, 1880 and is known for his brilliant work in light scattering. During his career, he got the Knight Bachelor in 1929, the physics Nobel Prize in 1930, the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award, in 1954 and the Lenin Peace Prize in 1957. Raman is best known for the Raman effect. The Raman effect is a way of scattering light based on the Compton effect, a way of scattering x-ray.

Dr. Krishnaswami**Kasturirangan**

Dr. Krishnaswami Kasturirangan was born on October 24, 1940. He got three major civilian awards; the Padma Shri award in 1982, the Padma Bhushan award in 1992, and the Padma Vibhushan award in 2000. He is best known for his pioneering contributions to the Indian space program. He is a huge inspiration to people interested in space.

M.S. Dhoni*Eesha Nagpal, Age 11*

Many of you may not know that M.S Dhoni's real name is Mahendra Singh Dhoni. Dhoni grew up in Ranchi, Bihar, India. He studied and excelled in badminton and soccer at DAV Jawahar Vidya Mandir, Shyamali. His soccer coach sent him to play cricket for a cricket club, even though he had never played before. He impressed the club and was soon led down on the path to becoming a worldwide, famous cricket player on the Indian team. Dhoni led the Indian cricket team to victory in the world cup in 2011. Dhoni was later moved to the Chennai Super Kings for 1.5 million USD. Dhoni has shown courage and leadership throughout his matches that he plays with his team. He has encouraged many young children to pursue their lifelong dreams

**Why Indians Are Smart***Mahek Sansi*

Have you ever wondered why Indians are known as smart people? I have, so I found out. Usually Indians are known to be smart because over the years, Indians have invented so many things. One of these inventions is the concept of zero. The Babylonians first discovered zero as a placeholder, but the scholars in India get credit for realizing that the zero did more than differentiate 60 from 600. Another one is the invention of the radio. A majority of people alive today probably do not remember a time when radios were scarce. However, the radio is a relatively new invention. A number of individuals played a role in helping to create this device. Lastly, another important invention is the game of chess. Chess is a very popular board game. Billions of people play it or have heard of it. Many scholars believe that it was an Indian who invented the earliest version of chess. In conclusion, I truly believe Indians are very smart.

Vijay Kumar*Aryan Tawde, Age 12*

Vijay Kumar is one of the best athletes if not the best shooter in India today. Vijay Kumar was born in a small village of Himachal Pradesh in a poor family on August 19, 1985.

Vijay, since childhood always wanted to be an army officer and he achieved his dream after completing his education.

Vijay was the best pistol shooter of the Indian Army. He won several medals within the army for his performance. One great thing about him was that he never dreamed to be a professional shooter, but since he was introduced to it he was keen on being an international shooter. After that he became a professional shooter that went to international competitions for India.

His professional career as a shooter began with the 10 meter air pistol and then he went up to the 25 meter rapid fire pistol round.

In the 2006 Commonwealth Games (the largest sporting event in the world), he won 2 gold medals. In the same year he won a bronze world. Also in the 2010 Commonwealth in New Delhi, he won 3 gold medals and 1 silver medal in the Asian Games which is the 2nd largest sporting event in the world. His last major sporting event was the London Olympics, where he won for India a silver medal in the "25 m rapid fire pistol".

In total he got 1 silver medal in the Olympics, 2 silver medals in ISSF World Shooting Championships, 5 gold and 1 silver medals in the commonwealth games and 2 bronze medals in the Asian games.

Vijay Kumar proves that a kid without top of the art facilities can still be a great sports person. India is proud to have him competing and will look forward to more competition from him.

Language Curriculum Update by Asmita Mistry

We have had a great start to the school year. Our language presentations are going very well and we are looking forward to planning our annual Teachers' Seminar in the spring months. Language final exams will be held in early May 2014.

All language classes are being asked to submit an entry for the yearbook by class. Please encourage your child to participate with this task. The submissions will be due in April 2014.

Please remember to read the weekly e-newsletters to get class updates and keep track of the on goings school wide. The link for the newsletter is e-mailed to you every Wednesday morning when school is in session. If you're having trouble accessing the e-newsletter, please email spa@vidyalaya.us.

Always feel free to contact your child's classroom teacher if you have any questions or concerns regarding what your child is learning in the language class. It is a team effort and we, the teachers, appreciate your partnership in helping the children to learn our languages.

LCT members: Asmita Mistry*, Shalini Mehrotra, Malini Joshi, Sejal Mehta, Rama Jonalagadda, Kiron Sharma and Deepa Vavilala.


Culture Curriculum Update by Malini Arora

Vidyalaya offers a 45 minute culture class for grades KG through 9th. The curriculum for culture covers a diverse set of topics including social studies, culture, religion and spirituality. The curriculum has been designed by various experienced parents & teachers of Vidyalaya itself. The curriculum is constantly evolving and goes through revision each year. Teachers who are mostly parents teach the topics through quizzes, games and multimedia.

Each culture class gets the opportunity to attend one Yoga session with our experienced Yoga instructors. Also, culture classes are responsible for setting up a booth at the Vidyalaya Annual Mela. The topics for these booth change from year to year. At this event each class gets to showcase though fun and games what they've learnt all year.

The Vidyalaya Culture Curriculum Team hosts an annual Seminar as training & networking session for the culture teachers. One goal of the seminar is also to elicit ideas and best practices from the teachers in order to make improvements. The seminar serves as a great platform to bring old and new teachers together so they can share teaching practices.

Teaching culture at Vidyalaya is a very rewarding experience and we encourage all parents and non-parent volunteers to come forward. If you're interested in making a difference in young children's lives by sharing with them your Indian heritage then come join our Vidyalaya Culture Team by emailing at spa@vidyalaya.us.



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Sunita Williams**Anikait Sota, Age 5**

Sunita Williams is an Indian-American astronaut. She holds the record of longest single space flight by a woman (195 days).

Prayer by Mukesh Dave

Through prayers we seek strength & compassion. Our prayer assembly teaches the words and the rhythm which fills our hearts during the prayers and beyond.

"Prayer is not asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is daily admission of one's weakness. It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without a heart." -- Mahatma Gandhi

Rani Laxmi Bai**Laya Neelisetty, Age 9**

Rani Laxmi Bai was born on 19 November 1828. She was the queen of Maratha in the state of Jhansi, situated in the north-central part of India. She was one of the leading figures of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 and for Indian nationalists, a symbol of resistance to the rule of the British East India Company. Rani Laxmi Bai was born into a Brahmin family in Varanasi, India. Her parents are Moropant Tambe and Bhagirathi Sapre. Her parents came from Maharashtra. She was educated at home and was more independent in her childhood than others of her age her studies included archery, horsemanship, and self-defense. Manikarnika was married to the Maharaja of Jhansi, Raja Gangadhar Rao, in 1842, and was afterwards called Laxmi Bai. she gave birth to a boy named Damodar Rao in 1851. On 10 May 1857 the Indian Rebellion started in Meerut when news of this reached Jhansi, the Rani asked the British political officer Captain Alexander Skene for permission to raise a body of armed men for her own protection and Skene agreed to this. The city was relatively calm in the midst of unrest in the region but the Rani conducted a Haldi Kumkum ceremony with pomp in front of all the women of Jhansi to provide assurance to her subjects and to convince them that the British were cowards and not to be afraid of them. From August 1857 to January 1858 Jhansi was under the Rani's rule at peace. When the British forces finally arrived in March they found it well defended and the fort had heavy guns which could fire over the town and nearby countryside. Sir Hugh Rose, commanding the British forces demanded the surrender of the city. If this was refused it would be destroyed. After due deliberation the Rani issued a proclamation "We fight for independence. In the words of Lord Krishna, we will if we are victorious, enjoy the fruits of victory, if defeated and killed on the field of battle, we shall surely earn eternal glory and salvation." She defended Jhansi against British troops when Sir Hugh Rose besieged Jhansi on 23 March 1858.

The Rani was unsuccessful in trying to persuade the other rebel leaders to prepare to defend Gwalior against a British attack which she expected would come soon. General Rose's forces made a successful attack on the city on 17 June in Kotah-ki-Serai near the Phool Bagh of Gwalior a squadron of the 8th Hussars under Captain Heneage, fought the large Indian force commanded by Rani Laxmi Bai which was trying to leave the area. The 8th Hussars charged into the Indian force killing many Indian soldiers taking two guns and continuing the charge right through the Phool Bagh encampment. In this engagement according to an eyewitness account, Rani Laxmi put on a sowar's uniform and attacked one of the hussars. She was unhorsed, fired at him with a pistol, and also wounded, probably by his sabre, followed by a fatal shot from his carbine. According to another tradition Rani Laxmi Bai, the Queen of Jhansi, dressed as a cavalry leader, was badly wounded. She was not wishing the British to capture her body so she told a hermit to burn it. After her death a few local people cremated her body. The British captured the city of Gwalior after three days. In the British report of this battle, Hugh Rose commented that Rani Laxmi Bai is "personable, clever and beautiful" and she is "the most dangerous of all Indian leaders". Rose reported that she had been buried "with great ceremony under a tamarind tree under the Rock of Gwalior, where I saw her bones and ashes". Her tomb is in the Phool Bagh area of Gwalior. Laxmi Bai died on June 18 1858.

Rani Laxmi Bai used to go into the battlefield dressed as a man, holding the reins of her horse in her mouth and used the sword with both hands while having her child strapped to her back. Rani Laxmi Bai of Jhansi whose heroism and superb leadership laid an outstanding example for all future generations of women freedom fighters.

Rani Laxmi Bai inspired many people like me because she is a woman and she stood up for the whole country of India and fought against the British and gave her life to India. She proved that just because we are women doesn't mean we just sit there and see our country go into ashes. We need to get up and prove that we can show bravery towards India. Her remarkable courage inspired many men and women in India to rise against the alien rule. If Laxmi Bai can do all this to save our country why can't I.



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Message to Parents by Asmita Mistry

...on Sundays, there is no question that our students' success begins at home. We cannot underestimate the contributions from the parents of our students. You, as parents are the single most important variable in your child's education. And whether you recognize it or not, you send both a silent and spoken message to your children daily regarding the importance of learning and appreciating your language and heritage.

One of the most important components of our school is the partnership we share as teachers, volunteers and parents in the best interest of our children. Throughout the year, you have the opportunity to develop this partnership in a wide variety of ways. You can join one of our various teams, volunteer to teach, help during the special celebrations and festivals, attend Back to School meeting, volunteer at our Annual Event like the Mela, work on homework with their children, attend the weekly prayer and assembly sessions or help in numerous other ways. It is important to your child that you are involved at Sunday school in some way. It's a way to let your child know that you think Sunday school is important.

To enhance the home and school relationship, we have multiple means of communicating with our families: 1) Weekly e-newsletter, 2) Homework logs from language classes, 3) E-mails from teachers, 4) Parent Teacher Handbook, 5) Annual newsletter and 6) Yearbook. We strongly encourage you to remain connected with the on going at school through these means.

Commitment to the best for our children is the key to our success as an institution. On behalf of our teachers, our teams and all of our volunteers, it is our hope that all parents will join this partnership and help us fulfill this commitment for excellence. We can work together to build skills and knowledge, reinforce values, and develop a strong sense of self-worth in our children. At Vidyalaya, we are not just a community school, we are a family. Thank you, parents, for helping us strengthen this relationship, and we look forward to building this partnership together, as one team, to benefit our most valuable resource - our children.

We continually strive to offer new initiatives at Vidyalaya, and we encourage you to share any ideas and thoughts you may have by writing to spa@vidyalaya.us.



Kalpana Chawla – India's First Woman Astronaut

Nisha Patel, Age 9

"Pioneers don't have role models". This is what she believed in. Kalpana Chawla was an Indian astronaut who lost her life during the return of Columbia expedition. Born in Karnal, India, Kalpana was imaginative and ambitious since early childhood. A town boy-like little girl in jeans and t-shirt would lie on ground staring at the stars and wondering how it would feel to fly in space. In one of her interviews she said she used to go to a flying club with her father, which was among the handful of flying clubs in India then.

Kalpana Graduated from Tagore School, Karnal, India, in 1976. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in aeronautical engineering from Punjab Engineering College, India, 1982, her Master of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering from University of Texas, 1984, and a Doctorate of Philosophy in Aerospace Engineering from University of Colorado, 1988. Kalpana earned many awards: the Congressional Space Medal of Honor, the NASA Space Flight Medal, and the NASA Distinguished Service Medal.

Kalpana had a very ordeal experience on the NASA program. She was selected by NASA in December 1994. Kalpana Chawla reported to the Johnson Space Center in March 1995 as an astronaut candidate in the 15th Group of Astronauts. After completing a year of training and evaluation, she was assigned as crew representative to work technical issues for the Astronaut Office EVA/Robotics and Computer Branches. In January 1998, she was assigned as crew representative for shuttle and station flight crew equipment, and subsequently served as lead for Astronaut Offices Crew Systems and Habitability section. She flew on STS-87 (1997) and STS-107 (2003), logging 30 days, 14 hours and 54 minutes in space.

Kalpana Chawla died in a space shuttle Columbia disaster which occurred on Feb 1st. The space capsule exploded just 18 minutes before landing. Her tragic death brought sorrow and grief to people across United States and India.

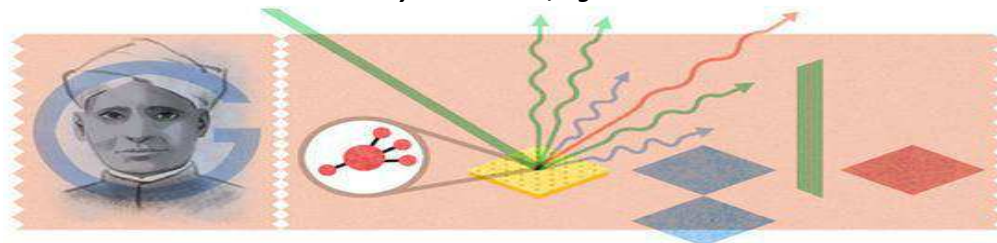
To reach for the stars is the dream of millions but there are very few who are able to realize it and Kalpana was one of them!!

Since Kalpana had a great mind and was a smart astronaut. Now, let's see if you have a great mind! Please complete my word search below.

a	g	u	e	o	s	p	a	s
r	h	a	s	f	p	k	c	h
a	i	d	n	l	a	a	m	u
y	A	t	g	k	c	l	e	t
u	S	n	p	s	e	p	w	t
p	A	r	v	m	j	a	g	l
p	N	j	b	n	c	n	a	e
a	s	t	r	o	n	a	u	t

Word box:

India, NASA, astronaut, space, shuttle, kalpana

C. V. Raman*By Ruhi Tawde, Age 9*

On November 7 2013 Google India celebrated CV Raman's 125th birthday by dedicating a doodle on its homepage that shows his portrait along with light rays emitting from a source.

Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman (C. V. Raman) was the first Indian person to win the Nobel Prize in science for his famous 1930 discovery known as the "Raman Effect". It is surprising that Raman used equipment worth just Rs.200 to make this discovery. C V Raman was born at Tiruchirapalli in Tamil Nadu on 7th November 1888. His father was a physics teacher. Raman was a very smart student. After completing tenth grade at an age of 12, he entered Presidency College, Chennai, in 1902, and in 1904 passed his B.A. examination, winning the first place and the gold medal in physics. In 1907 he gained his masters degree, obtaining the highest distinctions.

Raman passed the Civil Service exam and was made the Deputy Accountant General in Calcutta in 1907. Though his office work took most of his time, Raman found opportunities for carrying on experimental research in the laboratory of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science at Calcutta. On certain occasions he even spent the entire nights working on new experiments. Such was his passion that in 1917, he resigned from the position to become the Professor of Physics at Calcutta University.

On a sea voyage to Europe in 1921, Raman curiously noticed the blue color of the glaciers and the Mediterranean. He was curious to discover the reason of the blue color. Once Raman returned to India, he performed many experiments regarding the scattering of light from water and transparent blocks of ice. According to the results, he established the scientific explanation for the blue color of sea-water and sky.

A very interesting event served as the inspiration for the discovery of the Raman Effect. Raman was busy doing some work on a December evening in 1927, when he got the news that Professor Compton has won the Nobel Prize on scattering of X-rays. This made him think that if the Compton Effect is applicable for X-rays, it must also be true for light. He carried out some experiments to establish his opinion.

Raman employed monochromatic light from a mercury arc which penetrated transparent materials and was allowed to fall on a spectrograph to record its spectrum. During this, Raman detected some new lines in the spectrum which were later called 'Raman Lines'. After a few months, Raman put forward his discovery of 'Raman Effect' in a meeting of scientists at Bangalore on March 16, 1928, for which he won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.

The 'Raman Effect' is considered very significant in analyzing the molecular structure of chemical compounds. After a decade of its discovery, the structures of about 2000 compounds were studied. With the invention of the laser, the 'Raman Effect' has proved to be a very useful tool for scientists.

C V Raman died at the age of 82 on November 21, 1970 because of a strong heart attack. His advice to aspiring scientists was that "scientific research needed independent thinking and hard work, not equipment."

Swathi Dandekar*Devika Soni, Age 11*

There are many important Indian American women. I would like to tell you about one that I was lucky to meet, Swati Dandekar. Swati is running for a place in US Congress. I was lucky to meet her at a Diwali party in Illinois. There, at the Diwali party, she told everyone about her campaign. I found out that she really supports people's rights and how it comes to play a major part in US Congress. I think this is greatly important to our country because everyone deserves and should have rights. It is really important for her to support rights because people's rights are what let us have our Sunday school today. In conclusion, I think that Swati Dandekar will be a great person to be our first Indian American woman in Congress, and we will all be glad for her to be elected.

Sachin Tendulkar*Armaan Rochlani, Age 10*

Sachin Tendulkar was one of the best cricket players in the entire world! When he was 11, his sister gave him his first cricket bat. He has 4 other siblings and was born the youngest. His father was a professor while his mother worked at a life insurance company. In 2007, he became the first player to reach 15,000 runs in a one-day international play. He is also the first batsman to score a double century in a one day international. I met his cousin at a camp over the summer and we talked about him. Sadly, he retired this year in 2013. It was a tragic event for many people who considered Sachin Tendulkar the 'God of cricket'. These are some facts about Sachin Tendulkar.



Sheila Sri Prakash – Award Winning Architect*Saanvi Vavilala, Age 8*

Sheila Sri Prakash is acknowledged as an international thought leading design thinker. In 2011, Sheila was named to the "Top 100" list of the most influential architects in the world. Ms. Prakash developed what she calls "The Reciprocity Wave movement" which uses art to create awareness about social and ecological issues across the world.

Sheila Sri Prakash is a global leader in sustainability. She is internationally acclaimed as a pioneer of Holistic Sustainability, which extends the boundary of Sustainability to include socio-economic factors.

She was born on July 6, 1955, Bhopal, India. Sheila is 58 and is from Chennai, India, is married and has two children. She studied architecture at the Anna University School of Architecture and Planning. She also attended the Harvard Graduate School of Design's Executive Education Program.

As the only child to her parents, she was encouraged to train in Classical Indian Dance, Music and the Arts from a very young age. She started learning Bharatanatyam when she was just four years old. Sheila demonstrated an exemplary talent as a Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi dancer, while she also had an extraordinary gift for the Veena musical instrument. Besides music and dance, she also excelled at painting and sculpting. "As a dancer, I was trained to imagine spaces in my mind. The rhythm and repetition of movements helps me conjure up proportions within a space. Dance helps me visualize a space before it takes tangible form.", she says. Sheila Sri Prakash is the first woman to set up an architectural firm in India. She is the founder and chief architect of SHILPA, Architects, Planners and Designers Ltd., which she set up in 1979. Sheila has designed over 1000 completed architectural works to her credit over an illustrious career spanning 35 years. She is a true visionary in making an impact on the socio-economically underprivileged, through architecture and urban design.

Sheila Sri Prakash is a global leader in sustainability. She is internationally acclaimed as a pioneer of Holistic Sustainability, which extends the boundary of Sustainability to include socio-economic factors. She was a key charter member who was instrumental in establishing the Indian Green Building Council. She believes in designing buildings that are energy efficient, use natural light and have lower building and operating costs.

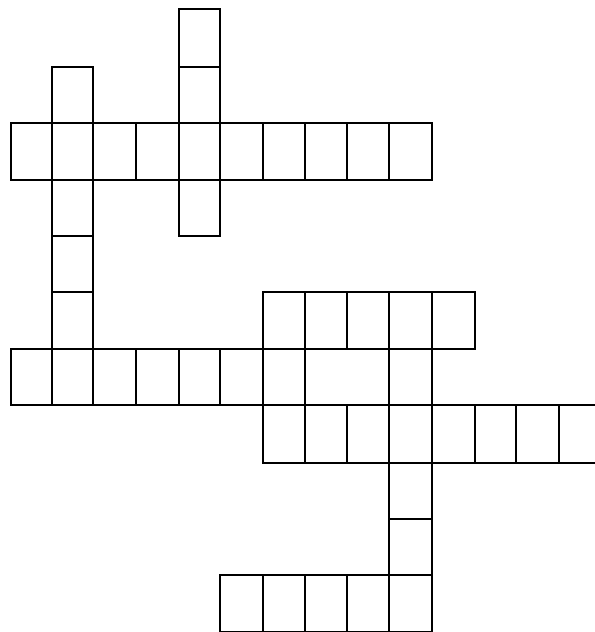
As India's foremost award-winning architect on the global stage, Sheila Sri Prakash is acknowledged as an international leading innovative architect.

MS Dhoni - Most popular cricketer in India*Ronak Patel, Age 7*

Mahendra Singh Dhoni was born on July 7, 1981 in Ranchi, India. He is 5'9" tall. He is famous by winning ICC Twenty20 and World cups. Also, he is the captain of the national Cricket team of India. He is an attacking right handed middle order batsman and a wicket keeper. SportsPro has rated Dhoni 16th most remarkable athlete in the world. Dhoni also kept the Indian team in the number one position for the first time in the ICC test rankings. Dhoni the captain of India in all three forms of the games.

Dhoni has also been the recipient of many awards including the ICC ODI Player of the Year award in 2008 and 2009 (the first Indian player to achieve this feat), the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award in 2007 and the Padma Shri, India's fourth highest civilian honor, in 2009. He was named as the captain of ICC World Test XI and ICC World ODI XI teams for 2009. The Indian Territorial Army conferred the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel to Dhoni on 1 November 2011. He is the second Indian cricketer after Kapil Dev to have received this honor. In June 2013, Forbes ranked Dhoni at 16th in the list of highest paid athletes in the world, estimating his earnings at \$31.5 million. The TIME magazine has added Dhoni in its "Time 100" list of 100 most influential people of 2011.

That's all about my favorite sportsman Dhoni!! Now you know enough about Dhoni, I think you can solve this cross-word puzzle.



Word Box: Dhoni, remarkable, keeper, born, award, cricket, earnings, Ranchi

Shikha Tandon*Tanvi Dembla, Age 8*

The famous sportswoman I chose to write about is Shikha Tandon. She was born in 1985 and is a champion swimmer from Bangalore, India. She has won 146 national medals and 36 medals in international competitions, including five gold medals. For someone who has dominated Indian aquatics for over 16 years and holds 6 national records, Shikha, as a kid, feared water! She used to accompany her brother to Bangalore club as he was advised by the doctor to try swimming since he had asthma.

Shikha used to dip her legs in the shallow end of the water. It took a lot of coaxing to get her into the water and try her hand at swimming. Then one thing led to the other and she started winning in competitions. But she never made a conscious effort to be a swimmer. She was declared the best woman swimmer at the national championships for 5 years. She is an inspiring champion for me, and I hope to be a great swimmer like her.

Google Glass*By Tejas Parekh*

Last week my uncle, Dr. Selene Parekh, travelled to Jaipur, India as part of the Annual Indo-US Foot and Ankle Surgery Meeting. The aim of the course was to share and teach techniques in orthopedic surgery to doctors in South Asia. This year was different from other years because my uncle was able to broadcast live surgery by using Google Glass. He wore special glasses that had a computer mounted while conducting and teaching surgery on Saturday January 11, 2014. The image seen by the doctor can be shared with anyone in the world without having to risk bringing in a camera crew or stop what he is doing to point things out. Dr. Selene Parekh is one of the few people to be given the glasses as a part of beta testing. This technology is really important to help transfer information and improve communication, especially to rural areas where healthcare is not easily available, such as in Jaipur, and many other places in India.

My Cousin*Sohum Gaitonde*

There are people in this world who are less fortunate than us because they have no food to eat and no clothes to wear. To help these people my cousin, who is 16 years old, started a charity that collects clothes and distributes them to the under privileged in India. This also gives people a chance to give back to the community. I am proud of him and I hope to do this when I am of his age.

Sabeer Bhatia*Divya Bhagat, Age 14*

Millions and billions of people use the popular email system, Hotmail. Today, Hotmail is one of the largest email providers. Little do they know that an Indian man is the mastermind behind this email system. Sabeer Bhatia was born on December 30th, 1968 in India. He was highly inspired by the lectures of legends like Steve Jobs, Vinod Khosla and Scott McNealy. He went to college in Stanford University and California Institute of Technology. Sabeer Bhatia started his career in Apple Computers as a hardware engineer. Afterward he transferred to Firepower Systems Inc. Jack Smith, a former Apple colleague and he started hotmail on July 4, 1996. This was the first free web based email service and became popular instantly. In 1998, Bill Gates' Microsoft bought Hotmail for \$400 million. Sabeer Bhatia has got many awards for his company Hotmail. In 1997, he got the entrepreneur of the year award and in 2002 he was named a "People to Watch" in international business by TIME Magazine. Sabeer Bhatia later started the company Arzoo Inc, which unfortunately failed. He relaunched it in 2010 as a travel portal, which got little more success. Afterward, along with Shiraz Kanga and Viraf Zack he developed BlogEverywhere to support the demand of new interest of blogging. He also, is credited for Sabsebolo.com. This company is a conferencing phone company. Sabeer Bhatia also launched JaxtrSMS, which provides free messaging. His current project is to create Nano City in India, in resemblance to Silicon Valley here in America. This man has a great number of achievements in the technological world. From Hotmail to Airways service he has covered it all. He is truly one of the most accomplished Indians in the modern technological world.

Indus Valley Civilization*Resham Sansi, Age 14*

Since the beginning of time, Indians have contributed ideas and intelligence to our world.

An early river civilization, the Indus River Valley civilization, was very advanced and clever even in 2500 B.C.E. Our ancestors were located near the Indus River in modern day Pakistan. They had a strong and highly centralized government that used urban planning. The Indus utilized the river nearby to farm and created food surpluses to build advanced cities. It also had beautiful and important cities, like the Harappa and Mohanjo Daro. These cities were so carefully built that in a building every brick was the same size! Sometimes they were called the Harappan civilization. The Indus also developed a writing system so complex, that even today it has not been fully deciphered. Along with brain smarts, the Indus were remarkable handy as well. They developed the world's first cotton cloth and created indoor plumbing and flush toilets.

Although we have made a huge advancement in technology and science from those times to now, Indians still are the smartest people around.





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