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Changing Lives
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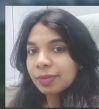
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Pemangkin Idea

EDUCATION

Empowering Literacy through Service-Based Learning



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In the realm of education, the concept of service learning stands as a beacon of hope, offering a transformative approach that not only enriches academic learning but also fosters social responsibility and community engagement. At the heart of service learning lies a profound commitment to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical application, particularly in addressing the needs of vulnerable and marginalized communities. It is within this context that our journey unfolds, as we embark on a research project that integrates academic service learning to empower learners facing various socio-economic challenges. In the exploration of service learning, we delve into a realm where education transcends the confines of traditional classrooms to embrace the real-world challenges and needs of society through a project entitled, 'Empowering Children Through Literacy'.

Our endeavor was guided by the purpose of contributing knowledge and skills to children who may not have equal privileges and opportunities for learning. In collaboration with an orphanage, our project endeavored to extend educational support to young learners aged between 6 to 9 years old, who lacked proficiency

in writing using English language as the medium communication. Through service learning, we sought to empower these children, not merely as recipients of knowledge, but as active participants in their own educational journey. As we navigated through the planning and implementation of this 16-week project, we were confronted with questions and challenges inherent in catering to a diverse group of learners with varying needs and backgrounds. However, it was through these challenges that we uncovered the true essence of service learning – a journey of mutual learning and growth, where educators and learners alike are enriched by their shared experiences. We delved into the intricacies of our service learning project by exploring its phases, activities, and the invaluable insights gleaned along the way. Through our reflections and observations, we aim to shed light on the transformative power of service learning in enhancing educational outcomes and fostering social change.

Planning Phase

During the planning stage, numerous questions arose regarding the integration of this group of learners into the teaching instruction plan. Given the

diverse learning levels typically encountered in care homes, considerations regarding age and learner characteristics were paramount. Insightful conversations with the head of the home provided valuable background information on the children. It was revealed that these students were young learners aged between 6 to 13 years old who lacked proficiency in writing in English. As the service-learning facilitator, our role involved teaching writing skills to these students through face-to-face sessions due to their lack of internet connectivity.

First Encounter

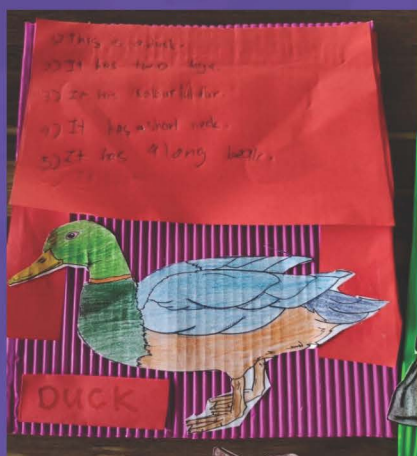
Upon engaging with the learners, they exhibited eagerness to know and learn. While some encountered challenges with English comprehension and speaking, they demonstrated proficiency in Tamil and Bahasa Melayu, and some interacted using dual languages during the sessions. They code-switched between Tamil, Bahasa Melayu, and some English. Code-switching was necessary to facilitate the understanding of the two-way communication between the children and facilitators. Despite language barriers, the learners actively participated throughout the sessions. The

initial class proceeded smoothly with a positive interaction, beginning with an ice-breaking session where students introduced themselves by stating their names that helped to foster camaraderie among them.

In the dynamic landscape of language education, fostering engagement and comprehension is paramount. The employment of these interactive methodologies not only captivated the learners but also cultivated a deeper understanding of linguistic concepts.

Exploring the Animal Kingdom

The journey began with an immersive introduction to the animal kingdom. The teaching activity centered on introducing animals through vibrant flashcards and descriptive narratives. Students were introduced to animals such as the rhinoceros, deer, kangaroo, and leopard, with their names written on the whiteboard for reference. They transcribed these words into their workbooks and engaged in sentence-building activities utilizing flashcard images. Subsequently, the students collaborated in groups to craft fun fact posters about the animal of their choice. These vibrant posters highlighted key characteristics and featured concise descriptions that were composed using five sentences. The activity aimed to reinforce the vocabulary acquired in class while fostering teamwork and creativity. The interactive session on "Zoo Animals" documented the students' writing endeavors, enabling them to apply their newfound knowledge. The posters were



Recognizing Animals

displayed, and a gallery walk was conducted, to appreciate each other's work. Drawing from Krashen's Learning Hypothesis model, this pedagogical approach emphasized both conscious learning and subconscious acquisition. By intertwining structured exercises with immersive experiences, the learners were able to navigate a seamless continuum of linguistic development. In lieu of this, by acknowledging the diverse linguistic proficiencies within the classroom, the instructors leveraged the Monitor Hypothesis to calibrate learning experiences, nurturing confidence and motivation amidst varied language competencies.

Mastering Basic Writing Structures

Transitioning from the wilderness to the realm of syntax, the educators guided students through the intricacies of sentence formation. In a vibrant classroom adorned with educational artifacts, students immersed themselves in a spectrum of colorful semantics. With hues delineating subject, verb, and object, the students embarked on a visual journey by internalizing grammatical rules through interactive exercises. The instructional trajectory unfolded with meticulous planning and dynamic execution. Through tailored worksheets and hands-on activities, the students unraveled the mysteries of word order, embracing linguistic structures with newfound confidence. As they navigated the semantic landscape, they were able to engage in real-time language production, honing their abilities through collaborative exploration and metalinguistic reflection. By evaluating the efficacy of the lesson, educators were able to witness a paradigm shift in student comprehension. Leveraging Swain's Output Hypothesis, the students traversed the continuum of linguistic proficiency, transitioning from passive learners to active participants in the language acquisition process. Through verbalization, hypothesis testing, and reflection, they also embarked on a language learning journey by harnessing language as a tool for expression and understanding. In conclusion, these teaching methodologies exemplified the fusion of pedagogical theory and practical application. By fostering engagement, collaboration, and reflection, educators can pave the way

for a generation of empowered language learners to embrace language with confidence and fluency.



Writing Literacy Practice

Reflection and Impact

Service-based learning offers a holistic approach that transcends the boundaries of the classroom, empowering students to apply their language skills in meaningful ways that resonate with real-world issues. They not only hone their language proficiency but also develop a profound understanding of the power of language as a tool for social change. Moreover, service-based learning fosters empathy by immersing students in the lived experiences of others. Through amplifying marginalized voices, students can develop a deeper appreciation for diversity and a heightened sense of social responsibility. Through the active participation in the service projects, they can also forge connections that extend beyond linguistic proficiency, nurturing a sense of compassion and understanding that transcends cultural and linguistic barriers. Furthermore, service-based learning empowers students to recognize their agency as active contributors to positive social change. By engaging in advocacy efforts and community initiatives, students learn to harness the power of language to effect meaningful change in their communities. Through service-based education, students can gain a sense of efficacy and purpose to make a difference through literacy and language learning.

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