



CONFERENCE CHRONICLE



Bangalore International School
Aspire Innovate Achieve Excel



Feb 14th – 17th 2017

Ages: 10-11 years

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Editor's note



Shefali Maddali

This year Bangalore International School hosted the Golden Jubilee year of the Round Square Conference, which included 113 delegates from 12 schools. Round Square is a worldwide network of innovative schools in 40 countries across 5 continents, built around the 6 ideals of learning, internationalism, democracy, adventure, leadership and service. Our theme for this conference was: NO GREEN, NO LIFE. KNOW GREEN, KNOW LIFE! The theme addressed the global issue of our natural environment slowly deteriorating. Indraneel and I from the Middle School EdBoard got the amazing opportunity to accompany the Round Square delegates to the eco resorts Visthar and Annadana to experience the activities first hand.

*"Only after the last tree has been cut down.
Only after the last river has been poisoned.
Only after the last fish has been caught.
Only then will you find that money cannot be eaten."*

-A Native American saying

Welcoming

In true Indian tradition, the host students welcomed the delegates with a tika. The delegates were whisked away to participate in ice-breaking activities, followed by March past practice. They then watched Leonardo DiCaprio's epic documentary, Before The Flood.



Opening Ceremony

"Are you thankful to be alive?" The opening statement of Mr. Prem Koshy's speech, our first keynote speaker of the conference. This year's conference was aimed at saving resources & understanding the importance of our forests & the various biotic & abiotic features found there that play a major role in our lives.

Our MC's Rytasha & Zehran welcomed the delegates from all 12 schools. This was followed by a march past where the flag bearers held their school flags up high & proud. Our Middle School students, Laya & Harini, performed an invocation dance that merged the dance forms of North & South India. The students of Grade 9 performed a dance that showcased the way our Earth felt as we destroy it in the name of development & power, where as in reality it's just a matter of greed.

Mr. Koshy drew on his childhood memories to deliver his message to the delegates. The second keynote speaker Mr. Milind Bunyan reiterated the message of climate change, deforestation & sustainable agriculture.

We need to start being thankful for what we have & take action NOW, because more damage is created when we wait & rely on someone to come & save the planet. We'd like to ask you a question, what are you more thankful for? That leaf that provides you with oxygen or the stack of freshly printed notes.



Eagerly listening to Mr. Milind Bunyan

Dolls with a purpose

In this session the delegates learnt how to make dolls with simple materials such as wool, cotton stuffing & flexible wire. Dolls were kept on display and the story they narrated was perceived differently by the delegates, giving contrasting perspectives. These dolls were portrayed to tackle social issues like racism, poverty & the adverse effects of pollution. The session helped cover these issues – which are still quite prevalent – in an interesting manner, leaving a deep imprint on each delegate.



Object Theatre

After a quick warm up to introduce themselves, the delegates were split into groups. They had to enact an object.



The objects were quite bizarre: a moustache, a peacock, a sofa & sushi. With some assistance & great teamwork, each group was successful in enacting the object assigned.



Finally, each delegate had to use a bottle as a different object altogether. This urged them to think creatively & have fun.



Dance

The actions we perform on a daily basis require movement of some sort. Therefore, each one of us is a dancer. Whether we are good at it or not is irrelevant. With this newfound confidence, the delegates learned the duties of a farmer through dancing. They were able to let loose and have a marvelous time!



“Dancing is not an art form, it is almost a necessity.”

Story telling & paper recycling

The delegates participated in a very lively story telling session. As the story unraveled, they learnt that larger companies often have ulterior motives. The story revealed how farmers are manipulated into buying expensive seeds with the promise of fast growing crops. This in fact, proves counter-productive and disrupts the harmony of a balanced ecosystem.

After this eye opening session, the delegates learnt how to make paper in an eco-friendly method. Jute, cotton cloth and waste paper is made into pulp with a beater and then continuously rolled into a roller until it has achieved a certain thickness. To end with, the delegates made paper bags and containers to keep as souvenirs.



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Annadana

"Let's re-seed India" is the mission statement of 'Annadana', a group of farmers promoting the usage of unadulterated, fresh, and organic produce through sustainable techniques. Their brief but effective presentation made the delegates conscious about their dietary choices and educated them regarding the diversity present in the natural world. The students marveled at the simplicity and innovative nature of the farm operations, after witnessing the production of compost using the humble ingredients of cow dung, cow urine, curd, and ghee. The usage of natural herbs to create cost effective pesticides garnered a lot of praise too. The delegates had a wonderful opportunity to experience farming first hand. They felt more attuned to nature after the experience and vouched to give gardening a chance in the near future.



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A student's perspective

"The Round Square Conference was phenomenal. My favourite part of the conference was my visit to Visthar. Dolls for a purpose movement intrigued me the most. I've been left in a state of euphoria. I would like to thank BIS for an amazing experience."

- Niharika Singhvi – Rajamata Krishna Kumari Girl's Public School

A teacher's testimonial

"Our students made a lot of friends here already and so have I. The sessions at both Visthar and Annadana were very educative and illuminating. After the fun, dance and entertainment last evening, the students were reluctant to leave the BIS campus, but had to be assembled together into the buses due to the early start next morning. In my Science class I will be using what I learnt today at Annadana, an interesting idea to use cardboard egg trays to plant seeds in and use these in the ground as well."

- Ruchi Dave - Sanskaar Valley

Barazza

The Round Square delegates were split into 6 Barazza groups: Pelican, Flamingo, Blue jay, Magpie, Raven and Mockingbird. During these sessions, delegates discovered the truly detrimental conditions our environment is facing. Together, they brainstormed solutions to help fix this issue through creative means such as dance, drama, songs and debates. Finally, two students from each Barazza group sat together along with the Barazza moderators and came up with the conference statement.

Conference statement: *"We believe in taking initiative and risks to combat global issues that affect our environment - such as the misuse of resources - in order to preserve our planet for future generations."*



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Cultural evening

Picking up the tempo the Cultural Evening performances incorporated the conference's theme: ENVIRONMENT. Schools went all out to entertain the audience with a mix of Bollywood & Western music. The British School even composed their own song!

The entertainment was followed by dinner with the Head Of School and the teacher delegates.



BIS would like to thank all visiting schools for their participation.

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