

The TEACHER.in

A Not-for-Profit initiative by Greycaps



Engaging Minds with Multiple Intelligences

Arti Chopra

Principal, Amity International
School, Sector 46, Gurgaon

Multiple Intelligences for Inclusive Classrooms

Sharmila Chatterjee

Principal, Billabong High
International School, Noida



Editorial Team

Rashmi Marian Furtado
Varsha Prasad
Jheelam Dutta

Design & Layout

Debanjana Saha
Nilufer Nisha

Support

Team Greycaps

Follow us on



GREYCAPS

CONTACT US

Ph: 080 - 41202438/42168124
vibha@greycaps.com
www.greycaps.com

Published by Greycaps India Pvt. Ltd.

All rights are reserved by Greycaps India Pvt. Ltd. No part of this publication may be produced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without prior permission.

Disclaimer: Content in the magazine is the point of view of the authors. The magazine takes no responsibility or ownership towards the correctness of the data or views presented. Photographs courtesy - respective authors

04

Is Education Industry in a Turmoil?

G. Balasubramanian

Cover Story

07



Skill-Based Learning The Need of the Hour

Soma Singh

18

Education News

28

We Recommend App and Book

Engaging Minds with Multiple Intelligences

Arti Chopra

10

Cover Story



Multiple Intelligences for Inclusive Classrooms

Sharmila Chatterjee

21

Knowing the Road Ahead

Dr. Anitha Ramachander

24

Are You Staying Away from BLUE LIGHT?

Dr. Vivek Baliga



You can scan the code by using any free-to-download QR reader available on the App Store, Play Store and Windows Store. Wifi/Mobile data will be required.



Providing the much needed human touch

RASHMI MARIAN FURTADO

Senior Editor, TheTeacher.in

Most of us never imagined that we would see times like these! Complete lockdown, difficulty in getting groceries, paying bills, health issues, trapped indoors...of the many situations us adults have had to handle, we may have, through no fault of our own, not realised the mental state and growth of our children.

A teacher who now handles online classes, spoke to me recently. She told me that one of her brightest students has gone into depression and another mischievous student who never paid attention in class, is now in the top 5. A pattern she had never seen before and she has been teaching for close to 20 years now. Another case was that of two kids who were not allowed to go out of their flat, for their safety. For the first week it was fun as they kept watching all their favourite shows on the television. As the weeks went by, these kids who used to be active, have now become very quiet, they don't involve themselves in any activities. Now, even if their parents push them to go out and play, the kids don't want to step out of their home.

Yes, the current situation has taught us huge lessons. Many of us have done things that we always wanted to do but "never found the time", our favourite excuse! Many of us realised what truly matters. Many of us are doing our best to sail through this difficult time. What about our children? Are we so preoccupied that we aren't able to comprehend what's currently going on in a child's mind?

Social skills, motor skills, interpersonal skills, etc., all develop as children grow. For these to develop a growing child must play and

spend time with other children of similar ages. These skills are also part of Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory, something all of us are familiar with and, at times, try basing our teaching methodologies on.

While we educators try all the possible ways to make sure children have a holistic education, there is something that is even more important than these methods, **'THE HUMAN TOUCH'**. The teacher who had the topper in her class slipping into depression, did nothing more than this. She spoke to the parents and then spoke to the child. She is not trained in child psychology, but a few friendly chats did the trick. The child bounced back. It wasn't easy for the teacher, she had to make time and put in that extra effort to make sure she could have multiple conversations with him. Today, she is glad that she put in the extra time and effort. In her words, "All the time and effort is worth it, when you know a child is getting back to her/his original self and doing well."

While speaking with children is one of the best methods, there are other methods that may help. First would be to have one day a week which is allocated only to clarify doubts. All the children who may otherwise not clarify their doubts in a class, may prefer having a one-on-one with their teacher to clarify doubts. Second would be to have small individual projects or tasks to be given to these children. Especially on topics and

While taking nothing away from parents, we teachers have gift and ability to catch things that may get past a parental eye.

”

fields they are good at. This can be done with the entire class. It is important to give topics or tasks that the child is good at or is comfortable with. It may not be possible with all the chapters of a subject. But do explore where it is possible. Thirdly, adding a fun element to the class which will help these children to open up and mingle, will help. Lastly, as teachers please have an eye out for children, who may have developed a change in their behaviour. This could sometimes be very subtle, sometimes obvious. Whatever be the case it's important to notice these signs and alert the parents and maybe your coordinator, with




suggestions on how the situation can be improved. While taking nothing away from parents, we teachers have gift and ability to catch things that may get past a parental eye.

I have one more suggestion for human touch. Schools that are having online classes sometimes tend to ask the children to mute their audio and switch off video. While one understands the audio mute requirement, please ask them to keep their videos on. Children like seeing people. They like to see you and they want you to see them. They want to see their classmates. That is what takes them back to their classrooms. So, teachers don't take their classrooms away.

Let's make some time for our children. Let's give them the attention they require. Let's keep in mind that after all they are children. Yes, they are superheroes to go through such tough times! But let's not forget they are our innocent superheroes and often they require our help, assistance, nudge and support to be the superheroes they are capable of being! In Nelson Mandela's words, "Children are our greatest treasure. They are our future!"

Yours Positively!



 @RashmiGreycaps
 @RashmiGreycaps
 Rashmi Furtado

Rashmi Furtado

rashmi@greycaps.com

**Children are our
greatest treasure.
They are our
future!**

”

A natural writer, teacher and a passionate content creator, Rashmi has authored the Cu and Rio series and created the Keystones program on Values Education from Greycaps. She is one of the founders of TheTeacher.in. She is a sought after speaker at educational conferences, facilitator programs and for motivational talks to students at schools across India. She holds a Master's Degree from the prestigious NIT Suratkal where she also taught before joining Greycaps. Rashmi is also a popular quiz host for schools, colleges and large corporate audiences. She has co-hosted the Tata Crucible quiz, Canara Bank National School Quiz and Travel Quest by Thomas Cook.

Is Education Industry in a Turmoil?

G. BALASUBRAMANIAN

G. Balasubramanian is a doyen of school education in India. He has held several positions of leadership at CBSE, including Director Academics. He was the brain behind the introduction of several innovations at CBSE, which included frontline curriculum, communicative approach to language teaching, Information Technology, alternatives to homework, etc. He is also an author, poet and a sought-after speaker at educational conferences world over. This article has been taken from G. Balasubramanian's official website balaspeaks.in



“The winds are strong and turbulent; no one can say whether it would turn out to be a tornado” – this would possibly be the best way to describe the status of education industry both globally and locally.



Picture credits - captionsgram.com

When an investor who put his head and heart into developing a well-articulated support system for schools for the last few years called up to say “Hey! I am shutting down the engine. The going is tough; there is no money, all roads appear to

be blocked. There is a sense of fear among the schools on any investment and don't want to look forward”, I could feel the heat, the pain and the challenge of the future. And the list of people seeing their

end of the business is increasing. Several companies have not been able to meet even the target of their business they had last year and the one before, leave alone a marginal increase in their business profile. The situation, though not alarming, calls for caution and understanding.

1. Policy changes in educational administration

There is a visible course correction in the policy pathways of educational governance. Whether such corrections are futuristic or not, is indeed a matter of debate. Alongside the corrections, there appears to be a clear control on the freedom of operation and freedom of execution through articulated methods of inspection, vigilance and demonstration of authority. The instructional modalities appear to make the edu-leaders take a backfoot in their strategic thinking. While the intentions of the powers that be, maybe puritan and to ensure the elimination of excessive commercialisation of the process of education, one could sense the unwillingness of even 'independent minds' to move beyond the well-defined circle of safety, so as to avoid and disengage themselves from any futuristic administrative challenges. This has impacted both the growth and experimentation in creative educational interventions and market dynamics.

“The role of private managements in school education has also been quite significant”.

2. Deviant role plays of organisations in education

A number of organisation engaged in defining, mentoring and refining educational architecture have shifted their role plays. Far from being the leaders in educational innovation, creativity and mentoring, the business of education has helped them to strengthen their balance sheets to project as better performing organisations, compared to what they were earlier. Though such changes do help in neutralising losses or expenditure from other functional domains, it does show a deviation from the core purpose of their functionality. With authority in hands, their ability to influence and reach markets for their products has indeed led to monopolies and hence there is a huge encroachment on the public participation in the business of education both at the corporate as well as small time entrepreneurs' levels.

3. Role of Private Sector in Education

The Private sector has played a significant role in improving the quality of education both at the school and higher education level.

Investments in infrastructure, appliances, delivery systems, research supports and in ushering change has been meaningful and



Picture credits - unplash

has facilitated to compete with some global trends. Hence, one cannot outright deny the role of private sector in education both within the infrastructure and outside it, in creating a conducive environment for quality. While profit booking by these institutions has always been a matter of suspicion and has been subject to scrutiny, with the regulators coming with more regulations (roadblocks) from time to time, the society has increasingly supported the role of private sector and has encouraged their motives at least at higher education level. It will be difficult even to the regulators to underplay the role of private sector in educational initiatives and its deliverance of quality. The role of private managements in school education has also been quite significant.

4. The thirst for profit booking by investors

The last decade has witnessed huge market challenges, thanks to an excessive thirst for profit booking by the players in the field. A number of products, of branded companies, have been increasing in cost, though partially justifiable, raising the eyebrows of both the consumers and the controllers. While several reasons could be attributed to this—like the middle men dynamics, very high discount demands often crossing even half-the cost of the labelled prices, auxiliary and subsidiary demands by the institutions to engage the suppliers to meet their social and professional obligations – all such things have contributed both to the cost and to the competition. While regulatory mechanisms, have certainly a role to play to put things in order, that should also not happen by demolishing the foundations of such industries and trades, where a few million are engaged in work for survival. When companies face existential problems, it signals disruption.

To continue reading, log on to [TheTeacher.in](https://www.theteacher.in) website. ■

Engaging Minds with Multiple Intelligences

- Steering Towards a successful future



ARTI CHOPRA | Principal, Amity International School, Sector 46, Gurgaon.

Arti Chopra is a dedicated educationist with over 28 years of experience in the field of education as a teacher, mentor, trainer, planner and skill developer. She is an alumnus of Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University and has had been associated with leading institutions like Bal Bharti Public School, Delhi; Sawai Man Singh Vidyalyaya, Jaipur and Lawrence School, Ooty in her career.

Besides her teaching experience Arti has administrative experience of 15 years as Principal in promising schools like Sunbeam School, Varanasi, Indraprastha International School, New Delhi and presently at Amity International School, Sector 46, Gurgaon.

Arti has received multiple awards for her contribution to the field of education. Excellence Award by SGT University, Inspiring Educator Award by Outdoor Education Research Team of Great Rockspport Pvt. Ltd. etc. are some of them.

“Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in.”

-Isaac Asimov

Do you as a parent wish your child to be intelligent and crack the problems with ease? Does it bother you when you see the falling grades in the child's reports? But have you realised that the reports shown were reflections of only a limited aspect of a child's personality and the belief that single tests may measure Intelligence Quotient is only a thing of the past? Yes, we do need to look at intelligence with a new perspective, keeping creative problem solving in mind. The world through research has

recognised and made attempts to understand the complexities of the human brain, and the notion of IQ, what it really means, and how it is most accurately captured. If we could understand the kinds of mind the children possess and provide a guided trajectory of multiple ways of engagement, their assessments would entail far better results, in terms of cognitive, social, psycho-motor & physical ability.

Human species, the most astonishing creation of this universe, is known to have lived from its instincts. A novel way to engage minds that recognises a child's own interests is the unique concept given by Prof. Howard Gardner that has reached out to the world through his book named *Frames of Mind* (1993). The theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) is based on the premise that we no longer should evaluate a child just based on his numeric/ language ability. Rather, there are eight skill avenues if worked upon, that could lead to child's development, as the theory allows a child to exercise his/her fullest potential. In his 1993 publication, *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*, Gardner defines intelligences as "the ability to find and solve problems, or to fashion products, that are valued in one or more cultural or community settings." Originally Howard Gardner of Harvard University, identified seven distinct intelligences. According to Gardner, this theory, which emerged from cognitive research, "documents the extent to which students possess different kinds of minds and therefore learn, remember, perform, and understand in different ways."



Everybody is a Genius. But If You Judge a Fish by Its Ability to Climb a Tree, It Will Live Its Whole Life Believing that It is Stupid.

Every individual is born with a variety of talents and unlimited capacities. According to Gardener, the way one shoe cannot fit all, similarly, every child cannot be assessed on the same parameters. His theory validates educators' everyday experience: students think and learn in many different ways. It also provides educators with a conceptual framework for organising and reflecting on curriculum assessment and pedagogical practices. In turn, this reflection has led many educators to develop new approaches that might better meet the needs of the range of learners in their classrooms.

In greater detail, the theory proposes that "we are all able to know the world through language, logical- mathematical analysis, spatial representation, musical thinking, the use of the body to solve problems or to make things, an understanding of other individuals and an understanding of ourselves. Where individuals differ is in the strength of these intelligences and the



ways in which such intelligences are invoked and combined to carry out different tasks, solve diverse problems and progress in various domains." Hani Morgan (2014) supports Gardner's theory. Morgan's research indicated that differentiated instruction benefits all students, but must be presented by well-prepared, experience and knowledgeable teachers. Keeping all these workable strategies in mind, teachers across the world have accepted this theory and have embraced it.

RATIONALE OF THE PROCESS/STUDY

The real working of this strategy is quite simple. It only entails identifying the Multiple Intelligences an individual is naturally endowed with, by taking a test and analysing the results. Once the results are plotted, it becomes easy to decipher the Dominant (the highest/most blessed), and Dormant (lowest/least blessed) out of the eight intelligences. In a classroom with an average number of students varying between 20-32, it becomes easier for a teacher to provide personalised learning experience to the students, with the prior knowledge about the student's strengths and weaknesses.

The classroom teaching learning pedagogy must have a variety of teaching alternatives so as to make learner comfortable with the lesson taught. For example, a child who is predominantly kinesthetically inclined, may not find a class of algebraic formulas interesting unless there is a hands-on experience. Similarly, a teacher's efforts to give a graphical projection of linear equation to reach out to a child inclined towards visual spatial intelligence, or to organise a nature walk to study parts of a flower to make it interesting for a child predominantly a nature lover, are simply to recognise the aim of education...

To continue reading, log on to TheTeacher.in website. ■



SHARMILA CHATTERJEE
Principal, Billabong High
International School, Noida

Multiple Intelligences for Inclusive Classrooms

Sharmila Chatterjee, during her career of more than three decades, has been the Principal of Delhi Public School Ghaziabad Vasundhara, and the Principal of Blue Bells Model School, Gurgaon.

Sharmila graduated from Delhi University and is an alumna of IIM Ahmedabad. She has also been a part of Australia-India Teacher exchange programme, to identify opportunities for establishing professional relationships between Indian & Australian educators/institutions/communities. A master trainer in life skills, Sharmila spearheaded integration of life skills in curriculum. She is a practitioner of Multiple Intelligence approach to learning & Total Quality Management in education.

She holds double masters in History & Human Rights and carries expertise in the fields of Academic Leadership, Instructional Leadership, Human Resource Management, Co - Scholastic Activities, Curricular Reform, Classroom Management & Transaction, Inclusive Education, In - Service Training.

● What or who inspired you to get into teaching?

There are a few people who have been my inspiration. My mother is & will always remain my biggest inspiration. It was her dedication and sincerity to her work as a teacher that always intrigued me. I was also deeply motivated by some of my teachers who were like role models, as they left an everlasting impression on me.

● What according to you would be an ideal curriculum in schools? Kindly elaborate.

Being in the field of education for the last 3 decades, I have come to realise that there is no ideal curriculum for schools. We are a diverse country

with a rich and vibrant culture, history, art, languages and geography. All these factors play an integral role in the shaping of a child to an adult and a citizen. I believe that our curriculum should be reflective of our country's rich culture, heritage and geographical factors.

● **How are schools, teachers and the education system as a whole, going to be impacted due to COVID-19? Kindly elaborate.**

The entire world is going through an extraordinary and unprecedented challenge. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has presented every stakeholder in the education sector with unprecedented challenges. The impact of the pandemic will be felt in all the domains of learning. The teachers are ensuring that the learning goes on by conducting online classes effectively. However it is challenge to maintain the attention of the pre-primary and primary learners.

“Faculty development programs should be an integral part of all schools policy and planning.”

We need to deliberate on several other significant issue like sports, outdoor educational trips & visits, group team activities, hygiene and food, etc.

Hosting and conducting team games will be a challenge and worrying factor. The emotional and psychological factors also need to be addressed, it is a time when we need to be extremely compassionate and empathetic towards all age groups of learners. School provides a platform for not just academics, but also to build and hone socio-emotional bonds with their peers.

The faculty and the staff will have to be trained for dealing with the situations post the pandemic. We also have to work towards making some infrastructural changes in the schools. Overall, it is going to be an extremely profound task to deal with the impact of the pandemic which will have to be a combined effort of all the stake holders along with the local/district administration.

● **What are the steps a school or a teacher can take to keep the students engaged in a classroom?**

‘Don't limit a child to your learning, for he was born in another time’ – Rabindranath Tagore. We have seen in the recent times that there is a

transformation in the pedagogy and practices of teaching-learning in schools. The teacher-facilitator is not limited to the chalk-board method to teach, technology has made significant impact in the educational systems. All boards across the country have adopted ICT to make learning engaging and productive. However, the role of the teacher is very important as the key moderator/mentor and guide. The teacher paves the path of learning – but she/he must remember the fact that each learner is different with a unique learning style. Teachers have to appreciate and implement the concepts of Multiple Intelligences and also adapt to an inclusive classroom. How a teacher prepares for a class is the key. Children should not be bound by the syllabus, they should be given the liberty to explore, experiment and deliberate on given situations. The learners should be involved in all the processes of learning- only then the learning becomes concrete and the student becomes a lifelong learner.

● **Do you think online classes can replace the traditional way of teaching? Please elaborate.**

Online classes have come as a boon today in the times of the national crisis to reach out to the learners and continue the process of learning. However, we cannot consider this as the best option in the long run as there are few basic challenges that the learners and the teacher are facing. The pre-primary and the primary learners cannot be engaged effectively on an online session for a longer duration. Group learnings, field trips and conducting lab practical is also an important part of learning which is not possible with online classes. Also, assessments for young learners and school going children cannot always be based on MCQs and objective pattern. Online classes are best reinforcement techniques and can be an extension to classroom teaching.

● **In today's education scenario, how important is teacher trainings and workshops? Kindly elaborate.**

Faculty development programs should be an integral part of all schools policy and planning. The education system in India is rapidly transforming adopting the best practices from around the world. The teachers have to be constantly in a learning mode and have to be updated with latest techniques and methodologies of teaching-learning. The Central Board of Secondary Education has now initiated compulsory teacher training modules which is the best thing to happen to the education system.

● **What has so far been your most rewarding teaching experience?**

As a teacher I have always believed in being a facilitator and make students empowered to take the lesson forward. I also involve students to prepare questions based on blooms taxonomy. The students are the best teachers and they learn best when they become the core of learning process. Our teaching-learning becomes effective only when it is learner-centric.

● **What according to you the greatest misconception about teachers/principals?**

The greatest misconception about teacher & principals, I feel, is that they know it all and that they can never go wrong. I feel this is not true. Teacher are also human and it is any human mind to know everything. And yes they may also make mistakes.

● **If given a chance to change one thing about the education system today, what would it be and why?**

I believe that education should manifest in freedom – freedom to think without prejudice, freedom to express, freedom to experience the unknown and explore one's inner potential. In a conventional meaning education is meant to provide us knowledge and information about theories and discoveries which is already established and accepted. It provides little opportunities to the learners to question the established and encourage to explore possibilities – to experiment and investigate with everything. Young minds are fearless, we need to tap this energy and provide the young learners the platform to identify their self-worth and potential. That is true education, I feel.

● **A few words for teachers...**

Teachers are second parent/mentor/friend & guide to a learner. They make a child understand her/his true worth and potential, instil in them wisdom and all the life skills - creative and critical thinking skills, decision making skills and above all, self-awareness. A person, however successful or wealthy he becomes, always remembers his teachers in times of reflection. I believe that teachers have the strong ability to not only mentor young minds but also engage and influence the society at large. A teacher/mentor's words of encouragement for their learners manifests in positive energy and brilliance among them. A teacher never ceases to be teacher in her lifetime. I would like to quote Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam here - "Teachers have a great mission to ignite the minds of the young". ■

Skill-Based Learning

The Need of the Hour



SOMA SINGH | Academic Head, Sunbeam School Annapurna | Varanasi

Soma Singh is an efficient and an organised administrator with over 16 years of experience. Soma Singh is a Postgraduate in Science and a Postgraduate Diploma in Environmental Science. She also has a certificate in Nursery Teachers Training.

Soma Singh has a great understanding of child psychology and pedagogy, which she uses to narrate stories and compose jingles for children as a mode of teaching them values. She got appreciation and award many times for her contributions in teaching-learning process. Varanasi School Association Award 2012: For Excellence in Teaching, Award of Great Teacher from Whom We have Learned Discipline 2011, Award of Great Teacher Who Has Taught to Share School's Mission and Educational Goal, etc. are some of them.

In the constantly changing environment, ever growing technology and data driven world, skill-based, teaching-learning is the most important component of any curriculum. Skill-based education is the building block or framework that allows children to apply the knowledge they acquire in the real-world problems and situations, helping them to develop good habits for long term stability, wellness and success.

The main objective of skill-based learning is to build self-confidence, encourage critical thinking, foster independence, how to socialise, make new friends and how to take actions in situations where parents or teachers may not be around to help or intervene. In simple words, we can say it develops **problem solving skill**



which children should have from a very young age and need throughout their lives.

Schools play a vital role in developing these skills amongst children. Keeping in mind that every child is unique and will learn at his/her own pace, it is important to acknowledge every child's accomplishment and strengths, and provide support and encouragement for building these skills.

Junior school teachers play the most important role in building skills in children, leading to a strong foundation for their future. The most important skills the students need for their future are -

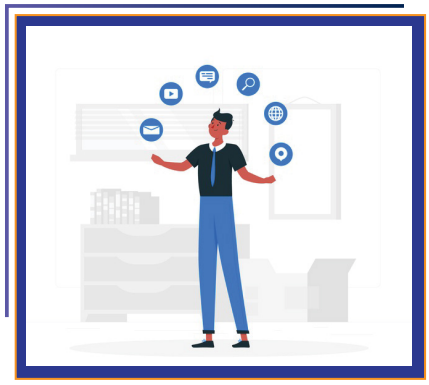
- Critical thinking and problems solving
- Collaboration across networks and leading by influence
- Agility and adaptability
- Initiative and entrepreneurialism
- Effective oral and written communication
- Accessing and analysing information
- Curiosity and imagination

When it comes to fostering these skills, skill-based learning is an extremely effective approach.

We need to weave topics into language, maths, environmental science, music, art and physical education. For example, students doing artwork might be asked to incorporate maths through the use of certain shapes and patterns. They can also learn maths through stories and songs.

This type of integrated approach strengthens students' learning and achievements in all areas by building multiple skills.

To develop these skills in the students, we need to focus on skill building in all the subjects. The curriculum of English should be



designed taking in consideration the development of four vital skills of language – **listening, speaking, reading and writing**. A variety of activities should be incorporated in the curriculum to assist the same. These activities should be learner focussed and most importantly, fun, which goes a long way in building the pillars of the language development through the different skills.

a) Listening and Speaking Skills – It is the most primitive skill to develop the process of communication. Good listening skills in turn helps in better speaking skills. For the development of this skill, we should focus on poetry recitation, storytelling, assembly presentation, group discussion and role plays.

b) Reading Skill – Reading should be a regular feature in all the subjects with emphasis on correct pronunciation, voice modulation and, stress and pause. Students should be motivated to visit the library regularly and read and comprehend from an early age.

c) Writing Skill – The students should be guided and motivated to align their thoughts and express them with ease and confidence. It develops the skills like comprehending, recalling, locating, extending and making connections. This skill can be practiced and enhanced by doing creating writing, paragraph writing, picture composition, framing sentences with new words, etc.

d) Mathematical and Logical Skill – Maths curriculum should give strong emphasis on developing mathematical, logical and problem-solving skills, understanding basic operations, estimation and mental arithmetic. It should be completely based on practical approach where a child has to understand, analyse and apply. A strong emphasis on reasoning and problem solving should be given. Other skills like visual and spatial skill, measurement and estimation, critical thinking and investigative skills should also be taken care of.



Apart from these skills, the most valued skill is **life skill**. It equips people with the social and interpersonal skills that enable them to cope with the demands of everyday life. The major purpose of including life skill in the curriculum is to help the students lead the right way of life. It also promotes human values, appreciating and understanding the need of positive attitudes. It gives strength to fight against personal insecurities and fears.

Now-a-days, the simple skills such as **sewing, ironing, laundry, cooking and balancing a check book** are often overlooked. In the past, these skills were often taught at home. But with the changing lifestyles and family dynamics, nobody is taking care of these skills. These skills should be taught at home and school as they are very important for living a comfortable life.

Parents also play a vital role in building skills among the children by assigning simple household tasks, giving them chance to take decisions and solve their problems, sharing, caring of pets and simple budgeting exercises.

Skill based education is not a choice but a need in country like India where the demand for skilled professional is still very high and the desire to get skilled is low. We all need to understand that we should prepare our students not for colleges but for basics of life. ■

EDUCATION NEWS

CBSE's Expression Series: 'Thinking Innovatively In Unprecedented Times Like COVID-19'

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has come up with 'Expression Series' to think innovatively to surpass the COVID-19 challenge. It announced the first Expression Series for the session 2020-21 with the topic 'Thinking Innovatively In Unprecedented Times Like COVID-19'.

The details of Series as follows:

Class Category with Medium	Topics
Primary (Class 3 to 5) Paragraph (150 words)/Painting	For me, Lockdown means.... or The best thing I learned during lockdown!
Middle (Class 6 to 8) [Essay (400words)/Painting/ Poem]	The hardest challenge brought out the best in me. or I did not miss the school in the last two months because...
Secondary (Class 9 to 10) [Essay (700words)/Painting/ Poem]	The last two months have made me a changed human being. or I turned the challenge into an opportunity when....
Senior Secondary (Class 11 to 12) [Essay(1000words)/Painting/ Poem]	Unprecedented times require unprecedented measures. or Innovative Solutions for Making Education accessible for all.

CBSE has directed the schools to conduct the Expression Series on the topics from 15 June to 15 July, 2020, via email or any digital platform. The entries that include essay/paragraph/poem, can be submitted in any of the 22 scheduled languages. The schools can send the shortlisted entries from 16 to 21 July, 2020 using an android phone through CBSE Expression Series App available at Google Playstore.

CBSE has also mentioned the following points:

- a. Each participant will get an online certificate of participation at his/her registered e-mail ID after the successful submission of entry.
- b. 10 best entries of each category will be selected at the regional level by all CBSE regions for onward submission to CBSE Academic Unit, New Delhi.
- c. From the entries received from all CBSE regions, 3 best entries of each category will be selected and uploaded on the CBSE website.

DIKSHA: Online Training For Teachers

Due to the unpredicted and unfortunate outbreak of COVID-19, the academic field has been impacted in many ways. However, it has given a room for focusing on the technology to ensure the continuity of education for both students and teachers. For pursuing the same, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has launched its 'online training course' on 'DIKSHA'. It is a digital platform for 'capacity building' of its teachers on the basis of the CBSE training manual and NCERT's NISHTHA curriculum.



DIKSHA provides two courses 'Pedagogy of Environmental Studies' and 'Health and Well-being in Schools'. The Board is not only providing the training but also e-certificates for the educators who are successfully completing the training.

The teachers would be able to access the same by following the below procedure:

Step 1 a. Download the DIKSHA app from Google Play Store or this link provided by CBSE

Step 1 b. Scan the QR code from the official link

Step 2. Log in with the help of these links from the browser:

a. Pedagogy of Environmental Studies: <https://bit.ly/cbse-pedevs-course>

b. Health and Well Being in Schools: <https://bit.ly/cbse-hnw-course>

New guidelines for online classes by the Karnataka government

A new set of guidelines have been initiated by the Karnataka Government, Union Human Resources Development Ministry, regarding online education for students.

The guidelines are to be followed by:

- Those following SSLC syllabus
- CBSE
- ICSE

Following is the new schedule for the students:



Pre-primary	30 mins a week
Classes 1-5	30-45 mins in 2 sessions on alternate days
Classes 6-8	30-45 mins in 2 sessions a day for 5 days a week
Classes 9-10	30-45 mins in 4 sessions for 5 days a week

Meanwhile, the decision to reopen schools in Karnataka will be taken after the first week of July. The Union Government has also stated in the recent guidelines that schools, colleges or coaching institutions should hold consultation with the parents and stakeholders.

Based on the result of the consultation, the decision on reopening the schools will be taken. ■

KNOWING THE ROAD AHEAD



DR. ANITHA RAMACHANDER

Director & Principal, Adarsh Institute of Management and Information Technology

Dr. Anitha Ramachander is the Director and Principal of Adarsh Institute of Management and Information Technology, Bengaluru. She is a dedicated and committed professor, teaching courses in management for over two decades in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

Dr. Anitha has 25 years' experience in the conceptualization, development and deployment of solutions. She has been recognized with multiple awards of which International Achievers' Award 2010-2011 for Education Excellence, Outstanding Women Achievers' Award 2013 and Outstanding Educator at South India Women Achievers Award (SIWAA) 2019 are some of them.

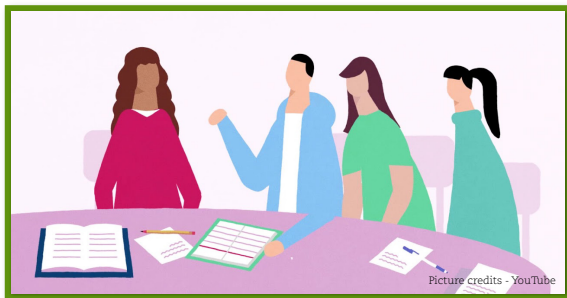
Dr. Anitha writes regularly for Deccan Herald.

'Teachers have three lovers: love of learning, love of learners and the love of bringing the first two loves together'. Scott Hayden.

In recent times, due to the pandemic, the teaching fraternity has been under immense pressure to engage students in academic activities. Teachers would have never imagined that someday they would be required to reach out to their students online, that too under the scrutiny of their overzealous parents.

It is indeed regrettable to see teachers being criticized and derided often. What people fail to realise is that we teachers take up the profession purely out of a passion to impart knowledge and in the process, dedicate ourselves to the noble cause of education. Teachers take immense pride in

shaping young minds and it is common knowledge that some of the most successful people in the world have had their teachers for role models. It is imperative that during these challenging times, teachers stay calm and focused on creating a conducive environment to nurture and mentor students.



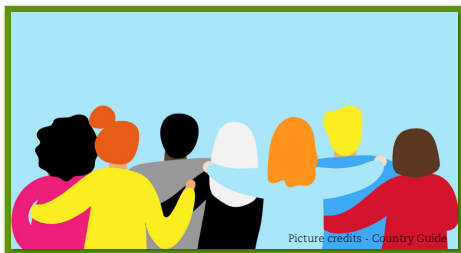
It cannot be denied that we teachers are lifelong learners and that we encourage the same trait in others. We play a pivotal role in igniting young minds, instilling moral values and social etiquettes besides adopting creative teaching to keep young minds engaged and interested. Schools are slated to reopen during August 2020 due to COVID 19 crisis. During the intermittent period it is essential to upskill to stay relevant.

Our philosophy of teaching are our beliefs and views about what is important in teaching and learning. It surpasses every decision and directs the course of learning in the classroom. When challenged with a crisis, it is possible to recall every aspect of one's teaching philosophy in a way that's valuable.

COVID-19 has had several negative ramifications like pay cuts, retrenchment and delayed salaries. These have demoralized us teachers and has increased the financial burden on our already fragile purse strings. However, despite such challenges, we need to stay positive, focused and motivated. The following remedial steps will ensure that we retain our passion and philosophies.

- We need to update the curriculum and make room for digital learning. In the foreseeable future, it is possible that schools will require online learning alternatives. Hence, we should be prepared to impart knowledge in an unconventional manner. Some creative ideas like creating a Facebook page where we upload lessons, host live classes through various modes and communicate with students and their parents through video calls could be adopted at this time. In a world where MOOCs and interactive learning apps are becoming popular, COVID-19 was nothing but a push towards an undeniable change in the education field.

- We need to shift the focus to physical and mental health. Coronavirus is on everyone's minds. Use this pandemic to reiterate focus on personal health and hygiene and inculcate clean and healthy habits by talking about the importance of keeping clean and staying safe. Physical and mental wellness is as important as good hygiene. Encourage students to talk to their parents and share their anxieties with them. Teachers can interact with parents and students with supportive reminders and can offer some suggestions for activities to keep students relaxed and occupied when they are at home.
- Help students find online resources. Some students may need additional support or struggle to learn from home. Extend help to such students through one-on-one messaging, video lessons, a curated list of learning sites and online learning opportunities. Make yourself available through video chats or online communication to assist students prepare for tests. The current situation has presented new challenges everywhere including in education. Help students to be more adaptable and prepare them for bigger challenges in the future. Teachers are the mentors and facilitators. Stay supportive always and confident in the delivery of the curriculum, and understand that we are all in this together.
- Maintain team spirit. Collaborate and remain supportive to your colleagues. They need help too. This could be helping someone seeking advice. Helping others also helps you. Doing a good deed makes you feel better at the end of the day.
- Stay happy and healthy. We need to practice self-care and find ways to stay happy, healthy and relevant in our day-to-day lives. We need to find ways to continue to support one another while remaining optimistic. Let us cherish memories that are joyous and have gratitude for all that we have now. This time is not a blessing to all. Let the world heal. For now, it's time to replenish our spirits and know things will get better.



We must make the most of it. For those of us who have forgotten to appreciate all that we have, this time, the universe made it happen. Gratitude and hope are the lessons we need to know. This crisis has made us one. This too shall pass. ■



Are you staying away from **BLUE LIGHT?**

DR. VIVEK BALIGA | Cardiologist and Consultant Physician

Dr. Vivek Baliga B is a consultant physician and cardiologist, and director of Baliga Diagnostics in Bangalore. He is a keen advocate of patient education and loves to blog about all things health related. Learn more about him at <https://drvivekbaliga.com>.



In the last few months, the Coronavirus infection has led to schools closing, social distancing and education through online platforms. Screen time has increased for both children and teachers, and unbeknownst to many, it brings bad news.

Modern technology is great at connecting the world. The fact that education of children can be continued through online classes just speaks volumes on how come in making keep learning. platforms that entertaining and games and even pastime are robustly by and children.



Picture credits - Medium

far we have sure our kids Numerous offer free classes, educational just videos for being used teachers, parents

Of course, while the convenience is great, there is a small problem with too much screen time. Modern tech devices like mobile phones, TV screens and laptops, all emit rays that harm the eyes. The light that is emitted from your phone or your computer is called 'blue light' and it is harmful to the eyes, especially at night. Let us see why.

Your Normal Circadian Rhythm

For millions of years, the sun has been the primary source of light for all creatures on earth, including humans. It is rare for us to require any artificial sources of light during the day, unless we are in a closed space with no windows.

While daytime is great for light, the night is not. How many of you can recall a time when we did not have mobile phones, advanced electronic gadgets or energy efficient light bulbs (compact fluorescent lights, or CFL), and relied on good old tube lights or low voltage light bulbs to illuminate our houses?

Our body has an internal clock that keeps us active and sharp during the day and sleepy at night. This 'circadian rhythm' is responsible for keeping us alert and attentive and relies heavily on external light. The average length of one circadian rhythm is 24 and one quarter hours (24 hours and 15 minutes). This varies in people who stay up late in the night, or those who work night shifts. Our circadian rhythm depends on the release of melatonin, a hormone released in the brain that helps us sleep. In the daytime, the hormone levels are very low, while at night they are high and help you fall asleep. However, if you are exposed to light for long hours at night by staring at your phone or computer or even when sleeping with the light on, your melatonin levels will remain low. This could alter your circadian rhythm, confusing your brain and keeping you awake for longer.



Blame The Blue

There are various wavelengths of light emitted from electronic gadgets and energy saving light bulbs. However, blue light seems to be the most notorious one. Interestingly, CFLs contain about 25% of harmful blue light and LEDs contain about 35% of harmful blue light.

In one experiment that was conducted at Harvard University, it was found that exposure to blue light for 6.5 hours suppressed melatonin release for twice as long as the same duration for green light exposure. It also shifted the circadian rhythm by 3 hours.

In another experiment conducted in Toronto, people who were exposed to bright light but were wearing blue-blocking goggles had the same levels of melatonin compared to those who were in a dimly lit room.

Excessive exposure to blue light has now been linked to weight gain, heart disease, depression and even some forms of cancer.

Researchers studying teenagers using their mobile phones or gadgets in the night found that just one hour's exposure to blue light reduced melatonin levels by 23%. In two hours, it reduced further to 38%.

Similarly, red light seems to have almost no effect on the circadian rhythm as compared to blue light. Some people even advise using a dark red light as a bed light as it would not interrupt sleep patterns.

The Harmful Effects Of Blue Light

So, what effect does blue light really have on the body?

Sadly, it is not just about it affecting one's sleep. Excessive exposure to blue light has now been linked to weight gain, heart disease, depression and even some forms of cancer. Melatonin has anti-cancer properties, and low levels of it at night can increase the risk of cancer. In one study, women who worked night shifts had low melatonin levels and a 50 – 75% greater risk of developing breast cancer in their lifetime.

People who are exposed to blue light at night have a lower level of insulin production. This means that any snacks eaten when staying up late are not broken down into glucose and used by the body. Instead, they are converted to fat and increase body weight. Not just that, the low insulin levels mean that diabetes can be a complication of blue light exposure.

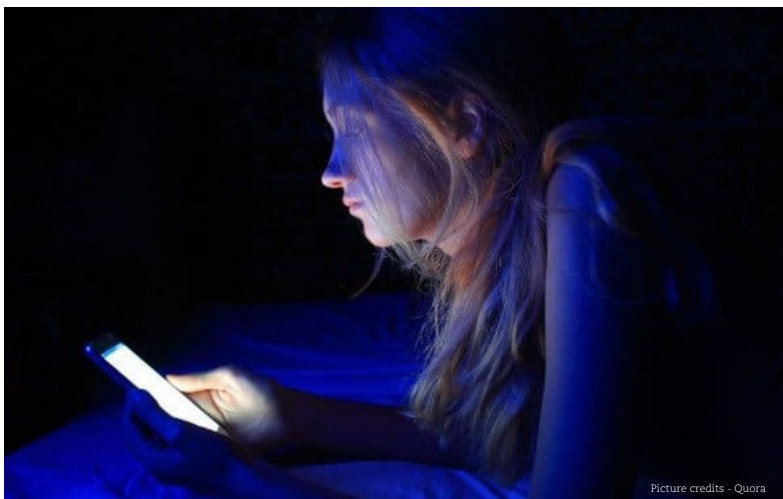
But it is not just adults who are affected. Children seem to be greatly impacted by blue light as well. Children and infants who stare at their favourite cartoon on your mobile phone are exposed to great amount of blue light. This can penetrate the eye, damaging the back of the eye i.e. retina. It leads to a condition called macular degeneration, which is a leading cause of blindness in adult life. It can also speed up the development of cataracts.

Preventing Damage

What can you do to prevent the ill effects of blue light on your health? Some simple steps are sufficient. Make sure you spend plenty of time out in normal daylight. You could shift your work desk near the window. Avoid using your phone or laptop for at least 3 hours before you head to bed. This will allow your brain to increase the levels of melatonin, and this will help you fall asleep sooner.

These days, apps are available for phones that filter out the blue light and only emit less harmful rays. 'Twilight' is a free app that is available on the android platform that effectively filters out blue light. With over 2 lakh 5-star reviews, it is one to download onto your phone. It would not just protect you; it will also protect your kid's vision.

Do your best to expose yourself to plenty of bright light during the day. Natural light is the best kind for you. If you must use a bed lamp, use a red



Picture credits - Quora

coloured one rather than a blue one. The red light has the least effect on melatonin and does not affect circadian rhythm. Avoid using LED lights too frequently.

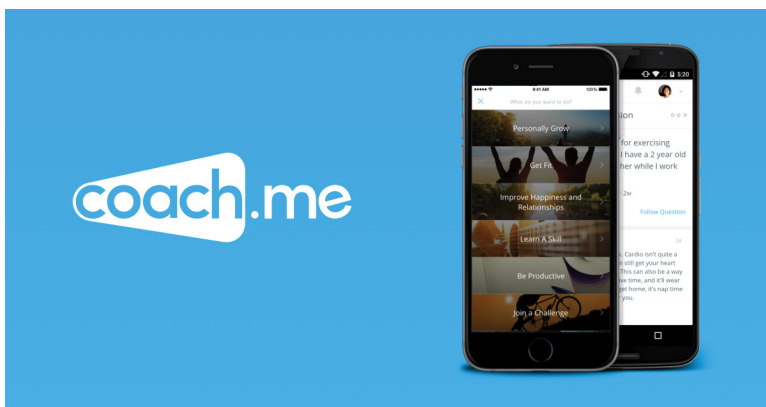
Too much of a good thing can be bad for you. While computers and other mobile gadgets have changed the face of education (and the way you teach), it brings a few problems. Staying safe and taking the right precautions is important. ■

we RECOMMEND

App

Coach.me

As humans, we are motivated to achieve the goals we aspire in our lives. The moment when we work towards our goal and achieve it, are moments of pure joy! However, there are times when we need guidance to achieve them and look for advice to do so.



'Coach.me' app helps us in achieving our goals. This online app methodically guides us so that we know what to do to achieve our dreams.

The App

Coach.me is a mobile-based application that is designed to provide its users with goal and habit tracking services. The app helps us stick to our goals and motivates us through an online community which in turn helps us to achieve our goals accordingly.



The app works on a step by step approach while providing guided advice on a daily manner. It, from the first day of usage, shows us the extent of our progress and celebrates our milestones or the goals which we achieve while answering our queries in a counselling manner.

This app also helps an individual to develop a growth mindset, discover the power of positive reinforcement and experience the motivational force of community-based motivation. The app harnesses individual efforts for improvement in an efficient way so that they would continue to practise the habit of achieving their dreams.

How does the app function?

The Coach.me app functions on two levels, wherein the first level enables the user to use 90% of its tools for free. This particular level is automated and generates advice through a coded programme, which replies to queries in a general manner. The second level is more of a personal level where the user can seek expert advice from counsellors without meeting them.

What does the app do?

The app provides a variety of options once we begin to use it. It enables its user to set targets and provides several reminders in a week, which enables the individual to be accountable to himself or herself. The app comes with the option of tracking a goal, which in turn enables the user to know about their progress.

Apart from that, the app provides step by step plans for further guidance on a variety of topics such as meditation to exercise, which motivates the user to work towards their goal. The Coach. me app also provides weekly and monthly trends of a particular habit that informs the person about similar habits that are followed by other people. The app also comes with an online support community that answers to queries and doubts expertly.

Coach.me is a very user-friendly app that is available on GooglePlay App Store and Apple store and is free for download. However, some features of the tool are paid versions. ■



we RECOMMEND

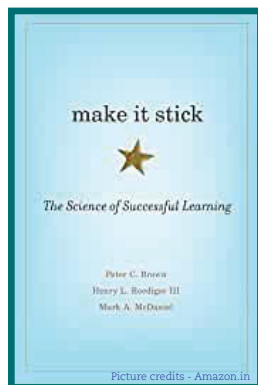
Book

Make It Stick

The Science of Successful Learning

Make It Stick is a book by Peter Brown, Henry Roediger and Mark McDaniel, on strategies, tools and stories for teachers, learners and trainers for effective learning. The book offers the following five concrete techniques to honing our memory:

- **Retrieving** - practice retrieving new (and old) learning (self-quizzing).
- **Spacing** - space out retrieval practice, leave time to forget in between practice sessions.
- **Generation** - attempt to answer a question or solve a problem before looking at the answer (experiential learning).
- **Reflection** - a combination of retrieval practice and elaboration that adds layers to learning new material. Ask ourselves questions.
- **Calibration** - to avoid various cognitive illusions, use an objective instrument to adjust your sense of what you know and don't know.



Many common study habits and practice routines unfortunately are the opposite of productive. Mugging up, repetition, rereading and underlining of new information false sense of mastery, but whatever learned fades away quickly. More durable learning can be done through self-testing, introducing certain difficulties in practice. Make It Stick is a book that will appeal to most groups of teachers and students and will definitely take up the attention of those who are looking to make a life-long commitment to keep on learning and improve their way of learning as well. This book is a must-read for teachers and students alike. ■

Online classes

Boon or Bane?



VARSHA PRASAD
Editor, TheTeacher.in

Today, with the corona cases increasing by the day, schools have gone the 'online way' to continue with classes. These online classes are being held on an everyday basis with two to three classes per day. But, are these classes helpful and effective?

There are both pros and cons to online classes. While most of the schools and children in the metropolitan cities are using online classes to their advantage, the others are still catching up.


But even in the tier 1 and tier 2 cities, are online classes effective?

Recently, my house help came home after a long time, accompanied by her son, looking sad and confused. Her son could not attend online classes conducted by his school, as her family did not own a smart phone and, laptops and computers were out of the picture. Her son's teacher followed up regularly on his absence to these classes, as he was a topper and a very bright student. The maid, after looking around a lot, had borrowed her relative's smart phone to make sure the son did not miss anymore classes.

But the problem was that neither of them knew how to operate one! The son, despite being a smart child, was never used to handling a smart phone and did not have any idea on installing apps. Once the video conferencing app was set up and timetable received for online classes, the boy was awestruck by the clarity in which he could see his teacher conducting the class and his friends interacting with the teacher.

Looking at the boy's expressions and curiosity, I was left wondering whether I should be happy that the boy was thoroughly enjoying this new experience or sad that he was ignorant of the impact of technology until recently.

Even after introducing the young boy to the world of online classes, he still faces problems like internet issues as he does not have enough data to attend classes every day. This is just a single case. There are multiple children out there who are unable to avail the facilities of the online classes and continue learning like the others around them.



Online classes can benefit visual learner the best and auditory learners to an extent.

These problems are not isolated to children alone. Teachers are going through a lot of trouble too, including technological knowledge, power cut issues and bandwidth problems. While some teachers are handing the classes from their homes, some are traveling to schools take online classes. For teachers there is also an added effort of managing the whole class online to make sure no child misses out. If the class strength is beyond 20 - 25, ensuring that the class is paying attention becomes very difficult.

To make sure that all the participants in their online classes are attentive, teachers are putting in an extra effort. This includes teachers preparing more than what they used to do during regular classes – making extra points, creating colourful props and creatives, designing interesting presentations and preparing engaging questions for engagement.

Boon

Most of the children today are remarkably familiar with the online medium. Handling it and navigating through technology comes easily to them. With this comfort, it becomes very easy for children to use online technology to their benefit.

For teachers, it becomes very easy to teach or communicate, as most of the children are already comfortable with the medium.

Extra information, presentations and videos add to the interest and curiosity of the children, enhancing the learning outcome.

Apart from this, the option of recording the class or archiving the lecture adds to the list of advantages. This can be used by children to revisit concepts and revise topics.

Bane

Even today, with all the technological advancements, there are a lot of people who are not aware or exposed to its advantages- the house help's son for example. There are many children who are unable to be a part of these online lessons due to connectivity, lack of technological knowledge and lots more. The same applies to teachers too.

It is very difficult for teachers to cater to different kinds of learners. While online classes can benefit visual learner the best and auditory learners to an extent, it becomes very difficult to keep the kinaesthetic learners engaged. This problem becomes profound, especially while handling the lower classes.

With all these efforts put in by both the teachers and the students, are the online classes really helping the cause? Is the teacher reaching all her children and are all the children involved?

With online classes continuing till the COVID issue is under control, are online classes the best option? Is it a boon or bane?

Share your thoughts with me at varsha@greycaps.com

Varsha Prasad
#ProudToBeATeacher

 Varsha Prasad
 varsha@greycaps.com

Varsha Prasad is leading THETEACHER.IN initiative from Greycaps, exclusively for teachers, as its Editor. She is also the Editor of TheTeacher.in magazine. It is created by Greycaps to celebrate the contributions of our teachers. She has played a vital role in creating many products, which ignite the curiosity of children, including the Global Awareness Program, also known as GAP in schools.



GOING DIGITAL

Starting
JUNE 2020

- Monthly GK Program from Class 1 to 12
- Created by noted quizmaster PICKBRAIN & team
- Brings FUN & ENGAGEMENT into Digital Learning

MONTHLY DELIVERABLES



**Engaging videos
for each topic
every month**



**Monthly
Downloadable
Worksheets**



**Fun quizzes to
break digital
monotony**



**Monthly GAP
quizzes on Play
& Learn (PaL)**



**Monthly
Teacher Resource
Material**

GET YOUR SCHOOL TO JOIN THIS PROGRAM

CALL: +91 9916132236, +91 9845299556, +91 9962995238

Email: ravi@greycaps.com