

# **Big Help for Education Post Internship**

**By: Vamsi Vetsa**

**Date: July 26-27, 2018**

I am Vamsi Vetsa and I participated in BigHelp for Education's Youth Internship program in the summer of 2018. During this internship, I was given the task of teaching and engaging a class full of 40 students for 2 days. I volunteered at the M.K.Baig Municipal High School in Vijayawada. More specifically, the school was located in Ajit Singh Nagar, PNT Colony, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. For the 2 days I was at the school, I was with the 9C class which consisted of 40 kids. The 9C consisted of about 25 boys and 15 girls totalling to around 40 students.

My father and his siblings grew up in Vijayawada, Guntur, and other towns near here. They attended several similar government schools in India near here although none of them attended the M.K.Baig Municipal High School.

During my internship, I noticed many similarities and differences between my lifestyle in America and the lifestyle in India. During the morning assembly on both days, I was up on the stage looking at all the students in the school and I noticed that not all of the students had proper shoes or footwear at all which was personally upsetting. Everyone seemed to be dressed nicely on the other hand. Unlike other government schools in India, this school did not have a mandatory school uniform but it did have a dress code which every student followed. Although the students were very enthusiastic, they were all very well behaved and were very respectful. When I walked in, the students treated me as they would treat a teacher and greeted me in unison. They also asked my permission to enter the room every time they left. These acts of respect are often not shown in the US. I also noticed how the boys and girls sat on opposite sides

of the room, unlike in the US, but still talked to each other and acted as friends. Everyone in the class seemed to be good friends with one another.

On the first day of the internship, I walked into the room and I was warmly greeted. I began my introduction but the students were all very shy at first. Early on, I asked them all to stand up and say their favorite color and the students didn't stand up at first but eventually they stood up reluctantly and orderly told me their favorite colors. As I continued talking to them and continued asking questions, the students slowly but surely became much more comfortable with me and were able to be themselves. By the end of the introduction, the students were all extremely enthusiastic and whenever I asked a question, they would eagerly answer. Throughout my introduction, I gave the students a glimpse into my life while also understanding theirs and we were able to notice many of the similarities and differences between the 2 countries. We discussed many topics including holidays, seasons, currency, and many other things. The students were very curious and asked me many questions about America and were eager to listen. We talked about time zones during my introduction and one girl in the class didn't entirely understand how to convert time from one time zone to another so she asked me later during a break period and I helped her to understand it but I was glad to see that she was paying attention and really wanted to learn and listen to what I had to say. After my introduction on the first day, I talked to the students about the importance of eating healthy and I talked to them about the 5 food groups. The students were able to name different types of foods in all food groups. By the end, the students learned a lot about different types of foods including what vitamins and nutrients they contained and how they help. After our discussion, the students were split into 5 groups and each group was given plates, forks, a cutting board, a knife, and fruits to make a fruit salad. Each group made their fruit salad and had a really great time doing so. The students were

eager to have me taste some of their fruit salads and each group made a unique design on their plate with the cut up fruits. After the activity, the kids wanted to take some pictures so we took pictures while the children asked me other questions about myself.

On the second day, I came in and they were extremely excited to see me and greeted me warmly. They started by asking me several questions that they had been thinking about from the day before. After answering many of the questions and discussing with the kids, I settled them down and got them into their seats. I then began to ask them questions about what I had talked about on the first day to review and they knew many but not all of the answers. After reviewing everything from the first day, I talked with them about the importance of exercise and physical activity. I then talked to them about heart rate and demonstrated to each of them how to find your heart rate and after making sure every student knew how to do it, I had everyone find their heart rate. I then took the kids outside and had them run around the ground and they were glad to see that I was running along with them. After the run, I had them measure their heart rate again and they were very surprised to see how much higher their heart rate was after the run. I then took the kids back inside and we talked about sports and the differences between sports in India and sports in America. We also talked about the FIFA World Cup which recently happened. I then took them outside and the kids played soccer on the ground with the soccer ball. After we came back inside, we talked a little bit more about sports and American football. I explained many of the rules in football and showed them how to hold and throw a ball. Before going outside again, every student held the football. When we went outside, every student got a chance to throw and catch the football and then the students were able to play with the football and soccer ball. The boys enjoyed playing soccer while the girls and I threw around the football in a circle. Later, the girls showed me how to play statue and I had a fun time playing with them. After a while, we

went back inside and reviewed what we learned throughout the day. They also asked me more questions about America and my lifestyle.

Throughout my internship, I truly had a great time and really enjoyed the 2 days I able to spend with the class. I made several friends and have even been in contact with several students after the internship by means of WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger.

Living in Westford, Massachusetts, and suburban town in the United States where the poverty rates are extremely slim and visiting the M.K.Baig school gave me a new perspective. I was able to see the different adversities and challenges they face there including several students being orphans and several students not having enough money to live as lavishly as we do. Despite their financial state, these children were all extremely lively and fun. Ones financial state may affect their outlook on life but it doesn't make them any better or worse and we are all still the same.

Going into this internship, I didn't know how I'd be able to really connect with the students and I was planning to stick to the script and keep it mostly informational for them but throughout the internship, the reality became very different. Although I still conveyed the information, we had a lot of fun as a group and spent a lot of time talking and having fun with one another. Despite all our differences including seemingly everything about us, we are all actually very similar indeed.

I would like to thank Sana for helping me throughout the whole preparation process and for motivating me along the way. I truly enjoyed the BigHelp Internship and it was an unforgettable experience that I will truly remember. The friendships and memories that were created at the M.K.Baig School will stick with me forever.