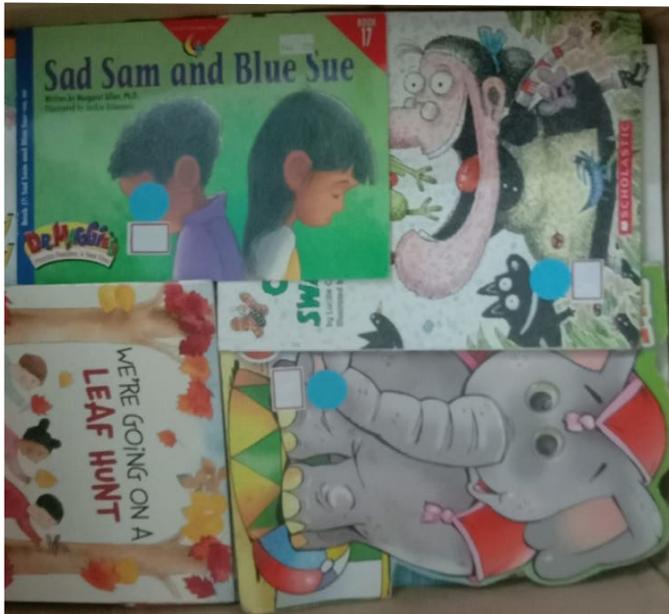


From the Editor's Desk

What sort of books do we need the most? This is a question that we ask ourselves constantly, and the question that we get asked the most by our supporters. More often than not, the answer is the same EVERY time. Basic English language books are always in short supply! When we buy books, the hardest books to source are the ones that we need the most. Easy readers like board books that introduce English words are very hard to find. Simple storybooks with large colorful pictures and easy to read sentences are another rare find. When we receive donations, we are fortunate to receive



lots of chapter books and fairy tales, story series books, and comics. The books that we have trouble finding the most are the ones that we need!

Basic English language books are required primarily because the English reading abilities in the communities that we serve are at a beginning reader level. While in some schools we may be working with children in the fourth standard, their

English comprehension is still at a very fundamental level. We also like giving easier books to read at first to build their interest in storybooks. It's exciting for a child to read and understand a book all by themselves.

Children in under-served schools where Pustakaar works are disadvantaged in another aspect - they may be the first generation learners in their families. Thus, they cannot turn to their parents or other adults in their families if they encounter an unfamiliar word or some incomprehensible text. Neither do they have other books at home or see others reading at home or in their environment which can spur them to read too.

We want to be able to strengthen early literacy skills in these children. Literacy consists of listening, speaking, reading, and lastly; writing. When we teach English as a second language, it's even more important to find books that help children learn English nomenclature. Children even in higher grades will still be learning shapes and sounds, tracking words, and have a basic concept of beginning/middle/end of stories. We need books with easy to understand stories in simple language. Please consider donating beginner reading books to Pustakaar. It really is the need of the hour!

For more on literacy skills, see the Harvard study at <https://bit.ly/3FS185d>

Shobha Bhansali
Shruthi Hegde
Karuna Koripella

Reading Matters - TFI Partnership



Trunks of books waiting to be shipped to Teach for India Fellows.



TFI's Narsimha delivering Pustakaar trunks of books to the Principal of Jillelaguda Primary School.

Teach For India, Hyderabad has come up with a flagship programme in association with the State Government that works on similar ideas. This 'School Transformation Program' has several educational initiatives, one of them is to build strong reading readiness among primary school children. Pustakaar has had a long association with Teach For India with regard to literacy support. The Teach For India Fellows serve as full-time teachers in under-served schools to bring about educational equity among low-income communities. Pustakaar provides key reading resources in the form of story books to over 60 Teach For India fellows each year to be used in their classrooms.

Seven Government Primary Schools in the district of Rangareddy are part of this project. For the following seven schools located in Balapur, Badangpet, Nadargul, Jijjelaguda, Dhatunagar, Rajiv Nagar, and Rajiv Gruhakalpa, Pustakaar will be setting up reading corners that will be closely monitored by the Teach For India Alumni resource to ensure strong implementation of the program. The program is intended to impact more than 1500 students. We have set up 28 libraries using aluminium trunks for the seven schools, and these have been dispatched to the TFI office. We look forward to sharing more information about how the program is doing once we receive feedback from TFI.

Volunteer Profile

Anjith



"It's been a pleasure for me to participate as a volunteer in the Pustakaar program. The sessions are fully interactive and thought provoking for the children. The story books have great illustrations which the

children really enjoy. My two months have been really fun! The children were excited every time I read them a new story. After a month, I noticed they had improved in their reading skills and they became good at guessing the story with the introduction itself."

Individual Scholarship



Ms. Andal, one of our volunteers, approached Pustakaar for supporting a 11th grade boy whom she had known for many years. The boy is being raised by his aunt who worked as her house help.

Amma Bhaskar, is a very bright kid with outstanding performance in academics as well as in arts. He is studying Commerce in Sri Chaitanya College, Malkajgiri and wishes to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Field Business (B.D.B) and eventually complete his MBA. He approached us through Ms. Andal for financial support. Pustakaar is now supporting him by paying Rs. 10,000 of his total tuition fee of Rs 16,000.

Shankarpally Primary School

A former teacher at Nanakramguda Primary School, Ms Udayshree, had recently been promoted to the post of Principal at Shankarpally Primary School. She reached out to Pustakaar and wanted to know if we could help her students. We visited the charming school and met with Udayshree and her primary grade students. Coincidentally, a new volunteer, Ms Swapna who lives in that area was looking for a school nearby to hold Pustakaar library sessions. It all came together seamlessly and we were able to partner with a new school and volunteer at the same time.



New Staff Member

We hired an intern for our outreach programs. Vamsi works in the film industry and was interested in social service. He is a big asset to Pustakaar as he has been able to do some much needed legwork. Vamsi visits our Reading Accelerator sessions happening in Rainbow Home orphanages. He checks in with the home teams, monitors students progress, and engages with the children. He visits each home at least twice a month and has been a bridge between our organizations. We are grateful to have young people who can bring their energy and enthusiasm to our work.



Your support keeps us motivated

Basic level picture books are the need of the hour for us to set-up our libraries for a new project that is in the pipeline in association with Teach For India, a long-time partner NGO. You can buy/donate preloved or new books for the same. You can also support us by conducting a book drive in your community. Please get in touch with us to get more details about the book drive.

Bank Details for Donations:

Account Name: Ansh Foundation

Account Number: 111405000966

IFSC Code: ICIC0001114

****Kindly write your name in the reference line so we can track donations****

Contact Info:

www.pustakaar.org

pustakaar@gmail.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/pustakaar

Instagram: @pustakaar

From Our Archives



Siva Ramkisan, an employee who has been with Pustakaar since inception, along with students outside Indian People High School. Photo taken in Feb 2017.