

# SECOND ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION THE ARTSPARKS ANGLE



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## Welcome Message

We are delighted to present the 2nd anniversary special edition of '**The ArtSparks Angle**', Professional Learning Program Newsletter. In this special issue we reflect on teaching and learning practices, share with you, our readers, an art-based activity, and much more. We have Shangmila, a past EdSparks Collective participant, sharing her experiences of bringing transformative art education experiences to the children of Manipur.

## Re-evaluating Teaching & Learning



Imagine a child who after a prolonged period of remote learning returns back to school; what would the child look forward to the most? Being welcomed into a safe space, meeting their friends and socializing again, being able to express emotions and feelings, looking forward to learning new things or maybe to feel comfortable and confident to start afresh? All these things undoubtedly help in developing and maintaining the well-being of children.

According to UNICEF, some children will have dealt well with restrictions and school closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. For others, it has been challenging to cope with all the changes and uncertainty. Care givers, teachers and school personnel play a critical role in supporting children's transition back to in-person classroom learning, particularly after extended periods of school closure.

Jumping into the frenzy of getting children to catch up on missed content, having curricula that are so heavily filled with tasks and expectations and having fixed objectives and clear-cut methods for achieving them, may not always be the most rational way to teach children how to deal with the uncertainties of

the world. Unreasonably high expectations, constant testing or an over emphasis on academic performance may actually undermine student well-being.

This is a time when alternate means of teaching and learning should be considered to ease children into learning environments. The arts are positioned to offer so much during this phase. Existing beliefs revolving around the arts leads to misunderstandings on its main and primary features. An important question to ask is how can we rethink the role of the arts in our schools at this time? A school in which the arts are present and taught with intent is more likely to offer legitimate opportunities for children's growth and development.

We would like to take this opportunity to highlight the influence of the arts and their potential role in advancing the goals of education. According to Elliot Eisner, art promotes imagination, multiple perspectives and the importance of personal understanding and interpretation. The problems of life are much more like the problems encountered in the arts. They are problems that seldom have a single correct solution, are occasionally unclear and

sometimes conflicting. Art creates an avenue to share the way we experience the world, in a way that we may not be able to do with words alone.

Reconnecting with friends and peers, developing empathy, interacting, building a supportive attitude towards each other and further developing positive relationships are the possibilities created through art education. Direct and meaningful interactions between students motivates them to actively participate and enjoy the process of learning.

For every child to feel valued, inclusive learning calls for a space where there are many right answers; And if you think about it, there are no wrong answers in the arts! This motivates children to have confidence in

their own experiences and abilities. If you want to use relevant themes and topics related to student's daily lives or real-world problems, you can easily do it through the arts, as well as get children to brainstorm solutions for these issues in creative and authentic ways. Throughout an art-making process, children are able to solve problems like these, get enough time to think and reflect, use their imagination to open up multiple possibilities, make independent decisions, communicate with each other, use resources effectively, and the list goes on. The arts offer many solutions to the challenges that we face, both for teachers and students. We just need to rethink and re-evaluate the importance and position we give to the arts.





*If you are interested in exploring the full potential of the visual arts to transform student learning, consider applying for ArtSparks' one-of-a-kind professional development program, EdSparks Collective. For more details, check out our upcoming events section.*

## Spotlight: Story From the Field

*It gives us great pleasure to showcase Shangmila, from Recognize, Rise and Empower Association (RREA), our EdSparks Collective (2021-22) participant. EdSparks Collective is ArtSparks' one-of-a-kind professional development program developing the capacity of different organizations and individuals across India. This excerpt includes Shangmila's experiences of participating in EdSparks Collective and conducting the Action Learning Project (ALP) as part of the program. Through the ALP, our EdSparks participants get an opportunity to apply their learnings from the program into the field and thereby witness the practical implications of the program.*

I am a program manager at RREA and I conducted EdSparks Collective's Action Learning Project with 4 children in Manipur. The children were very excited for the first session. All of them were on task but we could not move as quickly as we wanted. There were many questions and explaining took more time than the actual work. I wanted them to be able to work knowing exactly what they are expected to do. They started with a lot of focus but also got distracted easily. Even when I thought my instructions were clear and they understood everything, a couple of them were still confused as to what exactly was expected. When they started with tearing paper, they would do it in the same shape without exploring much. So, we left what we were doing and discussed more about the word "exploration". It was a great challenge for me to encourage children to explore since they were used to following instructions and doing things they are told to do. By the fourth day, When I sat down to observe

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the children, they were all very different from the first day. They knew exactly what was expected from them and our time management was better. What I would specifically want to talk about is this boy called Thampi (*name changed*). When I told Thampi that he had to share his glue with his partner, he said he didn't want to. I told him it's necessary since we only have limited glue, he didn't seem very happy about it. During the activity, he would often complain that his partner is taking all the glue for himself and not giving him enough time to use it. His partner was a shy boy who would not talk much. I tried making Thampi understand about the situation and told him to be patient and that if he shared, I would allow him to use one bottle of glue all by himself on the last day. On the fourth day, Thampi had no complaints. He was sharing glue with his partner and would patiently wait for his partner. On the last day, when I asked Thampi if he would still like a glue for himself, he said he is fine sharing and that felt like a big achievement for Thampi and me.

On the first two days, children were usually about 'my paper, my space, my glue' but on the last two



days, they would ask and speak to each other more politely. I could also see and observe that they were more comfortable with me and their peers. In the beginning they would often tell me that it was difficult, that they don't know how to draw, they made a mistake or they tore it wrong but I stopped hearing them complain after a few sessions. On the last day, I was also less tense and more comfortable as they were all busy concentrating on their own work. It was all about working and completing their work. They would also use words like, 'Please', 'can I', 'how long', etc.

I was comfortable managing the class since I have already taught children of the same age. But teaching art is something I have never done. Art for me is out of my comfort zone. After taking part in EdSparks collective, what changed was the realization of how important creativity is in children's education. If we want to empower our children and give them the best so that they are able to develop skills needed for the 21st century, intentional art education should start from early education itself. This conviction became stronger when I started working with children and facilitating the session for my learning practice. I could see their excitement and witnessed a 4-year-old getting involved in an activity like he knew exactly what he was doing. The behavior change in children and all the skill-set I wished for my children came alive.

This experience has definitely changed my attitude towards art. I've always had a huge amount of respect for people who are artistic. And, I would often say that art is not for me. But today, I'd like to say that art is for everyone. My idea and understanding of art and what visual art can do for me and my children was very limited, I don't think any subject could do that. This program was truly an eye opener for me, from the hands-on experience to all the meaningful discussions we had in all the sessions were such an immense learning experience.

When I joined EdSparks Collective, I came in with no experience with the arts. I had no knowledge about all the learnings that can be achieved through art. I have taught Math, AVS and language but no matter how hard I tried, I could never teach skills such as creative thinking, flexible thinking, collaboration, etc. I wanted my children to develop these skills to be empowered and achieve their fullest potential. With other subjects there is always a constraint of time, having to finish syllabus, exams, assignments, etc. But with art, I can be flexible and children can learn and explore at their own pace. Children learn to develop these skills and change attitudes towards their peers, while educators can strengthen engagement through visual art.



## Art-Based Activity: Colour Exploration



*In this special issue, we would like to give you an opportunity to experience and understand how visual arts can build problem solving and investigation skills in children through a hands-on activity. Please try out this activity by yourself or with children and share your experience with us.*

In a world that is constantly evolving, our children need to thrive and be prepared to tackle through the known and unknown, by being equipped with a set of skills and attitudes. They should be able to push their limits, think beyond the possibilities and come up with creative solutions. Problem solving and investigation are some of the ways which will encourage children to think flexibly and to uncover different possibilities and solutions. Now, let's try an activity to develop problem solving and investigation skills through the arts.

### **Colour Exploration**

Materials: leaves, grass, flowers, sand, seeds, spices, vegetables, coloured paper, etc.

Steps:

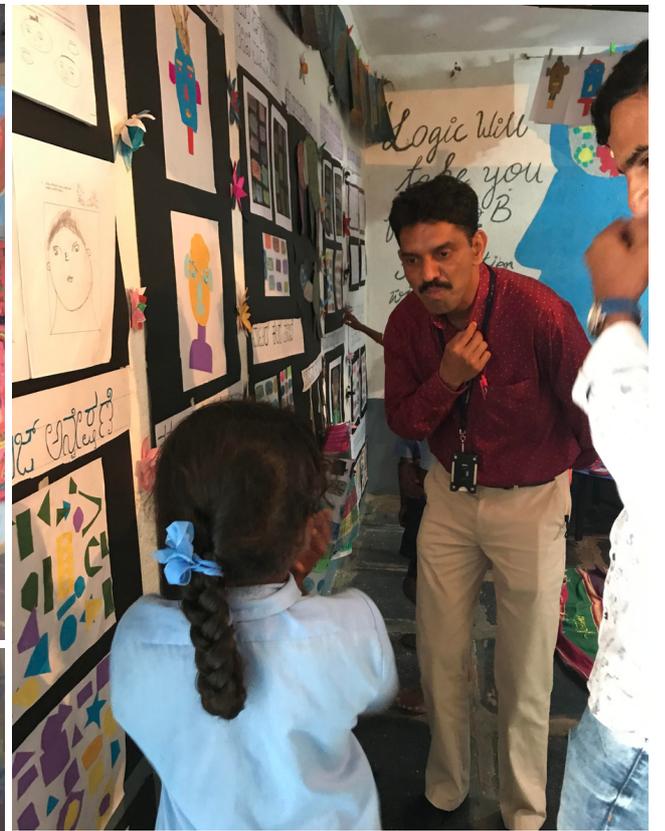
1. Look around your home and find at least 5 different kinds of materials with which you can create colours.
2. Based on the materials you collected, think how would you extract the colours from them. It could be by grinding, squeezing, crushing, etc.
3. When you get the colours, paint them out on to A4 sheet by creating different marks using different tools like toothpick, paint brush, crushed papers, etc.
4. After you try out the colours you explored, try mixing different colours to see what happens to it.
5. Share your exploration/discovery with your family and friends by telling them how you created the colours and the marks.

*When you have finished your work, please share it with us on Facebook or Instagram and tag us at @artsparksfoundation. We'd love to see your work! For more such interesting and engaging art-based activity sheets, please visit: <http://www.art-sparks.org/activity-resources.html>*

## Image Gallery - Inauguration of ArtSparks' Creative Learning Labs

Showcasing some of our inaugurations at various government schools in urban and rural Bengaluru, in the presence and support of school HMs, teachers, Cluster Resource Persons, SDMC members, parents and other educators. These got covered by the local media too!





## ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ ತಿಂಡ್ಲು ಶಾಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿತ್ರಕಲಾ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನ

ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ ವಾರ್ತೆ

ಆನೇಕಲ್: ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ತಿಂಡ್ಲು ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಹಿರಿಯ ಪ್ರಾಥಮಿಕ ಶಾಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹಮ್ಮಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದ ಆರ್ಟ್ ಸ್ಕಾರ್ಟ್ ಲ್ಯಾಬ್ ಉದ್ಘಾಟನೆ ಮತ್ತು ಚಿತ್ರಕಲಾ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನವನ್ನು ಮುಗಿಸಲು ಗ್ರಾಮ ಪಂಚಾಯತಿ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಎಂ. ನಾರಾಯಣಸ್ವಾಮಿ ಉದ್ಘಾಟಿಸಿದರು. ಬಳಿಕ ಮಾತನಾಡಿದ ಅವರು, ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಶಾಲೆಗಳು ಬಾಸಗಿ ಶಾಲೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಪ್ರೈವೇಟ್ ನೀಡುವಂತಾಗಬೇಕು. ಈ ನಿಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ತಿಂಡ್ಲು ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಶಾಲೆ ಬಾಸಗಿ ಶಾಲೆಗಳಿಗೂ ಮಿಗಿಲಾಗಿರುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಿನ ಶೈಕ್ಷಣಿಕ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳೇ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಯಾಗಿವೆ. ಪಂಚಾಯತಿಯು ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಶಾಲೆಗಳ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಒತ್ತು ನೀಡಲಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಭರವಸೆ ನೀಡಿದರು.

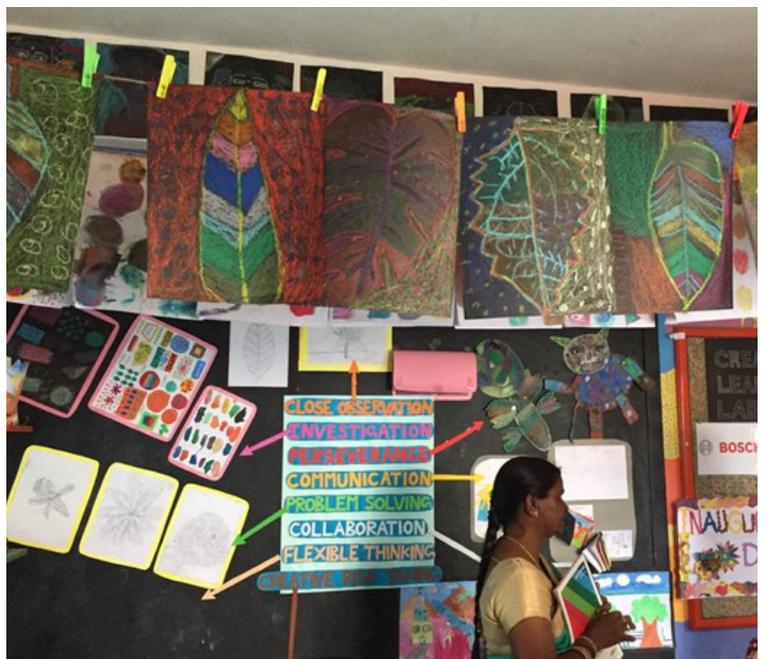


ಆನೇಕಲ್ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ತಿಂಡ್ಲು ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಹಿರಿಯ ಪ್ರಾಥಮಿಕ ಶಾಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿತ್ರಕಲಾ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನ ನಡೆಯಿತು

ಸಂಭ್ರಮ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಶಾಲೆಗಳಿಗೆ ವರವು ನೀಡಬೇಕು. ಶೈಕ್ಷಣಿಕ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಪ್ರೋತ್ಸಾಹ ನೀಡಿದರೆ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಶಾಲೆಗಳಿಗೆ ದಾಖಲಾತಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು.

ಆರ್ಟ್ ಸ್ಕಾರ್ಟ್ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ನಿಶಾ ನಾಯರ್ ಮಾತನಾಡಿ, 21ನೇ ಶತಮಾನದ ಕೌಶಲಗಳನ್ನು ಚಿತ್ರಕಲೆ ಮೂಲಕ ಕಲಿಸುವುದು ಆರ್ಟ್ ಸ್ಕಾರ್ಟ್ ಗುರಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ, ನಿಶಾ ನಾಯರ್ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಚಿತ್ರಕಲೆ ಉತ್ತಮ ಕಲಾಕಾರಿ ಎಂದು ಹೆಸರಿಸಿ

ನೀಡಿ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳೇ ರಚಿಸಿ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರದರ್ಶಿಸುವ ಮೂಲ ಅನುಭವಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಅನಾವರಣ ಮಾಡಲು ವೇದಿಕೆ ಒದಗಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದರು. ಶಾಲೆಯ ಮುಖ್ಯೋಪಾಧ್ಯಾಯ ಮುರಳಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಗ್ರಾಮ ಪಂಚಾಯತ ಸದಸ್ಯೆ ಸುರುಣಾ ನಾಗರಾಜ ಎಸ್‌ಡಿಎಂಸಿ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರ ಶಿಕ್ಷಕಿಯರಾದ ಉಮಾದೇವಿ ಲೀಲಾವತಿ, ಆರ್ಟ್ ಸ್ಕಾರ್ಟ್ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ



## Upcoming Event

### Accepting Applications for EdSparks Collective 2022-23



### EdSparks Collective 2022 - 23

**Registration Dates: Aug. 1 to Sept. 04, 2022**

**Program Dates: Oct. 10 to 15, 2022 & Jan. 16 to 21, 2023**

Visual arts learning is key not only for the development of students' imagination, expression, and observational skills, but to their cognitive developmental as well. EdSparks Collective is a one-of-a-kind, 12-session professional development program for all those interested in exploring the full potential of the visual arts to transform student learning.

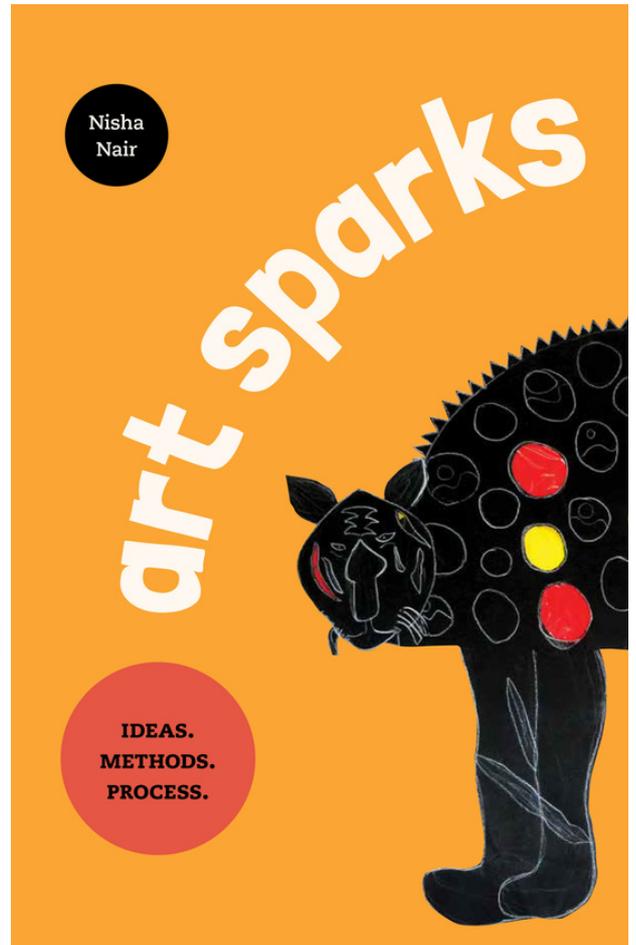
Supported by Wipro Foundation, each workshop session is carefully designed to gradually build participants capacity to design and implement enriching educational interventions that use visual arts to foster 21st century learning and life skills in children. *No prior experience in art or art education is needed to participate.*

To know more, please click here: <http://www.art-sparks.org/edsparks-collective.html>

If interested, let us know: <https://forms.gle/4EbGiUXiqHDREVqa6>

## Upcoming Event

### Book Talk - ArtSparks: Ideas. Methods. Processes



**Date: Saturday, Aug. 6th, 2022**

**Time: 11.00am - 12.00pm**

**Venue: Champaca Bookstore, Library and Cafe, Bengaluru**

Come by Champaca to meet Nisha Nair - author of ART SPARKS: IDEAS. METHODS. PROCESSES and Founder & Executive Director of ArtSparks Foundation. The book serves as a guide to developing meaningful art lessons, comprising thoughtful and clear summaries of ideas on art and art teaching. This is an invaluable resource for artists, teachers, interested parents, and more.

Drop-in to meet the author, and get yourself a copy of the book!

Please RSVP here: <https://forms.gle/2Gp5oQYpGzsnm2NgZ>

## Share Your Feedback



We'd love to hear from you,  
please click here:

<https://forms.gle/nN8rRoGfXy5BLCCdA>

## Read Previous Issues



To read our previous issues,  
please click here: <http://www.art-sparks.org/the-artsparks-angle.html>