

Kartik Tyagi

2016 North South Foundation APNA Youth Ambassador (Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India)

I am a 10th grade student attending Enloe High School in Raleigh, NC. I am a part of the Medical BioScience Academy in my school and in the past have won several NSF and other spelling bees. In addition, I placed 4th in the HOSA International Medical Spelling Bee in June 2016. This summer, while visiting my grandparents in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, I conducted spelling and vocabulary workshops at Kendriya Vidyalaya Aliganj. My mission, during the course of the workshop, was to motivate students to continue finding new words, increase their English vocabulary, and encourage them to use the English language as much as they can. I wanted the students to become comfortable using English in daily conversation and help them build an interest to learn new words.



It was the first day of the workshop, and as I set up the materials in the room, the students came in one-by-one with curious looks on their faces. I could tell they were all very smart students, eighty of them to be precise, because of the number of questions they asked me during the workshop; the amount of knowledge they wished to gain throughout such a rare opportunity they were given. On the first day, as we went over the plan for the upcoming days, they all seemed

very interested in what was to come. After discussing with them the plan for the workshop, I shared with the students the word *pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis*. I told the



class the word, the longest word in the English dictionary, and asked them if they could guess what it meant and if they could try to spell it. All of the students were amazed that words could be this long and were curious about what it could possibly mean. The point of this activity was how to make longer words seem easier, and how to break apart such words to figure out the

spelling and the meaning of the word. After many interested laughs and a few good tries from the courageous students, I gave them the spelling, and instead of memorizing the spelling through rote memorization, a method they were used to, we broke the word apart into word “chunks.” By using the meanings of the Greek and Latin language roots, we figured out the overall meaning of the word: *a lung disease caused by silica dust*. Throughout the course of the workshop, this lesson remained with them as the “essence” of how to spell and figure out the meanings of new words.

As I conducted the workshop, one thing I was surprised about and was not expecting was how much respect the students and even the teachers gave me, even though I was only a 10th grade student. On the second day as I walked in the class I was greeted by eighty smiling students, all of whom said to me “good morning sir,” and were eager to learn more! We started diacritical pronunciation, some basic plural rules, and some common prefixes and suffixes. My main message to the students was *"It does not matter if you cannot memorize all of this information, all*

that matters is that you know how much influence prefixes, suffixes, and roots have on the



meaning of a word, and that you should always look for new words to learn". I am pleased to say that even with so much new information, the students were trying their hardest to understand the importance of such topics in relation to their English vocabulary. I picked up on the first day of the workshop that the students were very curious about foreign languages such as

Greek, Latin, French, Dutch, etc., so before we went over basic language patterns, I talked with them about all the different foreign languages in the world. The point of this short lesson was to make them aware of where *exactly* English words come from. I shared with the students different languages that fall under Indo European and Non-Indo European and the subdivisions of these two main groups. We then looked over some interesting words from each language we discussed, something the students were very much interested in. The students now knew that so many languages all over the world have had an influence on the English language.



At the end of each day's workshop, many of the students came up to me and asked questions

about the study material, about the day's lessons, and about me! I was very happy that the students saw me as a mentor and felt that they could ask me what they wished to know.

The next day, we went over language rules. I was very happy to know that most of the students in the workshop were taking the school's only offering of foreign language, which was German. It prompted spurs of excitement as we went from language to language, and eventually to German! The day after, we reviewed all of the information that was shared throughout the workshop by reviewing the influence of prefixes, suffixes, roots, languages, and parts of speech on the meaning and spelling of any word. After this, the students took their written test. They all tried their hardest and did very well. On the last day of the workshop, we conducted our Oral round! But before that, I talked a little bit with the students about how to break apart a word one has never heard before. All of the students did really well because, as I shared with them, the key is to break the word down, look for prefixes, suffixes, and roots, find the language, remember the language patterns, and slowly spell the word! After the oral round, while marks were being tallied, I shared with the class many tips on improving their vocabulary. I encouraged them to keep looking out for new words, keep reading, and use the words they learn in their everyday writing and conversation. Later on, I was so surprised to find numerous students come up to me and give me friendship rings and bands, as it was International Friendship Day! It was so heartfelt and I was extremely



***Top Three Ranks with Senior English Teacher
Mrs. Neeru Chaturvedi***

delighted that the students thought of me as their friend in the short time I had been with them! After all the marks were tallied, we had our award ceremony! Everyone was awarded a certificate of completion and a small gift! The top 10 ranks were then recognized and given a certificate of excellence. The top 3 ranks were given vocabulary books and the winner was given



an Oxford dictionary along with a trophy. Now, senior English teacher Mrs. Neeru Chaturvedi and media head Mr. Rajesh Shukla walked up and presented me a memento. I was so honored and very happy that the teachers and the students enjoyed the program and wanted me back to conduct workshops again, but for a longer duration!

I was very impressed how well the students did with such difficult words and such difficult materials North South Foundation provided for the workshops. I would like to thank our hard



working and dedicated volunteers from North South Foundation who designed the curriculum and materials for the workshops. In my experience, the level of the materials provided was too advanced for the students at this workshop. That is why for the workshop, I edited the materials accordingly after first day and added supporting activities as

needed. Throughout the workshop, I tried as much as I could to kindle an interest in the English

language and its words and to make all the students feel comfortable using English before I went over spelling and language patterns with them. All of the students had a great time during the workshop; they all were very interested and curious. They all laughed at funny words or rules they heard. But most of all, they tried their hardest to learn what was being shared. I know I left a memory with all of the students and I know they will remember this workshop experience.



At the end of the last day, I thanked all the students and staff, and headed to the Principal's office. The teachers and the principal enjoyed the workshops so much that the school wants me to continue the workshops at the

school, be it online or over the summer when I visit India. We even discussed holding workshops for Elementary class English teachers so that they can help students at an early stage to develop their language skills. I am seriously considering this opportunity as it gives me ways to continually stay in touch with the school.

Overall, my experience was very enriching and rewarding. I believe I sparked an interest of learning new words in the students. I encouraged them to use these words in daily writing and speaking. I am very content and overjoyed that all the students were interested and learned many things which will help them in the future.

I would like to thank the school's current principal Mr. R.K. Verma and the retired principal, Dr. O.P. Rai, for their



Thanks to: Senior English Teacher Mrs. Archana Pandey

support and permission to hold the workshops at their school. I would also like to thank Mrs. Archana Pandey and Mrs. Neeru Chaturvedi, both senior English teachers at Kendriya Vidyalaya Aliganj, and Mr. Rajesh Shukla for helping me hold this program. North South Foundation opened to me this tremendous opportunity to perform workshops for students in India and APNA Head Mr. Venkat Gade helped me along the way and I would like to thank them for this. I would also like to thank my local Raleigh, NC NSF chapter head Mr. Chockalingam Ramiah who supported me and provided certain materials needed for the workshop. Lastly, but definitely not least, I would like to recognize my parents for assisting me in preparing and conducting the workshops and for being alongside me throughout the program.

