

My Experience in India

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Everything in this whole world exists because of science, and scientific discovery. However, not many people know about the importance of science. That's why my twin sister, Sweta, and I decided to team up and teach people about it. Many people in developing countries don't know the importance of science, and we wanted to do something about it. Sweta and I visited India, and decided to teach an 8th grade class about the basics and importance of personal hygiene. We conducted a simple experiment that would show the students why they should wash their hands, and how they should wash their hands. Clean hands can avoid diseases!!



At first, I was very nervous about conducting this workshop. What if they couldn't speak English? What if I couldn't answer their questions? I had never conducted a workshop before, and this one would be a week-long one—let alone in a country where I didn't know the language well. I was scared beyond my mind. However, after the first day, I was pretty comfortable. On

the first day, Sweta and I just gave a brief introduction of what we were going to be doing that week. We told them about the importance of science, why personal hygiene is important, and gave them an overview of the week's agenda.



We also asked a lot of questions. This was the part that I was scared of. I have a different accent compared to them; what if they couldn't understand me? However, I was pleased to find out that they could. We asked them simple questions, such as "How do you normally wash your hands," "Why should you wash your hands?", and "When should you wash your hands?" They answered all of our questions very well, and that's when I could tell that our message was getting to them.

The second day was when we gave a PowerPoint and actually conducted the experiment. Since the students didn't know too much about how school worked in America, we explained that in our presentation. We also put in some information about us, so that they'd get to know us a little bit more, and they'd feel comfortable with us. After that, we conducted the experiment. We asked 10 girls and 10 boys to volunteer. Surprisingly, a lot more than that did. Almost the entire class wanted to participate!



After we had our volunteers, we asked 10 of them to wash their hands how they normally would, and the other 10 to wash their hands using the correct technique. Later, we would compare the number of germs on their hands, using simple materials. When they all came back from washing their hands, we inspected them with a UV light. Unsurprisingly, we found out that the people that washed their hands using the proper technique had less germs on their hands than the people who washed their hands incorrectly. However, these students never got taught the importance of hand washing, and found the results to be surprising, and it was fun to watch their reactions to the results!

On the third day, we gave them a small assessment to see what they learned. We asked the questions that we asked on the first day, and compared the answers to see if they gathered any information during the workshop. We were pleased to see that our methods of teaching were useful, and the students did well on the assessment. After that, we gave them a sheet where they could write any feedback that they had about the workshop. Again, we were very happy that the feedback was good. On the last day, we handed out certificates of participation, and congratulated them on completing the workshop.

I learned a lot from this experience. I learned that while they may not speak or understand English well, they don't have to in order to understand science. Science is universal, and unlike language, it doesn't change based on where you are. I also learned that teaching others is an amazing way to reinforce the things that you already know, because people will ask questions. I got a lot of questions about hand washing and hygiene and being able to answer them definitely reinforced my knowledge on the subjects. All in all, I would definitely conduct this workshop, or another one, again. I gained so much experience, and can't wait to spread knowledge.



