Creativity workshop for working children

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BRITISH Council, Sylhet organised a creativity workshop for working children on 3 April 2010. The workshop was for a 3-hour shift and was targeted at instilling the children with creativity and infusing the innovative ideas in them.

Working children between the age group of 12 to 15 were targeted for the workshop. It was aimed at encouraging them to be natural with their creative and innovative ideas.

My heart is filled with gratitude for the Bholananda Night High School. When I agreed to do a comic workshop with this school; I did not expect anything so big. At first I tried to break the ice, get to know them and their background. I talked about comics and what they think about it. Like all the children in the world their reaction was very positive. But in the discussion one thing came up is that the children like reading comics but they can't even afford one. So I cut them a deal. I said "How about if you don't have to buy a comic book anymore, how about I teach you how to make one your self so that each of you guys can make comic books to share and read?" And the best part was that they only need a pen and a paper.





All thirty children were divided into three groups. Each group had 5 writers and 5 artists. The children had the freedom to choose. Most of them wanted to be scriptwriters. After the groups were ready and well equipped with pencil, papers and pens, we started to talk about the story. Mainly I talked about their likes and dislikes, dreams and nightmares to find out themes they will actually love. The groups worked on three different kinds of comics-an illustrated creative writing, a short comic and a comic strip.

The theme of the illustrated creative writing was "London" and the theme of short comic and comic strip was open, what ever they can make. I was amazed to see how a 10 year old wrote about visa, passport, and bank solvency. But I was trying to pinch out the creative side of them rather than the reality these working children face every day.

Finally the creative writings and the illustrations were glued on the wallpaper. In the wallpapers the reflection of their stories included drawing Michel Jackson, Big Ben and all that.

I started to train up the artists with the basics. I made them believe that making comics is no Rocket Science, its actually pretty simple. You just need to know how to draw an "O" and a "T" and the rest follows. I taught them how to use the comic bubbles and comic boxes.

The young scriptwriters converted their stories and plots into scenes. And depending upon the scenes the little cartoonists made boxes and cartoons within it. After that they put bubbles along with the speeches.

Finally after all the hard work was done, a presentation session was created. Each team came up with their comics/wallpapers and read it to the audience. This session was really amusing. All the works were pasted on the classroom wall. When they saw their comics displayed, the participants were amazed.