



Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Park becomes Bangladesh's first free Bangla book reading destination

The Book Garage inauguration event marked a fun-filled hour of literary excitement, from 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM, featuring an amazing storytelling session by Tahmina Rahman Sathi from Goofi and a lively puppet show. The storytelling session transported the audience into the enchanting world of the Bengali storybook *Jebhabe Pelam Bangla Noboborsho*.

On September 9, Grow Your Reader Foundation (GYRF) celebrated a significant milestone with the inauguration of two new Book Garages in collaboration with Goofi at the Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Park, Gulshan.

How wonderful would it be to get a small library on our way, while being tired from strolling at the park! What can be a more amazing way to take a break and get rid of all your tiredness? Yes, that's what the Grow Your Reader Foundation has been dreaming of, establishing street libraries throughout Bangladesh. Where all people will have access to read books regardless of their social status, religion, and race.

The objective of the Book Garage installation at Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Park comes from a genuine concern shared by Bengali parents – the fall in the proficiency of their children in the Bangla language, which is influenced by the general existence of English in modern life, including English schools, TV, and YouTube. In an era controlled by screens and digital



distractions, the aim is to address this challenge by promoting the use of the Bengali language amongst children and providing an alternative source of entertainment that encourages reading, nurturing a deeper connection with the native language and culture.

To address this issue and promote the use of the Bengali language now, GYRF and Goofi made a partnership. As part

of this partnership, they installed not one, but two Book Garages within this park. The Book Garages are installed in two different locations. Both are situated in very easy and accessible points of the park. One book garage is near the North End Cafe and the other one is right in front of the Kids' Zone. These Book Garages will be filled with Goofi Bengali books, ready to ignite

your imagination, take you on exciting journeys, and inspire you to embrace the joy of Bangla reading. Gradually they will cover more parks.

Upon selecting a book from the Book Garage, the children seamlessly integrate into the reading community, embracing the understanding that this privilege requires a responsibility. Once they have finished reading the book, it is requested that they faithfully return the book to the very same Book Garage from which they initially borrowed it. This considerate gesture ensures that the captivating stories can be enjoyed by others in the community. Additionally, if the children have older books to share with fellow readers, their contributions are not just welcomed but strongly encouraged. This enriches the wide range of books in the book garage and enhances the reading experience for the entire community.

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Sadia Jafri, the founder of Grow Your Reader Foundation, expressed her excitement and said, "Our objectives are crystal clear – to foster a profound love for Bangla books, preserving cultural heritage; bring back books that are forgotten, enriching the community's reading resources; cultivate empathy and respect through diverse perspectives; and create nurturing reading environments in parks and schools for both young and adult minds to explore and grow. We aim to nurture a reading habit among children and adolescents by providing free access and organising regular reading circles."

The event was open to all, welcoming families, friends, and book enthusiasts to join in celebrating the joy of reading and learning. It was a memorable day at Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Park, showing the transformative power of books and reading.

Making the jump from O level to A level

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If you have or are going to sit for your O level examinations anytime soon, chances are you've heard your teachers warn you to not get lost in the euphoria of finishing O levels. Though the idea of not going on a month-long vacation after toiling away for two years might seem cruel, it could shape how well-prepared you are for your A levels. While studying for the O levels, we often make the mistake of thinking it is the culmination of all our school efforts. However, O level is only the tip of the iceberg.

It only takes a few weeks into A levels for students to realise the stark difference between O and A levels. Some subjects involve slight revision of O level content before delving into the syllabus. Others, like Chemistry, will hit you like a truck right from the get-go.

There is just a huge difference in the way a subject is approached during these exams. O level mostly involves brushing the surface of a topic while A level tends to be a deep-dive. In theory, A level shouldn't be much harder than O level because the number of subjects is reduced to compensate for the more complex content. However, the syllabus content is simply too extensive, and

the time constraint is too intensive for it to not feel much harder.

All that said, one can see why taking time off after O levels might not be a great idea. It is very unfortunate but you really do have to start preparing for your exams from the moment you start classes. A lot of people make the mistake of thinking that cramming all your content four months before your exams might work out in A levels like it did in O levels.

However, that is simply not true. A level content is a lot harder to comprehend, and a lot of your ability to score marks can come from how well-acquainted you're with the marking points and the format.

Simply memorising notes cannot be your strategy. Solving as many past papers as possible, learning information from those papers about patterns of answering and utilising that information to enhance your own answers is the only sure way to score marks. A lot of the questions you'll come across are also highly analytical and case-based so a full understanding of your subject content is crucial.

In order to streamline your studies, it is important that you know what sources to use and how to use them. For students in the Cambridge curriculum, your coursebooks are your best friends. They are very

well-written and are structured in the exact way your syllabus is structured. A few thorough readings of the coursebooks can go a long way to understanding the topics. For Edexcel students, you might need to actually read from sources outside of your coursebooks because they are often not sufficient to cover the syllabus.

It might seem hard to juggle all of this while also trying to make the most of your school experience, and it really is difficult. That said, it is not impossible. Your time management game needs to be tight if you don't want to end up overwhelmed. The first few months should be spent tackling your subject content and solving papers topically to get the hang of it. After finishing your syllabi, as the mock season rolls around, you should be in a state of constant revision and solving yearly papers. You need to have a solid game plan if you want to enjoy yourself while not compromising your studies. But how you approach that game plan will depend entirely on what works best for you.

And, finally, you need to understand that your success in O levels doesn't automatically equate to success in A Levels. You need to put twice as much effort as you did in your O Levels over a much shorter period of time.



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