

# EDUCATIONPLUS

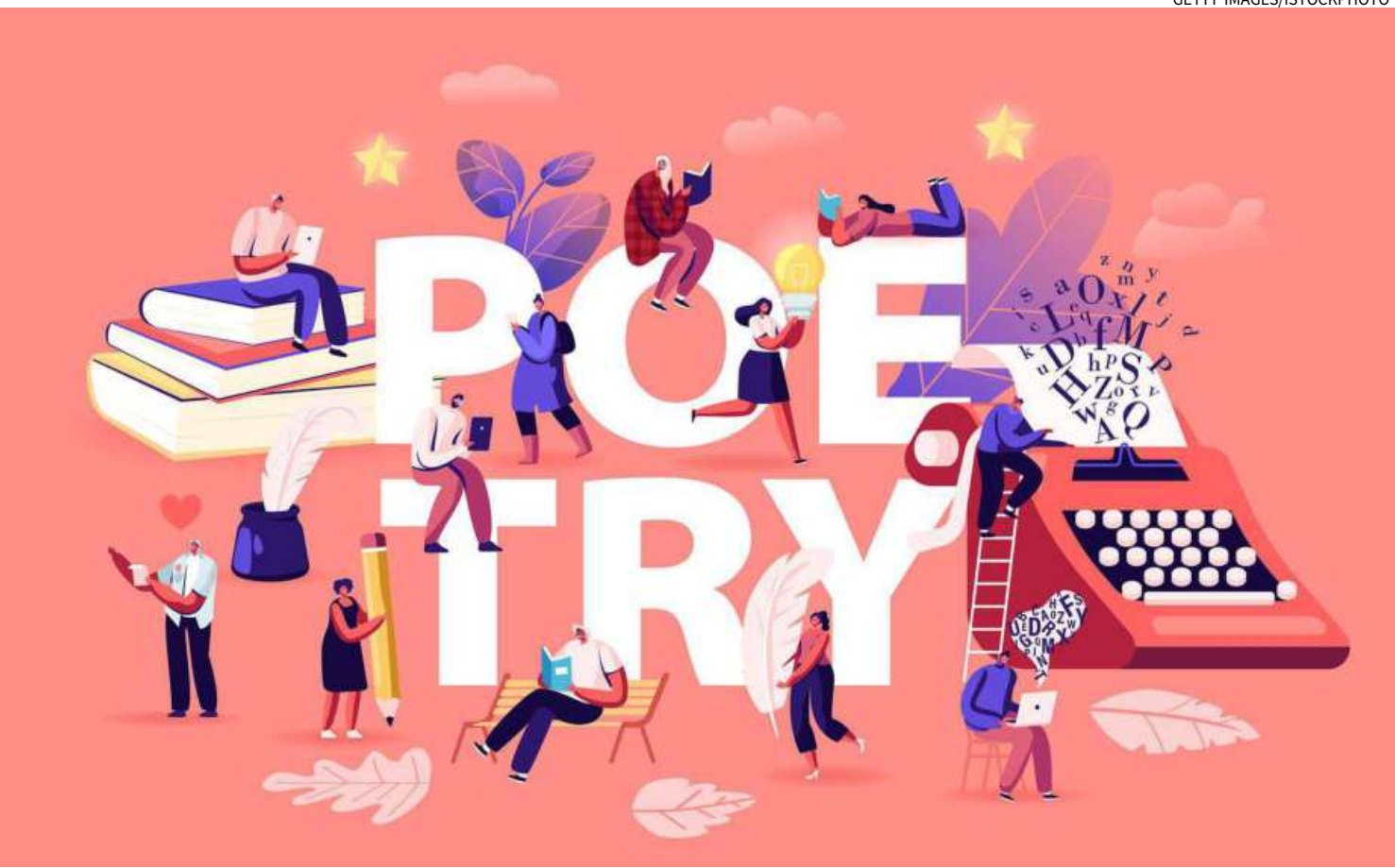
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Nimesh Ved

A few weeks ago, we had organised a session on poetry for teachers. The idea was to delve deeper into poetry and discuss how best we could get children to bond better with it. The session commenced with a song and I began by asking colleagues to recall one or more film songs which, in their understanding, were laden with metaphors.

The silence that followed made me wonder where I had erred. I then wrote on the board a few lines from a song to discuss the metaphors it contained. However, the participants found it difficult to connect the metaphors with the song. Most people like and listen to film songs but rarely associate them with metaphors or with any other figures of speech. Someone said that an exercise like this could suck the joy of out of songs. This left me wondering if we connect with metaphors only when we wear our teaching hats. Do we not connect them with our lives?

**What is poetry?**  
Going forward, one of the questions that came up was how do we introduce poetry to students and tell them what it is. The answers ranged from “not prose”, “rhyming”, and so on but no one suggested that each student could interpret a poem



## Rhyme and reason

How do we introduce poetry to students and tell them what it is?

differently without being incorrect. As Samuel Taylor Coleridge once remarked, poetry is “the best words in the best order”. As our discussion progressed, my colleagues’ struggle was palpable, despite having invested significant time in reading, reciting and listening to poetry.

Unfortunately, the

“conventional teacher” runs the risk of reducing a William Wordsworth classic to a list of difficult words with their meanings or explain the beauty of a Robert Frost as THE interpretation of the poem. In other words, we wean children away from poetry. On the other hand, I recall my English teacher who immersed us

in Shelley’s *To A Skylark*. I am not sure of the exact impact it had on me or my love for poetry but, even more than two decades later, I can still recall her infectious passion and the skylark she drew on the board. Eugenio Montale famously said, “I wait for poetry to visit me.” Poetry surely visited our class that week.

So, what can we do besides, of course, waiting for poetry to visit us?

**What we can do**  
We can begin with the basics. We can figure out what poetry means to us. Or, what is a poem? Paul Celan’s response to the latter is epic, “A poem, as a manifestation of language and thus essentially dia-

logue, can be a message in a bottle, sent out in the – not always greatly hopeful – belief that somewhere and sometime it could wash up on land, on heartland perhaps. Poems in this sense, too, are under way: they are making toward something”.

And possibly move on to how, if at all, can one

teach poetry? Siddhartha Menon, a teacher and poet, has an eloquent take in his *Building A Cathedral: An approach to teaching poetry*. “I ask myself what I might be doing when I teach poetry. A simple, and perhaps the most honest, answer is that I am pleasing myself and thereby, I like to think, my students”. We could also delve deeper by bringing in factors like age and comfort with the language. Then, of course, we need to try out actions. There are neither secret formulae nor short-cuts, and we will have to work our way.

In the recent months, in school we have focussed on the text. The poem. We have read poems – alone, in silence, together, aloud, in tandem with online videos online and re-read them. We have begun many days with poems as well. We have tried to encompass a wide range from the classics to the contemporary and from the religious to the revolutionary. In the process, not only have we built up a decent collection of books on poems but have also made inroads into our conversations. Some of us have become friends with poetry and a couple have also fallen in love with it. We understand this is a beginning and sooner than later the students will join us.

The writer teaches English and is associated with a school in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

#### UCL India Excellence Scholarship

An initiative from the University College London (UCL), the U.K.  
**Eligibility:** Permanent residents of India who have a Bachelor’s degree equivalent to first-class UK degree.  
**Rewards:** £5,000  
**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** February 27  
www.b4s.in/edge/ULCIH

#### SOAS University of London Felix Scholarships

An initiative from the SOAS University of London, the U.K.  
**Eligibility:** Indian nationals pursuing Master’s or Ph.D. at the University of London and have a first-class Bachelor’s degree secured from a recognised Indian university.  
**Rewards:** Full tuition fees, living costs, and return airfare.  
**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** January 31  
www.b4s.in/edge/FSSUI

#### ZScholars Programme

An initiative from ZS Associates India  
**Eligibility:** Indian students studying B.A., B.Com, B.Ed, B.Pharm, B.Sc., B.Sc. (Statistics), Bachelor of Social Work, Bachelor of Mass Communication, BBA, BBM, BBS, BCA, B.Sc. (IT), B.Arch, B.Tech/B.E., B.A. LLB (Integrated), BDS, LLB, MBBS, B.Sc. Nursing, and B.Tech + M.Tech (Integrated five-year programme) in Delhi, Pune, Chennai, or Bengaluru and have scored at least 60% in Class 12. Annual family income should be less than ₹800,000.  
**Rewards:** Up to ₹50,000 per year  
**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** January 31  
www.b4s.in/edge/ZSPU6

Courtesy: Buddy4study.com



OFF THE EDGE  
Nandini Raman

After my M.Com. I have been attempting various government exams but have not cleared any. But in this time, I finished M.A. Sociology from IGNOU. I am confused and have lost confidence in myself. Shyam

Dear Shyam,  
Focus on what you can control. Consult a career counsellor and identify your skill sets, interest areas and passion. It is not just about passing an exam. What do you want to do with your life? Talk to a few mentors, teachers and professionals that you look up to, as they can offer valuable guidance and encouragement. Acknowledge your efforts and take time to reflect to decide on what you want to do next. It will help refine your strategy to move forward. You can also study further or get into research in Accounting, Finance, or Management specialisations that align with your interests. It might just open up some exciting opportunities beyond these exams.

**My UG degree is in Life Sciences and I am pursuing M.Sc. Organic Chemistry. I am going to attempt the UPSC. What skills do I need to develop? How can I tackle M.Sc. and UPSC**

## Take time to decide

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This column may help

prep?

Stay persistent and do not lose sight of your goal. Prioritise tasks and create a realistic study schedule. It might help to enroll in a coaching institute or an online course to supplement your preparation, as it will offer structure and consistency and help build the discipline that you need.

Work on your analytical, problem-solving, comprehension and writing, critical thinking, time management and communication skills. To prepare for both the M.Sc. and the UPSC, use the syllabus overlap and link the relevant sections in both such as like Science and Technology and GS Paper III (Environment, Ecology, and so on.). Focus on NCERT books to understand core concepts in Geography, History, Polity, Economics, and Science and Technology. Manage your time sensibly and use weekends to take mock tests and practise writing answers. Use breaks during the M.Sc. schedule for quick revisions and study smartly using mind maps and other techniques.

**My UG and PG degrees are in English Language and Literature. I wish to work in the private sector but don’t know where and**

**what jobs to apply for. I don’t have any skills like content writing or graphic design and so on. Saumya**

Dear Saumya,  
Your education and skills are highly valuable across various sectors. Some potential career paths could be in content writing and editing as a technical writer (working on technical user manuals, software guides, and white papers), a content writer (for blogs, websites, and social media), a copywriter (writing persuasive marketing copy for advertisements, brochures, and product descriptions), or an editor and a proofreader. You could also look at education and training. Working at publishing and media houses will help you discover publishing, journalism and public relations. You can also consider roles in corporate communications, customer Service or HR. Don’t worry and get intimidated about not knowing the job; you will learn on the job and grow into the role organically.

**I completed MSW and am working on my doctorate in the same field. What are my career options apart from teaching? What is the scope in India? Should I focus on think tanks abroad? Shriram**

Dear Shriram,  
While academia is a traditional path, there are many other exciting opportunities to explore in India across research, administration, social work practice across NGOs and non-profits (in programme management, fundraising, advocacy), government organisations, CSR initiatives, counselling and therapy, policy and planning as a policy analyst, urban planner or a social development consultant. You could also consider joining international organisations like the UN, WHO, or UNICEF. Think tanks and research organisations offer a great platform to conduct research, influence policy, and contribute to social change. Some popular options are the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), India (focus is on public policy); Brookings Institution and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the U.S. Build your skills and expertise and leverage your research skills, analytical abilities, and knowledge of social issues. Network and consider gaining international experience through internships, fellowships, or research collaborations.

**Disclaimer: This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.**

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com with the subject line Off the Edge

**Eligibility:** Assessment beginning with the scores of either NID DAT Prelims, UCEED, or the BITS Design Aptitude Test (BITSDAT).  
**Deadline:** January 31  
For details visit https://www.bitsdesign.edu.in/

**The University of Sheffield, the U.K.,** invites applications for its M.Sc. Human Nutrition course starting in September 2025. International

Postgraduate Taught Merit Scholarships are available.  
**Eligibility:** Holders of a three- or four-year bachelor’s degree with minimum 55 % in a relevant subject from a recognised university. Overall IELTS score of 6.5 (with 6 in each component).  
Details at https://t.ly/PrUoj

**Badruka School of Management (BSM),** Hyderabad, invites

applications for its two-year, full-time residential Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) programme for the academic session 2025-2027.  
**Eligibility:** Class 10 and 12 from a recognised board, UG/PG degree in any discipline from a recognised institution; Qualifying scores in CAT, GMAT XAT or MAT  
More information at https://t.ly/wXesN



## Make it count

Tips for students to make the most of their internships

Varun Satia

The Union Budget 2024-25 has allocated ₹19,000 crore to create 30 lakh internships over the next two years and also requires India’s top 500 companies to provide internships. While this aims to address unemployment issues and equip youngsters with real-world experience, the success of this initiative hinges on more than just corporate compliance.

For interns, this is an opportunity to lay the foundation for a meaningful career. Making the most of this scheme will require focus, initiative, and a proactive approach from both interns and organisations.

Here are a few things that students can do to take advantage of this scheme:

**Be clear:** The first day as an intern is critical to establish clarity about your role and responsibilities. Take the initiative to ask questions about project objectives, timelines, and expectations. Summarise these discussions in writing to ensure alignment with your supervisor. This not only helps you stay focused but also signals your professionalism and commitment.

**Be curious:** An internship is an opportunity to learn from seasoned professionals. Take every chance to ask thoughtful questions and understand how your tasks fit into the

organisation’s broader goals. Go beyond your immediate responsibilities to explore the industry’s trends and challenges. This will help you build a deeper understanding of the field.

**Be proactive:** The most impactful interns are those who don’t wait for instructions but actively seek ways to contribute. Whether it is proposing solutions to existing challenges or suggesting new ideas, your initiative reflects a results-oriented mindset. If you find yourself with downtime, volunteer for additional tasks or explore areas where you can bring fresh insights. This not only builds your credibility but also shows your alignment with the organisation’s goals.

tion’s goals.

**Build relationships:** Internships are as much about networking as they are about skill development. Use this time to connect with colleagues across teams, participate in company activities, and seek mentorship. Building professional relationships creates a support system that could prove invaluable throughout your career. These connections often lead to long-term opportunities, and the trust you cultivate can have a lasting impact.

**Be professional:** Treat your role with the same level of seriousness and professionalism as a full-time position. Be punctual, adhere to deadlines, and maintain a high standard of quality in your work. Demonstrating ownership over your tasks showcases your reliability and could lead to positive recommendations, or even a full-time role.

**Use technology:** Leverage your understanding of technology to offer innovative solutions. Whether it is streamlining a process, enhancing a social media campaign, or introducing emerging tech trends, use your skills to contribute to the organisation in ways that make you stand out.

**Be aware of the big picture:** It is easy to become absorbed in day-to-day tasks, but don’t lose sight of how your work contributes to the company’s overarching objectives. Understanding the strategic impact of your efforts not only adds depth to your experience but also positions you as someone who thinks beyond their immediate role.

Use your internship to gain critical experience, develop meaningful relationships, and showcase your potential. The future of work is collaborative, dynamic, and demanding. An internship is your entry point; make it count.

The writer is Founder and CEO, Kraftshala.

### SAVE THE DATE

**Admissions**  
**BITS Design School (BITSDES)** invites applications for its four-year residential Bachelor of Design (Honours) programme, which has five pathways: Physical Product Design, Digital Product Design (UX/UI), Design Research and Insights, Experience Design, and Visual Design.



