

INTERVIEW Q&A

Q1: Deepali, tell us a little bit about yourself.

Ans: My name is Deepali Mangalam. I have completed my BA and MA in English Literature from the University of Allahabad. I have also earned my BEd degree and CTET certificate in the years 2024 and 2023 respectively. I love ***reading, writing, listening to music, watching K-dramas**, playing badminton with my dad whenever I have the time. The qualities that I would consider to be **my strengths are: empathy, patience, strong communication skills, ability to adapt quickly and effectively to different situations**. My passion for teaching has been inspired in part from my love for literature and my desire to share it with students, and in part from seeing the family members who are teachers and educators themselves--my grandparents, my aunts and my uncles.

Q2: What inspired you to choose this profession/subject?

Ans: I have many teachers in my family. My grandfather, my maternal grandmother, my aunt, and my uncles are teachers. Growing up I have felt their influence deeply and personally. I love reading, I love writing, and I definitely love teaching. I have had the honor to be taught by teachers and professors who inspired in me a passion for the profession, and made me realize how fulfilling and rewarding it can be. You get to make a big difference all while growing and learning yourself.

Q3: What makes you a good fit for AFS Bamrauli?

Ans: I believe I will be a good fit for AFS Bamrauli because I have had the privilege to be a part of the institution for 2 years as a student and be familiar with its values and ethics. And as a teacher, I bring my unique set of skills and qualities that I am confident in. I am meticulous, a quick learner, and I challenge myself to constantly improve and evolve. I also have good interpersonal skills and it helps me excel in situations that require teamwork.

Q4: You have no teaching experience. How will you be a good choice?

Ans: There is a saying that goes **"The expert in anything was once a beginner"**. While I may not have the expertise that comes with a formal teaching experience just yet, **I believe I would be able to bring a fresh approach to the classroom. What I mean is that I myself was a student until very recently, and I would also be quite closer in age to the students compared to senior teachers, and it allows me to have a better understanding of what the students really want and how they think and behave. I would bring in the factor of experimentation that is often missing in the teaching methods of teachers who on account of having taught the same material for many years, have gotten used to a fixed pattern that the students may or may not find captivating.** Also, I think I can count on my strengths like: **empathy, patience, strong communication skills, and my ability to learn & adapt quickly and effectively**. As a freshly qualified candidate I do have to start somewhere and it would be an honour if my alma mater is where I get to begin my teaching career. Besides, it would be a great opportunity to observe and learn through colleagues who were once my teachers.

Q5: How will you manage a class with problem children?

Ans: **I believe that good teaching commences when the teacher can extend to the students, unconditional patience and a judgement free space for communication.** Students that display disruptive behaviour are often children who are dealing with either emotional, behavioural, or intellectual difficulties.

There is always an underlying cause. And I believe that **addressing the root causes, providing support, and collective reformative effort** by students, parents and teachers all together can make a big difference.

Q6: Will you be able to work on your voice modulation? Will you be able to command discipline?

Ans: Throughout school & college, I have held positions like class prefect, cultural coordinator, school editor, etc. I used to host and give speeches during important functions, I was also responsible for planning, organization, and discipline a lot of the times. Through these positions I have accumulated skills that I believe would help me in the classroom as a teacher as well.

I understand that voice modulation is a crucial skill for engaging students' attention, and I believe I would be able to do a good job. I will make sure I take regular feedback from students about my volume and make adjustments accordingly. Besides I will make sure that I make rounds among the students as I teach, I intend to keep my classroom very dynamic.

Talking about discipline, I believe that discipline comes easy when the students respect you and find you approachable; and when the general atmosphere is neither too intimidating nor too lax. I believe I am capable of fostering a very positive classroom environment where the students find me approachable enough to feel like I'm both their teacher and a friend. However, that does not mean I would allow them to be disrespectful under the guise of being friendly. I can strike a good balance between being strict and approachable. I am also quite confident in my teaching methods that I know will have the class so actively engaged that they will not find the time to be bored and thus get cheeky or disruptive.

Q7: Students have been using AI to do their writing assignments. What is your opinion on the use of AI?

Ans: AI is a great tool which when put to use for the right kind of tasks can really improve accuracy and efficiency. But as a teacher and a student of the Arts and Humanities stream, I am not in support of the way people have been using AI to do their writing assignments, dissertations, or even the simplest of tasks like drafting messages or emails. There are people generating novels, stories, poetry, paintings, and even music with AI. Arts & humanities encompass disciplines that explore human culture, creativity, and the human experience. **My question to people is "What are you trying to be free of? The living? The miraculous task of it? If a piece of computer code will be writing your poetry and the messages for your loved ones, you are dooming humanity towards a world with no imagination, no creativity, no soul or substance."** AI is better used in fields with data heavy, technical, scientific, or diagnostic tasks. Students can use AI to find & summarize research papers, generate quizzes and flashcards for revision, and other similar tasks that support learning instead of using AI to do their homework for them.

Q8: How will you integrate technology/innovative teaching methodologies into your class?

Ans: I'm a big fan of integrating technology & innovative teaching methods into traditional classrooms. I believe that by leveraging both multimedia resources and interactive teaching methods, we can bring literature to life in classrooms. I plan to incorporate in my teaching both physical and digital teaching aid, the smartboard; there are also many online tools and apps that use quizzes and gamification to help students learn their lessons better. And as for innovative classroom techniques, I would like to make use of methods that encourage active participation. For example, discussion groups, debates, flipped classrooms, in-class guided writing activities, helping students connect literary themes with real life situations etc.

Q9: How will you assist students facing learning difficulties?

Ans: If we talk about general learning difficulties in class, I would do my best to foster an environment that allows open communication and positive reinforcement. Every student is unique and has their own learning style. If a student is struggling, I would talk and try to pinpoint the specific areas they excel in and where they struggle; what is their learning style, is it auditory or visual? I would adjust my teaching methods to accommodate different learning styles and provide extra support if need be.

And if a student is dealing with learning disabilities that require professional help for example: dyslexia or dyscalculia, I would encourage and counsel the parents to seek professional help because to be honest getting professional help is often stigmatized in India. While the truth is that it is nothing to be afraid of.

Q10: Who is your favorite author and why? Which is your favorite work by them?

Ans: I like several authors and it's usually not easy for me to pick a single most favorite. But I guess I could say someone who comes top of mind is **Sylvia Plath (1932-1963)**. The American poet and author. She was diagnosed with clinical depression early on and despite an untimely death by suicide at the age of just 30, Plath gave us one of the most extraordinary bodies of work by a 20th century poet. She is a major figure in both the [confessional poetry](#) movement and the [literature](#) of the [women's movement](#) of the 1960s; some in the FM saw Plath as speaking for their experience. Her best-known works are the poetry collections: ***The Colossus and Other Poems (1960)***, ***Ariel (1965)***, and semi-autobiographical novel ***The Bell Jar***.

WHY IS SHE YOUR FAVOURITE?

What impresses me about Sylvia is how she used poetry to explore her own states of mind and touch upon incredibly personal themes of trauma, suffering, mental illness, death, her troubled relationship with her husband and her father, patriarchy, female subjugation, and a struggle for self-identity.

Her work can be shocking & disorienting in its rage and trauma. Her language is brutal, raw, angry, confrontational, and very often morbid. She was called a 'brutal poet' by a critic on account of her searing use of language & the raw depiction of intense emotions and experiences. **Yet despite it all, her works are also empowering in the display of female rage & wit, and in the critique of societal structures that oppress women.**

WHICH IS YOUR FAVOURITE POEM/WORK BY HER?

There is this excerpt from her novel ***The Bell Jar*** that resonates with me a lot and that struck a chord too close to home. The excerpt starts with the protagonist saying how she can see her life branching out in front of her like a fig tree laden with fat purple figs that each represented a wonderful future: one fig was a husband with a happy home and children, one fig was a famous poet, one was a brilliant professor, one an Olympic champion and so on. Then she goes on to say how saw herself sitting under the tree starving to death, because she could not decide which fig she would choose. She wanted all of them but choosing one meant losing all the others. And as she sat indecisive, the figs began to wrinkle and go black and one by one they dropped to the ground at her feet.

The excerpt is a metaphor for indecisiveness, something that is the cause of many an existential crisis. The more our ambitions, greater is the dilemma about making the correct choice. If you spend your whole youth thinking about which fig (life path) to choose, by the time you make your decision, most of your options and opportunities will be gone.