



## PROGRESS REPORT (APRIL 2020)

OUR NEWEST IN 2020  
COMPUTER LABS  
VIDYA GYAN "SUPER 20"  
SCHOLARS TO SCHOOLERS

LIBRARY FOR LEARNING  
ADOPT A SCHOOL  
PENCIL TO POWER  
SAVINGS TO SECURE

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VIDYA GYAN (USA): 501 c(3); Tax Exempt

VIDYA GYAN INDIA : 80 G Income Tax Exempt

**In India:** Interacting with children during recent school visits is the single most important highlight. The children in the rural government schools are curious, eager, and talented as kids anywhere. They have the potential to excel and learn given the resources and proper guidance. Their parents are less-well educated and many teachers not as committed to, or accountable for, kid's learning. Yet, these kids appear content not knowing what can be better and different. Our school visits were aimed at, (a) assessing the state of our continuing initiatives, overall education, and the impact of Vidya Gyan's limited resources, (b) executing new projects discussed below, and (d) identifying school(s) in the NCR region for friends/donors to visit while in India without driving long hours.

**Computer Labs:** The Digital Divide in rural India is that most people have a mobile phone (not necessarily a smart phone) but fewer have laptops/computers. To the best of our knowledge, no government primary school in Saharanpur district (perhaps across India) has access to computer literacy. Thus, children are deprived of learning computer skills, a lost opportunity even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century "New India." Why? Make your own assumptions!



Vidya Gyan opened two computer labs in February 2020. First in a rural middle school with about 200 children (Dubhar) and second in a primary school with over 250 children (Biharigadh). Each lab is fully furnished with at least a dozen computers (with an NGO Computer Shiksha offering training and hardware).

**Teacher Recognition:** Our gratitude to the teachers who let Vidya Gyan reach a milestone of nearly 1000 schoolgirls with Sukanya Savings account as a future financial security and emphasizing girls education. It was also an opportunity for teachers to have an unfiltered conversation with the Chief Development Officer who presented Sukanya awards on behalf of Vidya Gyan and was keenly interested in finding out the issues faced by schools.



**Vidya Gyan Super 20 (VGS 20):** Part of our initiative, [“555: Dare to Dream and Transform.”](#) the teachers from **5 schools**, selected to receive **grants of Rs. 5 lacs** over **5 years**, unanimously named the program SUPER 20. The competitively selected 20 students in each VGS 20 will be supervised, mentored, and guided in an “after school” program by teachers for one hour each day. “Every Child Matters,” but every child has different learning ability, motivation, potential and willingness. The focus of VGS 20 is on deeper learning, test taking skills, communication ability, and time management etc. The goals of this pilot include transformation of learning and holistic development of 20 motivated students with potential to excel.

Vidya Gyan will provide necessary resources, monitor progress, and offer advice but VGS 20 will be teacher directed and student centered. Every child and his/her parents will be responsible and accountable for their learning. Vidya Gyan will offer a stipend for a 5<sup>th</sup> grader(preferably girl) as a student mentor every day.

Five rural schools (at Khandlana, Dubhar Kishanpur, Umahi, Ramkhedi, and Mirjapur Pujneki) were chosen because of voluntary (after school) time commitment by teachers. The girls will be given higher priority while selecting students for VGS20. We must underscore that about 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the grant will be used for the greater good of the school for infrastructure and instructional tools to honor our commitment to ‘Every Child Matters.’

The VGS 20s will begin in July after the summer break. However, we are regularly discussing and planning via conference calls for a successful launch. We welcome donors to adopt one or more VGS20s and for future expansion to let more teachers dream and transform.

**Regional Competition:** Six children from each of 13 schools came together for a written test on General Knowledge and a drawing competition on preselected themes. It was aimed to foster inter-school collaboration and a competitive spirit among children. We are pleased that children worked hard and were in true spirit to outdo each other. All participants were given a gift and the winners in both activities were awarded special trophies. Of the 3 best drawings, we are partial to the one on right with a focus on Vidya Gyan’s due emphasis on Beti Padhao (Educate Daughter).

**OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE TO TEACHERS, DONORS, AND FRIENDS FOR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF VIDYA GYAN IN IMPROVING CHILDREN’S EDUCATION**

# VIDYA GYAN SUPER 20

Children in Rural Primary Schools



**TRANSFORMING EDUCATION**

**Who Dared to Dream?**

- 5 Government Schools**
- 5 Years Duration**
- 5 Lacs ₹ (~\$7500/ school)**

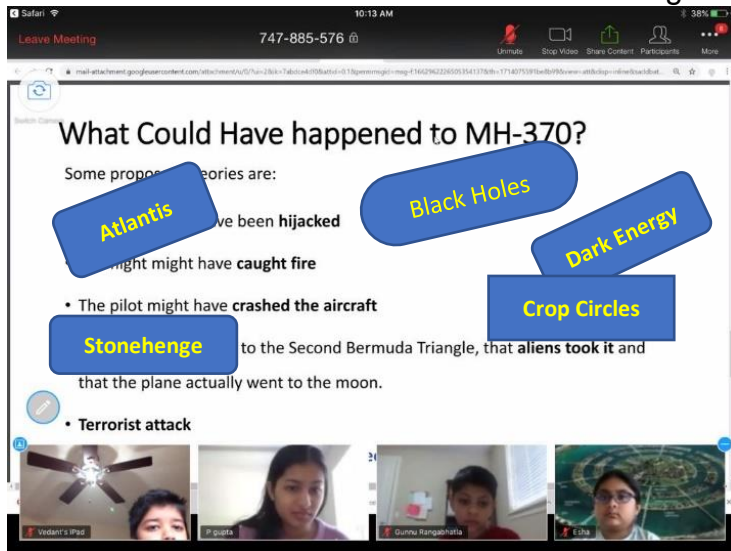
**What?**

**After School → Holistic Development**  
**Teacher Directed → Student Focused**



**In the United States:** Our commitment to “Every Child Matters,” has no geographical boundaries. While our efforts in the U.S. are not as expansive yet, our two projects are:

**Scholars to Schoolers:** Led by our Youth Ambassadors (the Scholars) offering outreach camps to the Schoolers became even more critical during the school closure due to COVID-19. Started as a pilot in the summer 2019, the Scholars have engaged Schoolers in three online Science outreach camps in the short three weeks. A camp on Creative Writing is scheduled starting April 13. A camp on Mathematics followed by one on Biology are under planning. What an AMAZING diversity of subjects!!!



The screenshot is an example of the Schoolers (grades 3-5) presenting a topic of their choice on Unsolved Mysteris of Science. Every topic by them was well researched, and presentation engaging, and organized. The Schoolers in the outreach camps included about 50 boys and girls including from as far as India and England.

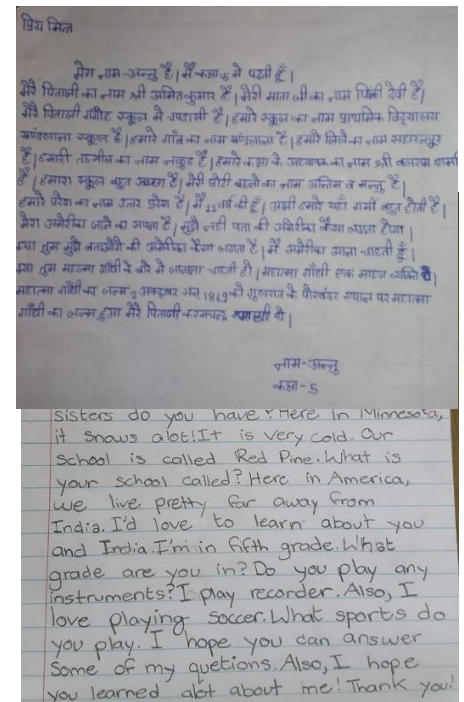
According to Aayush Gupta, one of the

Scholars, “the word “Kahoot” (an online interactive quiz game) is enough to create an aura of excitement in the Zoom session.”

Speaking on behalf of children and parents, Vidya Gyan applauds the Scholars for their passion for teaching and patience for responding to curious questions by the Schoolers. Vidya Gyan is also grateful for the fundraising by these Scholars. While the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 continues, Vidya Gyan’s Youth Ambassadors are ready to offer more learning opportunities.

**Bridging the Cultures:** Kids being kids everywhere means that they are more similar than different; their curiosity has no boundaries, and are eager to learn about other cultures. Vidya Gyan and Red Pine Elementary School initiated a pilot program- exchange of letters between kids ~12,000 km apart. Vidya Gyan translated letters from English to Hindi for kids in India’s schools, and Hindi to English for the U.S. kids. The first attempt included introductory letters which created more than expected curiosity and interest.

This school year, we expanded it to include handwritten write ups about respective Independence days of the U.S. and India (July 4 and August 15), important festivals (Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter., and Diwali and Holi in India), and two leaders Gandhi and King. Vidya Gyan made presentations to the 4<sup>th</sup> graders at Red Pine about India’s culture. Similar efforts in India could not be completed this year due to extended school closing. However, the limited efforts indicate significant interest among the kids to continue the program and so our journey continues.....



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