

Views of Teachers on Worksheets

Akshatha S Belludi

Worksheets, which in pre-COVID-19 times were used very rarely and mostly as homework, gained prominence during school closures due to the pandemic. They were seen both by teachers as well as the Department of Education as the last option to ensure continuity of learning among students. The limitation of worksheets is that they cannot be used as a teaching tool. But worksheets proved to be a good option for reinforcing concepts learnt during the short periods when teachers could spend teaching their students either online or offline. In this article, I would like to give an account of a few of the teachers we work with and their experiences of using worksheets both as a tool for learning as well as for assessment.

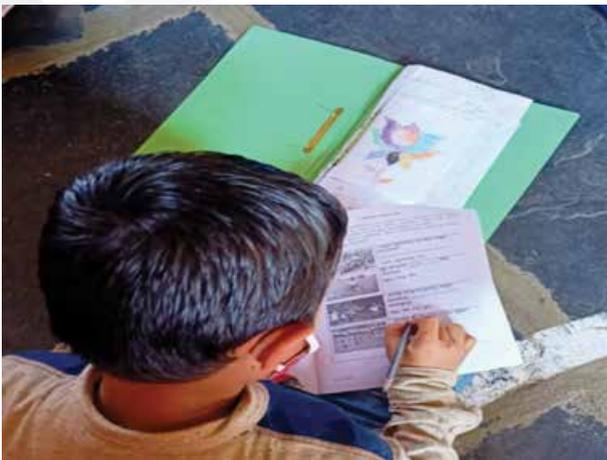
Yashoda Patil, Government Lower Primary School, Pampapathy Mandira, Gangavathi*

Our children loved receiving the worksheets and enjoyed filling them up since they were bored with writing in their notebooks. Worksheets also developed confidence among my students since we used to file the worksheets completed by them

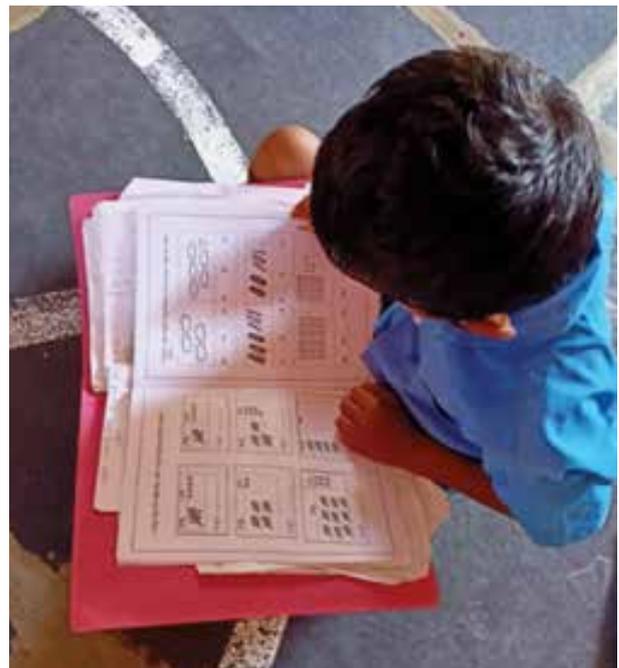
in their respective files. We maintained these files to assess their learning levels.

Worksheets generated a healthy competition among my students, who did their best to complete their worksheets. They still look at their files as something that they had accomplished by themselves. Worksheets helped us a lot to reinforce learning of basic learning outcomes among our students. My students were eager to receive the worksheets and return the completed worksheets to me. They enjoyed the worksheets which had activities for colouring and a lot of pictures. They found maths worksheets more interesting than the language ones, though I had to explain to them how to solve the problems since many of them could not understand the questions.

Another reason they enjoyed doing worksheets is that, since the children were not coming to school, their parents used to give them the responsibility of completing household chores. They used worksheets as an escape from the household chores!



A student busy filling out a worksheet to add it to his portfolio.



A student solving matching objects with numbers worksheet.

Pushpavathy N, Government Lower Primary School, Sangapura, Gangavathi

Initially, it was difficult to make our students understand how to use worksheets and we took the support of senior students who could read the worksheets and make the younger children understand what was expected. A few educated parents were able to help their children.

We also took the support of local youth groups in scaffolding the students' efforts in completing the worksheets which, in turn, helped them to achieve their learning goals. When they came back with their completed worksheets, we gave them feedback on how they could improve. Our students found it easier to complete maths worksheets than the language ones, over which they took time since they had forgotten how to read.

Using worksheets was a good experience during school closure, so we are planning to continue providing them. Our experience shows that working on worksheets will also help our students in preparing for competitive exams like the entrance exams of Navodaya and Morarji Desai schools.

Jayamma K, Government Lower Primary School, Guddada Camp, Gangavathi

We had to give our handwritten worksheets to our students since we did not have the resources for printing, nor could the parents of our students afford to get these worksheets photocopied. Children used to return the filled worksheets to us, and we realised that it was not my students but their parents and siblings who were completing these handwritten worksheets for them.

My handwritten worksheets were not too appealing for my students. Thanks to the workbooks provided by the Azim Premji Foundation, which our children found more attractive, the children began to take an interest and were eager to learn how to do the activities given in the workbooks. During the pandemic, my students were able to complete the workbooks of the previous grade as well as

a few worksheets from their current grade with some scaffolding. These workbooks supported my students to achieve at least a few of their grade-specific competencies.

Tippavva Ullatti, Government Model Higher Primary School, Hirejantkal, Gangavathi

Before the school closures, we used to give questions that children could easily find answers to from the textbook, but we found that with worksheets, we could set more practical and experiential questions. We were also able to introduce various themes to our children and make them learn in an engaging and meaningful way. This made parents participate in their children's learning because they could see what their children were able to accomplish and where they lagged behind. Regular conversations with the parents enabled them to understand what was expected of their children which also helped.

Children enjoy filling the worksheets which have more activities and less writing. Since most of the children of classes II and III had forgotten to read, they were not able to comprehend the instructions given in the worksheets and we had to explain how to complete the tasks. The children really enjoyed doing the worksheets. A child of class II felt a great sense of accomplishment when he handed over the worksheet to me. Other students told us how much they enjoyed filling in worksheets and asked us for more. Our worksheets had limitations – the pictures were not clear, and the children could not make out the illustrations – but with some help and support, they were able to complete these worksheets.

We found that worksheets foster group work and peer learning. This meant that we sometimes could not stop children from copying from each other's worksheets and helping their friends to complete their work! However, after analysing our assessment of the children's learning, the teachers have been able to decide what exactly to work on with the children.

**Gangavathi is a town in the Gangavathi taluk, Koppal district of Karnataka.*



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