

## English Access Micro Scholarship Program

English Access Micro Scholarship Program, in brief is Access or Access Program, which provides a foundation for English language skills to economically disadvantaged children primarily between the ages of 13 to 20 years old, through a platform of 2 years after-school (20 months' instruction) and intensive sessions. This program is supported by the Regional English Language Office (RELO), U.S. Embassy, New Delhi and U.S. Consulate, Chennai funded by Family Health International (FHI 360), a nonprofit human development organization based in North Carolina, through RELO. Currently, as many as 75 children in Mysore and Koppa, Karnataka has enrolled and has been experiencing a great deal of benefits from Access Program. Access Program helps students acquire proficiency and fluency in English language, effective communication skills and empowers them to learn the US culture along with their personal development through enhancement activities.

English Access Micro Scholarship Program is primarily designed to enhance the proficiency of school- going children in English language with focus on LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing). The program also focuses on ensuring holistic development of children through enhancement programs such as sessions on life-skills education, health and hygiene orientation, personality grooming, educational tours/exposure visits, community services, and the U.S. cultural orientation. This intervention also enables the children to explore possibilities of taking up higher studies in the U.S. educational institutions and also to take up jobs in the future.

SI No	Name of the School	Number of children	Place
1	Christ School Thandavapura	25	Mysore
2	Government School, Thandavapura	25	Mysore
3	Bharath Matha PU college, Koppa	25	Kushalnagar

This is the third Access project that is awarded to CSA by RELO, American centre, New Delhi. Earlier CSA has implemented English Access Micro Scholarship Program in Uttarahalli Government School, Bangalore which benefitted more than 100 students. After successful completion of the first phase of the program, CSA was awarded the second phase in July 2014 with an up-scaling model which benefitted 225 students (VIII Class) from four schools in three locations in Bangalore Urban.

Access Program follows a selected textbook- "Our World" from National Geographic Cengage portfolio as recommended by RELO New Delhi, which is currently being used by all ongoing Access programs in India. "Our World" has a global appeal, a lot of teacher support material, its content spans from various interest areas and is distinctly American in tone. There are 9 supplementary readers with this textbook along with an interactive software, Story time DVD, Exam view CD, and an assessment book. The RELO team has recommended the usage of the latest TED Talk app by NGL to bolster the content even further. In addition to this, the Access Resource Centre is equipped, with interesting and well-illustrated books from publishers like- Cengage, National Book Trust and Scholastic, along with extensive use of materials from the American English website. Teachers are encouraged to use a number of authentic materials from online and

print media, audio/video clips, supplementary readers, relevant projects, and VOA Special English. Access students are given exposure to a wide variety of eclectic language learning material and maximum opportunities to practice their language skills.

The Access Classes are organized thrice a week- Thursday to Saturday. The weekend class is of two hours while the remaining two classes are for one and a quarter hour, which eventually comes up to 4.5 hours/week. Each Access classroom is digitally equipped and students are encouraged to use the computer/multimedia facilities at the host-institutions.

The Access faculty conducts regular formative assessments to evaluate the performance of students, maintain individual portfolios, and monitor classroom participation. Through various formal and informal activities, students are given several opportunities to develop their English language skills without the burden of any formal exam system.

As part of the enhancement activities, students are given opportunities to know about the U.S. Culture through celebration of prominent American holidays, so that they can go beyond the surface-level perceptions about the United States and appreciate the heterogeneous religious beliefs, practices and terrain which make up the country. As India is also known for its diversity, the students are encouraged to draw parallels from their own culture. Famous American personalities from politics, sports, business and media worlds are introduced through fun activities, audio/video clips, discussions and presentations. Our team welcomes any support/ideas from the RELO and PAS Chennai to strengthen this component through visits by visiting American Officials, Fulbright ETAs and specialists.

Enhancement activities are scheduled with a theme for each month – January for MLK day, February for Black History, March for Women’s Day, April–June for environment related activities, July–August to know more about American and Indian independence movement, September onwards for Teachers’ Day, Diwali, Halloween, Thanksgiving, etc. Important global days dedicated to Tourism, Human Rights, Disabled, AIDS and Refugees are also discussed to develop their wider understanding of the world.

American protest music, jazz, theatre activities, public speaking, and dance forms like Hip-hop are used to add elements of edutainment. Clips from inspiring movies, documentaries and television shows are used to provide maximum language exposure. Students also participate in discussions and debates on common issues across the globe such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, health and hygiene, terrorism, etc. Workshops on conflict resolution, development of communal harmony, life skills, personality development, media-literacy, etc. are also provided. The students are engaged in community service projects in each program quarter as per their interest. Cleanliness drive, financial literacy classes and social/environmental campaigns are some of the undertaken community service projects.

CSA organizes exposure trip to CHRIST (Deemed to be) University campus where zero waste management status is maintained. Students are also given the opportunity to visit places like Mysore palace, Vrindavan garden, Mysore zoo, planetarium and science center.