

Jolly Phonics & Grammar



How this school got their non-native students reading and writing in English

Budding Minds International School: A Case Study

Jolly Phonics at Budding Minds Int. School

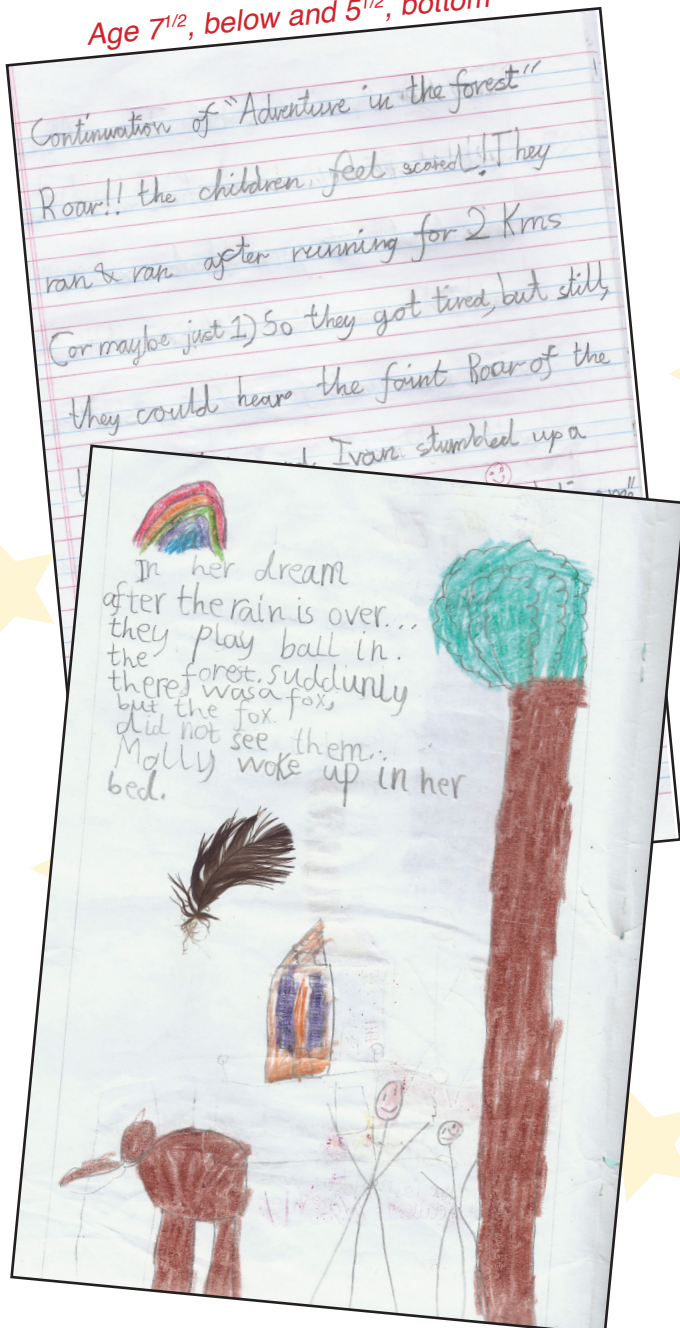
Budding Minds International School, situated in South India, started its journey as a playschool in 2004 before gradually evolving and opening its doors to upper grades in 2010.



A warm and caring community with an inspiring learning environment that instils a 'can do' attitude, there are 390 students and over 50 members of staff.

The school's vision: 'We drive excellence to facilitate core competency and create student leaders for the future world'.

Age 7^{1/2}, below and 5^{1/2}, bottom



By Sarasa Principal



Many teachers and principals have asked me how our students are displaying such tremendous confidence and flair in reading and writing. Looking back, I am truly glad to have been introduced to Jolly Phonics ten years ago.

English teaching has always been challenging in countries where it is a second language. I did not simply want my children memorising flashcards; we were looking to create a passion for reading and writing that would lead to stronger skills.

Using the Jolly Phonics programme, I am amazed to see how many words my four year olds are able to read and spell. Very quickly, they are moving on to full sentences and are able to enjoy reading and writing independently. A whole world has opened up to them and they are having fun; it is a pleasure to see their excitement at being able to figure out words on their own.

Jolly Phonics has been easy to use and understand, with the effort put in from our teachers being well worth it. It has catered to the needs of our children, whilst differentiation through the multi-sensory approach has allowed certain children to catch up. Learning is facilitated and the transitions through the school years are made easy as we've progressed in to the Jolly Grammar series, which has played a significant role in helping our children to build strong linguistic skills and reach higher standards.



The teacher's story

By Arthi Grade 1 Teacher



Children already possess a strong foundation that is laid out in pre-primary. With knowledge of many basic sounds, they enthusiastically pick up digraphs and start blending multisyllabic words with ease, introducing them in to their writing.

Jolly Phonics has enhanced the children's reading fluency, with better comprehension of texts leaving them enthused over reading books. This first step in to becoming independent readers assists them in also becoming independent writers, experimenting and expressing their feelings in the form of letters, poems, stories and other written passages.

From here on, it was a breeze to introduce alternatives spellings for digraph sounds, such as <igh>, <y> and <i_e> for /ie/. I was initially sceptical how easily children would be able to pick these up but, by building systematically on their existing knowledge, they made remarkable progress in understanding and applying these new alternatives. Wow.

Following on from Jolly Phonics, we have introduced Jolly Grammar. It has helped to refine and enhance the children's sentence writing, and I can see them getting creative with their usage of words. Actions, colours and games have helped in introducing parts of speech and parsing sentences. Progressing through the programme, it has helped our young minds become authors who can pen down their thoughts creatively in a variety of forms. The way Jolly Phonics has helped them to inculcate and ingrain good reading, writing and listening skills is adorable.



By Renita Pre-primary 1 Teacher



The last eight years teaching with Jolly Phonics have been a great experience. I was first introduced to the programme as a mother, before using it

at school with four year old children. Its multi-sensory approach made the language learning fun and accessible to every type of learner. Children were able to relate and connect sounds to words, identifying where in the word the sound is made. Aided by the stories, songs and actions, children were enchanted and found learning to read and write a magical experience.

Initially, children were introduced to the sound through a story, using a unique action and song to go with it. Within a short time, we could see children blending sounds together, reading out words on their own, and eventually falling in love to read signs and texts around the classroom.

Throughout the programme, children are also introduced to a list of 'tricky words'—non-decodable sight words. Combined with new spelling patterns and grammatical rules, children were able to read more complex books as well as pen down their thoughts in the form of stories.

We have enjoyed carrying out a variety of activities throughout the year, such as role plays, practical letter formation activities, treasure hunts, displays and other projects. All of these have really helped give me great success in teaching children of all abilities to read and write.

The teacher's story

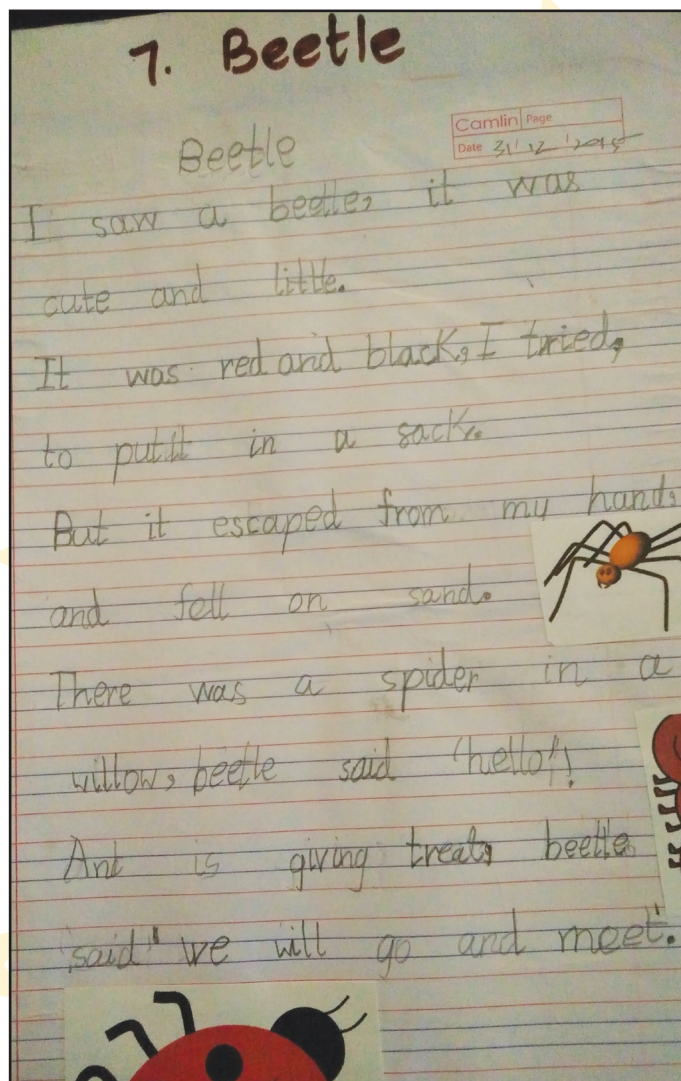
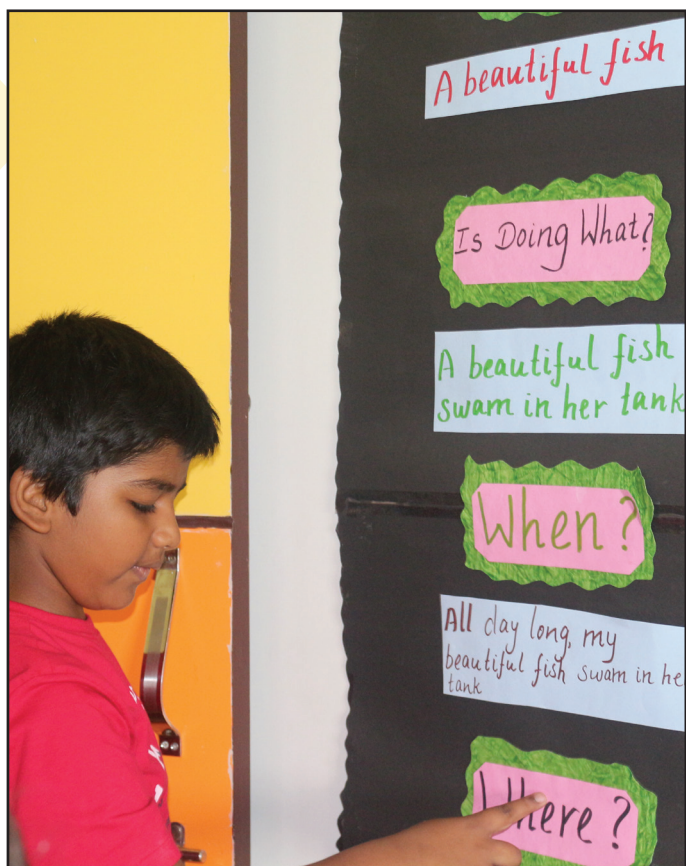
By Anita Grade 3 Teacher



When I was at school, I always enjoyed the part of English that gave structure to the language; namely grammar and spelling. Yet I was always aware at how dreary and, dare I say, boring grammar and spelling would appear to the majority of children; particularly for non-native learners like us, who do not 'naturally' acquire these grammatical skills.

When I joined Budding Minds as an English tutor, I was apprehensive of how I could take this dry aspect of the language to the learners. Then I was introduced to a whole new world of Jolly Grammar, and it was a revelation. Just one quick glance through the books made me realise why there was no hesitancy or aversion to grammar amongst my learners—who had been using them for the last few years—like I had seen growing up. Jolly Grammar truly makes this teaching an enjoyable experience.

The colourful illustrations explaining different grammatical concepts in a child-friendly manner have been crafted with a lot of expertise, serving the twin purpose of keeping my learners enthused whilst effectively introducing and reinforcing key



concepts in grammar, spelling and punctuation. The children not only looked forward to grammar lessons, but seemed to never get enough of it!

The systematic approach to the programme is another key virtue. Each lesson is progressively designed in such a manner that it builds on the prior lesson, maintaining a sense of cohesion which makes the entire learning process more impactful. The multi-sensory approach also caters to the varied learners within my classroom. Supplementing these methodologies with my own methods really helped me to maximise the impact of these lessons on my learners.

The Teacher's Book is a treasure trove. It not only displays all of the content knowledge to cover a variety of topics—verb tenses, word classes, proper adjectives, homophones, etc.—but it also gives complete lesson plans, down to the most minute of details; questions to guide the children, for example. Simply reading the relevant page would be enough to walk in to my class and ensure an effective, fun-filled grammar lesson.

What parents have to say

I have thoroughly enjoyed seeing my children learning to read and write with the help of Jolly Phonics. I was a little apprehensive initially on what I thought was an unconventional method, and was unsure whether my children would really be able to write stories by the end of the year, as mentioned by the teachers.

I soon realised that Jolly Phonics is an effective programme helping my children to learn in a creative and fun way. I was amazed to see them identifying the letter sounds; sometimes I am tested too! Gradually, they started to blend the letters as well as be introduced to tricky words, which has increased their confidence. Before the end of the year, they were able to read higher level books as well as write sentences. Absolutely unimaginable during my school era, it has been fascinating to see them express their thoughts through words. Thank you Jolly Phonics!

Sangitha, mother to Pranav and Deetya



Our daughter's interest in reading and discovering words everywhere around her environment has been really enjoyable. Recognising the letter sounds and blending words has given

her the confidence in reading sentences. She is enthusiastic about reading and shows no signs of frustration. Building on this initial knowledge that has strongly been set has allowed her to start reading books independently.

This immersion to reading built her curiosity to explore further, eventually using her imagination to create her own pieces of writing which has become seamless. This has improved further through the introduction of grammar, spelling and punctuation lessons. We have been so impressed by the Jolly Phonics and Grammar programme which has been a wonderful way of learning with lots of fun!

Divya, mother to Isha in Grade 1



English is a tricky language, and to begin with as a parent it was difficult for me to understand the concept of phonics. Yet as my daughter Madhumita started to discuss the sounds taught at school, I could see how well she started to blend letters and pronounce words without any difficulty.

Writing soon became easy for her. I am a bit jealous of these kids; had Jolly Phonics been taught to us in our school days, English would have been much more fun to learn!

I can proudly say that because of Jolly Phonics, she is easily further ahead in reading and writing of older children at other schools. We are very happy and impressed with the programme which is an effective and fun way of learning English.

Krithika, mother to Madhumita in Grade 1

What parents have to say



Jolly Phonics has revealed a whole new world to my child, taking a huge step in to reading and developing an enormous interest in it; she is now a book-nut!

Her appeal for reading started when she first began to blend initial letter sounds during kindergarten. Building on these by exploring alternative spellings, her reading and writing skills enhanced and she was capable of reading and writing bigger words. I was dumbfounded, and it encouraged me to collect appropriate books to facilitate her reading habit; she now has a home library with many genres.

Moving up the grades, she has been introduced to Jolly Grammar. It is a child-friendly, fun-filled way of learning grammar, spelling and punctuation that has helped her to understand how language works. These concepts have been expanded and refined, allowing her to implement them within her written work. I am so thankful at how she has transformed in to a book-lover and writer; Jolly Phonics rocks!

Padma, mother to Mathirakshana in Grade 7

We are thrilled with the progress that our daughter has made with the Jolly Phonics programme. She has quickly learnt and understood the connection between letters and their sounds and is able to identify these; learning has been made effortless.

As soon as the first group of sounds were taught, she was able to make three-letter words. We used magnetic letters at home and I was amazed to see her forming words quickly using the sounds she had learnt. Sometimes I could see that she was able to form big words which were phonetically correct! Learning the sounds and how to blend has made reading fun and improved the confidence in her.

Sujatha, mother to Anwitha in Pre-primary 2



Moderately autistic with limited eye contact and sensory inputs, I was anticipating my son Vishal may have issues in learning the letter sounds. Yet his joy knew no bounds once blending was introduced. Pattern-making is his strength and he loved blending sounds together as words. He quickly started to read independently.

Though poor motor skills were a challenge in creating legible writing, struggling with letter formation and how to correctly hold a pencil, he was able to express his thoughts by the second term; a major milestone that we all cherish.

He has developed a love for reading and writing. He can write different texts already; I am often stunned by his ease at using adjectives and adverbs. Such confidence that has been instilled at a young age speaks volumes of their learning for the years ahead; thank you Jolly Phonics!

Ponlatha, mother to Vishal in Grade 2