

## Projects For Happiness – Literacy Catch-up Programme

RE:ED main goals are to give underprivileged students equal opportunity in education and give them the chance to escape the poverty cycle. This was done through literacy catch-up program by having one-to-one and small group tutoring on every Saturday in SK Setapak Jaya.

Throughout the year, we did not organize other fund-raising efforts as we received sufficient funds to acquire the materials needed. However, we are planning to fund raise through simplygiving.com which is a peer-to-peer fundraising website.

RE:ED organizes literacy catch-up program by organizing extra classes every Saturday. This is done through one-to-one or small group tutoring. As every child is different, and each having their own different needs, we believe that giving each child individual attention will be more effective for them to learn. The students we tutor are from SK Setapak Jaya, and they struggle with English literacy. RE:ED tutors the student on reading, phonetics, spelling, grammar and vocabulary.

This project benefits the low-income underachieving students in SK Setapak Jaya who are academically and economically at-risk and have the greatest risk for behavioral problems. This could also help the teachers in the school, as RE:ED focuses on giving attention to individual students, which is something that is challenging to achieve in normal everyday classes. However, since the students come from a disadvantaged background, we faced some cultural barriers.

The students came from a low-socioeconomic background and below-average school grades. Therefore, the extra classes we organize for them is not seem as a priority to some of the students. Hence, some of the students would often not be present at most of the classes. This also causes the extra classes to be cancelled when the attendance is low. Furthermore, we faced difficulty in asking the community, especially the parents to cooperate, as the classes are not compulsory and it takes up their weekend.

Our curriculum worked well with the students, as we could see an improvement through the assessment given. The curriculum was also well received by the tutors as it gives them a systematic way to assess their student's progress. We even taught the students by using games to make learning English more fun for them, and this was well received by the students.

In the long term we want to achieve the following; decreasing percentages of truancy, absenteeism, discipline problems, and increasing retention. We would also want to increase students' grade point average and instill better attitudes of students towards school, schoolwork and learning. We will sustain our project in the school by continuously working together with the school, teachers and the students. We would also continue to assess, check and record the improvement or progress of the students and continuously spread awareness on the importance of English literacy. In the future, we hope that the tutors would be able to be involved in one-to-one tutoring with the students in the longer term, even beyond primary school.

The RE:ED project enable volunteers to contribute their knowledge, kindness and their experience in learning to the students who need help in their studies. In the process of one-to-one teaching between the volunteer and the student, we understand that just simply teaching English is not enough. Thus, fun activities were also conducted; enable the students to be engaged in learning English. The activities prepared and conducted by the volunteers enhanced the student's interest in learning English. The students were happy and had a lot of fun while learning at the same time.

The students also gain confident in speaking and writing too. Some activities conducted increased their speaking skills, vocabulary and understanding simple passage from simple stories. They are happy and their confidence level had increased whenever they learned something new and complete their given task.

Hence, the RE:ED project contribute short-term happiness for the student by conducting fun and interesting learning environment for the student to learn English. As for the long-term, the activities enable the student to gain confident in learning English. This could lead them to have long-term happiness.

We think that our project had changed our view about the world. This project shows us how important it is to help those students who are in need. This project gave us a chance to help the students to learn interactively and engagingly in order to increase their literacy in English. It also shows us how poverty is a vicious cycle that will continuously burden the individuals born in the system, and it is up to us to help them achieve a quality education that they deserved.

Personal statement:

"Imagine for a minute all the things you could not do if you could not read... That's what we're trying to prevent."

- Yo'el Wong