



**DEVI
SANSTHAN**
Dignity Education
Vision International

Leave no one behind

dignityeducation.org



45^{DAYS} to FLN CHALLENGE

foundational literacy & numeracy in record time





Foreword: A Radical Rethink

Is it possible for children to acquire FLN skills in months not years?

Is it possible for children to learn by working in pairs, rather passively listening to the teacher?

Is it possible for children and teachers alike to be in a joyful learning environment, reducing stress for both?

We believe it is.

In our pilot project in Shamli district, Uttar Pradesh, we have caught glimpses of this vision being realised. We've seen children who haven't learned to read in years of school acquiring literacy swiftly. Grade 2 students doing four-digit subtraction problems. Teachers astonished by what their children can achieve, when the children make questions and ask each other rather than looking to the teacher for answers. And all with only 45 minutes per day over just 45 days!

We want to invite you to try this free, revolutionary program, Accelerating Learning for All (ALfA), in your own context. The 45-Days-to-FLN challenge invites schools, districts, states, and even whole countries to make a concerted push for

universal literacy. We will be there with you each step of the way, from the research design to the teacher training, from providing learning materials to sharing a framework for supportive supervision.

The old system has been failing our children. Even before the Covid crisis, over half of ten-year-olds in low-and-middle-income countries around the world were unable to read. The pandemic has set our children back even further. But with every challenge comes an opportunity: as the old system's cracks have grown gaping wide, we have the chance to build something new and better.

A paradigm shift – in our pedagogy, our processes and our policies – is urgently needed to ensure every child acquires key foundational skills. We can't wait for gradual improvements (10% changes), we need a dramatic acceleration in the rate of learning (10x changes).

Reach out to our team today to discuss how to take up the 45-Days-to-FLN challenge in your context. You will be amazed what your children can achieve!

Warm regards,



Sunita Gandhi

Founder & CEO, DEVI Sansthan

Dignity Education Vision International

Chief Advisor, Academics, City Montessori School (World's largest school)

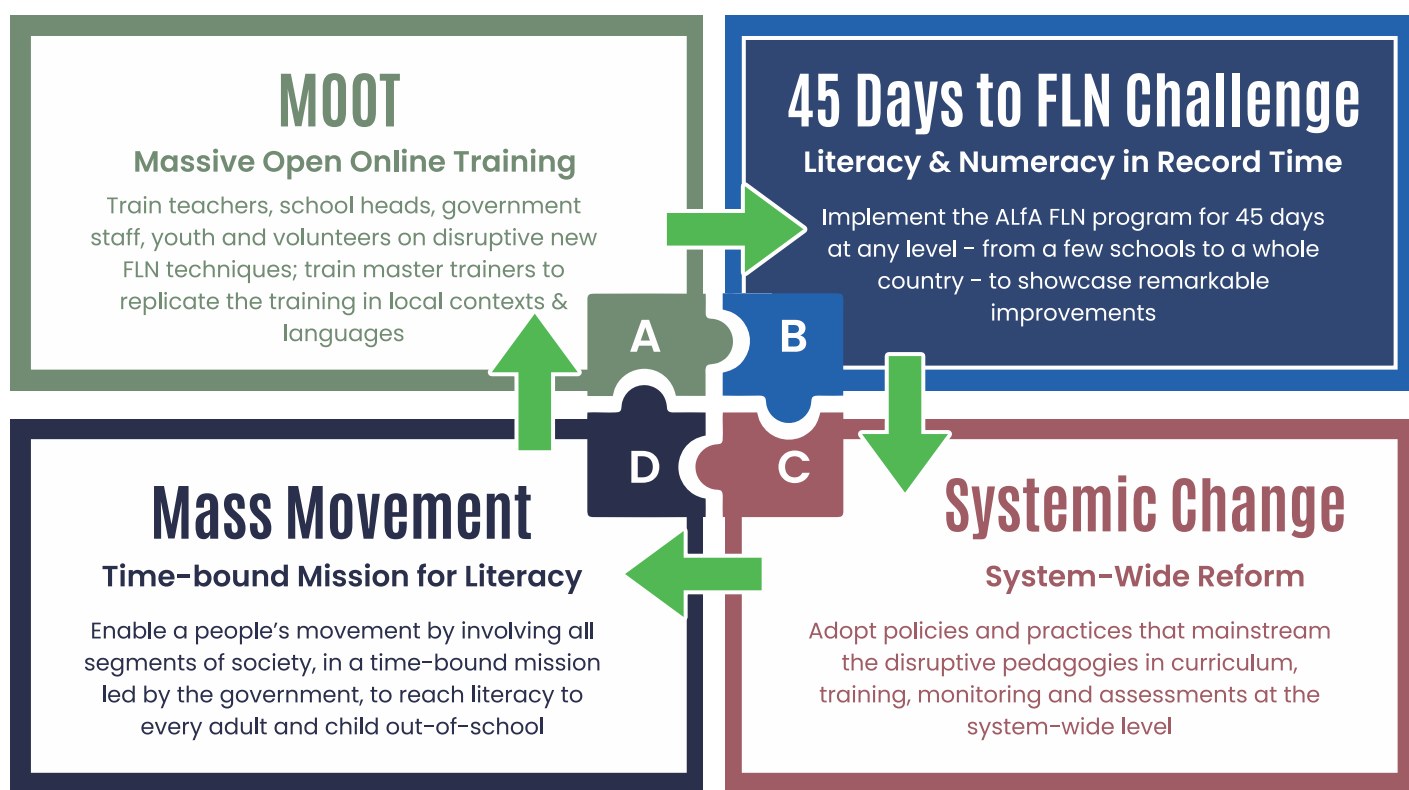
Former Economist, The World Bank, USA

PhD (Physics), Cambridge University, UK



A CALL TO ACTION

FOUR ACTS, ONE CAUSE:
UNIVERSAL LITERACY FOR ALL



Scan the QR to view other reports and videos on these four acts.

45-Days-to-FLN Challenge

Experience the power of the Accelerating Learning for All program in a school-based research program, enabling children to learn to read swiftly and joyfully.

ALfA Benefits

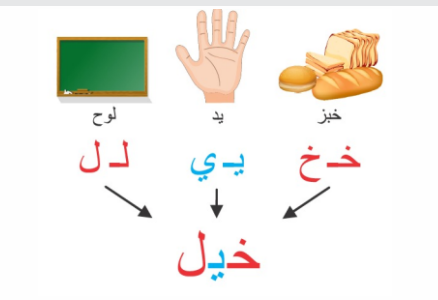
- **10x faster.** Children learn basic FLN in three months – instead of three years.
- **10x lower climate impact.** FLN in just 72 pages (averaging 18 pages per child – shared among two children, used for multiple classes) compared to 180 page textbook per subject + 180 page workbooks. No plastic, only reusable materials.
- **10x cheaper.** Thin, low-cost booklets. Free mobile app & e-Learning materials.



Peer learning through
A4 sized books



Use of Locally Available
Counters



Available in 30+
languages internationally

It's easy to run the FLN challenge in your geography, with DEVI Sansthan supporting every step of the way:



Select 20 schools, randomly allocate half each to implementation and reference groups. This helps rigorously measure the program's impact.

Conduct a simple test, using a multiple-choice OMR sheet based on NIPUN goals. The survey can be conducted by a third party, for example, college students.

DEVI Sansthan's team will conduct a one-day online training for teachers in the implementation schools, and provide them with ALfA materials.

The program can be conducted over a 45 to 90 day period, with one or two periods per day. Students first complete the thin ALfA booklets, then move on to reading textbooks, storybooks and newspapers with understanding.

Depending on the results and a thorough review of the process, the project can be extended and scaled up to more schools.

1. Preparation

The first step is to lay the groundwork by planning the program implementation.

The 45-Days-to-FLN challenge can be taken up at a variety of scales – from a single school to a whole country! The Accelerating Learning for All program has proved highly effective, but a rigorous research design can help gather more evidence. Choose a model appropriate to your context.



SCAN THIS QR
to view more evidence on
ALfA – photos, videos, reports, data

Class-level randomisation

If implementing the program in large schools, a single grade may have many sections. This is perfect for research – randomly allocate some sections to do the challenge ('implementation' group) while others continue with their regular curriculum ('reference' group). This model was used in Lucknow's City Montessori School (the world's largest school).

School-level randomisation

Randomly allocate schools to the implementation or reference groups, to compare the results between them. Alternatively, if just one period per day is available, then allocate some schools to a 'literacy' group and others to 'numeracy', and compare the results between the different subjects.

Cluster-level randomisation

It may be easier to implement the program across the board in a whole cluster or district. The results can then be compared against other clusters which have not yet adopted the challenge.

System-wide adoption

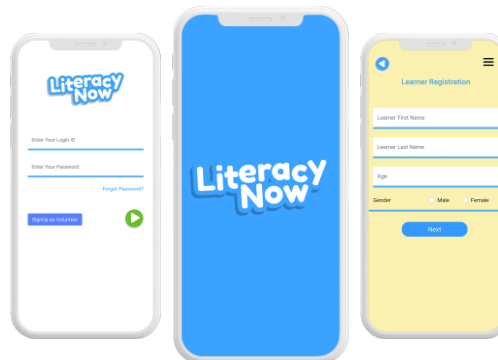
After an initial randomised control trial – or if you're already convinced by the efficacy of ALfA – it is time to scale up, implementing for all children across a geography to showcase dramatic improvement in FLN levels.

Another decision at the planning stage is whether to use the ALfA paper booklets or e-Books:



Paper Booklets

Every pair of students has their own booklet. Different pairs can be working on different modules at the same time. Ideal for scenarios with limited technology availability.



e-Books

In a classroom with the facility of a laptop and projector screen/smart board, ALfA eBook and the Literacy Now app can be used. This saves paper and expense.

2. Survey

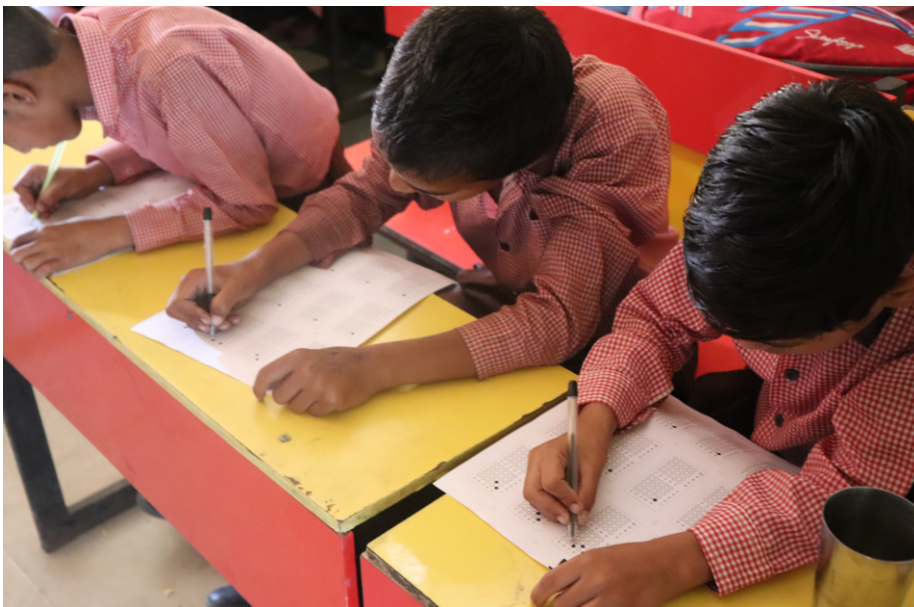
Whichever implementation model suits your context, it is vital to begin with a baseline survey to establish the existing learning levels.

DEVI Sansthan has developed a simple set of literacy and numeracy testing tools. These multiple-choice questionnaires designed to cover all the key competencies. OMR sheet scanning software allows us to swiftly collate the data and analyse learning gaps – from classroom level to country-wide.

The survey should ideally be done by an external agency rather than the teachers themselves, to ensure transparent and accurate data collection. For instance, education or social work students can conduct the survey as part of their field work practicum.

Surveyors should not be informed which schools are in the reference or implementation groups. They need to be briefed about precisely how to conduct the test:

- Explain to the children that this is just a fun questionnaire, there is no pressure.
- The questions can be read to the learners but the answer options should not be.
- The teacher should not be present in the class, nobody should be giving hints.



Government school students in Sharnli, India, work on a baseline literacy survey before starting the 45 Days to FLN Challenge

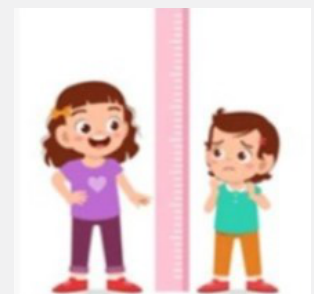
Rana takes 10 minutes to reach school from his home. Saba takes 6 more minutes than Rana. How much time does Saba take to reach school?

- A. Not Sure
- B. 12 minutes
- C. 7 minutes
- D. 16 minutes
- E. 4 minutes



The girl is _____ than the boy.

- A. Not Sure
- B. Cooler
- C. Smaller
- D. Taller
- E. Nicer



Sample questions from the literacy and numeracy survey.

3. Training

Before beginning the program, it is vital for teachers to receive training on the Accelerating Learning for All methodology.

This training covers key aspects such as:

- How to use paired learning & how to make random pairs
- Teaching children to ask each other questions
- Fun numeracy and literacy activities that take learning to a deeper level
- How to embed the 6C skills in a literacy and numeracy learning

The training is highly interactive and enjoyable, with videos of classroom implementation, role plays, hands-on work, quizzes and Q&A. A 6-hour workshop is sufficient to empower teachers with a new mentality and practical skills which will serve them well for years.

The training can be done in-person or online. The first Massive Open Online Training conducted on ALfA attracted some 25,000 views. A remarkable 86% of participants said they would 'definitely' use ALfA in their class, with a further 9% saying they would 'probably'.



Teachers enjoy a hands-on activity during their ALfA training in Shamli, India.

NUMERACY



LITERACY



Scan the QR codes to watch recordings of the MOOT Sessions

FIRST MOOT DATA HIGHLIGHTS

25,660

YouTube Views across 13 sessions

53

countries with representatives from all 6 continents participated

26

states of India participated

93%

of participants found the online format of the training to be effective

99%

of teachers said they had new take-away points from the training

4. Implementation

When students and teachers are empowered with the ALfA pedagogy, foundational literacy and numeracy can be attained in record time.

Some important points to keep in mind:

- **Don't use a mixed approach** – dedicate one period (30-40 minutes) per day for literacy and one for numeracy; in these periods use only the ALfA materials and methodology. Children will be able to catch up easily on their standard curriculum later, once they have learnt these foundational skills.
- The challenge takes **45 instructional days** (not counting holidays – this typically means 2-3 calendar months). Ideally, choose a time of year when there are not too many holidays to interrupt the program.

Teachers generally form a WhatsApp group

(or equivalent) for the duration of the program. This serves several purposes:

- **Circulating important information** & reminders about the ALfA process
- **Asking questions** & helping each other resolve any issues
- **Sharing photos & videos** of classroom implementation. These can be compiled to form a video showcasing and promoting the project.

With **ALfA**

FLN goals

can be completed in just

45 INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS

Scan the **QR CODE** to see how.



Grade 2 students read and do maths activities in pairs during the 45 Days to FLN Challenge. Shamli, India.

5. Review

After the challenge is complete, it's time to review and plan for a scale up.

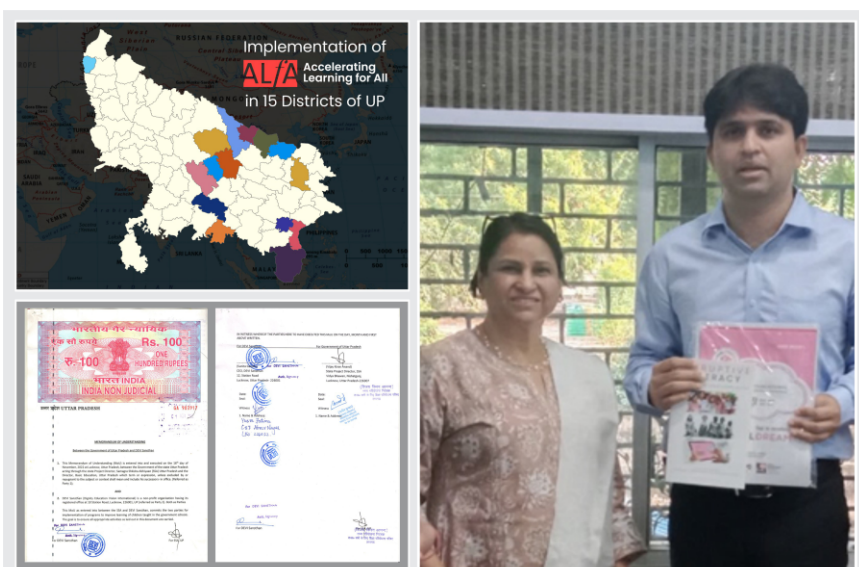
Conduct a post-test survey to check the learning progress of students in the implementation and reference groups.

Analyse the data to see what a big impact ALfA has made in your students' literacy and numeracy levels.

As well as quantitative results, take qualitative feedback from key stakeholders – students, parents, teachers – about the

program implementation, including what went well and any suggestions for improvement.

Meet together with policymakers and leaders to decide how best to scale up ALfA and make it a fully-fledged part of your school system.



Signing MOU with **Shri Vijay Kiran Anand***

*Director-General School Education,
Uttar Pradesh



Presenting a copy of
ALfA materials to
Anita Karwal,
Secretary,
Department of
School Education &
Literacy, India



SCAN THIS QR

to read a March 2023 report by
**HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF EDUCATION.**

Chapters 8 & 10 are about ALfA
implementation in India and the
Maldives. Both showcase
impressive results.

ALfA Implementation Successes

From a pilot to large scale implementation in 2022 in Uttar Pradesh, India's Most Populous State

1 District

AUGUST 2022
20 Schools



1 District

OCTOBER 2022
290 Schools



15 Districts

DECEMBER 2022
3000 Schools

One Program, Many Geographies. One Pedagogy, Many Uses.



Adult Literacy in Mizoram



Women's Literacy in West Bengal



Each One Teach One Program with Literacy Now App, Pan India



School Education Program in Sambalpur, Odisha

ALfA FLN Revolution

Accelerating Learning for All

ALfA is a groundbreaking pedagogy enabling learners to become foundationally literate and numerate in just 45 days. It is based on three key principles.

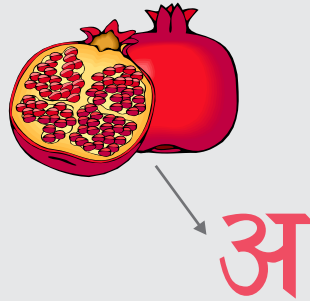
Paired learning

When students sit in pairs, even the shiest one becomes an active learner. Paired learning is more enjoyable, leads to better learning outcomes.



Known to Unknown

ALfA flips the traditional 'A for Apple' on its head, moving from known (picture) to unknown (letter). Children learn to read words from the very first lesson, without wasting months on the alphabet.



Asking questions

Students make their own questions and ask each other, which engages them more deeply in the learning process and is crucial to developing the 6C skills.



Children learn to read newspapers within months



Clapping and Snapping activity to learn place value

**Near
Zero Costs**

**Swift &
Effective**

**Available in
30 Languages**

**Addresses
Climate
Change**

**Embeds 6C
skills in
process**

How ALfA Works

ALfA is a joyful process of learning, based on years of psychological and pedagogical research into optimising literacy and numeracy acquisition.

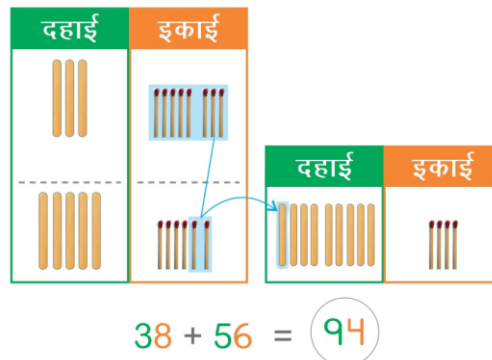
Key differences between traditional and ALfA classrooms

Traditional classroom	ALfA classroom
Transaction of learning is from teacher to student. Rote memorisation	Transaction of learning is from student to student. Children derive knowledge by working in pairs.
Children are grouped by skill level. Groups are fixed for a long period of time.	Random pairing which ensures diversity. Pairs are changed frequently, so that children get to mix and work with others of all ability levels and background.
Students working in whole class or groups, sitting in rows facing the teacher.	Students working in pairs is the main modality, they are facing each other.
Knowledge is abstract, not applied practically.	Children learn through hands-on activities, including the use of concrete objects
Bulky, dense textbooks which are designed for the teacher not the student	Thin booklets with highly visual, attractive modules designed for children to use themselves.

ALfA Numeracy

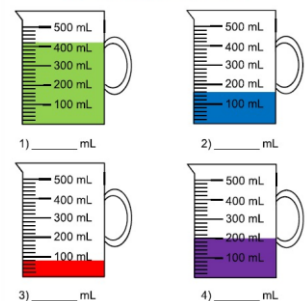
Children use concrete objects (e.g. ice-cream sticks and matchsticks) to represent tens and ones and to do sums.

Measurement, shapes, positions, etc. are taught practically.



Module 31: I can measure volume

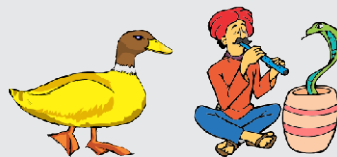
Juice Shop



ALfA Literacy

Children derive the sound from the known picture, and learn to decode letters and blend to form words.

What is this **picture**?

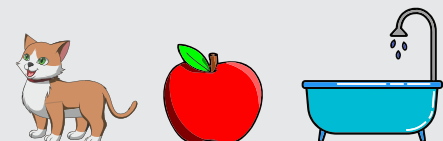


What is its first **sound**?

ब स

What **word** do these sounds join to make?

बस



c a t

cat

Climate Change & ALfA

Education needs to squarely address environmental issues, from reducing the carbon footprint of learning to explaining climate change in simple language.

How ALfA addresses Climate Change

- **The ALfA booklets are thin:** $32+12+28 = 72$ pages, that's all for reading, writing and arithmetic.
- **Sharing books, halving paper:** Children share one set of booklets between two in paired learning.
- **eBooks & Apps:** No need for printed booklets where a projector or digital screen is available.
- **Reusable learning materials :** Children gather pebbles, shells, leaves, make their own hands-on materials, or bring everyday objects from home.
- **Fostering climate action:** ALfA booklets contain short stories and roleplays about climate change and what we can do to address it; inspiring & empowering new readers to become climate activists.



“GLOBAL WARMING CAUSES DRAMATIC INCREASE IN FOREST FIRES”

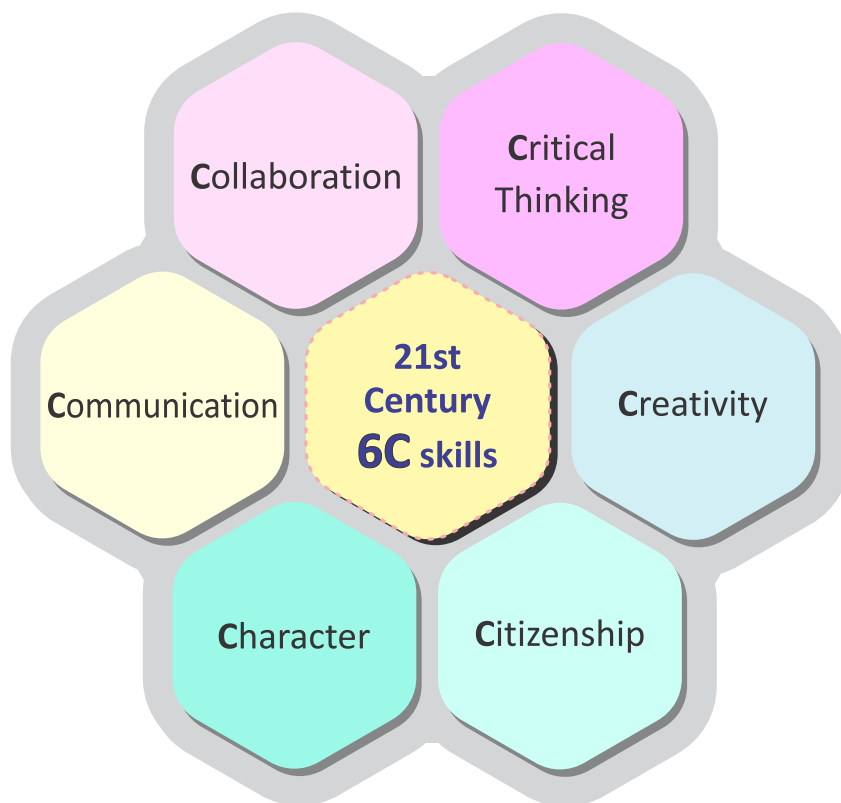
screamed the newspaper headline. Tara quickly skimmed the article and fell into deep thought. She wished she could do something to help protect forests.

Excerpt from a Climate Change short story

How ALfA Develops 6C Skills

ALfA develops the 6C skills of the twenty-first century. These skills cannot be taught from a textbook, but only learnt through practical experience.

- Children develop their **communication** and **collaboration** skills by working in pairs.
- By working with many different children over the course of a few weeks, including those of diverse backgrounds, students develop their **citizenship** and **character**. Helping others learn entails much patience.
- Through many hands-on activities and making questions for each other, children develop their **creativity** and **critical thinking**.



A Global Program

ALfA is available in 30+ Indian and International languages.

Arabic	Serbian	Shona	Marathi
Bangladeshi	Spanish	Assamese	Mizo
Dhivehi*	Swahili	Bengali	Odia
Dutch	Somalian*	Gujarati	Punjabi
English	Twi (akan kasa)	Hindi	Tamil
Filipino	Yoruba	Kannada	Telugu
French	Portuguese*	Konkani*	Urdu
Nepalese	Persian*	Maithili	* in process

Help us replicate the ALfA Toolkits in your own language (not included above).
It takes just one month on part-time basis.



**DEVI
SANSTHAN**
Dignity Education
Vision International
Leave no one behind

SDG 4
**disruptive
FLN at scale**
Foundational Literacy & Numeracy



45 DAYS
to
FLN
CHALLENGE

DEVI Sansthan (Dignity Education Vision International) is a small NGO with a big vision: to help India and the world achieve universal Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN). DEVI is pioneering transformative pedagogies, empowering teachers, and leveraging policy change to enable rapid gains towards literacy for all.



+91 740 840 6000



info@dignityeducation.org



dignityeducation.org