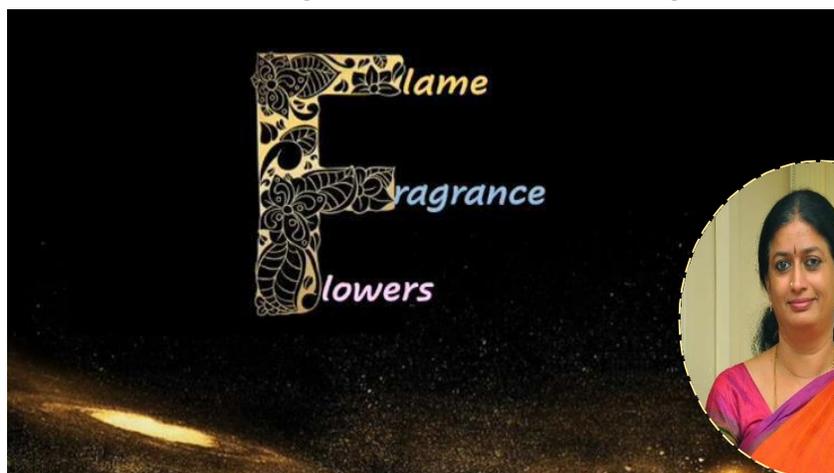


Science in the Puja Room-A holistic Experience!



Stimulations 2020

24th June 2020 proved to be an exciting day for the students of the outgoing batch of std. ten of the P.S.B.B group of schools ,when they received a pleasant surprise-an educational module by Whatsapp, presented by Mrs. Vasanthi S., the Principal of PSBB Nungambakkam ! The first of a series of 'STIMULATIONS' modules and webinars for students entering class eleven in 2020,the theme was thoughtfully based on the value additions to one's prayers ,from a scientific point of view! 'Science in the Puja Room' presented in the form of a video, kindled the intellect of the students, quenching their thirst for knowledge as well.

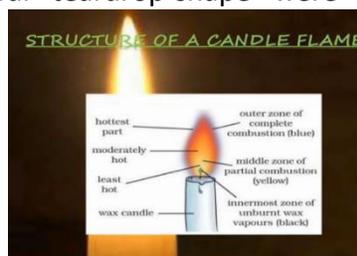
“ There is no more open door by which you can enter the study of science than by considering the physical phenomena of a candle” said the English scientist, Michael Faraday. Beginning with this apt quote, a comprehensive insight into the various features of the objects used in a puja room ,was presented in a vivid and pleasant narration, by Mrs. Vasanthi. The delightful module, comprised of three segments- three specific and important aspects of a puja room- Flame, fragrance and flowers. The Chemistry behind each of these aspects was meticulously explored through demonstration and detailed explanation in an interesting manner, tackling a topic close to everyone's heart!



The first portion of the video focused on 'flame'. The components of a lamp flame - the wick, the oil and the ignition were displayed and explained . The parts of a candle flame -which included the outer, middle and innermost zones, in its beautiful teardrop-shape were then beautifully pointed out. The picture of a flame under micro-gravity was also shown. The next portion dealt with how lamps, which are generally made of materials such as silver ,tarnish easily. The removal of the tarnishing is a simple chemical process which involves the usage of a weak acid such as vinegar to break down the tarnishing and restore lusture and this was clearly demonstrated.



The second portion of the video dealt with 'fragrance'. First, the 'agarbatti' or incense stick was broken down into its components - a



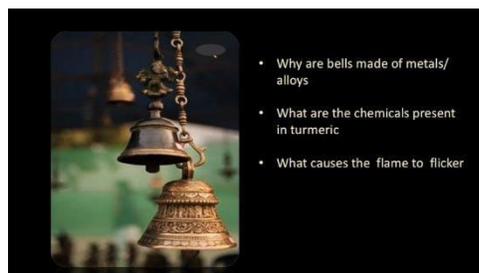
bamboo stick coated with charcoal powder and a sticky substance ,as well as a volatile chemical that diffuses the fragrance when the stick is lit. Mrs. Vasanthi also explained in detail the chemical structures of some fragrances found in the Puja Room -sandal, jasmine, lavender and rose.

The final part of the video covered ‘flowers’ which ,in Hindu culture are of great significance, especially during worship. Flowers provide the dual value of fragrance as well as colour!

The various organic compounds present in common flowers like jasmine, lavender, rose, etc. that give them their unique smell were presented ,as were the pigments present in flowers which determine the shape and colour of the flowers. Tulsi , an important plant used in worship was also mentioned and all its useful properties were cited, as there can be no mention of a Puja Room without Tulsi.



Mrs.Vasanthi concluded the video with a few intriguing and thought-provoking questions to spark research by students.



Why are bells made of metals/alloys?

What are the chemicals present in turmeric?

What causes the flame to flicker?

Combining science with everyday life, the module provided an exciting learning experience. Presented in a simple,comprehensive and aesthetic manner, it was a unique learning experience and watching it and imbibing the content in the comfort of their homes only made it more topical !



Students understood that science is not confined only to laboratories or a set of equations, but is omnipresent and omnipotent too. It piqued their interest in the subject ,making them look forward to many more such enriching experiences!

[Click here to view the video](#)

Reporter,
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