

FLY HIGH



• KNOWLEDGE • TEACHERS • STUDENT • ALUMNI



VIDYA VAANI

Volume V

"When the going gets tough, put one foot in front of the other and just keep going. Don't give up."

— Roy T. Bennett

Welcome to the fifth edition of VIDYA Vaani. This edition will include the ups and downs that VIDYA faced in the form of challenges, achievements, foundations, etc. Read on to know it all!



Meenakshi Roy

1. How long have you been associated with VIDYA and in what Capacity?

I have been associated with VIDYA since June 2009, first as Principal of the VIDYA School Gurgaon and later as a member of the Executive Board of VIDYA.

2. How was your journey as the Principal of Vidya School Gurugram? What major challenges did you come across during your journey and how did you overcome them?

I was appointed Principal of the school when it was in the process of shifting to the present premises. This was in June 2009. We just had one wing ready and it could house only 100 students at that time. The school was formally inaugurated by the then CM of Delhi Mrs. Sheila Dixit in October 2009.

It was a journey of love, passion, and hard work by all the members of the VIDYA family. It was a huge challenge as the school had to be set up literally from scratch, within a limited budget, and raised to the level of one of the most outstanding schools in the country.

There were many teething problems, as is expected, due to the magnitude of the task of getting the infrastructure in place, setting up classrooms, the Library, laboratories, Kitchen, Infirmary among others, procuring Sports and other equipment, enrolling students as the classrooms started getting ready, and of course, assuaging the used egos of the people in the neighborhood as we could not possibly admit all the children at one go! I remember it was quite a task to get the basics done like getting the garbage dump adjacent to the school cleared, water and electricity connections for the school, and waste management. Mr. Khullar, the Municipal Commissioner at that time along with members of DLF and I am Gurgaon helped us iron out all these difficulties. Mrs. Tara Bindra and Col Madan worked tirelessly with the builders to get the lovely school building up and running with DLf to get us various clearances. It was an exciting time as there were many firsts in our journey, the first school bus (donated by Kamla Charitable Trust), the first school diary, the first school News Letter, the first school uniforms, the first Smartboards, the first School Concert, the first NIOS Examination and of course the affiliation of the school! Once the systems were set in place and all the requisite criteria met we worked towards getting Recognition from the Haryana Government and Affiliation with the Central Board Of Secondary Education. It was fraught with its own set of unique problems, no doubt, but I must say all of us in the school (all teaching and non-teaching Staff members) worked as one big family, we went beyond our call of duty and worked sincerely to overcome the various challenges. Mr. Gulati guided us at every step as the School Manager, Mrs. Raji Nambissan who joined as the HeadMistress a year later Capt Jayram as the Estate Manager all the Office Staff at that time worked relentlessly towards making this a center of excellence. The vision, support, commitment, and involvement of our Founder President Mrs. Rashmi Misra, her trust reposed in me, the constant support of Bill and Natalie Comfort a Radhika and Ajay Relan, the hard work of all the Governing and Advisory Board Members, teachers, the dedication of our students and the goodwill of all our donors and friends helped the school grow from strength to strength. Meanwhile, the number of students had grown and when I hung up my boots in October 2014 we had a little over 700 students. Today the school has grown exponentially and it fills my heart with pride and joy to see the students flourishing under the guidance of their Principal, Mentors, and dedicated teachers.



3. Why did you choose to work with VIDYA?

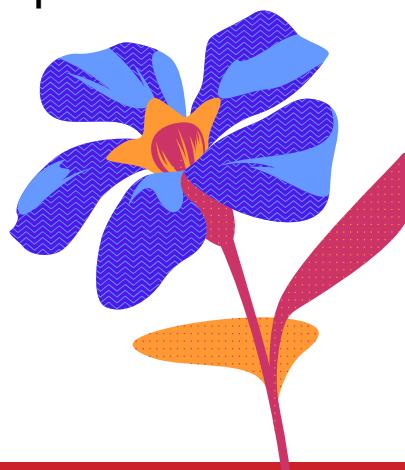
It was the happy, earnest faces of the children who I met on my visit to The Happy School, where VIDYA students used to have classes in the afternoon under the able guidance of their Principal Mrs Roma Robinson once the regular school gave over, that tugged at my heart and I was completely bowled over. I realised that all my previous experience of working with some of the best educationists and institutions could be put into effective use in building up this unique institution.

I had already met Rashmi Ji, Rekha Ji, Indu Ji, Tara Ji, Radhika Relan, Mala Ji and Mr Gulati and their vision and passion convinced me that this was the place where one could find real happiness and the satisfaction of being an infinitesimal part of bringing about a much-needed change in society.

There has been no looking back ever since and every day has been so very rewarding!

4. How has being associated with VIDYA impacted you on a personal level?

On a personal level, all I can say is I stopped looking for God when I walked into VIDYA School in June 2009! My quest for the omnipresent, omnipotent-ever-elusive presence had finally come to an end because I found my God in you my dear children! Your earnest, beaming faces and pure hearts made me realize that you were God's plan and I was privileged to play a part in your lives.





5. What is your message to the students of VIDYA?

You are truly unique and special! Your hunger for learning, your love of people, your simplicity, compassion, sincerity, and integrity will stand you in good stead. You are truly privileged to belong to the wonderful VIDYA family. Make the most out of your time here and explore every opportunity provided to you. The love, care, and direction that you receive constantly from your teachers should help you to carve a niche for yourselves in society and lead a life of truth and dignity. Remember your life is in your hands and you are the master of your destiny. So dream big and reach for the stars.

Keep in mind always that education is not just about the academic subjects that are learned and taught in school, it is also about becoming lifelong learners and developing a spirit of inquiry. Creativity and imagination are just as important for holistic growth and development. I firmly believe imagination can really liberate you, help you to think and innovate and define yourself.

Here I am going to share a favorite quote with you:

“Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand.” - Albert Einstein



COMPETITIONS



It was necessary to keep the artist alive in us, our ART TEAM made efforts to help students get in touch with their real selves. Our kids participated in a photography contest (THEME – POLLUTION AND SMOG) and a painting contest (PRATIBIMB). Some of the specimens are as follows:



FIGHT THE ODDS, BE THE CHANGE

We recently had a webinar with Dr. Kiran Bedi who is a retired Indian Police Service officer, social activist, former tennis player, politician and Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry. The webinar first focused on discussing with her about her journey, how she overcame the obstacles in her life and successfully hurdled each post that she took over.

Initiating her most awaited talk, Dr. Kiran Bedi straightaway came to the topic of the webinar, namely 'In conversation with Dr. Kiran Bedi: FIGHT THE ODDS, BE THE CHANGE,' where Dr. Bedi being the 'Daughter of India' talked about how the girls in India during the 50s and 60s would be dolled up to get married at a young age while boys would be encouraged to join the business and inherit the business from parents.

Breaking the shackles of discrimination Dr. Bedi became the first female Indian Police Service (IPS) officer and started her service in 1972. She shares her overwhelming experience of her inspiring journey filled with ups and downs, where many hurdles came in her way, mostly because of her gender.

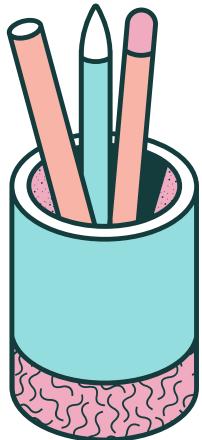
Then she talks about her hard work, passion and determination which led to her destiny to be a leader.

The session opened for questions from our students. An array of queries related to her life, experience and achievements were put up, to which the distinguished speaker provided the most convincing answers. Her one special tip to the youth was, "Fight the odds, be the change." In the end, the way she has broken the glass ceiling and proven to everyone that a woman is equally in managing the positions of power, excelling in anything she sets her mind to, is a stellar example to every little girl and woman in this country. I think, we, as women can take inspiration from her and be strong leaders like her.



#CHOOSE_TO_CHALLENGE

The theme for this year's International Women's Day was 'Choose to Challenge.' Here are some testimonials of the bright girls of VIDYA sharing their hardships and how they challenge them.



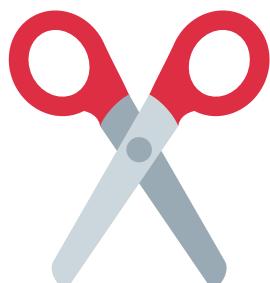
Nikita Yadav studies at VIDYA in 11th (Commerce), she hasn't been very vocal about her dreams. However, she's a simple child who's on the right path. She enjoys reading new books and writes prose and verse occasionally.

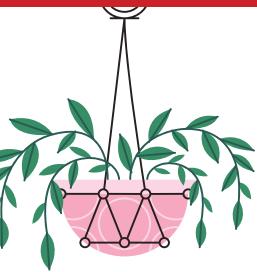
I choose to challenge the ideal beauty standards.

Growing up as a girl, I have seen what a girl goes through. We are often labelled as short, tall, thin, fair, dark, slim, fat and the list is endless. I have grown up hating myself. Was often labelled as being overweight/plump/fat. This lowered my self-esteem and self-confidence.

I overcame this on my own by understanding that I need to love my body, for whatever it is. There was a time when even stepping out of the house was a problematic thing. I used to think thousands of times before socializing.

Today I have overcome those insecurities and I feel that the definition of beautiful needs to change. It is not about being tall. Thin fair. It should be about being yourself. I upgraded my mentality and the society around me never bothered me anymore.





#CHOOSE_TO_CHALLENGE

Rajia Parveen is currently in class 11th (Science). She is a bubbly girl and she has a perception of things that is unique. Her communication and writing skills are strong just like her dreams. Her parents have struggled a lot to educate her and now she's in VIDYA'S hands. She wants to be a doctor in future.

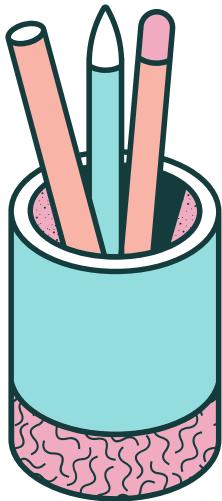
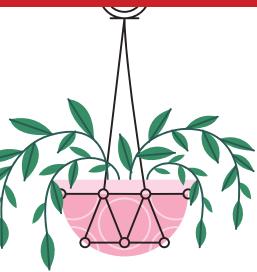
I choose to challenge the inferiority of Women.

As a woman, we are continually facing challenges, both at home, and outside as well. There are many situations where we are called upon to deal with problems and quickly find solutions. These problems we face are not crises, but opportunities to be strong. When we are strong, we stand out as natural leaders. The notion that women are naturally built for inferior jobs is a myth. We can be bold, strong leaders, only if society did not condition us to believe otherwise.

Experience often teaches us to rely upon our natural abilities and follow our instincts, which can help resolve any conflict. Whether it's a family crisis that needs our immediate attention, a situation at work that needs diffusing, we are capable of responding in a manner that is helpful to everyone involved.

Because of all the demands placed on us throughout life, women are especially good at dealing with chaos. We are good at facing challenges and overcoming them. Even if we don't hold a leadership position in the workplace, we can still be leaders by just being who we are and influencing those around us.





#CHOOSE_TO_CHALLENGE

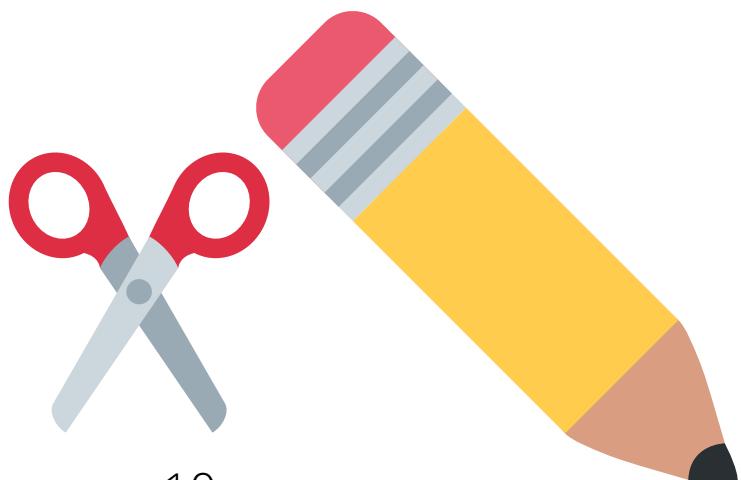
Preeti Kumari is the most persistent child in her class. She is academically driven and is clear about her goals.

Her dedication to work laboriously and her habit of constantly practicing, improving on her mistakes, and questioning the teachers inquisitively reflect the sense of responsibility she feels towards her family. She wants to be an I.AS officer and make her mother proud.

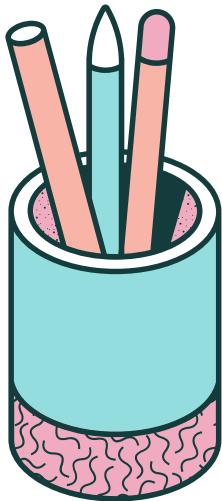
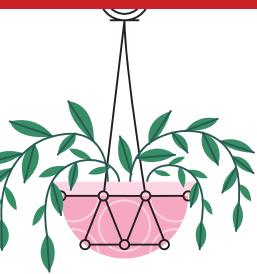
I choose to challenge the witch-hunting of women

My father passed away when I was eight years old. Since that terrible time, I saw my mother facing all kinds of challenges. People gossiped that she was the reason for my father's death. She was even ousted from the village

With me tucked in her arms, she came to Gurugram. She decided to become self-dependent and look for a job. She took care of me and my brother, got a job, and admitted us both to VIDYA School. VIDYA turned our life around. The school provided her with security and gave me the ability to dream big for myself. My mother is the biggest source of inspiration and I wouldn't have been here if it was not for her, who made bold decisions.



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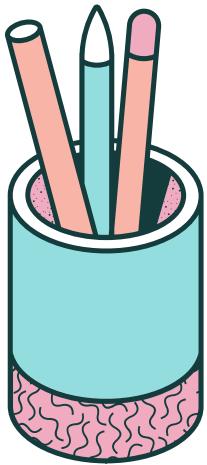
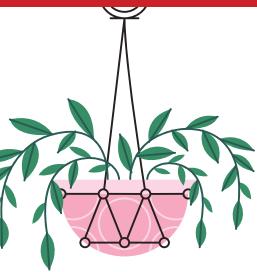
#CHOOSE_TO_CHALLENGE

Muskan studies in 12th (Humanities) at VIDYA School. Her predicament has been tough but she never let that come in way of her academics. She is a happy child who has overcome trauma and has almost defeated it. Her singing talent is no mystery to the entire school and she's got a beautiful heart. She wants to pursue English Honours and a course in singing.

I choose to challenge domestic violence.

I was three months old when my parents got divorced. When I was five, my mother remarried and I got a stepfather. My stepfather was the new hurdle of our lives. We thought we were a complete family but soon his true colors came out. He was a violent man who used to beat me and my mother regularly. I suffered along with my mother till I was 12 years of age. One day my mother gathered courage and decided to end that marriage. He had of course resorted to extreme violence. She had to approach the police, it was enough! I saw my mother gradually breaking the silence. Today my mother and I live happily, we might not be financially stable, but we've got each other and that's what keeps me going. My school has supported me in every way to come out of the trauma and has aided me financially to dream big and do something for my mother.





#CHOOSE_TO_CHALLENGE

Preeti Sahu is a shy child. She's an introvert but is a keen observer. She is very sensitive and understands the emotions of the people around her. Coming from humble beginnings, at VIDYA she has found immense help to groom herself and do better in life.

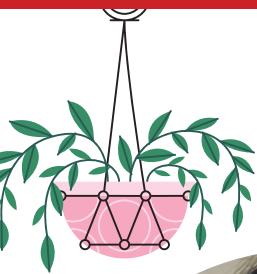
I choose to challenge the gendered gaslighting

The fate of Chanda- The society is full of discrimination of all sorts. I am blessed to have a family that doesn't expose me to the challenges of being a girl, but I have seen a small girl child called Chanda going through absolutely horrible stuff. Chanda used to be my neighbour, she was an eleven-year-old facing the absolute worst. Her family considered her the jinx of the family. They thought all ill things in the family happened because of her. Her father passed away when Chanda was only ten, and the mother put the entire blame on her. Chanda was pushed out of her home and forced to live with her parents, her mother is looking for a groom for her.

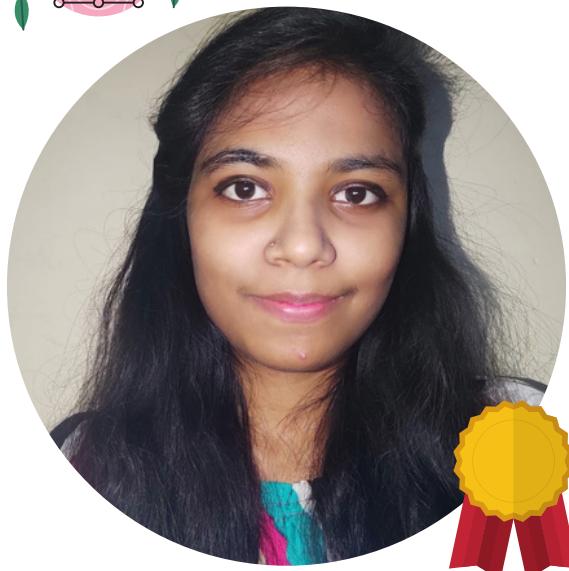
I don't know why our society thinks that being a girl is a curse? How can a woman be a curse? She is the one that gives birth. How can a creator be vengeful, or unlucky or anything negative?



'PREETI SAHU'



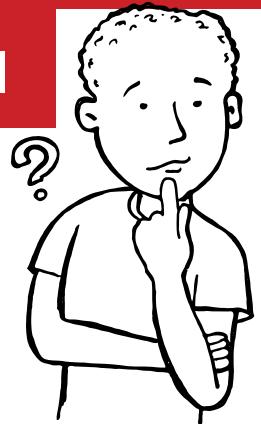
Simran Mishra of batch 2017-18 cracks GATE in her first attempt



Simran Mishra

GATE is one of the toughest exams in India. In gate 2021, only 17.82% of people are able to crack it. And before starting my preparation I was aware of this fact, so it was a tough challenge in front of me to crack the exam. I wanted to prepare for the institute but I can't afford the coaching fees. So instead I thought not to make that excuse for me and I decided to move further with my preparation all alone. I am pursuing B.TECH in CSE and I'll be graduating next year. Preparing for Gate all by yourself is a tough nut to crack. When I was preparing for the exam, there were a lot of topics and questions which I wasn't able to understand. I had to spend 5-6 hours just to understand a point or question because I didn't have anyone from whom I could clear my doubts. I wasn't able to find a good resource to study from, a perfect Book, a perfect strategy. I have spent 2-3 days just searching for perfect material and strategy. The sources I had with me were youtube, Google and e-books. Many times when I searched for some questions, I found 2-3 different answers for the same question. It became very tough for me to identify the correct answer. I am currently in my 3rd year and I had to cover up the syllabus which will be in my 4th year of college.

My advice for anyone planning to appear for the GATE exam is simple- Before starting preparation just right down on a sheet of paper why you want to crack it, because once you start preparing, there will be many times when you want to just give up. So at that time reminding yourself why you started in the first place is a good way to motivate yourself. If you can find someone who can guide you at each step to see what to study, what to leave out (as you'll be tested upon all the major subjects you covered in 4 years of college in just three hours), good notes, etc. Practising all previous year questions is a must and very good notes with proper heading and order for revision. Revision is the most important thing. You need to remember every point you studied. Try out different methods and see what works out for you, because everyone has a different way of doing things.



Did You Know?

1-If you open your eyes in a pitch-black room, the color you'll see is called "eigengrau."

2-Back in 1987, The New York Times reported that there was an issue with phone lines at the time because "sharks have shown an inexplicable taste for the new fiber-optic cables that are being strung along the ocean floor linking the United States, Europe, and Japan.

3-In about 20 years, the future could look eerily similar to Wall-E. Artificial intelligence expert Kai-Fu Lee said that 40 percent of humans could be replaced by equally capable robots. And drivers might be affected the most.

Riddles

1-I am the one who remains awake when you sleep. But I need to rest when you awake. Who Am I?

2-I am a five-letter word that is under you. If you remove my 1st letter, then I am over you. If you remove my 1st and 2nd letters then I am all around you.

3-If you throw me from the window, I will leave a grieving wife. Bring me back, but in the door, and You'll see someone giving life!



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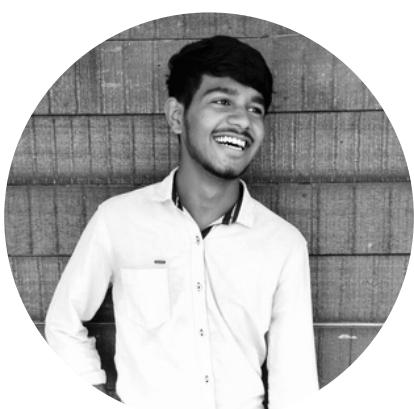
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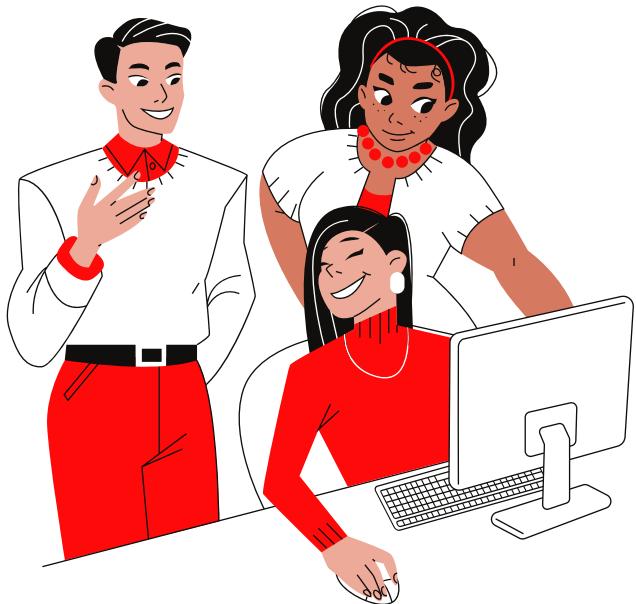


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Vidya Vaani is the alumni-led initiative, which aims to connect Vidya School to the outer world. We put forth this e-newsletter with a desire to allow you a sneak peek into the day to day affairs of the school, thereby also, creating a space for the students to exhibit their talents in terms of artistic or poetic expression.



We welcome you to our fifth edition of the series and hope to keep you engaged. Venga! Board the train to VIDYA Land and let Vidya Vaani echo unsung vignettes of inspiration into your ears.

We would like to hear from you! Share your suggestions/feedback and views with us on vidyavaaniconnect@gmail.com. Our inbox anticipates your mail.

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