

Bookworm completes six years this September.



Our lending library has taught us that...

Access to books must continue – with declining membership numbers from 300 odd in 2005 to 30 odd in 2011, we continue to believe that access to books is important. We report growing numbers of books. At the last count, we had a database of over 17000 children’s books from all over the world. We have shopped since then and promise to keep at it.



When we are at our lowest point of survival, looking at books without children to read them at the community library space in St. Inez, a parent stops to pick up books for her child and tells us how she has chosen to stay back in Goa rather than move with her husband because Bookworm and a nurturing preschool have helped her son and her develop a love for reading.

We have had to be creative, with the slow painful death of our extension activities due to declining participation from children, we came up with the Family Book Treasury – a scheme that encourages borrowing of larger numbers of books for longer periods of time. This scheme has a huge potential, but for now, the faithful WOM (word of mouth) marketing has helped. Our worm inches along.



Reading begins at home and grows there – children who read and who love to read come from families that have fostered this love. At Bookworm, we can support, encourage, strengthen and motivate, but reading begins at home. When a parent discourages borrowing a book at the princely sum of Rs.2/- a day because ‘there will be no time to read’ the die is cast. The bitter us can see that there is always time for the Rs.10/- packet of chemically laden crisps and worse, but for books, the price is high. We are always sad but there is also a wisdom on focusing energy on what can be done and we turn to find a family walk in the door, babe in arms, toddler at leg but here to choose books for the wet weekend. We know this for sure, we wait for you.



The School Book Treasury



has proven to be a program that has been growing and validates our existence in a different way. If reading begins at home, what must happen to the thousands of first generation school goers who come from homes that did not have books and still do not. Even more pertinent, what happens to teacher education that has not caught up with the expectations of policy like the Rte and UEE, which mandates reading and library in the classroom?

Herein, lies a mission of a different kind. We have a growing demand for books in the classroom from both private and aided schools and know that we need to be systematic. This demand comes in waves, often from silence and indifference to an awakening. We know that we must be patient, ride these waves, crest some of them and know that others will drop. We must develop systems that allow the books to be used in the best way possible within the classroom, while helping children grow in reading and learning. We have a powerhouse in the newly set up www.thebooktreasury.org website by a friend in Toronto, Canada. We continue to be nurtured by www.helpingelsewhere.org team in the UK and with friends and well wishers all over the globe, we will ensure that our bookmobile beeps along.



Bookworm Publishing:



Our dream is taking shape, slowly, haltingly but we will get there. Books from Goa for children that reflect as much of our world as possible from diverse perspectives is the goal. We crawl towards the goal with our project manager Noreen Carneiro gliding with us. From a lean team of 2 we are now strengthened by the addition of a third in Noreen and look forward to the year ahead and publishing.

Workshops and On going Projects:



Resource persons, too many to name have constantly leapt at ideas to work out of Bookworm. Every workshop brings a new energy of a positive kind to the library space and reminds us that we are alive and making our way, somewhere. When the space seems limited we Cholta Cholta with Pritha Sardessai, our ambassador on the heritage walks for children. We will soon release a Cholta Cholta notebook that will allow any visitor to Panjim to walk and learn and know where they are walking thanks to Pritha's illustrations of the city she loves.



Friends of Bookworm

is an army of strong supportive individuals who talk with us, laugh with us and love what we do in unconditional ways. They bring us resource in powerful ways and connect with us to make the vision of a better reading tomorrow brighter and possible.

As we move into childhood, leaving infancy behind, Bookworm thanks you, deeply.

Elaine & Sujata
September 2011

