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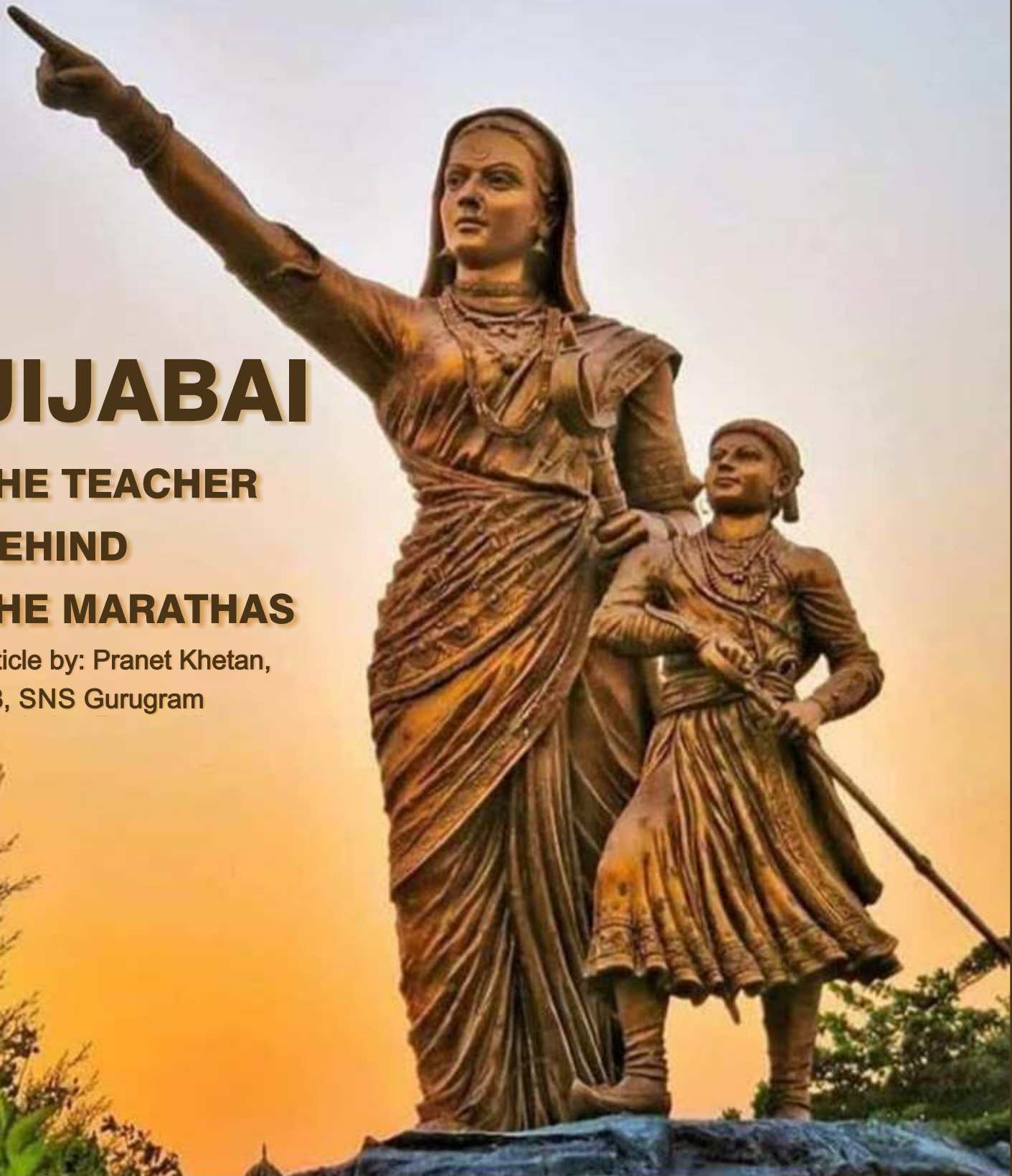
CHRONICLES

JIJABAI

THE TEACHER
BEHIND

THE MARATHAS

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G8, SNS Gurugram



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Jijabai: The Teacher behind the Marathas

By Pranet Khetan, Grade 8, SNS Gurugram



Here's a question: Who was Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj?

Most of us would remember him as one of the great rulers of India and the founder of the Maratha empire, one of the main reasons for the Mughal decline.

Chhatrapati Shivaji was one of the most illustrious kings of India. He was an excellent administrator and had such a harmonious rule that the people of Maharashtra still celebrate him over 300 years after his death. The question remains: how did he do this? How did a 15-year-old boy lay the foundations to overthrow a massive empire while keeping a harmonious rule? Let us find out:

Just like Chanakya was behind Chandragupta Maurya's success,

there was another esteemed teacher behind Shivaji whom we don't even talk about: Rajmata Jijabai. She was his mother and taught not only one but two of the best kings of India (Shivaji and her grandson).

She was a master of administration and warfare who began passing down this knowledge to her son at a very young age. Before moving on, I would like to mention that all of Jijabai's male relatives had high positions in the administration but got murdered due to betrayal. A few key pillars of her teachings include:

Swarajya: Translating to 'freedom', Jijabai instilled this idea in Shivaji, and he, along with a few of his friends, took an oath to free the surrounding villages from the rule of the Mughals at the mere age of 15. Surprisingly, he would also capture his first fort at age 16.

Compassion: The Mughal rulers at the time were ruthless. For example - When the Mughal army was moving to a strategic point, they carried very little food. They stopped at villages along the way and forced the headman to feed them.

Also, when a large farm came in their way, they would mercilessly trample over it, not even

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thinking about the farmer whose crops were getting destroyed.

Even if they suspected a villager was a traitor, they would burn the entire village down and massacre the people they had to protect. And finally, to add insult to injury, the taxes the villagers were forced to pay were so high that their entire produce got taken away from them.

Jijabai informed Shivaji about this and made him act on this. It is no coincidence that the Maratha army carried a lot of food and gold to pay farmers in case they needed more, all at the cost of reduced speed for the soldiers.

This spirit of compassion went so far that the Marathas treated even their prisoners of war with respect.





Administration: All the rulers of the time measured their 'power' by the land and wealth under their control, which led them to commit various atrocities. Jijabai taught her son that the greatness of a king is measured not by the number of forts captured but by the happiness and security of his subjects.

Following this principle, it is no wonder why his rule gets celebrated. The teaching after this is something that is still a fundamental part of the Indian constitution and has implications for every aspect of our lives.

Secularism: Although Shivaji was a staunch Hindu, he never let religion become a fundamental part of his governance. All people were equal before the law, meaning that even if one were a Hindu, one would not escape punishment if one committed a crime.

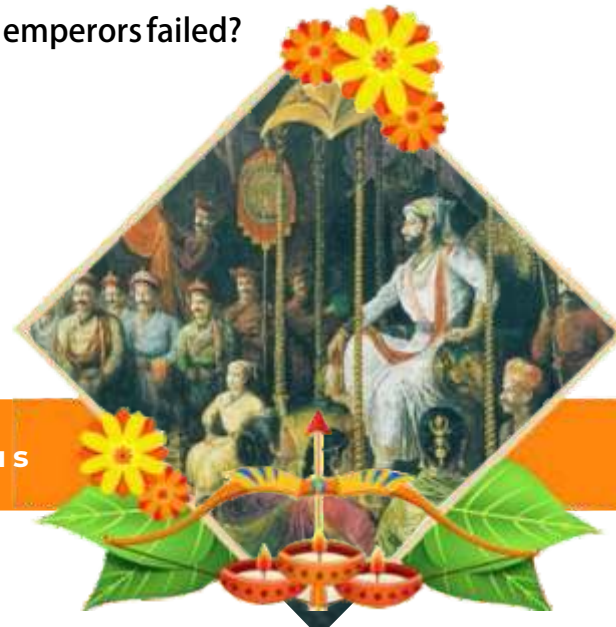
That is what is meant by Secularism. Also, instead of following a strategy of tolerance, Shivaji respected all other religions due to Jijabai's teachings of equality.

Warfare: A kingdom without the ability to protect itself is nothing: there is no way to guarantee the security of the people or their well-being. Jijabai

left no stone unturned while training Shivaji for warfare. The Maratha Empire had an enormous navy. Most empires at the time (like the Mughals) focused on land: the more land they could grab, the better. They also mostly ignored the British, Dutch and Portuguese Traders lining up on the coastline and capturing cities because of their land-based mentality.

Shivaji was one of the first to realise the importance of a navy and act on it. The mind-blowing thing is that Shivaji's navy was formidable and that without its protection, the Europeans would have started colonising India 20 years earlier.

How did Shivaji have this foresight, and how did he succeed where hundreds of ministers and advisors to the Mughal emperors failed?



The answer to this question lies in the teachings of Jijabai: she had made sure that Shivaji was an ardent student of geography from as early as possible.

Regarding how he built his naval fleet, the same Europeans he drove out to conquer the coastline designed all of his ships under a trade agreement.

Shivaji also sent trusted soldiers to learn this ship-building technique so they could become independent.

The most surprising part is that under Shivaji, commissioned architects built a sea fort and an underwater passage (yes, an underwater passage in the 17th century) to manage the fleet's operations.

To conclude, teaching is one of the noblest professions one can choose and that this world would be nothing without the great teachers that taught and inspired us.

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Our Mentors

By Aiyana Bhagowati, Grade 6, SNS Gurugram



Teachers work so hard, day and night,
And they always radiate so much light.

Like a torch lighting up the dark,
They protect us, like tree bark.

They are always so patient with us,
And never ever create a fuss.

They are so wonderful and kind,
And with their level of intelligence, they can always read our
mind.

Without them, a school is nothing but a concrete wall,
And teachers help us when we fall.

So that we can soar into the sky,
And through learning, we fly oh so high.

They can turn a frown upside down,
With the amount of work they do, they deserve a crown.

To all the teachers, thank you,
For every single thing you do.

Teachers

By AaroHi Maheshwari, Grade 8, SNS Gurugram



Words so sweet and kind
They say as they smile,
A message so beautifully enshrined
A gem to be prized,

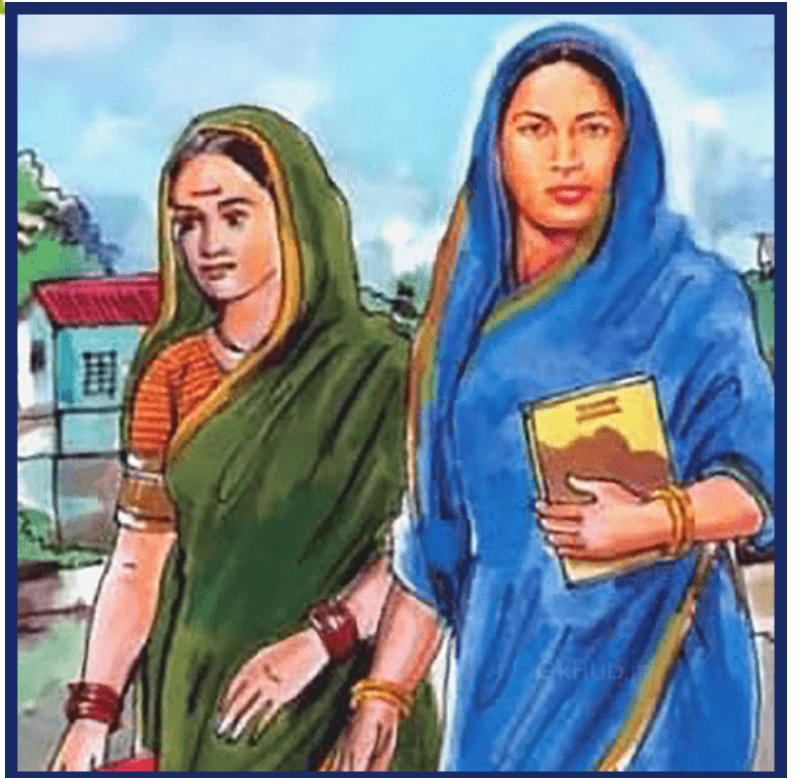
Someone to believe in
An angel come to my rescue,
A bond so true within
That nothing can compare,

None as virtuous as they
We who take them for granted,
Our gratitude is the least we can convey
While they help us through and through,

So, every day I will celebrate
The joy they bring into my life,
Their hearts they continue to dedicate
To us, who finally begin to appreciate their worth.

Savitri and Fatima- The Fierce Duo

By Tara Rao, Grade 8, SNS Gurugram



Education is something that we all take for granted. [What we are unaware of](#) is the effort it took to establish the right to education for all in India. [Some outstanding personalities in this field](#) are Savitribai Phule and her friend Fatima Sheikh.

Savitribai Phule was a pioneer in providing education for girls and for minority communities. She opened a school for girls with her husband Jyotirao Phule and friend Fatima Sheikh in 1848 and rose to become the first female teacher in India.

Savitribai and Sheikh set up the country's first girls' school called "Indigenous Library" in their own house, which went against the beliefs of both Muslim and Hindu communities.

Savitribai bravely fought against the oppressive caste and gender hierarchies to educate girls. Sheikh was also an Indian educationist and social reformer.

She started the 'Beti Padhao' movement in as early as the 1840s.

Their school's syllabus was different from what was taught by upper caste educationists in their vicinity.

It included subjects like Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies instead of religious texts like the Vedas and Shastras. This shows the open mind they had towards education, going against what was mainstream.

Most men were uneasy about the access to education these two pioneers were providing to all women, as education was considered something that only upper caste men received. Thus, people from the upper castes were provoked and reacted negatively.

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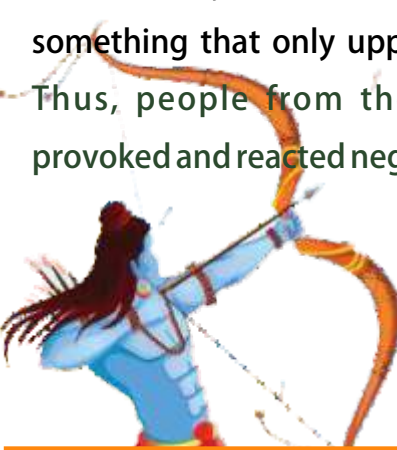


They pelted stones and dung at Fatima and Savitribai when they used to walk to their school. Apparently, the two women educationists used to carry an extra sari while walking towards their school due to the protests they knew would greet them on the way.

Despite this negative reaction from the upper castes, Fatima and Savitribai remained undeterred. Their friendship was something that had the power to eventually leave an impact on society.

Fatima taught in their school till 1856 and was the first Muslim, female teacher of India. Savitribai went on to become India's first woman teacher and headmistress.

They both were one of India's first social reformers who brought about such a huge change in the



education space.

As mentioned in an article in the Outlook magazine ("To Friendship") called 'Sisterhood of Solidarities', "Examples of the contribution of feminine friendships and solidarities toward the movements against oppression are aplenty in history."

Fatima and Savitri are also listed in this context as they played a big role in the education and liberation of thousands of women.

They are a huge inspiration for people across the world, as leaders of education and role models who prove that friendship and determination always win.

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Thank You

By Harsift Kaur, Grade 6, SNS Gurugram



Dear teacher, thank you!

For helping me when I'm feeling blue,
For being so caring and amiable,
Your joy in the class is radiable!

For being the best people on the Earth,
Precious than more than a hundred jewels are worth,
For being gods of wisdom & knowledge,
Your remarkableness we must acknowledge!

For spreading so much joy in Shiv Nadar School,
For being so amazing, kind and cool,
For tirelessly working day and night,
You are truly a student's delight

Savitribai's Struggle to Education

By Samarth Gupta, Grade 8, SNS Gurugram



Unlike today, right to education was not a right but privilege entitled to few. Social hierarchies were stringent. People were divided into groups according to their caste, class, gender, sex, religion and so on.

Women were considered inferior to men. Most of our society had become misogynists and were absolutely against feminism. They thought that if women get educated then they would go away from home and not get married, and even to get ahead of men, then what?

Many activists decided to rebel against these discriminatory practices and break the social constructs of society to help lead dignified lives.

One of these activists, also famously known as the first female teacher of India was none other than Savitribai Phule.

Savitribai was born on the 3rd of January 1831 (during the colonial era) in Naigaon, a small district of Maharashtra.

During her youth there was no sign of 'equality' as discrimination on the basis of caste, gender and religion were prevalent. Society was fully against women getting educational rights, especially the lower caste women.

One of these lower caste women was Savitribai. The Brahmin caste was considered superior to everyone, so they felt that they had the sole right to do anything and everything they wanted. Thus, they banned school for women.

Savitribai was also a school-going girl at that time and was forcefully kicked out of school. At a very early age, Savitribai got married to Jyotirao Phule. As Savitribai never got the chance to get educated, so she was taught by her very supportive husband. Later on, she studied at a

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university and accomplished a teacher's degree. Though it was very courageous of her to even have the guts to study and get educated in such an exploitative environment, but, she could not have done this without Jyotirao's help and support.

Soon, Savitribai became the first female teacher and started teaching girls. Alongside that the couple started a school in Bhide Wada in 1848 only for girls.

Though this helped change women's condition but it infuriated the upper castes and triggered them to physically abuse Savitribai.

Despite this, she was determined to get women their rights so that others do not suffer from what she went through and they don't have to compromise on their rights.



If this wasn't enough, in 1839 Jyotirao's father asked the couple to leave the house as their work of education women was considered a sin by religious texts and were a matter of shame.

But, no evil curse could break their unity and determination! Soon after they shifted to Jyotirao's friend Usman Sheikh's and his sister Fatima Sheikh's house. Yes! They were also feminists and had the same mission of changing the misogynistic society.

Then, Fatima and Savitribai worked together to open 18 schools that taught children from different socioeconomic backgrounds. These schools mostly exhibited women and people from demoralized stations and encouraged them to get educated.

It surely struck them that the improvement that comes about in a child due to the mother is very important and good.

So those who are concerned with the happiness and welfare of this country should pay attention to the condition of women and make every effort to impart knowledge to them if they want the country to progress.

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With this, they started many trusts like the Mahila Seva Mandal intending to raise awareness among women about their rights, nobility, dignity, and other social issues. Savitribai also wrote many poems which told the marginalized society to "free themselves by obtaining an education".

Savitribai is the reason girls are going to school. She and her husband have played a vital role in helping women get their rights, empowering them, and giving them the confidence to not be afraid of asserting their rights!



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Should teachers befriend their students on Social Media platforms?

I think that teachers should not befriend students on social media. If teachers start following students online or vice versa, then it will give way to assumptions and misconceptions. For example, if your teacher sees you online late at night, then she/he may think that you cannot balance your study time and sleep schedule, which could be a reason for you getting low marks. This is a cumbersome and unconscious bias which builds on the basis of another person's likes or dislikes. Ideally one should respect each other's privacy.

Our teachers impart knowledge and share their life experiences. Our job is to gain knowledge from them, ask valid questions and to enjoy the learning process. However, many a times, information exchange on social media goes astray and might as well be misused or misconstrued.

There are already multiple effective platforms through which teachers and students can connect with each other. And that way one can easily avoid the useless burden of social media interactions. Which is why, I strongly believe that teachers should not befriend students on social media platforms.



I believe that teachers should not befriend students on social media and students should do likewise.

Students and teachers should respect each other's boundaries in their relationship.

They should respect privacy outside school life and should not interact personally unless the interaction is confined to a student-teacher relationship.

Following and befriending on social media oversteps these boundaries and violates their privacy.

While many believe that letting students and teachers follow each other on social media or any other online platform will help to improve student-teacher connections and relationships, this has been proven wrong on numerous occasions.

One such example has been explained below.

A teacher in St. Xavier's, Calcutta was fired after a student unfairly lodged complaints of her posting 'inappropriate' pictures on her Instagram.

This complaint should not have been considered as it was outside school and not directed to or involving the student.

Therefore, it is important to separate and define the boundaries between private life and school life and so teachers should not befriend students on social media.





I think the relationship between students and teachers should be strictly professional. One can rather maintain a separate account on an online platform for strictly professional interactions with students.

It is good to stay in touch and exchange ideas and opinions but one ought to be vigilant of what they post so that only the appropriate audience may view them.

Teachers have the responsibility to filter the information they share with their students so that they can also train them to use social media responsibly.

Students should be able to connect with teachers on social media. Students will be vigilant of what they are posting and expressing on social media. Teachers will also feel more connected as they will get to know their students both within and outside the classroom space.

Being connected to and understanding the content people share builds an emotional bond. Both stakeholders will become more aware of each other.

This can lead to fruitful outcomes like teachers altering their strategies to better suit the interests of their students. Thus, befriending students on social media will create a space for extended learning.



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Teachers, Our Guides

By Arshia Bansal, Grade 6, SNS Gurugram



Teachers are those stars,
They are always twinkling bright!
They are the people,
Who always lead you by their light!

Keeping their personal troubles away,
They delightfully hear what you have to say.
Teachers are by your side
Whenever there is a high tide,

They always guide you right!
I salute all my teachers
For bringing me on the right track
A jolly heart-warming smile
Is what teachers never lack.

Enlightening us every day,
With something creative and new,
All I have to say is
People like you are very few,
Those who teach us to look at the world from a
unique point of view!

You taught us never to fall,
And always stand high and tall!
You show us how to reach our goal,
And try from our heart and soul!

A big thank you to all my teachers!





Teachers: Our Compasses

By Kashish Makkar, Myrah Madhok and Chahat Ratra,
Grade 8, SNS Gurugram



Teachers help us understand everything around us and beyond,
While always making a soulful bond.

There is no one like a teacher,
Not even a single creature;

Who can accurately explain,
All this information again and again.

Even though they get tired,
They always leave us inspired.

In our life a teacher,
Is just such a beautiful feature.

What an inspiring profession,
Changing lives every session.

Not only do they teach us science and
computers,
They are the real tutors.

Who guide us to make important decisions,
They broaden our vision;

Of our approach to life and existing
Thank you teachers, for assisting.

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