

# Into the minds of teachers



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As the anchor of *Teacher Plus's* regular column *Research In Action*, I persistently followed up with teachers to draw out some responses to the suggestions in the end-of-column box *Bring it into the Classroom*. When continuing this effort became too demanding, I quietly gave up, and just satisfied myself with writing the column – giving up any expectation of teachers writing in (as the box asks them to)! At one level, I understand why this is so. A teacher's day is so packed with urgent tasks that those rare free moments are enjoyed for the relaxation that they provide – and certainly not used for writing out articles!

When I casually bounced an idea off my friend and Editor, Usha Raman, seven months ago – suggesting that *Teacher Plus* solicit contributions from teachers on the contextualization of their lessons – little did I know that this would result in a deluge of articles! Never – in all my years of engaging with teachers – has an invitation to write elicited such an overwhelming response! This is a testimony to the resonance of the theme to a teacher's lived experience. Slowly at first, articles trickled in. Some of them came after I personally followed up with teachers in my circle. Most came in response to the *Call For Contributions* that had been posted on social media and in *Teacher Plus*, more and more rapidly as time slipped by.

As I read each one, I found myself transported to diverse classrooms. If one teacher brought alive ancient cities in ruins through a contemporary experience, another

showed me how to develop English textbooks from the children's own experience. [One piece from the latter category even fetched me a telephonic conversation with the author in New Zealand.] I soon found that I was gaining entry not just into the classrooms, but more importantly, to the *minds of teachers*. From the plight of a new teacher who bears the brunt of adolescents' pranks, to the ever-present dilemma in a teacher's mind of the importance of planning a lesson versus the value of spontaneity, and then, to the way in which a child can draw out the teacher in a mother ... oh, it was endless! Capturing my attention as each one of them did, I wondered what those eternal critics of our schoolteachers would say, when they read through these fascinating articles! I owe heartfelt thanks to every teacher who wrote in – for giving me fresh hope – and *Teacher Plus* for this opportunity.

And so, reader, here is a bouquet of flowers from those live gardens that we call 'classrooms': each one with its distinct fragrance! We are sure that you, too, will be transported into the minds of the teachers who write them!

And if, at the end of your reading, you long for more – we have good news for you! Those articles which could not be accommodated in this issue will appear in later issues, as part of a series we will call "Finding my own path". This may well sustain as a regular section: who knows?

It all depends on YOU!