

Dear Team

When we tell children that “Learning Is Fun and Exciting,” many simply tell us that we lie. Hence, it was disappointing but not unexpected when no children turned up at the arranged time and place for a science workshop in the neighbourhood. Our volunteers from the Hwa Chong Interact Club had prepared several hands-on ways for children to discover concepts and facts in science.

As we were about to close shop, we met some teenagers who told us that the children had informed them of the science activity and so they must have simply forgotten. The teenagers told us not to go away and within 15 minutes, they returned with 30 children below 12 years old for the activity. 5 parents also came along.

Old newspapers were handed out and the children in groups of 5 sat on them as they gathered around a science activity laid out on the floor. Some built “volcanoes” and learnt about how they are formed while others raced “balloon-powered” cars to determine how the changing of variables like the size of the balloon or the length of straw which supported the body of the car affected speed. The children found learning to be fun and exciting and for us, we were convinced of this when those who asked to go to the toilet actually returned. Perhaps, they had returned for the most popular activity which was learning how to make a “barel-o-slime” from some white glue, flour, liquid starch and green food colouring. This popular goo costs quite a bit at the shops and everyone was glad to bring home some.

It turned out to be a most enjoyable afternoon with lots of cooperation, communication and interactive learning. It was an afternoon where relationships were nurtured and a sense of community built. Somehow, it is always a lot more meaningful for children when they learn by interacting with people who care about them rather than simply learning from computers or books. After all, information is not the same as communication and cooperation. And, I am sure you will agree with me that it is not just children but all of us would certainly appreciate a little more cooperation and communication in our lives.

Enjoy your weekend.

Gerard

Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself. - John Dewey

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