

CHIRADDIKULAM THEATRE WORKSHOP I: July 10, 2012

Location: Chiraddikulam Community Centre

Key Contact: Major Lalith Edirisinghe

Age group: 9-11

3 girls: Risanthini, Thibadharshini, Saajini

10 boys: Sathurjan, Thiruchchelvan, Sayanthan, Anusanth, Vinodh, Kohilan, Kumanadas, Mayuran, Nirojan, Keshinthan

Programme:

Introductions

Icebreaker: Name Pass game

Outdoor Game: Keep the ball in the air

Discussion: Emotions

Writing Exercise (homework): My birthday

This was the first workshop in Chiraddikulam; organising the workshops through the army meant that it was not as well-coordinated as operating with the school principal as point of contact (as in Kakkaiyankulam). While in K'kulam, I feel as though my drama workshops are established as an extracurricular activity, I feel more disconnected from the Chiraddikulam community.

The distance that needed to be travelled and a few glitches including the fact that the children were late to arrive/the translator needed to return early, meant this workshop was very short – nothing more than an introduction, really.

The children responded better to the keep-the-ball-in-the-air game, but I suspected this was because they had less of the natural ebullience of the Kakkaiyankulam children and were not so inclined to turn the game into a free-for-all. One child, however – Thushyanthan – seems to be a little more comfortable with being dramatic and responding to prompts.

None of the children could come up with suggestions for different kinds of emotions (unlike the Kakkaiyankulam children – and I had to resort to asking questions like, “What do you feel when ___?” Even so, this was a difficult task for them.

The translator, Maheshwari, believed that writing about a time one felt happy/sad/angry/afraid was too difficult a task, so I asked them to write about their last birthday. We didn't have time to complete this activity in the workshop, however, so they were asked to write it as homework. They also had no pencils (I'm not sure how they keep up with their school homework!) so I had to lend them pencils for the week. However, I prefer that writing exercises are completed within the workshop (to minimise parental influence over the quality of their writing) and future exercises will be given within the space of the workshop.

See pg 2 for photos



Keeping the ball in the air



Distributing snacks