

ASL TWINS NEWSLETTER

A Message From ASL TWINS...

2008 is flying past and already proving to be an exciting year for ASL TWINS!

We have held our annual ASL TWINS Creative Writing Competition. The winner read his entry to a VIP audience at the Opening Ceremony of the Galle Literary Festival.

This event was followed by our pilot Skill Sharing Workshop for Teachers. This workshop was so successful we followed it up with another workshop where a further 48 teachers participated. Teachers all received our English Activities Handbook for Teachers to support their work in the class room.

Many TWINS schools are well underway with establishing their partnership agreements. Many of these agreements are being formalised face to face with some schools lucky enough to receive funding through the British Council for reciprocal visits with their Sri Lankan TWIN.

We look forward to meeting many UK teachers this year including two groups of students coming to Sri Lanka to spend time with their TWIN peers and help brighten up their TWIN Schools.

We have been visited by members of the Arabian Gymnastics Club who ran activities and demonstrations in 10 TWIN schools as well as helping us to link many new TWINS partnerships.

We welcome Royal Latin School, Lord Grey School, Hazeley School, Rickley School, Moorlands School (Luton) and Chestnuts School to TWINS and wish you all a successful 2008! We are now expanding our program and look forward to winning many more school in 2008.

The TWINS section of adoptsrilanka.com has had a major overhaul, it is a useful resource centre to support your partnership.

Bec Lyons

General Manager

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The AdoptSriLanka TWINS Program

Our Vision

- Promoting global and cultural understanding and awareness
- Recognising and respecting all cultural, ethnic and religious differences
- Engaging and working with local communities
- Discouraging a culture of dependency
- Encouraging mutual benefits for all through long term friendship

Our Objectives

- Cultural and educational exchange through global links
- Child participation through sport and arts events
- The development of rural under-resourced schools through financial assistance



Sri Lankan Kids have a go of gymnastics with friends from the UK

Special thanks must go to the girls and staff from the Arabian Gymnastics Team who once again traveled to Sri Lanka to run fun activities for Sri Lankan Schools.

The trip was one they will never ever forget and also gave many children in Sri Lanka with the chance to witness high level gymnastic skills and also have a go themselves!

Schools were buzzing in February with the arrival of Alan and Donna along with gymnasts Kirsty, Sam and Danni who led demonstrations and classes in many Sri Lankan TWIN Schools.

As well as the gymnastics the girls had a wonderful time learning more about Sri Lankan culture and making many new friends.

With the help of their coaches Alan and Donna, they also found many UK Schools keen to have a TWIN School in Sri Lanka. They personally visited these Sri Lankan schools to take along information and photographs of their new partner schools.

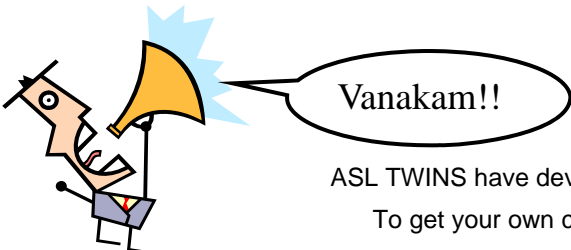


Handy Sinhala and Tamil Phrases

In our last Newsletter you had the chance to learn Sri Lankan fruits and vegetables in Sinhala and Tamil. Now you can have fun with your students learning the terms for numbers!!

Numbers in Sinhala and Tamil

English	Sinhala	Tamil
0	Binduwa	Saifer
1	Eka	Ondru
2	Deka	Iranduh
3	Thuna	Muunrduh
4	Hathara	Naan-guh
5	Paha	Ainduh
6	Haya	Aaruh
7	Hatha	Ealluh
8	Atta	Ettu
9	Navaya	Onbaduh
10	Dahaya	Pat-tuh
100	Seeya	Nooruh
1000	Daaha	Aayirem



ASL TWINS have developed a comprehensive 'Sinhala Survival Kit'
To get your own copy of this kit visit www.adoptsrilanka.com

TWINS Creative Writing Competition 2008

For the second year running the ASL TWINS Creative Writing Competition proved to be a fun and exciting activity for children from Sri Lankan schools.

The annual competition aims to give students the opportunity to expand their creative writing skills in English Medium.



Some participants from the National Schools Upper Intermediate Category

Held under examination conditions, the competition was linked to a series of Creative Writing Workshops conducted by the British Council in partnership with ASL TWINS and the Galle Literary Festival.

The workshops aimed to develop story telling skills while encouraging creativity in written English.

Students from 6 different categories showcased their talents with stories including meeting a talking leopard in the jungle, discovering new worlds in outer space and their hopes and dreams for adult life.

Winners were awarded prizes from each category with the overall winner announced as B.S. Kalansooriya from Mahinda College. The talented

All participants in the competition received a participation certificate and a gift of notebooks to inspire further stories. Additional prizes of books and gift vouchers were awarded to the category winners.

The winning entries from the 2008 and 2007 competitions can be read at our website www.adoptsrilanka.com



ASL General Manager awarding participation prizes

ASL Teaches Children to Swim in Sri Lanka



Proud children at their Awards Ceremony for completing the SwimLanka training

AdoptSriLanka along with partners SOS-Velsen and Jetwing Travels are set to open the first public swimming pool in Galle in June 2008!

On December 26th, when the Tsunami hit Sri Lanka a large proportion of the deaths and casualties were children.

Soon after the tsunami 'SwimLanka' was born and with the support of ASL, thousands of children were taught to swim using mobile swimming pools which were placed along the southern coastline. Since this program's conception, thousands of children have regained confidence in the water.

To ensure swimming classes can be offered to thousands more children, a permanent pool has been constructed along with a viewing pavilion and change rooms.

The pool provides a forum for local school children to receive swimming lessons completely free of charge. This project links into ASL's school TWINS program and this opportunity is being promoted within the schools via our TWINS Field Officers.

The rationale for this project in Sri Lanka is that:

- Many children lost their lives in the tsunami by drowning because they did not know how to swim
- Many children are traumatised and have an enormous fear of water and the ocean, yet every day of their lives will have to go near the ocean since they live in coastal villages.
- There are very few public pools in Sri Lanka and, in addition to children, many adults are unable to swim.

This carefully planned project aims to teach children to swim by running free classes available to schools. Special classes are also being offered to women and small community groups.

The official opening of the pool took place on Sunday 29 June 2008.

A very big thank you must go to ASCL 'Association of School and College Leaders' and the participating Surrey Schools for their incredibly generous financial contribution to this project.



The Galle Community Pool was officially opened on Sunday 29 June 2008

ASL TWINS Project Exchange Plans

Our Community

This project involves a walking field trip around the school's local community where students take photos and share information about local industry, services, educational facilities, religious sites and landscapes. This is a great introductory project to help TWIN schools understand the local communities of their TWIN.

Our School

This project is an excellent introductory project for a new TWIN relationship. Students prepare posters, a booklet or display that provides information about their school including history, facilities, subjects, special events and curriculum.

Festivals of My Country

Students research traditional festivals and celebrations of their country. They create posters or booklets which describe these festivals, their history, customs as well as anecdotes from friends and families about how they personally celebrate these events.

Our Cookbook - Recipes of My Country

Students brainstorm a list of traditional recipes from their country. Each student prepares one recipe to add to a cookbook for their TWIN school. They also write about the history of that meal, the special times it may be eaten and where it originates from. This project can combine various subjects including Religion, Home Economics and English. Additional activities can include the class preparing some of the recipes and taking photos to share with their TWIN school.

From Plantation to Tea Cup

Students research the history and procedures for producing tea – analysing its journey from Sri Lankan tea plantations to the supermarket shelves in countries such as England. This project encourages deep critical thinking in students through analysing subjects such as workers rights, fair trade, and environmental sustainability. The Sri Lankan students have the option to participate in a field trip to a tea planta-

tion to share photographs and first hand information with their TWIN school.

Comparison of News Stories

This project suits advanced students who are ready to apply critical thinking and analysis to their studies. Teachers agree on a set number of global issues which regularly appear in newspapers in both countries. Students collect the articles before photocopying them and sharing them with their TWIN. Students then compare and analyse the articles and how they are presented in both countries. Through analysis of these articles students will gain a greater understanding of the methods that can be used to sway public opinion and the importance placed on global issues by the different countries.

National Identity and Values

This project gives students the opportunity to explore and analyse what makes their country unique before sharing and comparing their national identity and values with their TWIN.

20 Q's - Perceptions vs. Reality

Students brainstorm a series of questions that they would like answered about their TWIN School's lifestyle, culture and country. The schools answer both sets of questions and guess what the responses from their TWIN may be. Once all answers are exchanged students can discuss and analyse the responses compared to their original perceptions.

Climate

Students actively study the climate in the region of the world and send weekly updates to their TWIN School. These results are displayed, compared and analysed. Students can also study the climatic changes and cause and effect of these changes on their local community.

Ecological Footprint

Students focus on their personal impact on the environment around them as well as how their lifestyle can impact on environments in other parts of the world. They analyse their 'ecological footprint' and discover ways that they can decrease the negative impact their lifestyle may make on the environment.

Poverty around the World

This project will raise awareness about today's living standards, which vary greatly among nations, communities and individuals. Students will learn how to define rich/poor, understand what resources are needed to fulfill basic human needs and what is considered as a luxury in different parts of the world. They will analyse their perceptions of poverty and recognise that it exists in all countries.

Stamp Collecting

This TWINS project aims to provide students with the opportunity to share information about images found on postage stamps with their TWIN school. Students will learn about significant events, landmarks and people from various countries. Students will put together a stamp collection; each stamp will have a written description and will be presented in a project which will be sent to the TWINS school overseas.

Plants in My Local Community

Students will walk through their local community and investigate what plants exist there. Students will learn how byproducts from plants play a big role in the country's economy and everyday lives of local communities. They will investigate what would happen to the eco system, climate, human health, economy, etc if plants were to disappear. By going on a field trip around their community, students will get to know their local environment better which will enable them to familiarise and understand the need for preservation.

English Activity Handbooks Now Available for Your TWIN School!

Here is your school's chance to directly support teachers from your TWIN school to learn new teaching techniques for their classroom!!

Volume 2 of the ASL TWINS English Activity Handbook for Teachers has just been released! 50 copies were presented to teachers attending the second Skill Sharing Workshop in March 2008. Over 75 handbooks have now been provided to Sri Lankan Schools.

This handbook was developed by ASL TWINS in conjunction with many qualified teachers from Sri Lanka and abroad. It spans over 70 pages of fun activities to help stimulate interest in English language learning for Sri Lankan students.

Many teachers had expressed their concerns with the lack of resources, guides and supports available to teachers in Sri Lanka.

ASL TWINS responded to this need by developing their handbook and designing a series of skill sharing workshops for all schools in the Southern Province.

The handbook aims to inspire teachers with lesson plans and activities to make the most of their English Activity Room or Corner.

It also provides examples of fun and interactive ways of developing English language skills for students

The handbook contains:

- Photo examples of English Activity Rooms
- Ideas on how your school can create an English Activity Room or Corner
- Lesson Plans and Worksheets
- Guidance on how to create your own activities (with no or little resources)
- Recommendations and ideas from other English Teachers
- A list of other sources for more ideas for your English Activity Room

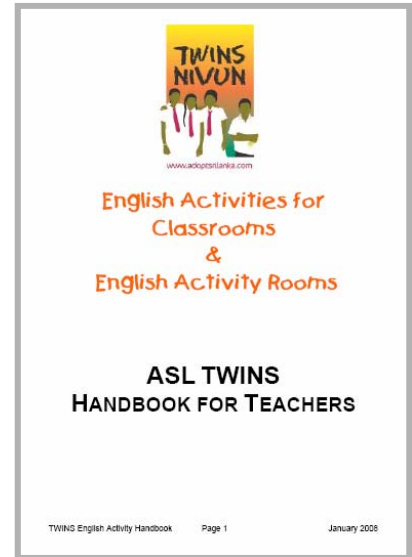
This handbook will reinforce that creating effective learning activities does not need to utilise expensive resources or a great deal of time.

We would like to encourage every teacher to support their students in

their English language development through interactive activities and a positive learning environment based on the individual needs of students.

These handbooks are available for \$25 USD (GBP).

If you would like to donate funds to purchase a copy for your TWIN School or perhaps a cluster of schools email adoptsrilanka@gmail.com



ASL TWINS Innovative Teaching Techniques—A DVD for Teachers

ASL TWINS are in the final editing stages of creating a training DVD for teachers in Sri Lanka!

This DVD contains footage of demonstration classes highlighting innovative teaching methods conducted by teachers from Sri Lanka and abroad.

The DVD also includes footage from the ASL TWINS Skill Sharing Workshops for teachers. It is hoped this DVD will help to motivate teachers in Sri Lanka to create fun activities that inspires English language learning.

The DVD compliments the ASL TWINS English Activity Handbook for Teachers. The DVD will be available for loan through the Galle, Matara and Tangalle Education Zonal Offices.

This project ensures the maximum number of teachers in Sri Lanka can benefit from these workshops, even those who are unable to attend the sessions.

For more information about the DVD or to find out how you could become a facilitator at a future ASL TWINS Workshop contact Bec at adoptsrilanka@gmail.com



ASL TWINS Skill Sharing Workshops for Teachers



ASL TWINS has now run two successful skills sharing workshops for English Teachers in Sri Lanka. Teacher Training and improving the overall standard of English teaching in Sri Lanka has now become one of our key aims.

Three teachers from the UK and two teachers from Sri Lanka facilitated workshops and conducted demonstration classes.

Through the second workshop, English teachers enhanced on techniques shared in Workshop 1 by exploring creative and interactive methods of teaching English through the use of drama.

ASL TWINS is committed to the sustainable development of Education in Sri Lanka. The workshops are coupled with the distribution of the ASL TWINS English Activity Handbook for Teachers.

Over 75 schools in Sri Lanka have now received these handbooks with a further 50 planned to be distributed to participants of the next workshop for Matara schools. ASL TWINS is seeking donations to purchase copies for schools throughout the southern province.

If your school is interested in fundraising to purchase a copy of the handbook for your TWIN School or a cluster of schools contact your Field Officer! See the previous page for further details.

A DVD is also currently being produced which includes footage from the training workshops as well as demonstration activities conducted by Sri Lankan teachers. Teachers will be able to loan these DVDs through the Education Department to ensure the training reaches as many schools and teachers as possible.

ASL TWINS hopes to continue to expand the teacher training aspect of the program. We are keen to hear from teachers how they may be visiting Sri Lanka and would be interested in teacher mentoring or facilitating sessions at future workshops. ASL TWINS are also currently working in partnership with the Galle Zonal Office to run train-the-trainer sessions to improve the overall standard of seminars



“One of the highlights of my six-month sabbatical was my involvement in the ASL TWINS Skill Sharing Workshops; sustainable education was enhanced through the exploration of a variety of creative teaching and learning techniques”

Susan Allen - Facilitator at Workshops 1 & 2



and training provided by the Education Department.

The workshops:

- **inspire and motivated teachers with innovative activities**
- **encourage teachers to network and share information and ideas**
- **make teachers aware of new teaching techniques and activities**
- **increase the confidence of teachers to try out different activities**
- **gather information on activities being successfully used in the classroom to create additions to the ASL TWINS English Handbook for Teachers**

Special thanks must go to Mary Yuille, Ava Hunt and Sue Allen (teachers from the UK) who all volunteered their time to facilitate sessions at our workshops.



Are you a qualified teacher and interested in facilitating a session at one of the ASL TWINS Skill Sharing Workshops in Sri Lanka?

Contact Bec Lyons at adoptsrilanka@gmail.com for more details

Reciprocal Visits between Sri Lanka and UK TWIN Schools



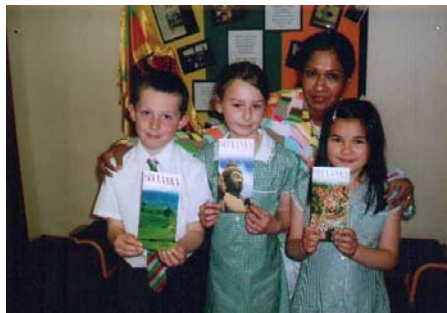
Teachers from **Grange Junior School, Swindon** and a teacher from **Deepankara Primary School, Tangalle** have had the chance to spend time at their TWIN School with the help of a grant from the British Council.

In March Deepankara School were delighted to welcome teachers Mr. Alan Duffy and Mrs. Diana Everett to their school. They and their partners were welcomed at the gates of the school in the traditional way by the giving of Betal leaves before a tour of the school and a welcome concert where the children displayed their talents for song and dance.

The teachers spent one week at the School which gave them a face to face opportunity to formalise a partnership agreement between the two

schools and spend time in the classroom working with the children. The teachers also visited family homes taking photos of everyday activities which will be used in a project to be exchanged between students about everyday life.

The Deepankara students learnt about the communities in Swindon by a fantastic display of photographs prepared by Grange Junior School's students. They also exchanged information about their local climates, flora and fauna as well as environmental issues.



In May Mrs. Hema Wijetunge, the TWINS Coordinator of Deepankara School returned from her Reciprocal Visit to Grange Junior School, UK. This was an amazing opportunity for Hema, not only because it was her first time traveling abroad, but because it also gave her a chance to

work with UK teachers and students for a week, comparing curriculum and sharing different teaching methods.

Mr. Alan Duffy prepared a full itinerary for Hema. During her week she participated in many classes and talked to the children about Sri Lanka, she had prepared books on Sri Lankan birds and also taught the children traditional Lantern making.

Hema was also taken on tours of the local infants and secondary schools giving her an overview of the education system in the UK. She said "I'm quite contented and happy. I was able to get sufficient knowledge in teaching and I'm quite confident I will make use of the skills." She added "The children like to meet me and they ask me to teach them Sinhala."

Alan arranged trips to local places of interest around Swindon, all valuable experiences that she has been able to share with the children at Deepankara upon her return.

For information about the Reciprocal Visit Grants visit
www.britishcouncil.org

Sri Lankan Teacher visits her UK TWIN School!

Tibshelf Community School, UK and Ihalagoda School, Sri Lanka have had the opportunity to meet to face to face in the UK and Sri Lanka!!

The schools were lucky recipients of the Reciprocal Visit Grants and Mrs Kasun Vithanage has just returned from spending time in the UK with her TWIN school (and her first trip abroad).

During Kasun's visit she shared information about her school and the education system with teachers and students. She taught students how to prepare traditional Sri Lankan foods and even did a demonstration of how

to drape a Sari! The visit also gave time for the teachers to work together on plans or future projects to ensure their partnership is beneficial for both schools.

Kasun was also a special guest at a fundraising dinner at Tibshelf School. This event raised funds for Ihalagoda School. A group of Tibshelf Students who arrive in Sri Lanka later this month will undertake project work with their Sri Lankan TWIN to improve the learning facilities at Ihalagoda.

Kasun found the trip to the UK incredibly beneficial and has said that this has really helped the two schools

make plans for the future. She has also asked if she can visit again and she loved her time spent abroad.

The schools are now working on a joint film making project to be screened at the Galle Film Festival in Sri Lanka in October 2008.



HELP! We are seeking new schools for TWINS global partnerships!

The ASL TWINS program is entering an exciting new phase! We are seeking new schools abroad to partner with schools in Sri Lanka.

We are now expanding the program to include more Sri Lankan schools, many of which are located further inland and are situated in poor rural areas. These schools have been largely forgotten and did not benefit from the influx of aid which followed the Asian Tsunami of 2004. Despite many of the communities being affected by the disaster that unfolded.

Sri Lankan teachers are in full support of ASL TWINS as they feel that an educational program of this type would really benefit their students. TWINS can broaden their horizons and provide them with new fun ways to improve their English through project exchange and the friendships that will develop between students.

We are seeking your help to introduce our program to neighboring schools and other schools in your local area!!

Any interested schools can be directed to our website for further information. ASL TWINS now conducts a thorough matching process to ensure that all new partnerships are equitable where both schools benefit through various educational outcomes.

www.adoptsrilanka.com

Here are some of the schools awaiting TWINS!



Ranna Maha Vidyalaya is situated in a bustling rural village in Hambantota district. It is a large school with 1'800 students aged 6 to 18. The school is well maintained with some resources. However many of the children come from low income families and struggle to buy the basics. Mrs. Nalini is a very enthusiastic TWINS coordinator who is keen to Twin with a secondary school for project exchange and a long lasting friendship.



Moraketiyara School is situated approximately 15K from Tangalle on the south coast. The school recently moved to a new site built by the Rotary Club of North England and so enjoys good facilities. They have also taken in the children from Mawella School whose school was completely destroyed by the Tsunami. There are 236 pupils aged from 6 to 18 and 27 teachers. Both the Primary and Secondary sections would welcome a TWIN for project exchange.



Nihiluwa Maha Vidyalaya - Primary Section has 218 children age 6 to 11 and 15 teachers. It is located in a rural setting north of Tangalle and close to Beliatta Town. Most of the children are from a poor farming community. The school shares its grounds with the Secondary School who have a successful link with Solihull School in England. The English teacher Mrs. Nanayakkara would love to link with a Primary School keen to do project exchange.



Henwala Jayatissa Vidyalaya is a school located in a rural area just inland from the pretty coastal town of Mirissa. The school has 265 students ages 6 to 16 and 23 teachers. The English teacher Mrs. Chandrani is a very motivated teacher and always tries her best to give her students a sound knowledge of English. She would like very much to have a link with an overseas school especially for curricular project exchange.



Vitharendeniya Maha Vidyalaya is a charming school situated about 10K from Tangalle in a very rural setting. There are 375 children in the school from age 6 to 18 and 23 teachers including 2 English teachers. Most of the children are from poor farming communities. Agriculture is a strong subject in this school and sport is also very popular. The school is eager to Twin with a Secondary school for project exchange.

Andugoda Kaniu Vidyalaya is a beautiful school set in a rural location 16km inland from Galle. The school has 165 students aged between 6 and 16 and 14 teachers. This school has now received a lot of support to develop their facilities through TWINS but seeks a TWIN school to develop a long term curriculum partnership with.