

The Pearl Padamsee Trophy

Excellence in Speech & Drama

..."and the winner of the Padamsee Trophy is, Kaashif Hajee!" As these words were announced by the host of the evening, I was just elated. Gaurang Biyani from class 7-A and Nishna Singh from class 7-B were the second and first runner ups respectively. This was the second consecutive year during which all the three winners were from Dhirubhai Ambani International School. Seeing the proud look on our parents faces also gave us a feeling of extreme satisfaction. Our school had indeed made it a practice to win all the three prizes in The Pearl Padamsee Trophy- an extremely coveted elocution competition.

Now let me tell you that this remarkable feat was not achieved overnight. We worked extremely hard with our English teacher- Ms. Nath and our speech and drama teacher- Ms Kalyani. It all started with us being called out of our classes. Ms. Nath and Ms. Kalyani introduced us to the whole idea of this trophy. It was extremely unique as all the participants had to creatively write out their own pieces which they'd have to enact. Nishna wrote about the two different worlds of a rich girl and a poor girl and how they become one when they both help each other in the 26/7 floods and Gaurang wrote about how writers and artists majorly contribute into uniting our world and making it one. I wrote about a young man who is going abroad to study in the prestigious MIT and how his orthodox family tries to create barriers of caste, class, race and nationality in his mind; but he convinces himself that he should go abroad with an open mind free from all prejudices. These were our respective interpretations to this topic. It was supposed to be a one-act play with a lot of props and characters. The topic we were given to write our pieces was "one world". This is an extremely broad topic and can have several connotations. We could interpret this in any way and all points-of-view would be accepted. So we wrote down our ideas at home and got them approved by the teachers. After a lot of brain storming, we typed out three final pieces. The next step now was to by-heart the poems; after learning them verbatim; we started rehearsing everyday with Ms Kalyani. We had many props to practice with and we worked very hard- the preliminary round was just a week away! So we did work a lot with Ms Kalyani and were all set for the prelims; she too was quite satisfied with our performances.

The preliminary round went off very smoothly. All three of us had qualified for the finals which were at NGMA in just two weeks. We practiced a lot- at school and at home; it was difficult to juggle between our academics and this trophy but all three of us were determined to win it. Soon came the finals, only the top seven children out of the forty-five were shortlisted for them. We were extremely nervous. But we confidently recited our pieces and were quite successful!

Now when I look back, it was quite a thrilling experience and I will cherish every bit of it. I thoroughly enjoyed all the aspects of this experience. Also, it has opened a door of vast opportunities for me. I have learned many aspects of living in a united world too and that creativity and imagination have no bounds.

-Kaashif Hajee 6-A

