

An enriching mix of fun-n-learning was Akshara and Spark India's story-telling session for children at Kaleidoscope.

Once upon a time... these magical words beckon us into a world of fantasy and tickle the sense of imagination of both children and adults alike. Infact the enduring *Tales from 1001 Arabian Nights* is a classic example of how enchanting the experience of listening to a story can be; so much so that the powerful King Shahryar who was inflamed with jealousy by his wife's infidelity and resolved to take revenge on womankind, condoned the killing of the shrewd daughter of his wazir to know the outcome of the story she narrated to him, night after night.

come the summer vacation: With the right mix of fun-n-learning. For a change, there was no chase of *Tom & Jerry* or the monotonous 'kahanis of kitchen' that entangle the tiny tots as well. (Their knowledge of *saas* and *bahus* can perhaps shame any older fan of the never-ending tele sagas.) But the li'l ones (between 3 - 5yrs) accompanied by their moms and dads and grandmas and grandpas got to "share" a very different kind of *kahani* - the story of *A Pot of Light* penned by Sheel. "How many of you have seen a pot of light?" asked Jaishree Uppal, one of the members of The Little Theatre, before commencing the reading. And there came a volley of answers from the li'l audience, while their parents gushed with pride.

"Long ago in a little village by a river, there lived a potter named Raman..." Thus began the tale of a potter who made different kinds of pots... "Can you make me a pot of light?" approached the village

Illuminating tale



Story time

Whether it's *Jataka Tales*, *Panchatantra* or *Arabian Nights*, story telling is an enriching facet of any culture, cutting across boundaries and barriers.

For children, reading or listening to tales is a precious moment of sharing dreams, imagining, exploring and relating fantasy to the world of their own. Akshara and Spark India's story telling session at Kaleidoscope (a library for children and adults, and a centre for kids that provides time and space to participate in various group activities and interactive sessions) was just the right way to wel-

chief's daughter. Though the potter agreed, he wondered for a while, and then began making a pot on the wheel. He then created diamond shafts and placed a wick inside the pot and lighted it: That's the pot of light... After an illustrative narration, tiny replicas of the pots of light in the hands of the story tellers, delighted the children and illuminated the special evening.

With illustrations by Mithila Maniketh, the Spark India's 'big book' is a teacher training and pre-reading material, designed for teachers and parents.

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