



Tips on conducting Virtual SSE Classes

1. Alleviate any outside pressure

- There is no expectation that everything will be same as the in-person class.
- Remember to be flexible – aim to get better rather than be perfect.
- Take care of the students and be attentive to their level of comfort.
- Understand that the kids are experiencing anxiety over virtual schooling. Please manage the content load and expectations of your SSE class to make the children feel less anxious.
- Simplify your lessons.
- Shift to a simplified way of teaching.
- Take time to understand what will interest the children.
- Modify your expectations in line with the virtual environment.
- Be compassionate to students and yourself as gurus.
- Create and maintain a class atmosphere that is loving, non-judgmental and supportive.
- As a teacher, look out for opportunities to tap a student's inner motivation.
- Encourage students to ask questions. Try to be interactive and collaborative.

2. Being prepared- Before class

Focus on what you can do instead of on what you can't. Be gentle on yourselves and creative.

- Understand the technology of online classes. In a zoom setting, learn how to share your screen, assign breakout rooms etc. If there are two gurus in a class, one guru should be monitoring the chats. This gives the gurus feedback on how well the kids are connecting to the topic. If the chats are unrelated to the topic presented, disable the chat.
- Request the President/Education Co-ordinator of your Centre to conduct a short session on how to use the online platforms (Zoom/Google meet etc.).
- Use of online tools for activities will hold the kids' attention better.
- Familiarize yourself with various tools and how you can incorporate them in your lesson plan
- Share individual reflections among co-gurus.
- Lesson plans should be organized, clear and to the point.
- Organize your presentations with little topic jumping. Otherwise it will be challenging in a virtual setting.
- Delivery of the 5 teaching techniques can still be done with conscious preparation/ visual aids. Use of interactive games or debate evokes better participation from the students in Group 3 and 4. *(Please refer to the Resources for Online Teaching document link for further guidance).*
- Find the best activities for kids to keep them engaged and grounded.
- Make sure you are prepared (i.e., read the story / read the activity or game and come prepared with crayons, thread and any other materials they would need to complete the activity.
- Have children keep materials ready by emailing parents ahead of the activity.
- Brain storm with co-gurus, must have prior knowledge of the children and their base understanding of the topic you plan to cover.



3-During Class:

- Gurus should sign in early to greet the children as they join.
- Please encourage the children to join at least 5 – 10 minutes early to sort out any login issues.
- Engage the children in conversation about their week/current topics etc. before the class starts.
- The duration of the online class should vary based on the age of the SSE kids.
- **Pre-post relevant materials/topics online.** Try to make efficient use of the time available by posting things online ahead of time
- Maintain the core content of the Lesson Plan and have group activities in class
- If a child is not participating in the class, send them a private chat message with words of encouragement.
- Encourage the children to be on-camera for the duration of the class.
- In every class, allocate time to celebrate the kids' birthdays or achievements.
- Welcome creative thoughts and ideas from students by giving them some keywords to spark the conversation.
- Relate your lesson plans to real life scenario
- Clarity in information sharing and instruction as to not waste time. Be clear specific and concise. Ask for understanding and time for questions.
- Show and tell a prayer (depending on the age of the children).
- Adapt as per your class and age group.
- Qualify your audience - At the end of each class, share the next week's topic with the children. Depending on the topic, some pre-reading/ a video connected to the topic can be provided.
- Teaching bhajans in a virtual setting can be tricky and needs planning on the part of the guru. Select simple, short bhajans that are easy to learn. Select 3-4 students to chorus while the gurus lead. For Group 3 and 4, pre-select the students who can lead and chorus. The gurus can also have a lightning round and make it a fun activity.
- Invite parents to attend a certain portion of the regular classes and involve parents during festival celebrations.
- Share planned activities with parents in case children require special materials.
- **For younger children**, use group role play technique and re-enact the story together using everyday items that are available at home (eg. Blue shawl to depict water, spoons to replace oars or shovels). Use sound effects for storytelling.
- When reading stories:
 - o ask the students what they think will happen next before you flip to the next page
 - o it helps to tell the story rather than just read the story
- Show & Tell activities for the younger groups to keep them correct.
- Visit public libraries' websites to find children's ebooks and screenshare during class
- Provide more opportunities for kids to express their opinion/concerns.
- Activities should be relevant to the topic, exciting and engaging. It generates interest, conversation and sharing of ideas.
- Practice handling technical aspects for smooth running of the classes.

4. Heart to Heart Connection

- In the absence of in-class teaching, the most effective way of communicating with parents is by phone (54%) followed by WhatsApp messages (34%). The least effective method is emails (4%).
- Continue to connect with children and parents on a regular basis outside of the virtual class setting.
- It is more important to call the children/parents on a regular basis so that we maintain the emotional bond during this difficult time.



5. Surrender to our Lord

The way we deliver the SSE class may be different at this current time (relying more on technology). However, our goal as SSE gurus remain the same which is to love our SSE kids unconditionally. Let us always remember Our Lord's Divine guidance:

“Pour out all your love on the children around you and instruct them gladly and sincerely. This attitude alone can justify association with the Sathya Sai Bal Vikas. Of course, Sai is not unaware that the Bal Vikas gurus are now heartily engaged in their sacred task and are contributing their best to the progress of the movement”. Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba (November 20, 1979)