

Time for games

V.R.DEVIKA

To revive interest in traditional games, *The Hindu* as part of its Newspaper in Education programme, organised a series of workshops, that culminated in a competition. Held in Chennai recently, it had 10 city schools participating.



The *Hindu* as part of its Newspaper in Education programme organised an inter-school competition in traditional indoor games in Chennai recently. The competition was between 10 schools in Chennai which had participated in the workshop conducted by members of Kreedaa, a branch of Masterpage that developed these games and is now marketing them.

Twentyfive students from Vidyodaya Matric School, A.M.M. Matric School, Sri Sankara S.S.S, Shankara Vidyashram, Vidya Vinaya Vinoda Matric School, Children's Garden School, T.I.Matric School, Bharath S.S.School, Bala Vidyamandir and Abacus School took part. The idea organising workshops in traditional games in city

schools was to resurrect the many dying games of Indian origin and introduce them to the younger generation; to provide schools an Indian alternative to games and to use Indian games to improve many skills, such as arithmetic, logic as well as motor and sensory ones.

The Kreedaa team was led by Vinita Sidhartha, who is responsible for the design and development of the games — *Aadu Puli Attam*, *Dahdi*, *Astaa Chemmaa*, *Tamarind Seeds*, *Pallanguzhi*, *Five Stones* and *Four shells*. Padmini and Sivagami were the resource persons.

Workshops were conducted in each school, where the participants were taught the rules of seven traditional games. These students were, in turn asked to teach the



other students conduct a competition in the school. "The enthusiasm showed by the children was fascinating. They soon learnt that the games required thinking and planning," says Vinita Sidhartha.

The idea of developing these games and making them available came after she wrote a series of articles on traditional Indian games for *The Hindu Young World*.

"The games have been created keeping tradition in mind and they are environment friendly, using only naturally



available material. Many indoor games played in the West have had their origins in India," says Vinita, "like Snakes and Ladders which was called *Paramapada Sopanam* and the original game is all but forgotten. *Paramapada Sopanam* means 'steps to the highest place'. The game was believed to be a symbolic attempt to reach God. The ladders represent virtues and the snakes represent vices. This game was played on the night of *Vaikunta Ekadasi* (the 11th day after the new moon in the month of *Margazhi* — the ninth month of the lunar calendar).

Paramapada Sopanam was given as the first prize for the winner in all the three games. All the participants took away a new pocket game *Kattam Veliyattu* and a certificate. ☺

Fragile and delicate

MALA MAHESH

Ceramics was just one part of Chinese art, which also included painting, sculpture, calligraphy and more.

When we say Chinaware, we immediately think of fragile jars, plates, and teacups.

This general term for dinnerware has stuck over the years because China's history in ceramics goes back to the Neolithic times (4000-2000 B.C.). Ceramic is anything made of clay and hardened by firing in a kiln.

In China, painted urns and vessels were found in burial grounds dating back to the Neolithic times. Earlier dynasties like the Shang and Zhou also buried material possessions with the dead. The Zhou dynasty was the first to make glazed ceramics.

Glazing was a technique of covering a ceramic object subject with a transparent coat to give it a smooth glossy finish. One of most interesting emperors was the Qin Shihuangdi (pronounced as Ch'in Shih huang ti). The name China was derived from his name. From his burial grounds, have beenexcavated a huge army of soldiers, horses and chariots — all made in terracotta- unglazed earthenware, usually used purposes of decoration.

The Haan dynasty, which followed, filled the graves of the dead with miniature ceramic duplicates of their possessions like small houses, farm animals, servants, objects of daily use and many more.

These were called 'Ming ji yi' (pronounced as Ming-chi'i). The Tang dynasty made an important invention in ceramics. They mixed white clay with ground feldspar.

Materials made from this clay were heated to a very high temperature to make beautiful white porcelain. These porcelain



Blue and red dragon vase ... Qing dynasty

glazing and firing, these painted patterns took on a beautiful blue colour called under glaze blue or blue and white porcelain. Copper oxide was also used in the same way to get a reddish tinge in the ceramicobjects called under glaze red.

The Ming dynasty was famous for its vases, which were exported. The most common patterns were the five-clawed Dragon and the Phoenix representing the emperor and the empress, with the usual floral and geometric designs. Enamel work on porcelain began during the Ming dynasty. Enamel was applied on ceramics before glazing and firing. It was applied on glazed porcelain after firing and was then fired again at a lower temperature. This resulted in a variety of coloured ceramics.

In China it was called *Wanli Wacai* — five coloured enamels, red, green, blue, black, blue and white. The West called it *famille verte* [green family], *famille noire* (black family), *famille rose* (Pink family) — depending on the colour of the enamels.

The Qing dynasty ruled till the early 20th Century. They painted porcelain with scenes from literature and landscapes. While enamelled ceramics were the result of more creatively, they also created single coloured wares in red, white, turquoise blue, bright green, copper, red and yellow. Ceramics was just one part of Chinese art, which also included painting, sculpture, calligraphy and more. ☺



objects were decorated with simple floral or geometric designs of brownish or black glaze on white background.

The Song dynasty patronised the Chinese art, creating greenish tinged porcelain objects. The symbolic lotus pattern was more popular in those times. The Buddhists used glossy black cups with designs on the inside, before firing. During the Mongol rule (Yuan dynasty), floral and sea wave patterns were painted on the ceramics using a mixture of ground cobalt and water. After



V.V. RAMANAN

1. In Internet lingo, what is 'cross-posting'?
2. The legendary British composer, who produced A.R. Rahman's hit musical "Bombay Dreams", was born this day in 1948. Name him.
3. Two of the world's five major rivers (by length) are in Asia. One is the Yangtze or Chang Jiang (6380 km). Name the other.
4. Who wrote the famous children's book *Stuart Little*?
5. What is the collective noun for a group of zebras?
6. Which of the 'Fab Four' was an accomplished sitar player?
7. What was the former name of the Houston Rockets?
8. Which European river is the title of a noted waltz by



The Yangtze river...

9. Johann Strauss?
10. What would one get on ordering 'escargots' in a restaurant?
11. Which train in India has the longest run in terms of total time?
12. In the Indian Air Force, which rank follows Squadron Leader?
13. Who was the first monarch from the House of Windsor?
14. Of which European



Zebras...time to ponder.

14. In chemistry, what name is given to the naturally occurring form of calcium carbonate?
15. In Greek mythology, who is the God of the Seas?



Rolling Stones

The Chinese government has stopped the Rolling Stones in their tracks. Four of their best-known hits — "Brown Sugar", "Honky Tonk Women", "Beast of Burden", or "Let's Spend the Night Together" — have been

banned from their concerts in Shanghai on April 1 and in Beijing on April 4. The four songs, which include sexual references, had also been axed from the release of the band's "40 Licks" compilation album by China's culture ministry. The album, the first Rolling



No honky tonks in China...

Stones album to legally hit the China market, was released by EMI Records China earlier this year.

Man on the moon

Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon, is an American icon. And so far there has been no movie on his exploit. Now that omission in being rectified. Hollywood tough guy, Clint Eastwood has announced that he plans to produce and direct a feature film about the astronaut. The star has got the rights to a forthcoming authorised biography on Armstrong by historian James R. Hansen. Warner Bros. Pictures will release the film, the studio announced.

But Eastwood fans are in for a disappointment. Their hero doesn't plan to star in the Armstrong biopic.

Hansen's book is an account

of how the former Korean War fighter pilot joined the U.S. space programme and finally wound up on the moon.

Bugged by the phone

Are you the kind who gets bugged when the phone rings when you are busy? Well, then, what scientists at Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania are working on may be just the technology for you. And that's a smart telephone that can sense when you are busy and asks the caller to leave a message. It will use microphones, cameras, sensors that reveal body language and computer software that analyse the signals to decide if someone is too occupied to take a call. Scientists who are developing the system, think it could be available in a few years. ☺

Compiled by R. KRITHIKA



The letters of these crazy words are all mixed up. To play the game, put them back into the right order so that they make real words you can find in your dictionary. Write the letters of each real word under each crazy word, but only one letter to a square.

ITE

TENX

DONB

LOHD

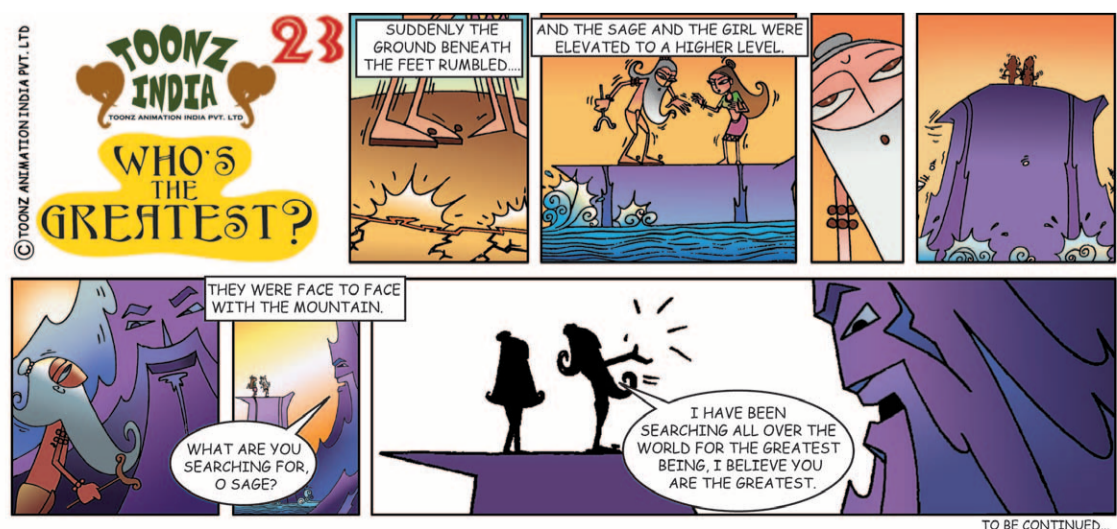


Color me

You are now ready to solve today's Jumble For Kids. Study the picture for a hint. Then play around with the letters in the circles. You'll find you can put them in order so that they make your funny answer.

Print answer here: A

Jumbles: TIE NEXT BOND HOLD Answer: SIS borrowed many things but she never took this — A HINT



TO BE CONTINUED.



File: Mendonca