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Coonoor Kripalani with Pallavi Foley

The world of words

By Malvika Tegta

THE access to the world of words wasn't through alphabets - words were things that found meaning over time, meaning being that access. The way, however, was paved by the basic letters that arranged themselves to include more and more of our world.

To facilitate the journey, Oxford book house introduced a series of four Hindi books for the pre-schoolers at Leela Galleria on Tuesday. The books conceptualised and written by Coonoor Kripalani seek to bring in such 'few and far between' books in Hindi that are unlike the conventional text books where learning stops as one shuts the book.

With these books, learning comes through fascinating stories in various shapes and colours. Like in the book titled Aakar, where two butterflies talk of shapes with each other. In the other three books titled Varnamala, Ginti and Rang, a similar idea is embraced by the writer who was inspired by the many teachers who adopted a similar method of imparting their lessons. The evening proceeded with an interactive session with the kids who were quick to

identify the Hindi alphabets and numbers. However, when it came to identifying the objects and shapes, the children seemed better equipped with the English names, where the Hindi alphabet 'ka' stood for cake.

On the reason why she chose to write in Hindi the writer said, "We need to maintain our strength and our dignity and it's a shame that there aren't as many good basic books in Hindi as there are in other languages."

"A child's personality is formed before they are four and the initial learning process shapes a child's respect for the language," said Kripalani.

Besides learning, according to the writer, shouldn't be a burden. "A book should be something a child wants to play with and learning should be like osmosis that just happens on its own," she said.

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