

Mattel Scrabble Challenge

After a screening test, 20 students were selected to go for a workshop on scrabble. The students were taught the basic rules of scrabble by two experts who played the game professionally. Not only were they taught the general rules of the game but also important things such as scoring and were given tips and suggestions to improve their level of playing. These suggestions/tips helped the students understand the nuances of the game. The students were also given other useful information regarding the formation of bingos, exchanging of tiles and how to make the most of bonus squares. After being taught the general rules of the game, they were made to play a game of scrabble under the supervision of the experts. In all the entire workshop was a fun and enriching experience for all the students.

A few days later, the students who went for the scrabble workshop were made to compete with each other. In the first round of the competition, the students were given a worksheet to complete. The students were selected for round two based on how well they performed in round one. Round two was a scrabble tournament. The tournament was held at Thyagraj stadium. Since this was the first scrabble tournament the students were attending, they were all very excited. Once they arrived at the venue they were given refreshments and told to wait while they were matched with opponents. After all the schools had arrived there was a cursory review of the general rules of scrabble as well as those rules that were specific to the tournament. This was followed by a briefing on the seating arrangement and announcements regarding who was to play against whom. After this all the contestants were allowed to begin their games. The contestants were made to play 4 games against different opponents. After each game the contestants were given a ten minute break while the judges checked the score sheets. After the fourth and final game, there was a prize distribution ceremony in which the winners were awarded their certificates and prizes. Prithu Menon stood first and Anika Gupta stood third at Grade 6 level, and Shivan Ajay Iyer stood third at Grade 8 level.

Overall this experience was not only fun but also highly educational. The students learned lots of new words they had no idea existed. They were also reintroduced to scrabble as not only a recreational board game but as a sport which could also be made into a career. They also learnt about strategy and presence of mind as it is not necessary that the person with an extensive vocabulary will win a game of scrabble. Often the winner is determined by who is able to spot patterns and make words in such a way so as to maximize the points he or she gets for it. Most importantly all the students enjoyed themselves thoroughly at both the workshop and the tournament.

