August 2026
The Freedom Edition

THE VOICES BEYOND

People. Perspectives. Possibilities

Freedom to Dream

Looking beyond Independence to the freedoms that shape how we learn, live, dream and grow

Before You Turn the Page...

Freedom isn't one story. It's a question, a dream, a language, a voice, a choice—and sometimes, even a kite. Turn the page and see freedom through new eyes.



infocus

True Freedom Begins with a Question



Seemita Bhattacharya,
Editorial Board

Ma'am... what if the textbook is wrong?

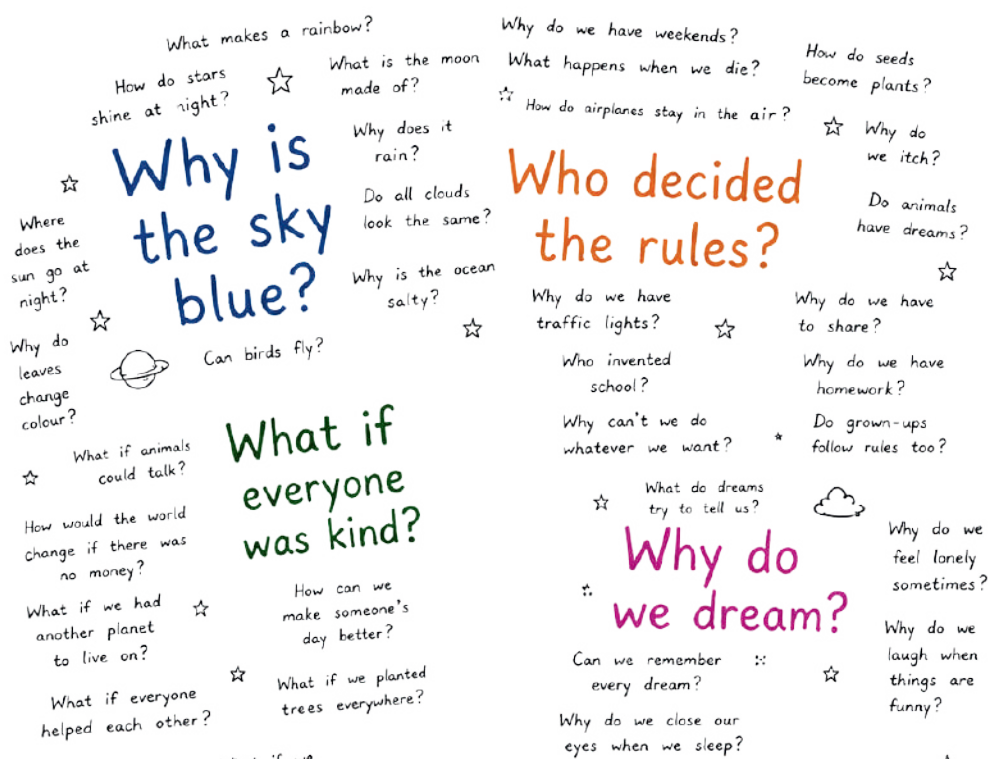
For a moment, the classroom fell silent. It wasn't the question I had planned for. But it became the most important lesson of the day. As teachers, we often believe our greatest responsibility is to provide answers. Yet the most remarkable moments in education rarely begin with an answer. They begin with a child who dares to ask, "Why?"

Looking back, I realise my own journey began the same way. I was the child who questioned everything—why stars appeared only at night, why history unfolded the way it did, and why two people could witness the same event yet believe completely different things. Those questions didn't always lead to answers. But they taught me something far more valuable - the courage to keep wondering.

Today, when a student asks a difficult question, I no longer see it as a disruption. I see it as learning itself. Across the world and sometimes closer to home than we realise - there are moments when asking difficult questions is mistaken for disloyalty, when disagreement is met with discomfort instead of dialogue, and when fear discourages people from speaking their minds.

History tells us that progress has never come from unquestioning acceptance. It has always come from people who had the courage to ask, "Could there be a better way?" That is why both education and a free press matter. One teaches us to ask questions. The other ensures those questions continue to be asked. Together, they help keep democracy alive.

Perhaps the greatest freedom education and democracy can offer is not the freedom to memorise.
It is the freedom to ask, "Why?"





The freedom to dream, in my opinion, must also include the freedom to fail. We cannot ask people to imagine extraordinary futures while teaching them to fear every mistake. If we want young people to dream boldly, we must give them room to stumble, learn and try again.

- Moukthika Bella, Grade IX



The greatest freedom isn't being told who you can become. It's deciding that for yourself.

- Lakshita Kansal, Grade IX



The Freedom to Belong

Why language should build bridges, not boundaries.



Manjunath J., I.A.S.,
Secretary to Government
Department of Information & Public Relations
& Kannada & Culture Department,
Government of Karnataka

You walk into a small café and place your order in English. The person at the counter smiles and replies in Kannada. You smile back... awkwardly. You know this city is becoming your home. You just don't know its language yet. Or perhaps you've lived here all your life and wondered why someone still hasn't learnt it.

The same moment. Two very different perspectives.
And perhaps that is where every conversation about language should begin. Language has always been about more than words. It carries memories, history, identity and culture. Our mother tongue is often the first language of love, comfort and belonging. It shapes how we see the world. Kannada is one such language. But perhaps the question is not whether Kannada should be learnt. It should.

The real question is... How do we inspire people to love a language instead of merely learning it?

For someone who moves to Karnataka from another state or another country learning Kannada is more than learning new words. It is a gesture of respect. It says, "I want to understand the place that has welcomed me." Even a simple *"Namaskara"* can build a bridge between strangers. But respect must travel both ways. People rarely fall in love with a language because they are compelled to speak it. They embrace it because someone patiently teaches it, encourages them and makes them feel that they belong.

Every new language we learn expands more than our vocabulary. It is freedom - the freedom to connect, the freedom to belong and the freedom to see the world through someone else's eyes. Perhaps freedom isn't measured by how loudly we defend our language, but by how warmly we invite others to learn it. Speak your mother tongue with pride. Learn another with curiosity. Welcome every sincere attempt with kindness. That is how languages and societies truly flourish.



> **Every language we learn gives us the freedom to connect and belong.**

This Is What Freedom Looks Like

Every child discovers freedom in their own unique way.



Community Voices

The Freedom to Fail



Paromita Mitra,
Editorial Board | Parent

No one remembers Steve Jobs for being fired.
No one remembers J.K. Rowling for being rejected.
No one remembers Michael Jordan for being dropped from his high school basketball team.
We remember what they did next.

Yet when our own children score poorly on a test, miss the school team or lose a competition, we often make failure feel permanent. Why? Think about the first time a child learns to walk. They stumble, fall, cry and get up again. No one says, "Walking isn't for you." We cheer every tiny step because we know that falling is part of learning.

Somewhere along the way, our expectations change.
A low score isn't the end of the world. Losing a race, forgetting lines on stage or not making the team are not signs of failure – they are opportunities to grow, adapt and try again. Children don't need adults who expect perfection. They need adults who say, "It's okay. This didn't go as planned. Let's figure it out together." Perhaps the greatest freedom we can give our children isn't just the freedom to dream – it's the freedom to fail.

Success after all rarely belongs to those who never stumble. I belongs to those who keep getting up.



STEVE JOBS

Fired from Apple in 1985.



J.K. ROWLING

Rejected by 12 publishers before *Harry Potter.*



MICHAEL JORDAN

Didn't make his high school varsity basketball team.



JAMES DYSON

Built 5,126 failed prototypes before his breakthrough vacuum cleaner.

The Freedom to Simply Be



Dr. CK Mathew IAS (Retd),
Former Chief Secretary,
Government of Rajasthan.

> **"I love the freedom that lets me spend time with my books, or in writing, the freedom that lifts me above mundane worries and anxieties."**

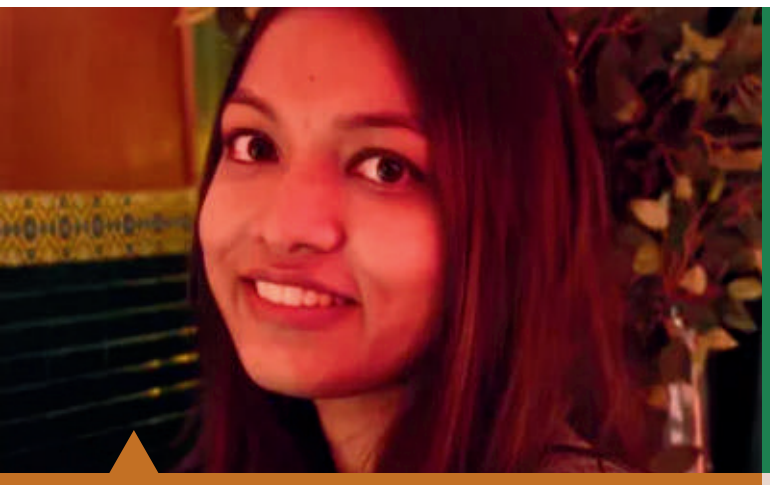
When I retired from government in 2014 after about four decades of service, the initial loss of structure in the days of my life was disconcerting. On relocation to Bangalore, I found my feet again in a different and uplifting life of academics and literature. In time, I realised that I had freed myself from the confines of a controlled life within the bounds of government and entered a life with boundless possibilities. **I know my freedom comes from Articles 19 to 22 of the Constitution of India, dealing with the liberties associated with speech, movement, personal liberty, protection from arbitrary actions as well as the right to practice any religion.** Those are fundamental to my life.

In practical terms though, I now know that I do not need to wait on hand and foot for anyone other than myself. I come and go as my mind tells me. My freedom means that I read or walk or travel or think or slumber, whenever I wish to. I love the freedom that lets me spend time with my books, or in writing, the freedom that lifts me above mundane worries and anxieties. My pension and other savings free me from financial uncertainties. I am free to connect with the people I want to. My wife and I are free to travel wherever we want. I maintain a careful watch over diet and health. I have time now for family and personal fulfilment. It is a gift beyond measure and one that I shall greatly treasure and consciously safeguard. The liberty to be free and wonder at the splendours of the universe around me: that is what freedom means for me now.

Community Voices

Freedom, In Their Own Words

Freedom means something different to each one of us. For some, it is safety. For others, it is trust, opportunity or the ability to take ownership. We asked one simple question—**"What does freedom mean to you?"** Here are a few reflections.



Freedom means becoming the person I know I can be.

Arav Shiv, Student



Every child deserves the freedom to make mistakes, solve problems and discover who they are. Sometimes, the greatest act of parenting is simply believing in them enough to let go.

Radhika Jaikumar, Mom | Educator

Freedom begins the day every girl knows she can stand on her own feet.

Twinkle.R, IT Engineer - Designer



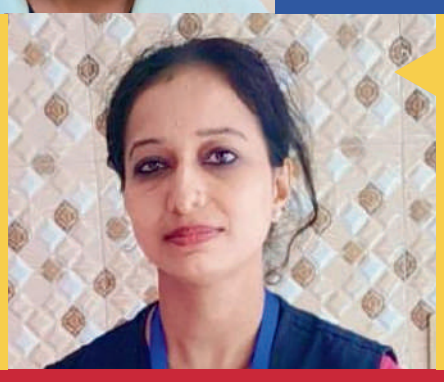
Freedom means little until opportunity belongs to everyone

Shree Krishnan, Retired Physics Professor



Freedom is living by my values, not by society's expectations.

Dr. Priyanka, Assistant Professor



Freedom is being trusted to do the right thing—even when no one is watching

Pushpavathi, Support Staff Supervisor





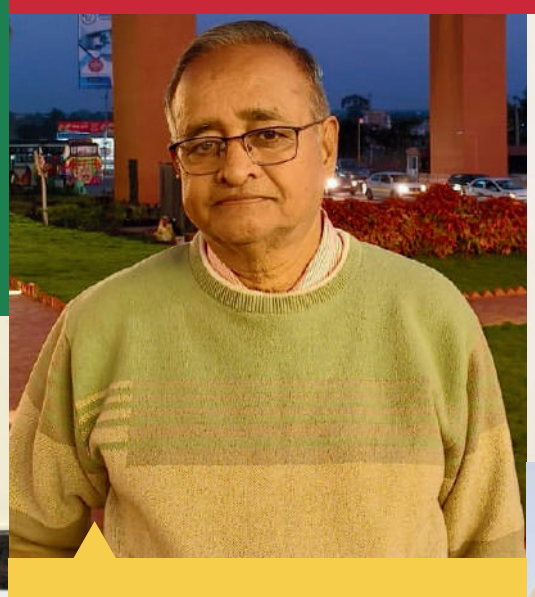
Freedom means being able to play, learn and dream about who we'll become.

Venni Ganesh and Siddhant Sairaj, Students



Freedom is having the confidence to make my own choices without constantly being judged.

Netravathi, Nurse





Freedom is muddy shoes, loud laughter and one more game before going home.

Lakshit Sethi, Grade III





Freedom means life, liberty to live and enjoy as we don't know what will happen next

Col.Pratap Handa, Retired Army Officer

After a lifetime of healing others, I've learnt that good health is life's greatest freedom.

Dr. Sunil Rathore, Retired Surgical Specialist



To me, freedom is a life where people are free from pain, fear and suffering and have every reason to smile.

Ms. Vijaya, Administration, Vydehi Hospital

Freedom is finding the courage to walk your own path, guided by faith.

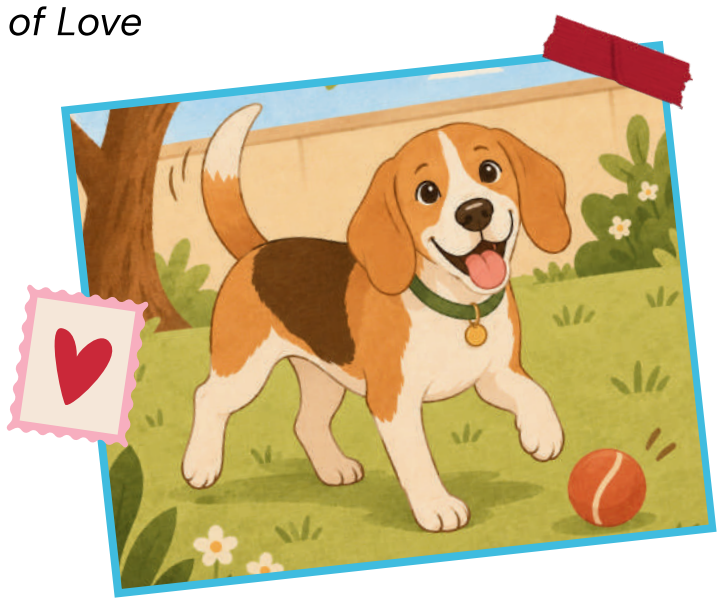
Bhawana Sethi, Phonics Educator

Community Voices

Freedom Has Four Legs Too

A Beagle's Story About Fear, Family and the True Meaning of Love

By A Pet Parent | Hyderabad



My name is Biscuit. I'm a Beagle. Some people call dogs like me stubborn. Others call us stupid. If you looked into my eyes for just a moment, you would discover that neither word is true.

I am simply afraid.

I was born during the COVID years, when the world was strangely quiet. There were fewer visitors, fewer outings and fewer opportunities to learn that the world was a safe place. I grew into a timid little dog who loves deeply but trusts cautiously. There is one fear that has never left me—elevators. To most people, an elevator is a convenience. To me, it is a giant metal box that swallows me whole. The doors slide shut, the floor vibrates beneath my paws, strange mechanical sounds echo around me, and my heart begins to race.

Every walk begins not with excitement, but with anxiety. Before I can smell the grass or chase a butterfly, I must first conquer a fear that feels overwhelming every single day. My parents never laughed at my fear. They spoke to trainers. They visited veterinarians. They even worked with a canine psychologist. Every tiny step mattered. Every pause was met with patience. They never saw a difficult dog. Only a frightened child.

Some fears can be trained away.
Others can only be loved through.

Thankfully, most of our neighbours are kind. Many know my name. Children wave enthusiastically when they see me. Some residents keep treats in their pockets just for me. Every gentle smile makes the world feel a little less frightening. Every kind word reminds me that people can be wonderful. Yet kindness is not universal. One day, an elderly gentleman angrily told my father that dogs should not use the elevator. According to him, I should walk down eighteen floors and climb eighteen floors back up every single day. He saw inconvenience. My parents saw fear.

On another occasion, an elderly lady entered the elevator midway through our journey and calmly asked my parents to step out because I was inside. I had neither barked nor misbehaved. I was quietly standing beside my father, shivering as I always do. We stepped out without an argument. The doors closed. The elevator disappeared. I may not understand every human word. But I understand rejection. Dogs always do. Sometimes, well-meaning people watch us and remark, "Don't drag him." They assume my parents are forcing me into the elevator. The truth is exactly the opposite. My parents are the ones constantly stopping because I freeze. They wait patiently while I gather enough courage to move. They bend down to reassure me, stroke my ears and tell me that I am safe. They walk at my pace, not theirs.

Fear does not always look dramatic. Sometimes, it simply looks like a Beagle whose trembling paws refuse to take the next step. What many people fail to understand is that a pet-human relationship cannot be measured by ownership. I am not a possession. I am not an accessory. I am not something my family keeps for entertainment. To my parents, I am their child. They know which blanket I prefer, which toy comforts me, which sound means I am happy and which silence means I am afraid.

Love creates its own language. Those who have loved deeply understand it without words. Then something happened. It wasn't another training session. It wasn't another visit to the veterinarian. It wasn't another attempt to make me brave. My parents decided to move. They chose to leave the home they loved. They chose to leave the friends they had made, the community they knew and the comfort of a beautiful penthouse they had built over the years. They chose to move into an independent house where there would be no elevator waiting at the beginning and end of every walk. Not because they wanted a bigger house. Not because it was a better investment. Not because someone asked them to. They chose to move because they wanted to remove the greatest source of fear from my life.

> **The purest form of unconditional love is changing your own world so someone else can live without fear.**

People often ask why anyone would change their entire lifestyle for a dog. The answer is simple. Because love does not calculate convenience. Parents relocate cities so that their children can receive a better education. Families make sacrifices for ageing parents. Husbands and wives reshape their lives for one another. Why should it surprise anyone that parents would move homes for a frightened Beagle? Love has never been measured by logic. It has always been measured by sacrifice. Perhaps it is time we broadened our understanding of what freedom truly means for companion animals. Pet freedom is not merely the absence of chains or cages. It is the freedom to live without constant fear. It is the freedom to begin every walk with joy instead of anxiety. It is the freedom to exist without being treated as an inconvenience. It is the freedom to be accepted, respected and understood.

The next time you see a dog hesitating before entering an elevator, remember that you are witnessing a battle you cannot see. The next time you encounter parents patiently comforting a frightened pet, remember that you are watching love in one of its purest forms. My parents are not moving because they found a better house. They are moving because they wanted to give me a better life. That is not indulgence. That is not weakness. **That is family.** And perhaps that is the purest definition of unconditional love—a love that quietly changes its own world so that someone smaller, quieter and unable to speak can finally live without fear.

Because freedom has four legs too.

Community Voices

Behind Every Statistic is Someone's Second Chance

20,019

Organ transplants performed in India in 2025

A national record

89,839

People officially waiting for an organ transplant

The actual number is believed to be much higher

86,000-130,000

People undergoing dialysis across India's six largest cities

Many spend two or three days every week waiting for the call that could change their lives.

8

Lives one organ donor can save.

Data sourced from the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (NOTTO), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India (2025–2026), with comparative international data from NHS Blood and Transplant (UK), and the United Network for Organ Sharing (USA).

> **Organ donation is hope becoming action, love becoming legacy, and one person's decision becoming another person's future.**

Who Gets Tomorrow?

The freedom to give someone else another chance at life.



Divya Mathew,
Editor-in-Chief

"The surgery was successful."

For one family, those four words mean relief. A father returns home after years of dialysis. A young woman celebrates a birthday she never thought she would see. A child no longer asks why their mother is always too tired to play. None of these stories begin in an operating theatre. They begin with a decision made by someone else.

Sometimes, that decision is made by a parent donating a kidney to a child. Sometimes by a sibling, a spouse or a friend. Sometimes, by a family choosing to donate a loved one's organs so that another family can have hope. Different journeys. One extraordinary act of generosity. Every Independence Day, we celebrate the freedoms we enjoy - the freedom to choose, to speak, to dream and to build the future we imagine. But there is another freedom we rarely talk about - The freedom to give someone else another tomorrow.

Every year, thousands of Indians are given a second chance - not because medicine performed a miracle, but because another human being made a remarkable choice. India's story is both inspiring and heart-breaking. In 2025, our country performed a record **20,019 organ transplants,** making India the **third-largest transplant programme in the world,**behind only the United States and China. Just over a decade ago, India performed fewer than 5,000 transplants a year. And yet, another number changes the conversation completely - as of March 2026, **89,839 people** were officially waiting for an organ transplant in India. In six largest cities alone, an estimated **86,000 to 130,000 people** spend two or three days every week on dialysis, hoping for a phone call that may never come.

How can both of these facts be true? **India is among the world's leaders in the number of transplants performed.**But when those numbers are measured against our population of more than **1.4 billion people,** we perform only around **14 transplants per million people.**Compare that with the **United States,** which performs around **142 transplants per million people.** Or the **United Kingdom**, at around **66 per million.**

We have the hospitals.
We have the surgeons.
We have the science.
Too often, what we don't have... is someone who said "yes."

Often called the gift of life, organ donation is something even greater. It is hope becoming action. It is love becoming legacy. It is one person's decision becoming another person's future. This month, as we celebrate freedom, perhaps the most important question isn't: **What freedoms do I enjoy?**

Perhaps it's this: **Could my decision give someone else the freedom to keep living?**

What If Schools Measured Questions Instead of Answers?

Have We Really Given Children the Freedom to Learn?



Ms Ritu Sarvahi,
Principal,
Vydehi School of Excellence

> The next freedom we must protect is intellectual freedom—the freedom to ask, wonder, and imagine.





Artwork by
Priyal Tiwari,
Student

Every August, we celebrate the freedom our nation won in 1947. We remember the sacrifices that gave us the right to vote, to speak and to dream. But perhaps there is one freedom we rarely pause to think about.

Have we truly given our children the freedom to learn?Not simply the freedom to attend school. Or the freedom to score well. But the freedom to ask difficult questions. To disagree respectfully. To make mistakes without fearing failure. To say, without hesitation, "I don't understand." Because education is not about filling young minds with answers. It is about giving them the confidence to ask better questions.

Every child begins life curious.
"Why is the moon following our car?"
"Can fish sleep?"
"Why can't we see the wind?"

Curiosity is natural. Fear isn't. Yet somewhere along the journey through school, many children begin asking fewer questions - not because they become less curious, but because they begin believing that getting the right answer matters more than asking the next question. That should concern all of us.

Every breakthrough in history began with someone asking *"What if?"*
What if the Earth wasn't the centre of the universe?
What if diseases could be prevented before they spread?
What if humans could fly? What if India could reach Mars on its very first attempt?
What if a young girl from Karnal could one day travel into space? Kalpana Chawla didn't begin her journey in a spacecraft. She began by looking at the sky differently.

Every extraordinary achievement begins as an ordinary question.

Artificial Intelligence can answer almost any question in seconds. But it cannot decide which questions are worth asking. It cannot wonder. It cannot dream. It cannot imagine a better future. Those remain deeply human strengths—and they are exactly what education must protect and nurture.

Our freedom fighters won us political freedom.
The next freedom we must protect is intellectual freedom. The freedom to ask.
The freedom to wonder. The freedom to challenge respectfully.
The freedom to fail. The freedom to imagine.
Because the future will not belong to the children who memorised the most answers.
It will belong to the children who never stopped asking "Why?"

Somewhere in a classroom today sits the next Kalpana Chawla.
Or the next A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.
Or the next scientist, teacher, entrepreneur or artist whose ideas will shape the future.

Our responsibility is not to give them every answer. It is to ensure they never lose the freedom to ask the question that changes the world.

Freedom to Learn



260 Million+

Children have access to education through the **Right to Education Act** since 2010.

THROUGH THEIR EYES

Finding My Beat



Shreshta Vijay,
Grade X

One competition.
Zero experience.
Infinite courage.

A year ago, everyone around me seemed to be winning medals. I wasn't.

I wanted to find my thing - something that excited me, even if I wasn't good at it. So I signed up for the most unexpected competition I could find.

Beatboxing.
I had never done it before.
As strange clicks, beats and rhythms escaped my mouth, something unexpected happened.

I felt FREEEEE.

I didn't win a medal. But I discovered that sometimes the greatest victory isn't standing on a podium.
It's finding the courage to try. Since then, I've said yes to every opportunity that excites me—even the ones that scare me.

Because the fear of trying fades. The regret of never trying doesn't.

Sometimes freedom doesn't sound like applause.

Sometimes it sounds like trying for the very first time.

Perhaps the greatest freedom isn't wearing your favourite player's jersey.

It's growing up believing that one day, someone else could wear yours.

Freedom Wears a Jersey Too



Manvik Sethi,
Editorial Board | Grade XI

Why do most of us know the names of our male sporting heroes... but have to stop and think about our female ones?

It's not because one mattered more. It's because, for years, we weren't taught to watch both. Every weekend, the television in my house belonged to cricket. The men watched every ball. The women walked in and out of the room, rarely stopping to look.

Nobody ever said sport was only for men.
But somehow...it felt that way.

Today, the picture looks very different.

Packed stadiums, record-breaking performances and young girls proudly wearing the names of their sporting heroes have changed the game. Every victory has done more than add another medal to India's tally—it has shown millions of girls that they belong on the field, the court, the track and the podium.

Perhaps the greatest freedom isn't wearing your favourite player's jersey. It's growing up believing that one day, someone else could wear yours.



2022
P. V. SINDHU
Won India's first Commonwealth Games women's singles badminton gold.



2024
MANU BHAKER
Became the first Indian woman to win an Olympic shooting medal—and the first Indian athlete since Independence to win two medals at a single Olympic Games.



2025
DIVYA DESHMUKH
Became the first Indian woman to win the FIDE Women's World Cup, defeating Koneru Humpy in an all-Indian final.



2025
HARMANPREET KAUR & TEAM INDIA
Created history by lifting India's first ICC Women's Cricket World Cup, inspiring millions of young girls across the country.



2026
SALIMA TETE & TEAM INDIA
Led India to victory at the FIH Women's Nations Cup, securing promotion to the elite FIH Pro League.

THROUGH THEIR EYES

To be opened on: 15th August, 2046

Dear Future Me



Kamalisri,
Grade VIII

To: The person I'll become.

Hi,
It feels strange writing to someone I've never met.
And yet...
I think I know you better than anyone else.
I wonder where life has taken us. Have we achieved the dreams we're chasing today, or did life surprise us with dreams we never imagined?

Don't tell me.
NO SPOILERS! Seriously... don't cheat!

Whatever happened, ~~I hope your rich.~~ I hope you're happy.
Lately, I've been thinking about freedom. I used to believe it meant growing up and making my own decisions. Now I think it's something much bigger.

I've often imagined myself as a soldier - not the kind who fights on a battlefield, but someone who keeps showing up for life's own battles. Things haven't always gone the way I hoped. I've made mistakes. I've doubted myself.

But every challenge has taught me something. Maybe that's what real freedom is. Not getting everything right...but having the courage to keep moving forward anyway.

I hope life never changes the best parts of who we are.

The kindness.
The curiosity.
The courage to make our own choices - even when they're difficult.
Twenty years feels like forever.
But one day...I'll become you.

Until then,
Take care of us.

With love,
Your Present Self

P.S.
If you've forgotten who I am...Read this letter again.

Maybe you'll remember.



Dear Future Me,

- ☐ Still Curious?
- ☐ Still Kind?
- ☐ Still Dreaming?
- ☐ Still Smiling?
- ☐ I hope so



Growing up is realising that not every opinion deserves your attention and not every piece of advice deserves to be ignored.

- Srikar Bharadwaj, 1st Year Undergraduate Student



Freedom, for me, is hitting snooze one more time without society turning it into a personality flaw.

- Sayar Mitra, 2nd Year Student



As a teenager, even one failure can feel like your whole life is over. One bad grade. One rejection. One mistake. But maybe we've made failure way bigger than it actually is. What if it's just proof that we're trying? Maybe hitting rock bottom isn't game over. Maybe it's just the plot twist we didn't see coming.

- Suzanne Matson, Editorial Board

THROUGH THEIR EYES



I dream of an India where a child's future is decided by their dreams—not by their postcode, surname or privilege.

- Vasavi Singh, Grade VII



- Shreya Shah, Grade VII



- Ananya, Grade VII

What does the freedom to dream really mean if our dreams are measured only by marks?

Marks matter. But they cannot measure imagination, resilience or potential. They may open a door—but it is our dreams that decide which one to walk through, and our determination that carries us beyond it.

- Shravan S, Editorial Board | Grade VIII

ಮುಂದೊಂದು ದಿನ...

ನಾ ಬಯಸಿದಜಗತ್ತು
ಹಸಿರೆಂಬಪ್ರಕೃತಿಯಸಿರಿಯಾಗಲಿ
ಸ್ನೇಹ - ಪ್ರೀತಿಯುಬಂಧುತ್ವವಾಗಲಿ
ಅಜ್ಞಾನವಗೆದ್ದು ಸುಜ್ಞಾನದ ಕಡೆಗೆಚಲಿಸುವಂತಾಗಲಿ.
ಮುಂದೊಂದುದಿನ.....

ಮಹಿಳೆ-ಮಕ್ಕಳರಕ್ಷಣೆಯುಬೆಂಬಲಿಸುವಂತಾಗಲಿ
ನವ ಪೀಳಿಗೆಯುಸಂಕಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೆಒಳಗಾಗದಿರಲಿ
ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕಜಗತ್ತಿನಉನ್ನತೀಕರಣಕ್ಕೆದಾವೆಇಡುವಂತಾಗಲಿ
ಬಡವ - ಬಲ್ಲಿದರಕನಸುಈಡೇರುವಂತಾಗಲಿ
ಮುಂದೊಂದುದಿನ.....

ಎಲ್ಲರಲಿನಾಡಾಭಿಮಾನವುತಲೆಎತ್ತುವಂತಾಗಲಿ
ಮೂಡನಂಬಿಕೆಗಳಭಾವನೆಮೂಡದಿರಲಿ
ಜಾತಿ - ಮತ, ಬೇಧಗಳುಅಳಿಯಲಿ
ಕಾಯಕದಲಿಹೆಣ್ಣುಗಂಡೆಂಬತಾರತಮ್ಯತೊಲಗಲಿ
ಮುಂದೊಂದುದಿನ.....

ಇರಲಿ ನಿಸ್ವಾರ್ಥಜೀವನದಬದುಕು
ಇರದಿರಲಿಹೆಣ್ಣು, ಹೊನ್ನು, ಮಣ್ಣು, ವ್ಯಾಮೋಹದಕಿಡಿ
ನನ್ನ ಕನಸಿನಜ್ಯೋತಿಸದಾಬೆಳಗಲಿ .
ಮುಂದೊಂದುದಿನ.....

- Seema, Teacher



- Devansh Kumar Sahoo, Grade V

Perhaps freedom was never meant to make us louder. Perhaps it was meant to make us better.

- Shiva Shankar, Grade XI



- Tanisha Roy, Grade VIII

Interactive Corner

What's Wrong with this Picture?

There are 8 hidden problems in this picture. Circlethem!



Watch this corner for answers in our next edition

Pack Your Future

If your future fit into one suitcase, what dreams would you pack? Colour the things you'd take with you and don't forget to add one dream that's uniquely yours.



Draw Your Dream

Complete the dotted picture, then colour it your way. **Add your own ideas to turn this scene into a future that's uniquely yours.**

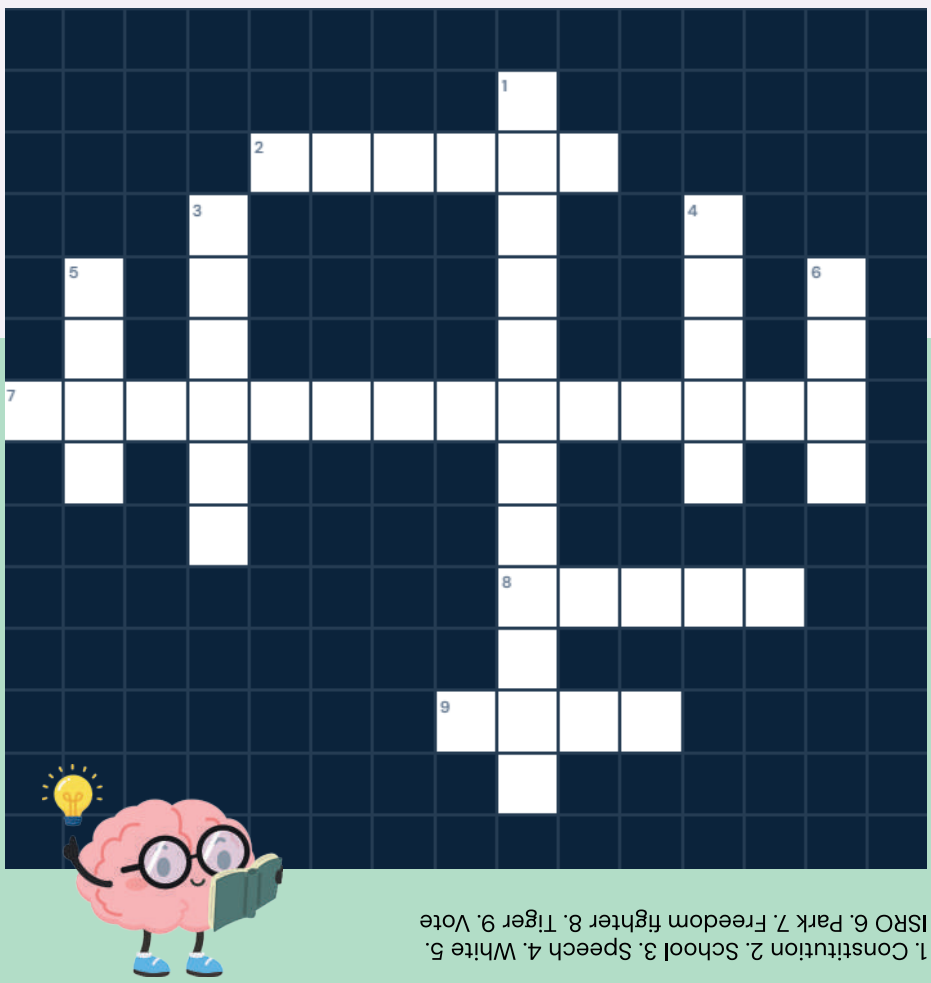


Freedom Word Hunt

Find all the hidden words! They can appear across or down. Tick each word off the list as you discover it.

- ☐ DEMOCRACY
- ☐ EQUALITY
- ☐ DREAM
- ☐ PLAY
- ☐ VOICE
- ☐ FUTURE
- ☐ COURAGE
- ☐ KINDNESS
- ☐ QUESTION
- ☐ DISCOVER
- ☐ INNOVATE
- ☐ INDIA
- ☐ UNITY
- ☐ HOPE
- ☐ RESPONSIBILITY

E	A	C	M	E	S	Z	U	J	X	R	Q	J	D	R
C	P	O	J	E	T	X	J	G	V	T	V	I	Y	E
Y	B	U	X	H	J	V	E	M	P	L	A	Y	Q	S
N	Q	R	F	D	D	R	E	A	M	H	O	P	E	P
X	U	A	J	E	S	E	Q	U	A	L	I	T	Y	O
P	E	G	A	M	F	E	U	D	M	E	X	J	N	N
M	S	E	B	O	A	N	K	I	N	D	N	E	S	S
Q	T	W	F	C	C	O	U	Z	I	I	M	N	I	I
Z	I	F	U	R	I	C	N	K	N	S	L	W	N	B
O	O	V	T	A	N	B	I	T	D	C	M	C	N	I
Z	N	O	U	C	M	J	T	S	I	O	J	V	O	L
D	R	I	R	Y	I	T	Y	M	A	V	T	X	V	I
W	Q	C	E	E	E	M	G	X	W	E	L	I	A	T
N	J	E	K	S	R	S	V	W	K	R	X	W	T	Y
H	E	E	X	P	V	T	J	P	H	P	Q	U	E	U



1. Constitution 2. School 3. Speech 4. White 5. ISRO 6. Park 7. Freedom fighter 8. Tiger 9. Vote

Freedom Crossword

Across

2. The place where children learn and ask questions.
7. A person who fights for a country's independence.
8. India's national animal.
9. The right to choose your leaders.

Down

1. The document that gives us our rights.
3. The freedom to express your thoughts.
4. The colour in our flag that represents peace.
5. The organisation that launched 104 satellites in one mission.
6. A green space where children feel free to play.

Beyond The Last Frame

Write the dialogues and finish the story your way



Beyond The Plate

What Does Freedom Taste Like?



Shruti Chatterjee,
Editorial Board

Growing up, I always wondered why my grandmother refused to write down her recipes. Whenever I asked how much salt she added, she'd smile and say, *"Enough."*

How much tamarind?
"Until it smells right."

How long should it cook?
"You'll know."

As a child, I found it frustrating. I wanted measurements. I wanted certainty. I wanted to recreate her cooking exactly as she did, convinced that every perfect dish was hidden in the right proportions.

Years later, standing in my own kitchen with a wooden spoon in hand, I finally understood. **She wasn't teaching me to follow a recipe. She was teaching me to trust my senses.**

To taste before adding more salt. To notice how the aroma changed as the spices roasted. To understand that cooking wasn't about memorising instructions—it was about paying attention.

Somewhere between those childhood questions and my first home-cooked meal, I realised that her recipes were never unfinished. They were invitations.

Invitations to experiment. To make mistakes. To adapt. To add a little more chilli or a little less tamarind. To make the recipe my own while honouring the hands that first taught it to me. Maybe that's what it means to inherit something well—not to repeat it perfectly, but to have the confidence to make it your own.

Not forgetting where we come from, nor preserving every tradition exactly as it was, but carrying it forward with confidence, curiosity, and care. Because the best recipes, much like the values we inherit, aren't meant to be copied perfectly—they're meant to live on, one generation at a time.



> **"The best recipes aren't meant to be copied perfectly—they're meant to be made your own."**





Freedom to Be Food Secure



376.56 million

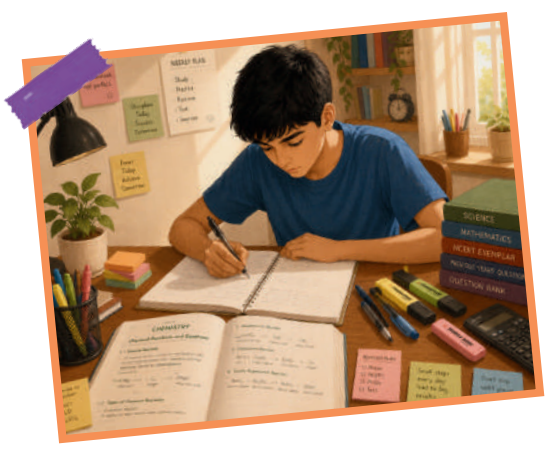
tonnes of foodgrains were produced by India in 2025–26—**the highest in the nation's history.**

The Freedom to Breathe



Vahin Chava,
CBSE Grade X
Bengaluru Topper,
2026

> One examination can measure what you wrote in three hours. It can never measure your curiosity. Your kindness. Your resilience.





It was 10:03 PM.
The chemistry textbook was open.
My highlighter had stopped working.
The exam was only a few weeks away.
And for the first time in months, I wasn't thinking about chemistry at all.

I was wondering what would happen if I didn't score the marks everyone expected. Every student preparing for a board exam knows this feeling. The syllabus isn't always the hardest part. Sometimes, it's the weight of expectation.

It starts quietly. One comparison. One rank list. One conversation about "that student." Before long, success begins to feel less like a dream and more like a deadline. Somewhere along the way, we stop studying because we enjoy learning. We begin studying because we're afraid of falling behind.

I've realised that stress rarely comes from the exam paper itself. It comes from everything we carry into the examination hall - comparison, expectations and the fear that one result will define who we are. But it won't. **One examination can measure what you wrote in three hours. It can never measure your curiosity. Your kindness. Your resilience.**Or the person you're still becoming. Ironically, the day I felt most free wasn't after the results were announced. It was the day I understood that giving my best mattered far more than proving I was the best.

Because there will always be someone who scores higher. Someone who runs faster. Someone who learns differently. The race never really ends. Comparison doesn't either unless we decide to step out of it. Perhaps that's the freedom every student deserves. Not freedom from hard work. But freedom from believing that our worth begins and ends with a number on a marks card.

Because the greatest achievement isn't topping an examination. It's walking out of it without losing yourself.

Coming Up Next

September 2026

The Human Edge

Can a machine write a poem?
Probably.

Can it comfort a friend?
That's the conversation.

We're looking for

- 📝 **A story**
- 🎨 **An artwork**
- 📷 **A photograph**
- 🎙️ **An opinion**
- 🎭 **A poem**
- 💡 **An idea**

Looking Beyond

The next story could be yours.

One thoughtful contribution could inspire thousands of readers.

Email your submissions to

community@thevoicesbeyond.com

P.S. Don't forget to tell us who you are! Include your name, city, profession (or grade & school for students).

Selected contributions will be featured in future editions of BEYOND.

THE LAST PAGE ISN'T THE END



You just spent the last few pages reading about freedom.

Now... come and fly it.

Some Dreams Were Never Meant to Stay Between These Pages.

They were meant to be folded.
Tied with string.
Lifted by the wind.
Laughed over.
Chased across open grounds.
And remembered long after the sky turns dark.
Because the best stories aren't always the ones we read.
They're the ones we live.

JOIN US!

Scan the QR code to
Build. Dream. Fly