

Pay Attention Students!

With Teachers' Day having been celebrated on September 5, B'luru teachers reveal their fondest classroom memories that go from lighthearted pranks to clever excuses

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FROM the screech of chalk on the board and the dust rising from worn-out dusters, to the nervous silence of surprise tests, every classroom has a story to tell. And if you ask teachers, they'll tell you that behind those doors lies not just discipline, but mischief, a lot of laughter and the little moments that make their profession deeply rewarding.

Excuse me, ma'am!

Students have always been inventive with excuses, but some remain truly unforgettable. "I usually don't assign homework, but once when I did, a student came up with an excuse that her cat had a UTI (urinary tract infection) and she needed to rush it to the hospital," laughs Ryan James Wilson, an assistant professor.

For associate dean Parinitha Shinde, one of the strangest excuses she has heard in her 11 years of career came from a student who said her dog 'ate' her laptop. "I paused, commended her 'creativity' and gave her an extension on the deadline," she says.

One classic excuse that never gets old is the story of a mysteriously dying grandparent. "A conveniently ill or suddenly dead grandparent just before the submission of a work! Some students seem to have about 10 grandparents by now," jokes Vibin Kumar VG, assistant professor at the School of Design, Presidency University.



Mahima Upadhaya

When anger turns to laughter

For primary school teacher Mahima Upadhaya, her funniest moment came when a fourth grader mispronounced her name. "A new student once called me 'Hamima ma'am', instead of Mahima. It was so unexpected and innocent that I burst out laughing," she shares. Sometimes, mischief can be clever enough to make even the strictest teacher smile. "During a unit test, I caught a student who had neatly written answers inside the lid of his pencil box. It was so well done that I almost admired the effort before asking him to put it away and



Vibin Kumar VB

continue writing. It was smart, but I had to be firm," she recalls.

Kumar has his own share of lighthearted moments, as he says, "With Snapchat being popular, I've become a sticker in the class group. The students sometimes even send me snaps of my taking class."

Moments that matter

Just as every coin has two sides, not all classroom memories are mischievous; some are deeply moving. Godwin E Emmanuel, a postgraduate professor, remembers how his students helped him during an awkward moment. "In my first year, the projector suddenly stopped working. I panicked, running around trying to fix it. But my students calmed me down, assured saying we could continue next time. We ended up having a casual chat instead and it was surprisingly therapeutic."

For teachers, it's often the smallest gestures that leave the biggest mark. "Once I was upset because the class was too noisy," recalls Upadhaya. "Then a student suddenly stood up and said, 'Sorry, ma'am, we won't do it again.' That simple apology was enough to calm me and the class immediately became quiet."

Ultimately, it's the blend of laughter, mischief, small acts of kindness and of course the teacher-student equation that make a classroom a place of fond memories that lasts far beyond the school years.



Parinitha Shinde