

Audio script

Podcast- *How a new generation of STEM books are putting the fun back in fundamentals*



Source: <http://www.audiomatic.in/show/new-generation-stem-books-putting-fun-back-fundamentals/>

Padma: Hello and welcome once again to a new episode of the Intersection, the show where we skate through various voices to weave a story around science, history and culture.

This week I want to take you back to a particular time in your childhoods, which, to be honest, could have been slightly terrorizing. I really hope this doesn't trigger memories of tear-soaked textbooks and the impending horror of annual exams. We have all had times in the past when our brains have just refused to accept certain scientific concepts. For me it was the vectors chapter in physics, which never allowed me in into their mystifying universe.

For many of us, we blame our teachers or curricula in schools or the lack of interesting books. Especially books that explained obscure concepts with flair and imagination – a segment that is now called STEM books, an acronym for science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

But whoever gets the blame, the truth is my science or math classes **did not** sound like this

[clapping and happy noises from this clip:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BRsM3BsJtJY/?hl=en&taken-by=pratham.books>]

Kamakshi: What you are hearing are young children in an after school centre at a government school in Villipuram in Tamil Nadu. They are sitting around a large package containing science and math books, and they are clapping and jumping over one another to get a first look at the books.

Padma: This is Kamakshi, our producer, who worked on this episode with me.

Kamakshi: This is a part of the Pratham Books STEM book initiative, a collection of books that are housed in a mobile library that can be hung on classroom walls and tell science and math stories in ways that won't turn off kids or put them to sleep. These Pratham Books' STEM libraries, that are given for free after an application process, have sprung up in schools and communities from Tamil Nadu to rural Karnataka to Telangana to Ladakh. Today, they hang in about 300 libraries around the country, and have impacted more than ten thousand children.

Padma: This sound of joy is a sign, a very positive sign that the STEM books segment is undergoing a change in India.