



[ALL](#) [CAMPUS](#) [EVENTS](#)

SOCA 2320 and ENGL 1330 students support PPR Sg. Bonus families

👤 Sarah Jamil 📅 June 27, 2024

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Throughout Semester II, 2023/2024, 118 students from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and Department of English Language and Literature, had jointly conducted various projects for SOCA 2320: Sociology of Marriage and Family and ENGL 1330: Reading Poetry, under the Synergised Academic

KIRKHS). The SAA approach is introduced by AHAS KIRKHS to encourage students and academics to establish various community partnerships and networks through projects and activities which reflect knowledge and learning in their classes.

Students from both classes had conducted a total of 20 projects focusing on various activities that can help improve quality family time and increase the enjoyment for reading in children between 27th April and 25th May 2024. These projects saw the involvement of a total of 100 participants, mainly children, over the span of five weeks and took place at the Pusat Pemerkasaan Pendidikan Dan Komuniti (PREPKOM) at PPR Sg. Bonus, Kuala Lumpur. PREPKOM is an educational initiative under Yayasan Wilayah Persekutuan that aims to improve education for B40 children who live in PPRs around the Kuala Lumpur area.

The collaboration between these two courses was arranged to encourage multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to addressing social issues. Students designed and executed modules that brought together elements of sociological imagination and analysis as well as tools in poetry reading to meet the needs of the community.

Positive attitudes towards books and reading are important in helping to increase cognitive functions and level of confidence, as well as aiding the development of other important skills in children. Reading is an activity that can create strong bonding opportunities for parents and children as well as other family members. Positive relationship with books is also often correlated with future successes. Unfortunately for children who come from underprivileged backgrounds, there is a lack of access to quality books that would have helped them grow a long term love and appreciation for books and reading. Reading cultures in underprivileged communities may also be limited due to social norms and the lack of time available due to financial pressures of working multiple jobs. With this issue in mind, ENGL 1330 students were tasked to come up with activities that help children discover the love for words, reading and books and incorporate various elements of poetry such as rhyme and onomatopoeia into their reading-related activities so as to increase the appeal of their activities to young children.

spent with family members.

Urban poverty not only affects children's access to learning resources but also the quality of time families are able to spend with one another. A recent study conducted by UNICEF, Living on the Edge, a Longitudinal study on post-COVID-19 impact assessment among low-income households in Kuala Lumpur highlighted concerns that parents have regarding their children's education due to their financial challenges.

Prior to the commencement of the projects, a general briefing and proposal writing workshops were conducted for the students to help them plan and prepare their activities. Students were also given the opportunity to visit the PREPKOM on 27th March 2024 in order to get a sense of the area and venue as well as to interact with the person in charge, that are invaluable to the planning of their activities. Presentations and consultations were also conducted prior to the program dates to enhance and finalize the projects through the guidance of the course instructors. These processes were not only helpful in ensuring that the projects executed were well vetted but also in enriching students' learning experience through continued guidance.

Through the project preparations and execution students were also able to experience hands-on lessons of problem solving and managing challenges on the field. SOCA 2320 and ENGL 1330 students were also required to submit a final reflection report of the projects through which they documented their experiences and thoughts of the overall project. The reflection reports indicated that students generally enjoyed the projects and felt empowered by their contribution to the community. Many mentioned that the project broadened their views and gave them a sense of connection to the community; realising their roles within the bigger picture.

Ultimately, the projects managed by the students have fulfilled the principal objectives of the SAA and those outlined by their instructors. The students achieved their learning objectives as well as gathered invaluable community engagement experience that enhanced their learning beyond the classroom setting.

experience for the students but also bridging the university with the community. We hope that this initiative contributes to the actualisation of IIUM's mission and vision.

We would like to convey our sincerest gratitudes to AHAS KIRKHS for their encouragement, support and funding of the SAA activities. We would also like to express our deepest appreciation to the community of Sg. Bonus, PREPKOM PPR. Sg. Bonus staff and Yayasan Wilayah Persekutuan for allowing us to conduct our activities at the PREPKOM. Finally, our thanks also go to ELITS and SOCASA for their help in conducting workshops for our students, and Sr. Hafsa Azhari from Kiriman Si Kancil for her help with the activities.**

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