



At Student Think Tank for India, we are creating a model in schools to promote **critical thinking** and **civic engagement**. We are interested in the inquiry and understanding of different perspectives around social, economic, cultural and political issues. Student choice is at the centre of our organic learning process, and we believe that the skill of critical thinking will catalyse **empathy** and **entrepreneurialism** in students.

[www.studentthinktankforindia.com](http://www.studentthinktankforindia.com)  
[www.facebook.com/studentthinktankforindia](https://www.facebook.com/studentthinktankforindia)

## THERE'S SOMETHING **MISSING**.

The world is changing rapidly, and the number of opportunities to positively impact change in the world are mind boggling. What is stopping our students from pursuing these opportunities to do good?

## WE MIGHT HAVE AN **ANSWER**.

A lot of research has been done on the benefits of **critical thinking** and **civic engagement** in students, which help to cultivate successful students, engaging environments and a better world.

Student Think Tank for India is a voluntary group of educators who believe in the power of these two skills. In a programme created jointly by educators and students from some of the best institutions across the world, we aim to promote these two skills in high school students through:

■ **Activities**

■ **Baatcheet Sessions**

■ **Challenges**

## BAATCHEET SESSIONS

STTI Moderators regularly conduct discussions on various civic issues that are significant in India. These discussions are 1 - 2 hours long.

Some examples include:

- ✦ Urbanisation and the Environment
- ✦ Adolescent Education
- ✦ Disorders and Disabilities
- ✦ Gender education
- ✦ Stereotypes and Discrimination



These discussions are designed to make students ask questions and expand their understanding of what issues they see around the country. Exercises and activities provide an experiential dimension to each of these issues, and promote core citizenship values. Moderators also organise **guest interactions** and sessions on locally relevant civic issues.



## ACTIVITIES

Complementing the sessions, we help students to prepare Assemblies and put up Bulletin Boards. The purpose is to create a platform to showcase their learning, and share it with the larger school community. This is based on Project-Based learning, a defined methodology that promotes 21st Century skills (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication – along with civic engagement.)

For example — After a session on waste management, students may speak in the assembly about the problem, and showcase on the bulletin board how various innovative organisations are solving it. This could be in alignment with academic projects in Environmental Science, Sociology, Political Science, etc.

### 1. Assemblies

- **Choose** an issue of your choice
- **Collaborate** with one of our Moderators to define the scope of your topic, and start learning more about it
- **Critically think** about the three most important questions and perspectives you want to present to your audience
- **Creatively** communicate this issue through your assembly

### 2. Bulletin Boards

In assemblies, you will do the talking. But what about other media? One bulletin board can be chosen as the STTI board, where you can **display** writing, artwork, photography and creative presentations can invite people to think and know more about issues.

Bulletin boards can also be used as a **two-way channel**: ask questions, and invite responses.

You can place a chart and post-it sheets. Everybody can respond to the question and to the answers, or ask more questions, and start a discussion right there!

## CHALLENGES

Challenges are designed to motivate students to take action to solve the issues that they see around them – they build empathy, teamwork, creativity and leadership.

Challenges involve two parts: first, a workshop by STTI and a leading organisation to build the skill set that can solve a civic issue, and then doing a Project for students to use these skills and abilities in making a change. The best efforts amongst all STTI Clubs are awarded with certificates and prizes.

- ✦ Community Projects with Design for Change
- ✦ Media and Storytelling with Youth ki Awaaz
- ✦ Social Ventures with Ashoka Youth Venture
- ✦ Art for Civic Engagement
- ✦ Green Projects with Reap Benefit

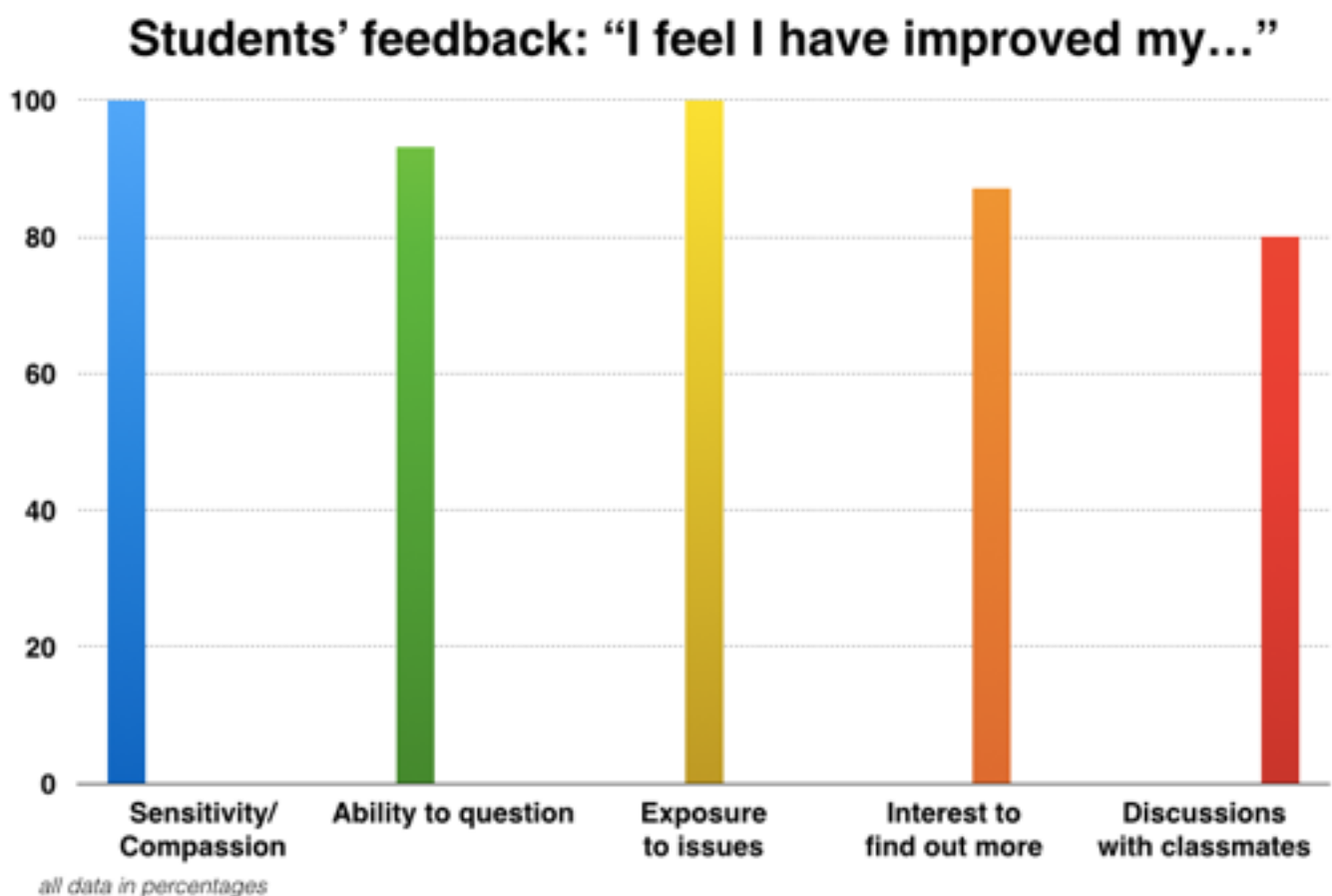


## MODEL

- We work with students of **Classes 8 to 12**, who voluntarily join the club, and take up leadership positions to coordinate and guide activities. We can work with Class 10 and 12 at the start of the academic year, and with other students during the exam months of December - April.
- **STTI Moderators** – volunteers who regularly conduct sessions in the school with the interested students. Our moderators come from distinguished colleges and programmes, typically centred around the social sciences and humanities, and are trained in student-centred discussion methods.
- **Teacher coordinators**, who allot and provide dates for sessions, ideally during after-school hours, zero periods, or club activities. They also coordinate permissions for activities such as assemblies, field trips and bulletin boards.

## IMPACT

From our short experience, we have seen some very promising impact of the STTI School Clubs. The above data is based on a self-report questionnaire given to students at Delhi Public School, Hyderabad. Many of them shared that they were beginning to make sense of the world outside, and had acquired the skills to question, research, analyse and connect.



1. Encouraged by the response in Hyderabad, we are expanding to leading schools in **Bengaluru, Delhi, Coimbatore and Pune** in the coming months. These 15 clubs will collaborate with each other through the year to form a network of young citizens.
2. This is also a way for schools to achieve the aims of classes like **General Studies, SUPW, and Community Social Responsibility (CSR)**.
3. Many **students applying to universities abroad** have taken an active part in the STTI Clubs, as this is an platform to take up initiatives and lead their classmates in various activities.
4. Expression from students have come in the form of great writing, media, and projects. We are collaborating with leading platforms and organisations to showcase this student output.
5. There is a positive relationship between the students and the STTI Moderators who act as accessible **role models and mentors**. Guests visiting the schools (Eg: Ashoka fellows, renowned artists and college professors, writers) expose students to the different careers they could pursue.
6. The learning methods used in STTI are innovative and effective, which focus on building **21st century skills**. Our pedagogy is adopted from the very best in the field: Harvard Graduate School of Education, Project Based-learning from BIE, Stanford d-School, and inquiry-based learning methods from School of ThinQ.
7. STTI has been selected as one of the 15 recipients of the Ashoka Youth Venture programme, which recognises it as an impactful social venture driven by the youth.

**This is a crucial time in history where everybody has to lead the change, small or big — and education is critical in stepping up to that challenge. Our aim is to create innovative and critical thinkers so they may grow up to be thoughtful and sensitive citizens.**

**We would be very glad to meet with your school, and and to be associated with setting up a club there.**

**See more about our work at [www.studentthinktankforindia.com](http://www.studentthinktankforindia.com).** We would love to answer any questions you may have.

[studentthinktankforindia@gmail.com](mailto:studentthinktankforindia@gmail.com)