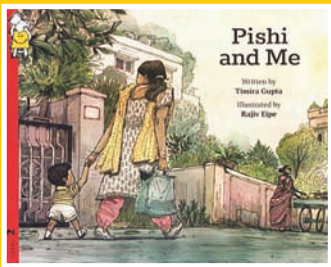
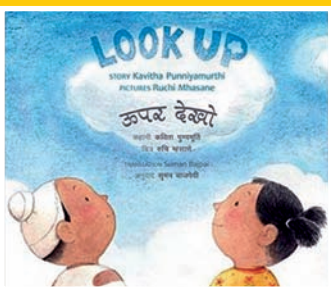


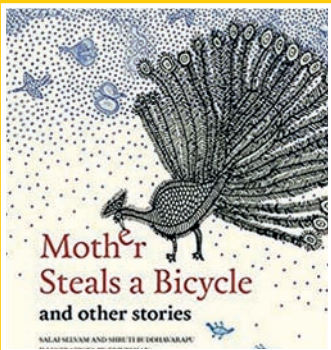
IN BOOKS



PISHI AND ME
by Timira Gupta and Rajiv Eipe
Writer Richa Jha recommends this as one of her favourite Indian picture books. She says, "It's a book that makes me want to slow down, to look at everything that's around me, to sniff the clouds in the sky, to feel the soft, velvety monsoon moss and slurp the raindrops trickling down the leaves."



LOOK UP
by Kavitha Punniyamurthi and Ruchi Mhasane
Mimi and Gulu find all sorts of things when they look up at the sky.



MOTHER STEALS A BICYCLE AND OTHER STORIES
by Salai Selvam
Archana Atri, host of AA's Book Nerds, says, "In this book, the mother honestly narrates incidents from her fun-filled childhood, even if these sometimes showed her as breaking rules or stepping out of the boundaries of structured behaviour."



La dolce far niente THE SWEET ART OF DOING NOTHING

The Italian proverb, which translates to 'pleasant relaxation in carefree idleness', is a worthwhile quest in the age of maximum productivity. All you have to do is simply be, and enjoy moments sans any goals

Nitya.Shukla@timesgroup.com

Children's literature is full of characters left to their own devices. Whether it was Mary in Frances H Burnett's 'The Secret Garden' wandering about the great outdoors or Lewis Carroll's Alice ('Alice's Adventures in Wonderland') getting lost in a rabbit hole. Ask any adult in your life, and they too may recount such luxurious times where they had nothing to do after school hours. A far cry from the present scene when thanks to the pandemic, an average student/child's time is divided into structured zones. Often online classes at school are balanced with online extra curricular activities and digital entertainment which may not leave enough time for the simple stuff.

WHY (NOT) DO NOTHING?

Merely asking that question sounds counterintuitive for harried parents trying their best to channel their children's energy into fruitful pursuits. "As kids we were left to fend for ourselves if we were bored," says Archana Atri, the super popular host of Delhi-based book club, AA's Book Nerds. Having run the club for over 11 years now, Atri is a firm believer of encouraging children to 'do nothing.' According to her, taking time off gadgets and all forms of structured activities to simply stare into space or look out of the window is important. Atri's book club encourages children

(between 4 to 14 years old) to read and discuss books, ask questions and write their own stories. However, that may not always be the case. Sometimes her 'Nerds' don't want to do anything which is fine by her. For her, a bored child is not something to fear, rather an opportunity for him/her to learn to fend for themselves.

Atri adds that there are many authors who have highlighted the positive aspect of doing nothing. She says, "At our group discussion on Katherine Applegate's 'The One and Only Ivan', when I asked my Nerds to name the character or element they liked most in the book, one child said he liked Bob, because he just lay

"If kids are engaged all the time then how will they listen to their inner voice, create or imagine? Why are we demanding so much from ourselves when the pandemic has affected everyone?"
— ARCHANA ATRI, runs a book club

around doing nothing. That's something we don't let children do – just 'be' and not necessarily 'do'. A couple of years later I saw online that Applegate chose Bob as the main character in her next book."

STEP 1: UNPLUG

In our new normal, gadgets have become the most treasured household item with everyone gravitating 'online' to stay connected and entertained. As that continues, unplugging may be the first step to doing nothing. Children's author Richa Jha's quest to escape the lure of the digital world ended up in unique book 'Manic Panic' where a young girl helps her parents experience life outside the wi-fi zone. When asked who needs a bigger reminder to unplug: parents or students, Jha said, "A lot of what our chil-

"Unplug and engage children by getting them to see the beauty of a still moment, of nothingness, of letting go of constant visual stimulation"
— RICH A JHA, children's author

dren do with their time throughout the day comes from what they have seen their parents do with theirs. So yes, the unplugging has to begin with the grown-ups. But with a big part of the world functioning pretty much through its parallel online track these days, it's no longer a question of whether one should or can. The focus shifts to how to strike a balance. And that balance comes only when we begin engaging with our children more through conversations and shared activities for them to find excitement in their gadget-free moments. Just unplugging is not enough. What we do in and with those moments is what matters".

STEP 2: LOOK UP

There are plenty of other ways to invite 'La dolce far niente' into your life. A helpful hint comes from a poster (below) created by Tulika Publishers. Speaking about it, their manager of marketing and promotion, Aneesa Vijaykumar, said, "The pandemic



Originally created and published by Tulika Publishers, Chennai

IN FILMS



THE JUNGLE BOOK
Carefree and easygoing, Baloo taught us to appreciate the simple things in life, whether it's looking for ants under a boulder or picking out fresh bananas from a tree, as he sang: "Look for the bare necessities/the simple bare necessities/forget about your worries and your strife".



MY NEIGHBOUR TOTORO
Featuring the titular Totoro, a gentle giant with a soft, plushy body, and fuzzy, rabbit-like ears, who is the embodiment of all the simple joys in life like fishing.



THE LION KING
Timon and Pumbaa taught us 'Hakuna matata' the Swahili phrase meaning 'No worry(s)' that helped Simba (and us) to look beyond our troubles.

has disrupted the lives of children. They are not able to do many of the things they did before. This can easily lead to boredom and restlessness. So, we made a fun poster about all the things they can do at home. Being stuck inside can also be an opportunity to enjoy other pursuits they may not have thought about or had the time for, earlier."

YOUR TAKEAWAY: Doing nothing is quite doable. Maybe you whistle, meditate, stretch, lounge, or nap. Just as long as it feels natural instead of something that you 'should be' doing.

The Book CLINIC

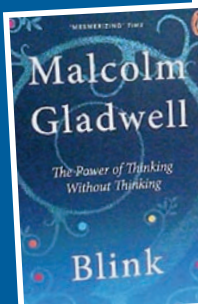
WHAT TO READ IF...



You 'fear' too many choices
Chances are, the more choices, ideas and goals you have, the less likely you are going to pursue all of them. 'The Art of Choosing' by Sheena Iyengar is one of the best books that will help you understand (and get beyond) the paradox of choice.

You 'overthink' everything

Pick up 'Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking' by Malcolm Gladwell. The world-renowned journalist and author suggests that often snap judgements (made within seconds) lead to better decisions than a more cautious, thoroughly planned approach. According to him if you feel unsure about what to do, trust your gut instinct and act upon the first thought that crosses your mind.



You don't 'finish' things
Read Charles Duhigg's 'The Power of Habits' to teach yourself how to get into a habit of finishing things. For many starting something is easier than finishing it. The thing to remember is that com-

pleting a task works just like any other habit. You start small, figure out your cue to do a desired routine for which you get a reward.

Got a book-related query? Not sure what to pick up next? Email us at toinie175@gmail.com with the subject 'The Book Clinic'.

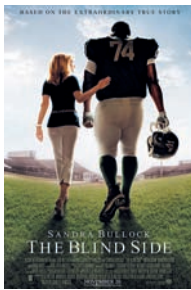
ENTERTAINMENT

NO GUTS NO GLORY

Been watching the Olympics? Then you know champions are made, not born. And it often takes a super dedicated set of parent(s) whose blood, sweat, and sacrifice goes a long way to raise athletes who achieve global recognition. Here are a few films that chronicle their struggle



KING RICHARD (2021)
The new biopic featuring Will Smith as Richard, the father of tennis stars Venus and Serena Williams, will be released later this year. This film will show the Williams' sisters in their younger years, but it is really the story of their father and the work he put in to help make them the champions that they are today. According to reports, Richard was a tough dad with many calling his methodology controversial. In fact, it's reported that he had written a 78-page plan for Serena even before she was born!



THE BLIND SIDE (2006)
This is a semi-biographical account of Michael Oher who went on to become an offensive lineman for the Baltimore Ravens in the NFL. As a troubled youth, Oher was adopted into the affluent Tuohy family. Despite numerous setbacks, his adoptive mother, Leigh Anne Tuohy was able to help Michael fulfil his potential by providing guidance, encouragement and love.

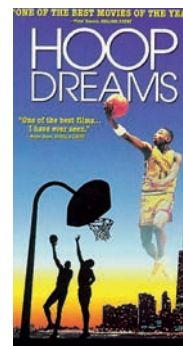
DANGAL (2016)

Based on Mahavir Singh Phogat, the amateur wrestler who trained his daughters



THE HAMMER (2010)

A coming-of-age drama based on the life of Matt Hamill, the first deaf wrestler to win a National Collegiate Wrestling Championship. Born deaf at birth, Hamill was introduced to wrestling by his stepfather Michael Rich, who was the head wrestling coach at his high school.



HOOP DREAMS (1994)

It is called the 'Citizen Kane' of sport documentaries. A film crew spent five years in Chicago with two underprivileged schoolboys who pursue their dream to play professional basketball with their families. The three-hour film captures the struggle that had not been seen before.

TRENDING

STUDY WITH ME VIDEOS

Study With Me videos on YouTube became popular in 2019 and peaked in 2020. According to Google Trends, these videos' popularity is on the rise once again. In India, students of Delhi, Telangana, Punjab, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh are top users...

What are they?

Study With Me is a video format that has students streaming videos on YouTube of themselves studying for long periods of time. The videos are not vlogs, just raw clips of entire study sessions and may go on for hours. These videos are visually pleasing as they mostly feature beautiful views or sounds of rain, white noise,

good music, neatly arranged study materials laid out on spotless desks.

Why are they popular?

Studying requires constant motivation, focus and staying in one place for hours which is not easy, especially during exam times. Watching a pre-recorded or a live video of influencers (in this genre) studying at a stretch works as a parasocial experience. Students like studying alongside such people as it helps them to stay motivated, and inspired. Inspect

any comments section of a 'study with me' video and one finds tons of viewers playing such videos during their personal study sessions.

Where did it originate?

According to 'Vice', this unique genre of



seems to have first gained traction in South Korea, but there are now prominent video creators across the world, including the United Kingdom, Argentina, and Singapore.

Who is it for?

These videos are popular among university and high school students, remote workers at lonely workstations and people who simply dig all kinds of soothing ASMR.

Where to start?

Youtubers like Merve, gussy studygirl, Monomen and the Strive Studies.

8 PODCASTS TO SATISFY ALL KINDS OF CURIOSITIES



Newsy Jacuzzi

Run by 8-year-old Leela Sivasankar Prickett who discusses everything from planes powered by 'water' to electric vehicles.



Radiolab for Kids

Created by Lebanese-American radio host Jad Abumrad, the award-winning show runs family friendly content.



The Unexplainable

Disappearance of Mars Patel
'Stranger Things' for kids! An 11-year-old, Mars Patel and his friends solve a mystery.



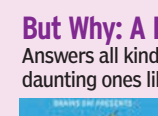
Mission ISRO

Cricket commentator Harsha Bhogle traces the journey of the Indian space programme.



Wow in the World

Latest news in science and technology in a way that's enjoyable for kids.



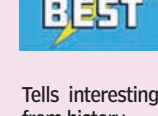
But Why: A Podcast for Curious Kids

Answers all kinds of 'why' questions including daunting ones like 'Why is the sky blue?' or 'Who invented words?'



Smash, Boom, Best

A family-friendly debate podcast in which a kid judges the outcome.



The Past & the Curious

Tells interesting, little-known stories from history.

LOST MEDAL,

BUT WON HEARTS

The Indian contingent may not have won many medals at Tokyo 2020, but it cannot be denied that many of these champs did not go down with a whimper. They fought valiantly, often with injury and a sense of loss, to win the support and applause of our countrymen

A LOOK AT SOME OF THEM



Photo: AP

FOUGHT LIKE A TRUE SOLDIER

India's first super heavyweight boxer may have lost his quarterfinals match, but won many hearts including that of his opponent. Satish Kumar showed incredible vigour against Bakhodir Jalolov of Uzbekistan. He entered the fight with stitches for a cut above his eye and had multiple cuts on his chin. The 32-year old showed a never-give-up spirit. He was out-classed, but his performance gained him the respect of everyone.

BOXING

SPLIT HEARTS OVER THE SPLIT DECISION

Millions of Indians expressed grief and cheered for the champion MC Mary Kom, whose dream of winning a medal at the Tokyo Olympics remained unfulfilled. Mary was knocked out of the round of 16 after she fell 2-3 on a split decision against Colombia's Valencia Victoria. It was a bitter-sweet departure for fans rooting for her all along. All hopes were pinned on the supermom to win her second Olympic medal. But her claim of unfair judgment and exit left many fans heartbroken.



Photo: PTI



Photo: REUTERS

TABLE TENNIS

TOUGH MATCH FOR REIGNING CHAMP

Paddler Achantha Sharath Kamal may have bowed out of the Tokyo Olympics, but not before getting reigning Olympic champion Ma Long stressed out and on the defence during his third round singles match. The 32-ranked Kamal put up a spectacular fight, matching stroke for stroke, leaving everyone talking about how the scoreline did not justify what he actually did in the match. Earlier in round 2, Sharath overcame a sluggish start to comfortably beat Portugal's Tiago Apolonia.

REBELLION PUTS PAID TO HOPE

Manika's impressive campaign in the women's singles came to an end with a 0-4 loss to 10th seed Sofia Polcanova in the third round. Batra and Polcanova exchange some great points to start the match. The Indian even tried to delay the inevitable by playing some quality long rallies, but it was the Austrian who prevailed against Manika. The star Indian player had stunned world number 32 the previous day, coming from behind to progress to Round 3. However, with her personal coach not granted on-court access, refusing help from the national coach cost her dearly.



Photo: AP

FENCING

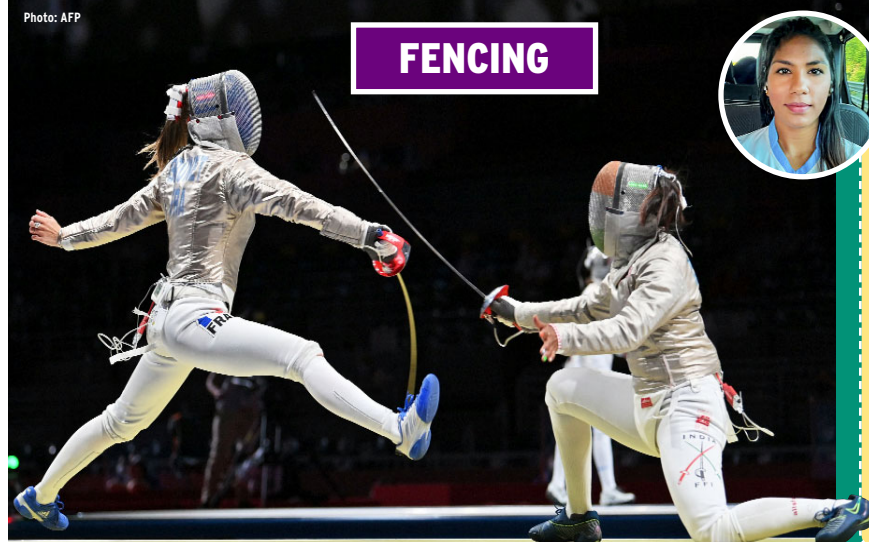


Photo: AFP

A GIRL WHO SPARRED HER WAY INTO HISTORY

The 27-year-old Bhavani Devi was not only the first Indian to qualify, but she went on to become the first Indian fencer to win a match at the Olympics, with a victory over her Tunisian opponent Nadia Ben Azizi. But, in the next round, world number three and Rio semifinalist Manon Brunet of France cut her short. Her successful debut is expected to give a boost to combat sport in every nook and corner of our country.



DISCUS THROW

A THROW THAT FELL SHORT

Discus thrower Kamalpreet Kaur finished a credible sixth with a 63.70m throw in her first Olympics in a rain-interrupted final. The 25-year-old finished second in the qualifiers, but fell short in the finals. Competing without her personal coach, she seemed short on confidence. The World University Games in 2017 being her only international competition, she clearly lacked exposure. Besides, she was performing with her right shoulder heavily strapped, and pain in her knees. Kaur was on the verge of being eliminated, but fought back with a performance that equalled 2010 Commonwealth Games gold medalist Krishna Poonia's throw in the 2012 London Olympics.



Photo: GETTY IMAGES

BADMINTON

THE SPIRITED YOUNGSTERS

World No. 10 Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty were aware of the hardships they will face in their campaign. None of the matches were going to be easy. Not losing heart, the duo made a fantastic start in their first face-off against World No. 3 pair of Lee Yang and Wang Chi-Lin. In a match of dramatic rapid service exchanges, the motivated duo showed great character to win a nail-biter.



Photo: PTI

MISSING THE BULL'S EYE

Atanu Das crashed out of the pre-quarterfinals losing 4-6 to Japan's Takaharu Furukawa. Das however impressed the most when he defeated the Olympic champion Oh Jin Hyek in the previous round. On the other hand, the World No. 1 Deepika Kumari's quest for an Olympic medal ended in heartbreak for the third time in a row. She became the first archer to qualify for the quarterfinals but surrendered to the Korean top seed An San in straight sets, as the archer misfired three 7s in a row after a perfect opening set of 30.



Photo: GETTY IMAGES

ARCHERY



Photo: PTI

EQUESTRIAN



Photo: AFP

FALL AT THE HURDLES

Equestrian Foaad Mirza is the first equestrian from India to take part in the Olympics in over two decades. The 29-year old made an impressive debut in the Olympics, finishing 23rd overall in the individual eventing discipline of equestrian competitions at Tokyo. Mirza, away from home and based in Germany for training and competition during the pandemic, made an impressive start as he was placed ninth after the dressage section with a 28.00 penalty. He slipped to 22 in cross country round, having started late due to a technical issue. Yet at the end of the dressage, cross country, and jumping rounds, he, astride Seigneur Medicott, managed to squeeze into the top 25.