

Herald Cafe



VINTAGE VIEWS OF MANDOVI RIVER TOWNS



THE WEIGHT THAT WOMEN CARRY

GenZ's handwriting: A dying skill in a digital age

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A recent study from the University of Stavanger has found that around 40 percent of Gen Zers are losing their grip on handwritten communication, a skill that's been key to human interaction for about 5500 years. Dependence on digital media is the leading cause for the deterioration and over the years, with no patience for cursive writing and with ball pens coming in the art of handwriting is being lost. While the teachers always look forward to good handwriting, more recently, the focus is on legible handwriting at least for the exams.

The advantage of cursive handwriting

Zeeba Tiegel has been teaching English and Social Studies at Little Flower of Jesus High School, Calangute for ten years now. Through her experience, she says, "Their handwriting is dilapidating and is getting worse by the year. Every batch comes with like a more complex problem, in terms of their writing. Earlier, we would have like at least a majority that would write averagely well and it would be legible. Now, it is the opposite. I can count the number of students whose books I take and I would be able to understand on the go."

Speaking about the advantage of cursive writing, she says, "The most important

advantage of cursive writing is children save on time because they don't make as many stops in the words and don't break the rhythm of writing. They are saving those milliseconds, when calculated across three hours of examination. I just returned from board paper correction and with the bad handwriting, now a child can actually stand a chance to lose a couple of marks. The answers could read incorrectly because of the handwriting. I don't think all of us are cut out to have very pretty handwritings, but being legible is one thing, that all of us could aim for."



A ROLE MODEL IN WRITING

Anora Fernandes won the first place at a national level Handwriting Competition organised by Wiz Writing Wizard Olympiad. A student of Class 6 at Presentation Convent, Margao, Anora was among students across India from 21 states who participated in the competition. Her mother, Nisha informs, "Anora began writing in cursive handwriting in school and then we used to correct her and keep persuading for neat handwriting. Later, in higher classes, she was inspired by her teacher's handwriting. Earlier, she had cursive handwriting book but now also, she just keeps writing to practise."

Teachers can be an inspiration

A former student of St Francis Xavier's High School, Siolim and now a teacher for 37 years in the same school, Lilia Dhargalkar is a senior English and History teacher. She was inspired by her teacher to write beautifully, a practise she has followed and made sure the students learn too.

"As an English teacher, I have really worked hard for the students. Even in Covid times, when I saw that a child's handwriting was not legible at all, I would call him with his mother to school for practise. When teachers write on the board, students see and if the teacher has good handwriting, they copy the teacher's handwriting.

PRACTISING FOR HANDWRITING COMPETITIONS

Annabelle D'Souza specialized in Mathematics, but teaches Maths and English at Holy Cross High School, Siolim. She along with Sr Julie Rodrigues, headmistress and Sr Dolly Fernandes was instrumental in introducing the Handwriting Competition organised by Wiz Writing Wizard Olympiad for the students in the school.

"Since Covid-19 lockdown, I have seen the writing speed of the students has gone slow and the writing style also has changed. This year, we got this opportunity of Wiz Writing Wizard Olympiad which had spelling bee and handwriting, both in it. When our students registered, they gave us books and students could practice it before actually having the test. Three of our students have qualified for national level for spelling bee and handwriting competition. The primary classes under Sr Dolly has already adopted it. For high school till Class 9, we are going to do it from June. The students will get access to the books and they will be automatically registered for the competition as well," says Annabelle. She writes in cursive writing and encourages her students also to write in cursive.

That becomes an inspiration for them. Learning handwriting is a must and I ask the students to bring a double line handwriting book to practise running handwriting," she informs.

When a child's writing is good and legible, the teacher should appreciate it too. "Parents and teachers should motivate students to write well and if they show it to the other students, maybe they will also copy or try to get their handwriting as good as that one as well," adds Lilia.



How to improve your child's handwriting

- Write with the right and comfortable pencils.
- Encourage drawing and puzzle games in order to develop the physical requirements of writing.
- Pinpoint common handwriting problems.
- Practice with their fingers, a stick, or a pencil, inspiring their creativity.

Making cursive compulsory



Teaching English for classes 5 to 10 for seven years at Holy Cross High School, Bastora, Christa Cardozo can decode the handwriting of her students. "Students handwriting has deteriorated because they are not practicing their writing skills as they are mostly with mobile phones, they are not writing beyond school. Those who are going to explore creative fields, like art and crafts, they pay attention to their handwriting, because they are into writing well and designing and illustrating their book," says Christa.

The students in the school are all encouraged to write in cursive handwriting and the Class 10 students especially focus on their handwriting. "We just have about three or four students who write in print. The Class 10 students write well when it is important. If they know it's for something worthwhile, then they will write well. If they are getting marks, if it's result-oriented, then they put that much effort to write well," explains Christa.

SWIPE RIGHT

Alia Bhatt's March is about shooting for 'Love & War'



March has been a busy month for Alia Bhatt. National Award-winning actress is shooting for her next project with Sanjay Leela Bhansali, titled 'Love & War'. The film also stars Ranbir Kapoor and Vicky Kausahal in key roles and revolves around two strong-headed males. A source revealed, "Both of them are phenomenal actors and indulge in a tug-of-war for Alia Bhatt's character. SLB has already shot some confrontation sequences between RK and Vicky and is mighty impressed with the output as both the leads are fantastic actors with a stellar screen presence." The shoot is going smoothly, and the film is on track for a release in March 2026.

Ben Affleck has 'lot of respect' for Jennifer Lopez



Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez had been making headlines since they got into a relationship in 2021. In 2024, Jennifer filed for divorce from Ben in Los Angeles Superior Court on their second wedding anniversary. Ben recently revealed that despite the circumstances, he has a "lot of respect" for the 'Marry Me' actress. The actor revealed, "There are a lot of people who I think have handled celebrity more adeptly and more adroitly than I have, Jennifer among them. My temperament is to be a little bit more reserved and private than hers. As happens in relationships, you don't always have the same attitude towards these things."



Miley Cyrus shared a bold new image that will be on the cover of her upcoming new album, 'Something Beautiful'.

Acting is not limited to the big stage

This World Theatre Day, Konkani and Marathi actors talk about how theatre gives them the advantage to transition into film roles. However, there are still many issues hindering this process

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World Theatre Day is celebrated on March 27 annually. The oldest form of performance in Goa, the theatre stage has seen great talent in Konkani and Marathi dramas. While many begin their career with the stage, very few have taken this passion forward to films. What are the challenges actors face in finding work in films?

As for filmmaking, there are lot of opportunities coming to Goa. But Goan artistes are not getting the primary or even secondary roles as those are the roles which are going to fetch money for the producers and directors. Goan artistes will not get the required exposure unless there are good productions in Goa and the audience accepts and pays the ticket to watch them.

To keep both, cinema and theatre, rich and thriving, we need more spaces in the interior parts of Goa for the local audience.

—Mandar Jog, Actor



When you act on stage, sometimes the acting is loud or dramatically but while acting in films, you have to be very natural. I know how to switch from stage to film. I have acted films like 'Home Sweet Home', 'O La La', 'Amizade', 'Connection', 'Pedru Poder' which are hit films. 'Crazy Mogi', written and directed by my elder son,

Christ Silva and produced by A Durga Prasad, premiered at IFFI, Dubai and London and is still running in Goa. Our Konkani film industry is still struggling and hence, very less films are produced. But good Konkani films have a good future throughout the world.

—John D'Silva, actor

Theatre and films are completely distinct mediums. Theatre is prominently practiced in Goa which enables artists to hone their skills. I being a theatre artist, I have also done a few films. We see theatre artists internationally doing great films and vice versa, this is possible because there are more avenues and better opportunities. When it comes to films in Goa, there is scarcity of opportunities due to many factors. It gets hard to get work that one is longing for. This is for everyone, not only theatre artists.

—Shefali Naik, actor and director



Theatre has always influenced film industry. IFFI has given some boost to Goan filmmakers and Goan theatre artistes has tried to shift from theatre to films. But due to limited support, unfortunately, it has not given good results and they have restricted themselves in short film competitions organised by different organisations. When big production houses comes to Goa for film shoot, our artistes are not considered for major roles. There is no film institute in Goa to learn film and Goan artistes has to travel outside. This issue also has to be taken seriously.

—Satish Narvekar, actor



Theatre and film are like two different stages, each with its own way of telling stories. Theatre is live and in the moment, while film is more controlled and detailed. Even though there might be fewer films made in Goa, that doesn't mean theatre actors can't work in films. The skills you learn on stage, like acting naturally and understanding characters, are useful for both. Being able to adapt and work in different ways is important for any actor.

—Samiksha Desai, actor

