



Big little
Book
award

CM Govinda Reddy

Author (Kannada)



Shortlist 2018

"We must understand children,
their feelings, their worlds and
draw our stories for them."

How did you become a children's author?

I started my career as a school teacher. As I was teaching children poems, quite naturally I was drawn to write for them. Then in 1992 I started with my first poem, 'ChandraGrahana'. This poem won an award in Prajawani Deepavali Children's completion. A journey that began with writing children's literature just continued with 'Mathondu Mahabharatha'. Presently I am writing Valmiki Ramayana and Bhagavathgita for children.

Do you feel that there has been a shift in Kannada children's literature over the last few decades?

Yes. From then to now, there has been a lot of change. Today, children are moving away from reading, are becoming distant from their culture and appealing western culture. Due to this new culture they are adapting, innocence of childhood is shed quicker. Feelings of empathy are replaced with rage, aggression and violence as this is often what is all around

them. This is positively due to onslaught of television, social media and mobile phones on young minds. I must add, children today are smarter, more intelligent but somewhere they are different or moving away from being real children. Accepting our culture, being proud of ourselves is possible only by opening up our minds and young minds through books and good literature can make this shift smother and safer for children. We must again draw children towards reading. Just by writing in simple words, it doesn't become good for children to read. We must understand children, their feelings, their worlds and draw our stories for them. A world of literature needs to be created for them.

What has been your most treasured experience in your writing journey?

Writing for children has given me different and dear experiences. Whenever I get a chance to interact with school children, I get to hear my poem 'Mangala Grahadali Putti' recited in their own creative tune. The minute children break into a song and dance of my poem in their lovely tunes, brings joy to me.

Who are your favourite authors and why?

My favourite authors are G P Rajaratnam, Panje Mangesh Rao, Shivaram Karanth and Kuvempu. Writings by these stalwarts have had an impact on me. Especially, Kuvempu's Bommana Halliya Kindari Jjogi' has had a huge impact on me.

According to you, what role does an award play in promoting children's literature?

Awards do provide authors with the required encouragement and motivation. There is no doubt, awards encourage and enable in bringing out good literature/ good work by authors.

Have your books been translated into other Indian languages?

Not yet. My book 'Mathondu Mahabharatha' is being translated into English. I am also working on translating Telugu stories into Kannada for children.

How can we encourage young authors to write for children?

Writing for children is a wonderful experience. Children are equal to god. My life is fulfilled if I am able to write good literature for children. By being amidst children, writing for them, happiness, peace will come calling your way.

