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**Village School  
in Gingee**



### Questions

This is a village school. Although the school has four classrooms (you can see one in the background of the girls' photograph) the fifth class does not have a room of its own. The children have their lessons in the shade of a tree, and you can see their blackboard propped up against it. They speak Tamil, and you can see some work written in Tamil on the blackboard.

What do you notice about these pictures? What questions do they make you want to ask?

How is the village school different from the town school in photograph 1 and how is it similar?

In what ways is this school similar to yours and how is it different?

Do you ever go outside for lessons?

### Background

These two photographs show the same class at work – you will find a panoramic shot of the whole class together in the photobank on the CD. It is noticeable that the boys and girls have chosen to work separately from each other and in different ways. Their lesson on the blackboard is about conjunctions.

You may wonder what this class will do when it rains. At this particular school the class has permission to use the church building in wet weather. In a number of villages the church is used as a classroom during the week by the church school.

Although this is a church school, this does not mean that the children all come from Christian families. The Church sees itself as having a mission to the poorest of the poor (dalits) and helping to raise them out of their poverty through education and training. The education of girls is seen as particularly important because of their later responsibilities in raising families. The poorest families, if forced to choose, will only educate their boys.

Although many village children will complete their education at the age of ten and go into work, pastors will identify children who are capable of progressing further. Such children will receive whole or partial scholarships and be given places in secondary schools. Since secondary schools are normally in towns, the church runs hostels where children can board. With church support, some of these children will be able to go on to Higher Education.

