



Radhika Ramanathan
PGDLT 2015-16

Resume

Objective: I wish to work as a part time educator for the classes 6 to 10, in a school which believes in experiential learning.

Summary:

- 3 years of teaching mathematics for middle and high school students
- 5 years of corporate experience in banking technology management
- Strong communicator and possess excellent collaborative skills
- Excellent analytical and interpersonal skills

Experience

Mathematics classes for class 6- 10

Aug 2011 - Till Date

Tutored children in Mathematics

- Taught mathematics to children of domestic help in our colony, in my capacity as a volunteer with an NGO -Dishaa Educational Society. Collaborated with the NGO to get admission for 30 kids into a mainstream school in the first year of initiative. The number is growing steadily.
- Took evening classes in mathematics for middle and high school children.

Sabbatical

Dec 2008- July 2011

Took a sabbatical due to motherhood.

Accenture, Singapore Business Analyst

Sep 2008 - Nov 2008

- Conducted Feasibility study, scoping & effort estimation for new projects
- User requirements study & project planning and monitoring
- Technical and Financial feasibility of various projects (cost and resource utilization wise) in consultation with the client

ICICI Bank, Mumbai
Business Analyst

May 2007 – March 2008

Part of Core Banking Technology Group in-house team supporting developments in General Banking and Deposit module in Finacle

- Collaborated with different departments of the bank, translating the user requirement to a workable solution.
- Evaluated alternatives & provide cost effective solution resulting in optimal resource utilization
- Ensured quality in the end product.
- Automated the customer services application

Bank Of India, Mumbai
Specialist Officer (Information Technology)

Dec 2004 –April 2007

- Core Banking Software Finacle – Product enhancement & Customization
- Liaison with HP/Infosys for product enhancement
- Design & implementation of new functionalities under Core Banking Solution
- Techno Functional support to branches across the country

Tata Consultancy Services, Mumbai

Oct 2002 – Sept 2003

Assistant Systems Engineer

- Clearing Corporation Of India Ltd. project of TCS

Educational Qualifications

- Pursuing **PGDLT(Post Graduate Diploma In Learning and Teaching)**, I Am A Teacher, (Jun 2015 – Mar 2016)
- **PGPBTM (Post Grad. Program In Banking Technology Management)**, Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology, Hyderabad, (Sept 2003-Aug 2004)
- **B.E. (Electronics & Communications)**, Regional Engineering College, Bhopal , (July 1998- Jun 2002)

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My Learning Journey

My journey in IAAT has been one of intense soul searching and learning. Every day has been a day of wonder- unraveling something new. I can see myself growing as a person and as a learner.

My approach to learning....

To start with, I never knew that there were philosophies to back educational methodologies. From learning of the philosophies I got to know the deep and sound bases for many of the educational practices that we see. It was enlightening to know the purpose of education as envisaged by the great thinkers- as being one to help humans to realize their ultimate potential, and not confined to literacy and numeracy.

My views about how learning happens have undergone a sea change. The idea of collective thinking leading to great ideas and rich learning experiences was an eye opener. All through my school life I had been an individual learner. There was no element of group work at all during my schooling. But here, as a resident I am experiencing group learning in my theory classes, and also in my practice sessions in the class where most of the learning happens through crew work and class discussions. **I have seen knowledge getting constructed through the collective thinking process.** I would like to specially mention the social science classes that I have been a part of in my grade 6 practice sessions. Unlike the usual way of teaching history, where children are just fed with facts- the approach is to help children reconstruct history using historical thinking skills. A lot of time is spent in skill building- observation skills, inferential skills, historical thinking skills, geographical thinking skills, systems thinking skills, etc. This can be likened to tilling the soil and preparing the ground before actually sowing the crop. Equipped with these skills, they are able to build knowledge through well thought out probing questions which help children through the process of learning.

The importance of appreciating all answers, including “**wrong answers**” from children – as the wrong answers are the ones which bring to light the various possible thought processes - which can in turn help clarify concepts to a deeper level- was a revelation.

Another idea with regard to the purpose of education which appealed to me greatly was Manish Jain’s (the founder of the Swaraj University) idea- we are here to complete each other, not to compete with

each other. Education should aid us in this process. When he said that he does not print the price for any book that he publishes – because though the book is authored by him, but he himself is comprised of so many people he has come across in his life, from whom he has learnt- it touched the deepest core of my heart. It suddenly brought to light there is nothing called ‘my ‘ idea. All ideas are generated as a result of constant interactions with people around us.

Through the process I have also understood the importance of **unlearning** what is no longer relevant or effective. It is difficult for new learning to take place unless we are open to unlearn.

Learning by doing is also something I experienced through my practice sessions. Here I got two perspectives. One perspective was by seeing children by actually working with their hands during pottery sessions, as a part of their history lessons where they were getting the **direct experience** of what they were learning in their theory classes. The other perspective is my own learning to be a teacher by actually doing what a teacher does -taking classes, checking student work etcetra. It was a stupendous learning experience.

Learning by observation is another way of learning which I am experienced through the course- as I got to observe my collaborating teacher transacting with the class. This gave me great insights into what should be the strengths of a teacher.

I am also getting to **put into practice what I am learning in my theory classes**. This process is bringing out **the effectiveness of learning when it can be immediately applied**. It is amazing to see how theory contributes to practice, and practice in turn enriches theory through the improvisations and practical problem solving that are experienced. It also provided insights into how a theory would be constructed.

The biggest understanding for me about learning is that never a state where everything has been learned. It is a **perpetual process**, which never stops in life.

My growth as a person.....

Many aspects of my personality are undergoing change. As I settled into family life, I had got into a defeatist approach to life. I had started equating life to the practical day to day issues. Now with the gradual building of a can-do attitude in me, through the course, my focus has shifted to the solutions and possibilities that life has to offer – and now I am unable to believe that I was blind to these possibilities all this while.

I had never looked at the outdoors as a place for training the mind and spirit. But the 5-day training at Junga did just that- brought about a synchronization between the body, mind and spirit. It was a liberation from my own imagined fears and anxieties. I realized that it is never too late to start learning anything in life. The seeds for a can-do attitude were sown here. I also witnessed the **collective energy of a group** and its **positive effects**.

The session on **assumptions** as part of the MPL course- opened my eyes to so many hidden truths in my life. One major revelation was that in my life until now – I had not lived my life as me, but as the person that people expected me to be. My identity was shaped only by what others expected me to be, and my own part of what I am and aspire to be – hardly found any expression. As I probed deeper, I realized that what appeared as guilt on the surface was actually a result of not being able to fulfil those expectations from others. And then came the realization that probably it was not even ‘others’ expectation, but **my assumption about their expectation**. This understanding has changed the way I live life. It has had a positive effect on relationships, which are more authentic now.

I am experiencing that when an individual changes, driven by a deep conviction, society also changes in response. And this is probably what acts as the catalyst for a deeper change in the society – one family and one circle of influence at a time.

I have also tasted freedom from fear in bits and pieces- my personal fears, as well as fear of societal perception. I have learnt not to dissipate my energies by thinking about unnecessary things.

Partho bhैया’s definition of love to be truly attentiveness has also made a difference to my approach to spending time with family and friends. It is not essential to be physically around all the time, but the time spent should be full of attentiveness to them.

His elaboration on the idea that each one of us comes into the world with our own svabhava (intrinsic nature) and svadharma (characteristic turn of being) also remarkably changed my approach to myself, my own children and to the students I teach. I have started accepting myself now.

The course has also brought into light the many strengths that I possess, which were unknown to me so far. Knowledge of these has helped me develop faith in myself.

I have developed some great habits, the most important one being reflection. Reflection is helping me in resolving the clutter in my mind, making way for clarity of thought. It also helps me as a teacher in improving my practice. I am being more organized now, as I find it necessary in order to manage my

time effectively in a packed schedule. Planning is another habit whose significance I have understood now and am putting to use in my everyday life.

My approach to life and learning have undergone a radical shift. I intend continuing on the same trajectory, at an even more accelerated pace.

My Educational Philosophy

Through my school and college life I had never thought about the purpose of education, or the process of education.

Now, after the exposure to various educational philosophies and my own experiences so far in the educational field, I think the purpose of **education is to help an individual make sense of oneself (the microcosm that an individual is) and make sense of the world around (the macrocosm), and subsequently be able to make a positive difference to both.**

By making sense of oneself, I mean that education should lead to a process of self discovery. The child, through the process of education, should be able to identify at least her main strengths, areas of improvement, emotions etcetera and be comfortable with her identity. I would call an educational process effective if it helps the child in some way to find her purpose in life - her inner calling.

By making sense of the world, I mean the child should be able to understand the world around and identify her association with it.

With these two purposes in mind, at this point in time I feel the two most important features that educational process should have are:

- It should be **integral** in nature – it should bring together the body, mind, heart and soul of an individual - the whole individual.
- It should be relevant to the social context.

Healthy mind in a healthy body is an old adage, which holds true always. The body should be a part of the educational process alongside the mind. Stamina building exercises would build the foundation for a healthy body for a lifetime. Rhythmic movements help in developing co-ordination between the mind and body, which would help develop a different faculty of the mind. Certain physical and sports activities can help children in getting over their fears. This attitude of **fearless exploration** of their abilities will then percolate into other aspects of their life as well, and have an overall impact on their personality. Childhood is the best time to inculcate healthy habits like regular exercises, healthy eating etcetera. Hence this should be inculcated at an early age itself.

The human mind is the most powerful computer in the world. It has immense potential. In training the mind, apart from intellectual stimulation, there should be emphasis on **regulating** it. This can be done by regular meditation, so that stray thoughts fall off and the mental energy doesn't get dissipated. Specific attention needs to be given to developing **will power**, as I believe that it has a decisive role to play in the life of a person, and is a trait which can be developed by consistent effort.

Exposure to various art forms, lot of outdoor trips, thought provoking questions and problem situations etc should be given to children in order to kindle their **curiosity** and enhance their **creativity**. Various forms of **expression** should be encouraged. The intrinsic nature of each child should find expression in the process of education.

Lot of opportunities for **decision making** and **self management** should be created within the process of education. This would help in building confidence in children. Needless to say, there should be a great deal of **freedom** for every child to explore his interests.

By educating the heart I mean building sensitivity in children. The educational process should make them sensitive to human feelings- their own and others; sensitive to the environment and sensitive to social realities.

I think education should be relevant to the social context of the child. It should be connected to the immediate reality of the child's world –for example in teaching of geography, the child should first learn about his neighborhood- the local produce, local industry, local soil quality etcetera. Children should be given opportunities to work in the society for simple projects like cleaning up the surrounding area of the school. The child would then grow up considering himself an active part of the society- having the power to make a difference to social situations- and eventually grow up to be a responsible citizen of the society.

Educational process should not rely on a second hand experience- children should experience first hand – personally- what they are learning.

Children also need to be sensitized to the value of money –so that when they come in contact with money, they are not put off balance by either surplus of it or lack of it.

Each of these has to be done in accordance with the svabhava of the child. This would require a high degree of differentiated, individualized teaching. The role of a teacher I envisage in the process of education is that of an active facilitator. She needs to be connected to every child should be able to make out the needs of every child and take the child forward from there.

In formulating my own philosophy, I have been deeply impacted by Aurobindo's philosophy on education. Especially the Second principle, and I would like to quote it here :

It should never be forgotten that everyone has his own *svabhāva* and *svadharmā*, his intrinsic self-nature and the characteristic turn of his being....The chief aim of education "should be to discover it, develop it and use it" to the maximum extent possible. The teacher should try to help the child to draw

out that in him which is best and noble and make it perfect for a worthy use. And for this the mind of the student has to be consulted in its own growth. The teacher must not seek to hammer the child into the shape desired by the parent or teacher: the student himself must be induced to expand according to his own nature.

Teaching & Learning :

Learning, for me, was an **outcome** before I joined this course. But now I feel the more important part of learning is the **process of learning**. The questions that are generated in a child's mind, the ideas, thoughts and feelings arise in a child's mind, as a part of the learning process-are what help the child develop as a learner and discoverer and shape her personality.

In my opinion, there should be lot of group work in the learning process. Collective thinking and deliberation of ideas and thoughts should find place in everyday classroom experience.

I do not believe in compartmentalizing learning into subjects – it is not effective as drawing connections ;would become difficult, and children would find it difficult to apply any of these learnings in their daily life. Learning has to be interdisciplinary, since real life's problems are interdisciplinary in nature.

From my experience in the classroom I have come to believe that learning is an important part of teaching, and for effective teaching, one needs to be an active learner. Hence whatever I write about learning here applies to teaching as well.

Role of a teacher is that of a facilitator- helping students to discover themselves and the concepts. this is completely different from my previous idea of teacher as a knowledge giver.

My philosophy impacting my practice:

To allow every child to blossom at her own pace would need a high level of differentiated teaching. I would look at a child as a whole- recognizing the fact that each child is in her characteristic fashion full of different impressions- inborn and acquired. Hence the various faculties of each child are differently developed. I would take the child as she is and begin her teaching from there.

Me as an Observer

Observation as a mode of learning was a new experience in this course. The classroom practice for us started as an observer in class, with the collaborating teacher and other subject teachers taking the classes and we observing their classes.

I started with observing the children. I used to observe which children are paying attention and who are not. I tried to find out why those particular children were distracted and tried to find a pattern if there was a reason for their distraction. In this process, I identified the child whom I wanted to observe for my child observation assignment. While observing him, I learnt how many facets are there to a child.

Through this observation, I understood group dynamics – how children behave differently when paired with different crew members. There was a huge difference in his behavior when his crew was changed. Thus I realized the significance of proper crew formations- giving proper attention to the individual characteristics of each child, and how it can help in managing individual behavior and its impact on classroom management as well. It also helped me understand that behavioural problems in children are only symptoms, the root causes may lie beyond the teacher's vision, and the teacher needs to probe further in order to solve them. Merely addressing the symptoms does not offer a permanent solution.

I also observed that while some children are completely engaged in the class, some are distracted, fiddling with something or the other. This gave me insights into different learning styles of children.

Next I started observing my collaborating teacher and the various subject teachers closely. My observations focused on the teaching styles and pedagogical practices followed by the different teachers. I also got to observe various classroom management techniques and their effectiveness in different situations. I also observed how setting the protocols right can make a difference to the quality of the lesson transacted in the class.

I also observed how children behave differently with different teachers, as I got to observe the same class across different subjects and the difference made by the personal connect that some teachers made with the children.

I also observed the impact a day's routine had on the moods of the children.

When I started co-teaching and subsequently teaching independently, I realized the immense learning that observation had given me. I knew exactly which child to ask what, and what to expect in response, in each subject. I was in a position to predict behaviours, and pre-empt them in certain cases.

Initially I was emotionally involved in my observation of children and certain behaviours really used to put me off. Lately my observation is more detached in nature. I am able to look at them objectively, without judging and working on them from where they currently are. After starting to teach, observing my collaborating teacher has become even more meaningful, as I am now able to relate to the challenges that she faces while handling the class, and make sense of the various strategies that she uses.

I realize that this process of observation has made me a much more alert person in my daily life.

Assignment - Child Profile

My Rationale for Observing:

Right from the start I noticed that 'something' was holding back M's personality- he seemed to be making sense of everything around him, but it did not show in his work, or in his interaction with the class or the teachers. To my eyes, there was a potential waiting to be discovered. To find out that 'something' and the 'potential' is the objective of my observation.

Physical Presence and Gestures:

M is a twelve year old boy. He has a younger brother who is seven years old. He lives in a nuclear family with his parents. Both his parents are pilots.

He is a medium built boy. He usually speaks in monotone and without any gestures. Across activities, I have found his energy level to be one which can be termed as laidback.

Disposition

He displays even disposition. I have hardly found him expressing feelings. Generally he stays to himself during crew work, and snack and meal times. I would call his emotional tone as subdued.

Some of his classmates, whom he claimed to be his friends, say that he gets abusive when he gets angry – but I have not noticed this in the class or in the field.

He takes a long time to follow instructions, and sometimes does not follow even after repeated instructions. For example, for taking down notes from the board, only when he is told multiple times, he starts doing it.

He is not organized and spends a lot of time searching for subject books and notebooks, weekend sheets etc

Relationship with Children and Adults:

I have not noticed him having any close friends, though he does name a few boys as his friends when inquired. But those he named as his friends, also do not seem to be knowing much about him.

Generally, he is not well received by class mates. Most people keep teasing him. Often the crew members complain that he is not sharing his ideas / opinions in the crew, and disturbs when others share. They also complain about him singing or uttering funny words out of context. But he counter complains that nobody in the crew listens to him and that he does not get a chance to share.

His interaction with the teachers is confined to counter complaining about his classmates, requesting for avoiding speaking in public or for washroom breaks (which is quite frequent).I have not seen him approach any teacher for getting his doubts cleared or for sharing anything about his personal life.

For example, in a Hindi recitation session in July, I saw him approach the teacher repeatedly, citing excuses and requesting him not to make him do it.

And on the few occasions lately, when he is attempting to speak, the whole class giggles and starts making remarks. One instance is, in the 'Read Aloud' session in English, when it was his turn, many started giggling, or saying 'all the best', 'best of luck'. Such a behavior was not noticed for any other child.

Activities and Interests

He likes playing cricket. He is interested in wrestling and was very happy to go and watch Mark Henry in Kingdom of Dreams. I have never seen him reading during free time, which stands out in the class as most children read whenever they get free time.

Out of the subjects, he says he likes expedition, module and French classes. In the module class, he takes active interest in doing the experiments and observing. But he is not interested in taking down the observations/ result, in drawing and labeling diagrams, or in noting down definitions.

He used to stay away from swimming during the physical education classes. But during hockey, I found him actively participating. During pottery sessions, I have noticed complete lack of interest. In the performing arts, he is part of general music appreciation (GMA), which is for those children who are not able to qualify for any of the instruments. He says he is not particularly fond of music.

When the teacher initiated a one day desk clean up activity, he was very interested and kept at it for many days.

Artefacts: Generally his notebooks are not complete, with many answers either incomplete or left unanswered. He does not prefer making a second draft for any of his works. He does not enjoy writing and drawing diagrams. Even much of the work in his portfolio is incomplete.

Overall, working with hands does not seem to be his forte- as is evident from his hand writing, drawings and pottery classes

Adult Lens

I did not get the opportunity to interact with his parents, but from what they have written about him in the portfolio, and from what teachers who have interacted with them tell me, I have gathered that they have very high expectations of him, especially on the academic front.

All the teachers are of the opinion that he can do well, but for 'some reason' he does not.

Progression : I have observed a change in him, during the course of my observation, on almost all the above mentioned aspects.

In July, he used to keep fiddling with a pen, doodling or shaking his legs through most of the periods. He used to be completely silent during crew work and think-share-pair activities. He hardly used to participate in class discussions.

But of late, I see him very focused during most of the sessions. He has started proactively contributing to the class discussions. I have also observed him making attempts to talk to his crew members. His work in the notebooks is also now more detailed and complete.

Inferences

I have arrived at the following inferences, based on my observations:

- Individual attention and constant nudging motivates him to perform well. For example, I found a remarkable change in his notebooks, after I kept following up individually with him for some time.
- Dynamics play a vital role for him- On changing a particular crew member, his participation in the crew activities started improving. Some of the behavior in his crew like cracking jokes out of context etc seem to be negative attention seeking.
- He needs to feel accepted.

Way forward

My understanding at this point in time is that attention and love can motivate M to do well. As he is not self motivated, his potentials are lying buried. He needs some hand holding in building self esteem.

Creating repeated opportunities for him to speak up in the class, and giving him some class responsibilities – like material distribution - may give him an opportunity for quality interaction with his classmates and may help develop his self esteem.

I have not been able to speak to him in person much. And I do not know much about his family. Many of his behavioral traits may be stemming from there. Hence I would like to work in that direction now.

My Approach to Teaching of Subjects

For teaching both subjects my first approach would be – near to far- I would start at the child's reality and then move further from there.

Teaching of Maths

In maths, we have been exposed to appropriate pedagogical practices for primarily the early years, but many of the principles would be universally applicable.

My first and foremost learning in teaching of maths is that we need to make **children go through the process of arriving at the various theorems**, instead of giving them straightaway. It is essential to remember that what we are teaching children in 5-6 hours is what has taken humanity thousands of years to arrive at. Going through this process of discovery is essential to ensure possibility of children to discover something better, and not just use existing body of knowledge. Secondly, the **relevance** part has to be kept in mind always- it has to be connected to the real need of life. For example, while teaching a concept like fractions, there is no real need for children to deal with fractions like $\frac{117}{213}$ - they would never come across such a quantity in their daily life. Thirdly, embedding any new concept in a context, and preferably in such a **context which is similar to what historically led to the origin of that concept**. For example, the need for negative numbers (integers) arose because of the concept of debt. Hence while introducing integers, it is best to use a context around the principle of debt, so that the need for the concept becomes obvious, and children learn it intuitively. Also, I would use **word problems as a means to convey social awareness, and hope**. For example, while teaching algebra I formulated a word problem around car pooling- how it is decreasing individual expenses and helping reducing pollution.

As there is a lot of difference between the pace of learners in the same class, I would also bring in differentiated learning by making different worksheets for different sets of children.

Teaching of English

Language offers limitless possibilities to create opportunities for children to express themselves freely- their ideas, thoughts, feelings etcetera. It provides the maximum scope to the teacher to let children exercise rational autonomy in the classroom.

One principle that would guide my teaching of English is to provide an atmosphere of **immersion in English** to the children and they would automatically learn. The main role of the teacher that I see here is to foster the interest of the child in the language. I would make available a variety of literature to children – chosen appropriately, but not limited by their age/grade level – and let children choose what they want to read. They would most likely enjoy reading what they have chosen by themselves, more than what the teacher chooses for them. I would also ensure that they read something they understand and like everyday- the regularity has to be maintained. I will make them write something- about anything of their choice- everyday. This exercise would slowly contribute to their learning of grammar- as they would understand the need for their message to be conveyed properly to their readers – which would need adherence to some universal standards. I would also ensure opportunities for higher order thinking wherever possible. For example while formulating questions for unseen reading passages, I will make sure children get to think critically and apply what they read in the passage to other contexts.

My Understanding of the Larger Ecosystem of Education:

Assignment 1 on educational philosophies

‘Hammering the mind into shape’ refers to forcing or conditioning the mind to develop according to external diktats or preconceived ideas about how it should think or function, without any consideration for its natural inclination or gifts. The external influence/ diktat can be the educational system : the curriculum, the teachers, the teaching methodology, the school environment; or the parents or society at large.

Every human being is born with a unique set of capabilities – mental, physical and emotional. No two people think exactly alike, or react to the same situation in exactly the same way. As a result, every child has her own likes and dislikes, and way and pace of learning. The child may pick up certain skills/ concepts faster and certain other skills/concepts slower than other children. There may be variation in

aptitude across academic subjects. For example, a child may grasp mathematical concepts faster, but struggle at language. Across modes of learning there may be differences. Some may be tactile learners, others may learn better by listening. There may be differences in aptitude in the arts. Some may pick up physical movements faster, others may be good at drawing/ painting.

Unfortunately, our education system, as it exists today, is not able to accommodate this inherent uniqueness in each one of us. There is a prescribed syllabus, and a prescribed timeline to complete it. There is no concept of personalization in education. Also there is a lot of parental and societal pressure in choosing a field of study or profession. Thus there is no reference to the original nature, or original gifts of that particular mind, in its own process of development. The self of the child becomes thwarted, as all learning is forced and secondary. Instead, if the child is given the freedom to explore his faculties, and the time and space that he needs, learning would be a joyful and expansive process.

When a teacher tries to push a child to learn or do certain things that ‘need’ to be done, but the child is not yet ready to do them or is not inclined to do them, then it is akin to hammering the mind. Instead, if the teacher gives the child the space to learn at her own pace, helps the child identify her unique strengths, and encourages the child to nurture them, then she is actually letting the child’s learning to be guided by the innate nature of the child’s own mind. Then there is a possibility of the child attaining perfection in that field, as it is not a forced or a secondary activity, but a natural one. If a teacher finds that a child has challenges in some particular area, the teacher can explore different media of instruction to arrive at the mode best suited to the child. Exposure to different art forms can help find yet unexplored facets of a child, where her true calling may lie. The role of a teacher in this case becomes that of a facilitator.

An example that comes to my mind is the student- teacher relationship depicted between Darsheel Safary (student) and Aamir Khan (teacher) in the movie Taare Zameen Par. The child was constantly being hammered by all – teachers and family- to learn something he was really not able to, and faced constant humiliation, which pushed him into a shell. But the new teacher(Aamir) accepted the weakness of the child, and more importantly, figured out his amazing talent in painting and created opportunities to explore and expose his talent. This boosted his self esteem and, he started improving even in subjects which were his problem areas.

Assignment 2 on Educational Philosophies

- a. School practices that lead to fear, conformity and competitiveness

Fear of exams is instilled at a young age because children are judged as “intelligent” or “not intelligent”, solely based on how they perform in exams. Some subjects like maths and science are considered more important, and children doing well in these subjects are thought of to be superior to those not doing well in these. In some schools in south India, the ‘most intelligent’ students are grouped together in a section, and such sections are prepared for entrance exams like IIT-JEE, from as young an age as 11 yrs. as the school wants to outnumber all the other schools in the number of successful candidates. It is only the competitive spirit that is encouraged.

The teacher’s method or perspective is supposed to be the only right one, and all have to conform to it. All children are expected to progress at the same pace; there is no concept of differential learning.

Discipline is enforced through fear of the teacher, fear of punishment, and value of self- discipline is not recognized.

Negative Effects

A child who has grown up with fear, will always be low on self esteem and can never gather the courage to face life. A competitive environment, shifts the focus of the child from learning to winning, defeating the very purpose of going to school. It leads to insecurity, stress and fear, which deepen the barrier between self and others leading to utter selfishness. Incidents of suicides and road rage among youngsters are all a direct consequence of the fear and competitiveness instilled at a young age. Though society perceives conformity as necessary to maintain order in its state of affairs, in the long run, a society of conformists would stagnate completely.

Children lose the ability to think originally, and can never discover the new.

And the irony is that, the world is looking for innovation in all fields now – be it medical, architecture, agriculture – because there are new diseases coming up, more people less food, more demand than supply on almost all fronts.

The suppression that children are subjected to, gets an outlet outside of the controlled environment of the school, in the form of aggression, which leads to increased violence.

These negative effects can be minimized only by bringing in an attitudinal change in the school administrators and teachers. Forums can be created where progressive schools and conventional schools can interact - as most conventional schools may be perpetrating all the above harmful practices without even realizing their impact – just because it has been going on the same way for ages and nobody thought it was necessary to question.

Encouraging collaboration instead of competition, among children and among schools would go a long way in reducing the competitiveness. Training teachers to be facilitators, and not agents of control, will help reduce the fear factor. Designing and treating assessments as yardsticks to measure children's learning, and not to pit them against one another or to label them as intelligent or unintelligent, will make exams a joyful experience.

b. Right Education

Right education should give complete freedom to think. It should encourage multiple perspectives of looking at a situation, multiple strategies of solving a problem and give the freedom of choice to decide the best suited method. This would encourage an integrated outlook to life. It should offer the freedom to discover and pursue the individual's area of interest, not subjected to societal perceptions of superior and inferior.

It should help one connect to one's inner self, and understand one's strengths, weaknesses, emotional responses etc. and to manage them.

Children should experience personal love in the process of education. This would naturally develop empathy in them – which would keep them safe from selfishness and ensuing competitiveness.

Trusting the child's innate goodness and wisdom would eventually bring them to self discipline and the love of learning.

I as a teacher would help educate the emotional make-up of my students by creating space in the classroom for all kinds of emotions, and giving each child the opportunity to look at one's own emotional responses and evaluate. I will also discuss age specific concerns which can have deep emotional implications. For example, most adolescents are very conscious of their physical appearance. Some may really withdraw into a shell during this phase of change. Sharing feelings about these can ease the stress related to it.

I will bring up values into perspective by creating contexts wherever possible. For example, contexts around gender sensitivity, littering etc. can be built in word problems in maths or writing pieces in languages. Guided reflection processes can also help them discover their deeply held values and values that they think are wanting in them.

Recognizing the fact that everybody would be at different places in the learning journey, I will try to adopt differential teaching wherever possible – by creating more challenges for the fast paced learners, and more time for the slow ones.

Assignment on Historical Perspectives of Education

Right to Education Act and its Implementation

India has made significant education policy reforms to reach the remotest corners of the country to impart elementary education to children from all sections of the society. The nation is spending tens of thousands of crores on the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and implementation of Right to Education Act – which guarantees free and compulsory education to all children between the age of 6 to 14.

In the implementation of the RTE Act, the emphasis seems to be on enrolment and compliance with the infrastructure norms. This lopsided emphasis on enrolment seems to be misplaced, since 96.5% of children in India were already in school by 2009, the year in which RTE Act was passed. With the wide spectrum of schools that India has- some accommodating around 3000 children, others having less than 60 children, the same infrastructure norms across all schools also seem unreasonable. In this scenario, the more important aspect of what children are learning in the classrooms- **quality** of the education delivered - has taken a relative backseat.

Quality of education is measured by the **learning outcomes**. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) has repeatedly shown that less than half of Class V students can read a paragraph or do a simple arithmetic sum from a Class II text. Indian students ranked 73 out of 74 in a simple test of reading, science and arithmetic called PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) in 2011, though the literacy rates had gone up to 74 % by the same year.

This brings us to the question – should we take the “free and compulsory education” guaranteed by the RTE to mean “learning” or “schooling”?.

The RTE identifies **infrastructure** as a basis for delivering quality education and has laid out 10 norms for these.

As per the DISE (2012-13) data only 8.28% schools in the country fulfill all the norms required as per the RTE. These norms are: at least one classroom for every teacher, office cum-store-cum-head teacher’s room, separate toilets for girls and boys that are usable, safe and adequate drinking water facility,

kitchen where mid-day-meal is cooked in the school , playground, and arrangements for securing the school building by boundary wall or fencing.

More than 50 % schools have 4 or more of these facilities, which shows a fair degree of compliance with these RTE norms.

Data shows that 62 % of the bigger schools (enrolment>120) complied with all the norms, while only 10 % of the small schools (enrolment < 60) complied with all the norms. It comes out clearly that compliance on these parameters increases with the size of the school, which is expected, since bigger schools would have more facilities.

The RTE also gives very specific norms regarding **PTR** (pupil teacher ratio). About 40% schools had PTRs which were according to the norms. However, in schools that did not comply with the norm, the average PTR was almost 3 times that in the compliant schools – 66 compared to 24, resulting in an average PTR of 49. So, as compared to infrastructure, schools have a much longer way to go to meet the RTE norms of PTR. Also only about 30% of the bigger schools meet the RTE prescribed PTR compared to 70% of the smaller schools. **These bigger schools form the bulk of the school population.**

If we look at the learning outcomes in these schools in correlation to the compliance to these RTE norms, we find that the outcomes are significantly higher in schools with PTRs in accordance with RTE norms. On the other hand, learning does not seem to be directly correlated with the number of infrastructure facilities a school has. In this light, these infrastructural norms may be imposing an unnecessary burden on the schools, which otherwise are performing well in the aspect of learning outcomes.

This is not to say that well-functioning schools with good facilities are not a desirable outcome. They will certainly encourage attendance which may result in better learning outcomes. The point is to make sure that the priorities while implementing the Act should not get mired in chasing targets of school infrastructure alone, which seems to be happening with many private schools being asked to shut down after “inspection”, on dubious grounds.

An important pre-requisite for learning to happen is “attendance” of both teachers and children in school. Unless children and teachers attend school and instruction takes place, learning, however defined, will not take place no matter how many classrooms, toilets and playgrounds are built. The Right to Education Act does talk about **instructional hours** and **working days** for teachers. It provides for 200 working days during the stage of primary schooling and 220 days at Upper Primary. However, 6.63% primary schools and 26.8 % upper primary schools fail to comply with this norm. Most states have failed to bring in accountability in this area.

TLMs (teaching learning material) are an important component of any educational set up, which greatly impacts the quality of education imparted. No state has reported 100% supply of textbooks in all schools (DISE 2012-13). Focused attention needs to be paid to the modalities of their procurement- with attention to the **tendering process, data systems to ensure demand and supply of textbooks and action to address frequent supply bottlenecks.**

Libraries are an important part of the TLMs. According to DISE 2012-13, 68.95% schools had libraries. However, ASER notes that in the majority of the schools libraries were found to be in-accessible to children. Books were locked in cupboards, not given to children due to the fear of them getting destroyed and mostly stocked with books that are not selected in accordance with the level and interest of children. This is another example of the government machinery failing to establish accountability.

One major aspect of the policy which has widely been blamed for declining learning outcomes is “**no detention policy**” under RTE act. The policy states that no child should be held back till class 8 in order to ensure compulsory education up to the age of 14 years, and to prevent dropout in schools.

There is a feeling that this may have led to relaxation of classroom teaching since all exams and assessments are scrapped and no child is held back. However, this is an **implementation issue**, arising out of **misinterpretation of the policy. No detention does not mean no assessments.** The policy recommends a **Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)** process, which ensures that children learn continuously and the learning is continuously assessed, instead of measuring the learning of children by how they perform on one single day (the examination day). The continuous evaluation can serve to be a yardstick for the teachers as well to measure the effectiveness of the teaching process, and to take remedial action when necessary. But it needs to be made **more explicit and decoded for teachers.**

CCE is now a part of the law and 76.93 % elementary schools in India currently implement some form of CCE. But the modalities of CCE vary drastically across the country in terms of quality of the process adopted.

Teachers seem to be spending significant proportion of instructional time in recording and preparing detailed report cards and consider this kind of CCE an additional burden. And with so many tests teachers start ‘teaching to tests’ leading to rote learning and use of ‘guide books’ by students and teachers both, which completely defeats the purpose of CCE. **A change in the modalities of**

implementation of CCE in several states is, therefore, needed and **teachers need to imbibe the spirit of the CCE process.**

Another provision of the RTE in which there is a lot of difficulty in implementation is admission of children who have been out of school, into **age appropriate classrooms.** We need **remedial programmes** for these children – which becomes difficult in the existing scenario of scarcity of trained teachers. The limited physical infrastructure is also a major constraint in providing additional special training sessions, especially when the number of such children is large.

The most important input for imparting quality education is quality teachers. RTE provides for appointment of appropriately trained teachers, i.e. teachers with the requisite entry and academic qualifications. But, 5 lakh sanctioned teacher posts remain vacant and 6.6 lakh in-service teachers are untrained. The vacant posts, in spite of the improved pay structures, point to the fact that the image of a teacher in the society needs revamping in a big way. Also, incentives need to be created in order to attract good talent into teaching.

Even more worrying is the fact that out of the teachers who are on the rolls, one in four teachers is found absent (another instance of failing to ensure accountability), and one in two, who is present, is found not teaching on any school working day.

The in-service training mandated for teachers is also far from the realistic requirement, if we want teachers who can impart quality education. Moreover, quite a few private teacher training institutes have sprung up under licenses from NCTE. Many of these provide degrees to student teachers without really imparting the required learning and training.

A critical factor behind the skewed PTR is the slower rate at which teachers posts are created and vacancies filled in comparison with the rate at which children are getting enrolled in the system. The enhancement in enrollment has been acclaimed as one of the greatest achievements of the RTE Act. However, this growth in enrollment has not been matched with a commensurate and planned process of enhancing school infrastructure and teacher (especially trained teacher) availability.

Another aspect that the Act is trying to bring about is community participation in the management of schools, through School Management Committees (SMCs). But the scope of roles and responsibilities of SMCs are not clear in various states.

This brings us to an important point to be considered with respect to the implementation of any policy regarding education. Within the **federal structure** of the country, while broad policy and legal framework on education is provided by the Central Government, implementation of various programmes and schemes are undertaken largely by state governments. Each state promulgates its own Rules, in accordance to the Act. These rules vary from state to state and hence there is a lot of disparity between the implementation of the Act in various states. Hence the ball of implementation of RTE is in the states' courts.

While many state governments have failed on accountability, Gujarat's Gunotsav (literally meaning celebrating quality), stands out in the crowd.

This initiative of the Gujarat government brings in learning outcomes in measuring the implementation of the Act. It does this by basing its assessment of schools in the four domain areas of scholastic activities, co-scholastic activities, utilization of school infrastructure and community participation.

It is a statewide exercise carried out every year in two phases. In the first phase, self evaluation is done by all the schools. Each school is given a school Self evaluation booklet with instructions for conducting the academic test for children and for the assessment of co-scholastic activities, use of resources and community mobilization. Assessment is carried out in the presence of School management committee (SMC)..Children studying in standard II to VIII are given unique DISE ID number as part of new system of **Child Tracking for Learning Outcomes**. Children of Standard II to V are assessed for their performance in basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy; whereas children of standard VI to VIII take the OMR based test for all scholastic subjects including Gujarati, Hindi, English, Sanskrit, Mathematics, Social Sciences and Science and Technology. **Utilizing this database, reports and graphs for remedial measures are generated. Similarly, reports / graphs for co-scholastic activities, use of resources and community mobilization are generated. This child wise database is placed online for utilization by schools.**

Evaluation for the second phase follows the self evaluation. To create a spirit of a high priority to this cause and to make those in the field of education feel the value of this activity, the complete strength of government machinery is deployed with a first hand briefing by the Chief Minister to the participating officers in the state capital. Simultaneous satellite based conferences are held at district levels for district officers to share the process.

The second phase of Gunotsav involves 3000 senior bureaucrats of the State evaluate government primary schools covering 25% schools from all the blocks of the state. Officers and their teams visit one

school each day and cover three schools in this exercise, each year. The team comprises of a senior state government official, accompanied by one or two members from his/her own department/office and a local liaison officer. Great emphasis is laid on uniform numbers of schools to be assessed in all clusters/blocks/districts of the state.

The Officer and team spend an entire day in the selected school (from morning assembly to the evening presentation by students and meeting with parents) The team has to reach before school time, participate in the assembly, participate in the school review and non academic and academic assessments-participate in the mid day meal and also review the school's basic facilities on matters of safety and utilization of resources.

After school hours, the officer and team interact with parents and take view and suggestions for educational activities in the village/school. At the end of the day, in school, Officers attend the cultural programme. This encourages the scope of participation among parents and makes them aware of their role in the school activities.

The class assessment by Officers in the selected schools is conducted for Reading, Math and English. For the 'Reading assessment'-in each standard, and in each division, 20 children or 20 % (whichever is much) are assessed. All the students of the class are assessed for Writing and Numeric Skills. There are specially prepared booklets for reading, writing and math. Officers and accompanying team members divide themselves in visiting classes in the school.

For reading-officers themselves assess the child's reading and grade them on their competency for reading. The written and math evaluation is checked by teachers in front of the officers, which the officers randomly check as well.

Apart from assessing the competencies in each subject, officers assessed parameters of co-scholastic activities, use of resources and community participation.

Report card for schools: Each school's final grade is based on the self evaluation done by the school and the evaluation done by the officer. This process is strict in its implementation and hence encourages each school to follow honest self evaluation procedures. Schools where only self evaluation is done, are graded on the marks obtained for performance in the self evaluation.

The evaluation gives 60% weightage for education /subject wise marks and 40% for school co-scholastic activities, use of resources and community participation etc. Report cards are prepared for 34177 schools. A grade summary is available for districts, talukas, schools and teachers.

This is a shining example of implementation of the Act- connecting all the required norms to the actual learning outcomes.

RTE and Inclusion

Empowered by the Right to Education (RTE) Act, a child with special needs can study in any mainstream school today. Though a special educator is needed for autistic, visually challenged and hearing-impaired children, even regular teachers need to be able to identify, involve and teach them in a way that they understand. However, the government has not yet introduced training for teachers in special education. Currently, teachers learn about special education through one module while studying for Bachelors of Education (BEd) or Diploma in Education (DEd). This module neither teaches how to handle specific disabilities nor has any practical element. The right kind of infrastructure facilities – ramp, special toilets for the disabled - become important here – to enable physical access to children. These may be difficult to implement in the already existing school building – especially the ramp.

For these two major reasons – lack of trained teachers and the right kind of infrastructure- special needs children are still being denied admission in regular schools.

Conclusion

Generally in the implementation of any Act, the tendency is to look at the most visible and measurable aspects of the provisions mentioned in a verbatim manner. This applies to RTE Act as well. The focus of RTE implementation seems to be on **inputs rather than outcomes**. The Act itself lacks clarity in stating children's expected learning achievement. It is true that inputs are essential to the process of education, and are easier to target and monitor. But if we believe that "education" entails more than just being enrolled in school, then at some level we have to have a set of **outcomes that we expect the education process to lead to. The correlation of the norms laid out in the Act, with the actual learning outcomes – should guide the implementation process.**

Section B

My Growth As A Teacher

Before starting with the course, I had been taking evening classes for children at home. My journey as a teacher started there. Through this experience for the last 3 years, I knew that I am good with a small group of children. But would I be able to transfer the same effectiveness to a class of 30 plus children – was the biggest question that I came to the course with. I wanted to experiment with myself.

To start with, I was quite anxious about the practice sessions. I was allotted grade 6 for my practice. I had always been more comfortable in one to one transactions than with big group transactions. It was the opportunity to shape young minds, which the teaching profession offers – that prompted me to come into this field, and hence this course. But here I was – scared of even getting into the class in front of so many children. It appeared to be the most daunting task in the world. But it is slowly unfolding to be most fascinating part of the course.

There has been a major shift in my perception of probably all the aspects related to the teaching profession. First of all, about the scope of a teacher's role. I had always attributed 'teaching' to the responsibility of a teacher, but it was a vague idea. Now I understand 'teaching' comprises of building – knowledge, skills **and** attitudes.

Next, my understanding of the knowledge building process has undergone a major change. In an inquiry based learning approach, the way knowledge is collectively constructed in the class room, with the **scaffolding** that a teacher does through probing questions – is an altogether new pedagogical approach that I have learnt. Here the teacher is a facilitator in children's learning- her primary responsibility being to create an atmosphere for learning, rather than imparting knowledge.

Skill building would equip children with abilities that would help them in the knowledge building exercise, and would stay with them for a lifetime. My expedition classes in history have given me a crystal clear understanding of this whole process. First the teacher spends a considerable amount of time building skills which are essential for understanding and reconstructing history. For example, exercises are done for building observation skills, inferential skills, documentation skills, historical thinking and geographical thinking skills, systems thinking etcetera. Only after the ground is thoroughly prepared, the seeds are sown- the lesson is taken up. Now, through the skills acquired, and with the teacher's appropriate probing children are able to reconstruct most of the narrative by themselves-

which is fascinating. They learn to think about the underlying reasons for historical events as well- which is very unusual.

The biggest revelation for me was the teacher's role in building attitudes of her children. This is where the power of a teacher really lies. I have seen my collaborating teacher do this by repeatedly drawing the attention of children to the important and enduring values, at every given opportunity, without imposing or enforcing.

I remember the first time that I took class – it was an expedition class- I felt very conscious of myself going in front of the class and addressing the class. There were so many challenges facing me. Initially I was affected by the class management issues - children getting distracted and not listening, some of them not even acknowledging my presence. How would I make myself heard in such a boisterous class, I thought to myself. It triggered a lot of thoughts about the balance between respect and freedom in me. How much freedom do I give the children? How do I ensure sufficient freedom and at the same time make sure they do not take me for granted? My own experience during my schooling – when respect for a teacher was a given- steered my thoughts in the same direction. Is it the changed times, or the affluence of their homes that has changed the value systems? Do they even consider respect as a 'value' ? I felt my first responsibility is to 'teach' them respect.

But in due course of time, I questioned myself whether my concern about respect was arising from my own insecurities in facing them? And it dawned gradually, through more and more interactions with children, that 'respect' actually grows organically and mutually through the relationship. This was experiential learning – where the teacher and the students are both learners, constructing knowledge together in the classrooms. Slowly, the demarcation between 'me' and 'them' started falling off. Now there is no more 'looking for respect' in me – I am a part of them and they are a part of me.

Partho bhaiya had spoken in his session that the primary requisite for a teacher, according to our ancient traditions, was to be an awakened being. This became evident through my teaching sessions. Now I am completely 'present' in the class- it is a state of relaxed alertness.

We were required to take at least half an hour's session everyday independently. Through the process I started connecting with the class children at an individual level, and it was such an eye –opener. It is so different looking at a child as a whole, vis-à-vis a child only with respect to academic subjects. Each of them has a distinct identity, and brings something unique to the class.

I also got a glimpse of the whole gamut of all the roles that a teacher plays by working closely with my collaborating teacher. Apart from the roles discussed before, conflict resolution appears to be a major part of a teacher's responsibility. She has to give a patient and fair hearing to all the sides involved. She also has to lead the child who is wronging, to reflect on his/her doing. Detailed planning, time and resource management are habits that are starting to get formed in me.

My growth as a teacher got a major impetus due to the lead teaching week. I got the experience of taking primary responsibility for the class for the duration of a week. I could see the shift in me clearly. My comfort level in managing the class came as a surprise to me itself. I have grown in confidence as a teacher and as a person. The classes were tremendous learning experiences for me. The responses from children brought into view varied trajectories of thought. The connect established with children over a duration of time got strengthened during the lead teaching week, and this gives me a great deal of satisfaction.

I realized the importance of laser sharp attentiveness when taking a class. I had to know which children are paying attention, and who are not. Even while talking to one child, I had to keep in my mind that the others should not get distracted in the process. I had to ensure that every child's perspective is brought into the purview of the class, and every child feels safe enough to put forward his/ her thoughts.

Shaji's view that teachers should lead interesting lives, and teachers should be connected to the reality of the world have struck me deeply. A class can be moulded in accordance with what the teacher brings to the table.

Way forward.....

I would also like to develop innovative ways of dealing with the class.

One thing that I am wondering about currently is how can I be connected to the current reality of children's lives, as there is a generation's difference and social distance between a teacher and her students.

To conclude, I realize that the responsibility of a teacher is limitless, and that is the reason why a teacher is seen at par with God, in our ancient Indian tradition.

Lead Teaching Week Lesson Plans

Expedition Lesson Plan

Learning Targets and Assessments		
Long-term Target	Supporting Targets	Assessments
<p>I can explain why Emperor Ashoka has a unique presence in the history of India.</p>	<p>I can critically examine Emperor Ashoka’s edicts to describe the sociocultural and political structures of his empire.</p> <p><u>Culture Targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can stay focused on the task at hand. • I can respect my crew-mate’s point of view by listening attentively during crew discussions. • I can read a text to draw inferences. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">Introduction: Building engagement and setting purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is this lesson/sequence of lessons important and exciting work to do? • What will cause students to be curious and want to learn? <p>How will you provide students with a vision of the long-term target(s) in a way that involves them?</p>		
Instructional Steps		Time and Resources Required

Step 3 Teacher distributes Text 1.

Establishing the purpose for reading :

Reading Target: I can read the text to know more about Ashoka and the main events in his life.
I can draw inferences about principles of Buddhism.

Step 4:Close Reading

Follow the steps for close reading that you followed during the Readers' Workshop:

1. Circle the unfamiliar words or phrases to make meaning
2. As you are reading ask yourself, "Why is a particular word or sentence important to notice or remember?"
3. Underline the key words or phrases
4. Underline what I know

Step 5 Class Discussion about Buddhist Principles

Elicit from students what Buddhist principles may mean.

Buddhism is a religion based on principles of peace, non-violence and equality. We know that people had started questioning the jati and Varna system, animal sacrifices etc. and Buddhism provided them an alternative religion as it did not believe in caste system, animal sacrifices etc.

Step 6 Class Discussion about Ashoka as an emperor before and after the Kalinga war

What was the event that changed Ashoka as a person? What changes did it bring about in him?

Do you find any difference between the approach of Chandragupta Maurya and Ashoka?

Children will fill graphic organiser at the end of the discussion.

Step 5: Teacher releases Learning Target :

I can explain why Emperor Ashoka has a unique presence in the history of India.

Think – Pair – Share

Followed by a class discussion.

Step 6:Teacher asks "How did we come to know about Ashoka?"

(Children may respond as books, travelogueetc, Teacher asks what is the evidence to corroborate that the details in the texts are true?

30 Minutes

5 minutes

**Grapple: 5
minutes
10 mins**

<p>Show PPT where instudents first grapple with an edict and Transliteration.</p> <p>And Teacher asks what are your wonder questions.(consolidation on flip chart)</p> <p>Teacher introduces edicts and speaks about Brahmi script and Prakrit language.</p> <p>Teacher asks “What do you think the edicts were used for “EA : Spread his message Spread Buddhism, spread awareness about his policies.</p> <p>Teacher models decoding the edict.</p>	
<p>Teacher brings out the significance of this edict (Rock Edict 13) where Ashoka is apologizing for the destruction that took place in the Kalinga war. This edict has a unique place in history as it is a public apology by an emperor.</p>	<p>5 min</p> <p>15 min</p>
<p>Teacher asks “has any other emperor that you know of apologized to the citizens “?</p> <p>Step 7: Teacher releases Learning Target: <i>I can critically examine Emperor Ashoka’s edicts to describe the sociocultural and political structures of his empire.</i></p>	<p>5 min</p> <p>25 mins</p>
<p>Teacher gives 5 edicts (1 to each crew) for making meaning out of it.</p> <p>Students discuss in their crews and then class sharing and class consolidation.</p> <p>Teacher projects the video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wmNU9ijkFcc</p>	
<p>Step 8 : Project Map of Chandragupta Maurya’s empire and Ashoka’s empire</p> <p>Teacher: Do you think any king before Ashoka had such a big empire? What could have been the challenges in managing such a big empire?</p> <p>(EA : how administration is organized over such a big empire, different cultures, languages in the different regions)</p> <p>Teacher introduces the concept of diversity.</p>	
<p>Step 9 Teacher gives Second reading.</p> <p>Follow the steps for close reading that you followed during the Readers’ Workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle the unfamiliar words or phrases to make meaning • As you are reading ask yourself, “Why is a particular word or sentence important to notice or remember?” • Underline the key words or phrases • Underline what I know <p>Children read and fill Graphic Organiser for:</p>	<p>10min</p>
<p>What are the sociocultural and political structures that existed in Ashoka’s time that weredifferent</p>	<p>15 mins</p>

from Chandragupta Maurya?

Class Discussion and consolidation.

Teacher gives this as H.W

Would you like to live during Chandragupta Maurya or Ashoka? Why?

Class Debate

Was Ashoka a weak king because he gave up fighting?

Students will make their own edicts for the value that are important to them (**Circle time**)

Closure - How will students synthesize their understanding? How will we assess the effectiveness of the lesson?

Instructional Steps

Resources
Required

- Check out LTs

Reading 1 for the Lesson Plan

Learning Target: I can identify the main idea of the text.

I can use key details from the given text to draw inferences about Ashoka as a person before and after the Kalinga War.

The Story of Ashoka

Ashoka, the son of Mauryan emperor Bindusara and grandson of Chandragupta Maurya, was born in 304 BCE in Pataliputra (present day Patna). He was an extremely brilliant and fearless child. He got military training during his [early life](#). When he was just 18 years old, he was appointed as the **Viceroy** of Avanti (present day Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh). He ascended the throne of Magadha in 273 BCE after winning the war of succession in which he killed his own brothers.

Following in the footsteps of his forefathers he set out to expand his empire. He used military strength in order to expand the empire and created cruel rules against criminals. A Chinese traveller named Xuanzang (Hsüan-tsang) who visited India during the 7th century CE, reports that even during his time, about 900 years after the time of Ashoka; Hindu tradition still remembered the prison Ashoka had established in the north of the capital as “Ashoka’s hell”. Ashoka ordered that prisoners should be subject to all imagined and unimagined tortures and nobody should ever leave the prison alive.

In the 12th year of his **reign**, he wanted to annex the territory of Kalinga (present day Orissa), and sent a message to the king of Kalinga asking him to surrender. His grandfather (Chandragupta) had already attempted to do this. The king of Kalinga refused to give in, and conflict took place around 261 BCE.

The people from Kalinga defended themselves stubbornly, keeping their honour but losing the war, as the limited forces of Kalinga were no match for the overwhelming

Magadha army. The victory ultimately rested with Ashoka. Now he controlled the entire Indian subcontinent, except for the extreme southern part.

But, the **disaster** in Kalinga was supreme. Many **perished** in the battlefield. The war took a tremendous toll of life and property and it is considered one of the most brutal and bloodiest wars in world. The scene of the war presented a horrible sight - the whole **terrain** was covered with the corpses of soldiers; wounded soldiers groaning in severe pain, orphaned children **mourning** the loss of their parents.

This sight overwhelmed Ashoka. He realized that victory at such a cost is not worthwhile.

This is the singular instance of a war in history which brought about a complete change of heart in a stern ruler like Ashoka. It resulted in Ashoka's turning towards Buddhism and he became an **ardent** follower of Buddhism under Acharya Upagupta.

Ashoka promised that he would never take to arms again, unless for the defense of his subjects.

He made some significant changes in the state policy of Magadha. He gave up military expansion of the empire. The age old policy of aggression and **conquest** of the Magadha rulers ended. A new policy of peace and non-violence was adopted in the empire.

Ashoka died in 232 BCE in the thirty-eighth year of his reign, at the age of 72.

Source: Adapted from Subhadra Sen Gupta's writings and other web based sources.

Glossary:

viceroys:	someone who represents a king or queen and rules for him or her in another country
reign:	rule as a monarch.
disaster:	an event or fact that has unfortunate consequences
perished:	died
terrain:	a stretch of land, especially with regard to its physical features

mourning: the expression of sorrow or grief

ardent: very enthusiastic or passionate

	Before Kalinga War	After Kalinga War
Ashoka as a person		
Ashoka as a ruler		

Reading 2 for the Lesson Plan

Learning Targets:

- I can examine the text, to describe the sociocultural and political structures of Ashoka's Empire.

Social and Political Status of Society(After Kalinga War)

Key Aspects of Administration

Ashoka was perhaps the first emperor in human history to ban slavery, hunting, fishing and *deforestation*. Ashoka also banned the *death sentence* and asked the same for the neighbouring countries. He encouraged women to get educated.

Ashoka's aim was not to expand the territories but the welfare of all of his subjects

Political Structure

Apart from Magadha with its capital at Patliputra, the Mauryan Empire was divided into four other *provinces* with capitals at Taxila (northwestern India), Suvarnagiri (southern India), Tosali (eastern India) and Ujjain (western India). These were put under the control of royal princes. Ashoka appointed a council of ministers called *Mantriparishad*. There were various other officials, who helped him perform his duties. These officials were known as *Amatyas*, *Mahamatras*, *Adhayakshas* and *Samhartas*. They helped him with governance and collection of taxes etc. In one of his rock edicts Ashoka declared that even common people could meet him any time. He also declared that all his subjects were like his children and he desired their happiness in this and the other world.

Social Structure

By the latter half of Ashoka's rule, expansion of the empire was almost complete. It was an empire having different cultural, social and religious groups. In order to save the empire from political tensions arising out of these differences there were two ways. He could either increase the size of armed forces to seek military solutions to these conflicts, which might have needed increased taxes and in turn could lead to more resistance. Another alternative was peaceful resolution of various conflicts by

cementing different groups together. Ashoka chose the second alternative in order to promote harmony and peace in his kingdom. He recommended his [people](#) to study and [respect](#) all [religions](#). According to [Ashoka](#), to [harm](#) another's [religion](#) is [harm](#) to one's own [religion](#) .

In his vast [empire](#) there was no [evidence](#) of recognizable mutiny or civil [war](#). [Ashoka](#) was a true [devotee](#) of [nonviolence](#), [peace](#) and [love](#). This made him different from other [emperors](#) and thus his rule became a milestone in the [history](#) of the [world](#).

Source: Adapted from Subhadra Sen Gupta's writings and other web based sources.

Glossary

slavery:	a condition of having to work very hard without proper pay
non-violence:	the use of peaceful means, not force, to bring about political or social change
deforestation:	clearing of trees, transforming a forest into cleared land
mutiny:	an open rebellion against the proper authorities, especially by soldiers or sailors against their officers.
provinces:	a principal administrative division of a country or empire.
civil war:	a war between citizens of the same country.

What were the sociocultural and political structures that existed in Ashoka's rule that were **different** from Chandragupta Maurya's rule?

<u>Socio-cultural Structures</u>	<u>Political Structures</u>
<u>Needs</u>	

Maths Lesson Plan

Lesson plan: Algebra

Grade: 6

Learning Targets

- I can generalize to make a rule following a pattern using a variable
- I can make an expression on a given situation using variables and numbers.
- I can differentiate between an expression and an equation
- I can arrive at a solution to a given equation using trial and error method

Culture Target

I can listen attentively and participate in the class discussion.

Teacher releases the culture target to children. She reminds the children to follow these targets.

Pattern

T: Meeta and Anita are making patterns with matchsticks. They decide to make simple patterns of the letters of the English alphabet. Anita takes two matchsticks and forms the letter T. Then Meeta also picks two sticks, forms another letter T and puts it next to the one made by Anita. Then Anita adds one more T and this goes on as shown.... Their friend Rohan comes and looks at the pattern. he asks, "how many matchsticks will be needed to make 7 Ts ?" Anita and Meeta go on making patterns....1T, 2 Ts, 3 Ts.....till 7Ts.They put it in the table Teacher draws the table on board.

Number Of Ts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Number of matchsticks needed	2	4	6	8	10	12	14

Rohan gets his answer from the table.

Meeta found that there is a pattern here. Can we find it?

S: the number of matchsticks is always twice the number of Ts.

T: Asks another question how many matchsticks would be required to make 100 Ts

S: 200 matchsticks.

T: How did you find it?

S:By multiplying 100 by 2.

T :So if we have to make n number of Ts what will be the required no of matchsticks

S: the number of matchsticks required = 2 x number of Ts , so if number of T=n

Then the number of matchsticks required for making n Ts will be $2x n = 2n$. ($2 \times n$ is the same as $2n$).Teacher emphasizes that $2 \times n$ is same as $2n$

T asks so what is $5 \times b$

S: $5b$

T : what is $5 + b$

S : (expected reply $5 + b$) ---if not so then talk about it using numbers; bring out that $5 + b$ and $5b$ are not same

T: Here the n that we used to denote the number of Ls is called a variable. The variable does not have any fixed value- it can take any numeric value.

This branch of mathematics which uses variables for solving problems is called algebra.

Let us try some other situations :

Pramila is 5 years elder to her sister Pari. How old will Pramila be when Pari is 5 years old?

Pari	1	2	3	4
Pramila	6	7	8	9

Can you identify any pattern here? If we write Pari's age as x , what will Pramila's age be ?

Pattern: Pramila's age is Pari's age plus 5. Pramila's age in terms of x : $(x + 5)$.

With this rule, we can find Pramila's age directly, without making a table for all the values.

Let us try this in some other situations:

Questions on the board (ppt)

- If there are 20 pencils in a box, how will you write the total number of pencils in terms of the number of boxes? (Use b for the number of boxes.) Ans $20b$
- In our class there are 6 students in each crew. What is the rule which gives the number of students, given the number of crews? (Use n for the number of rows.) Ans $5n$
- Mother has made laddus. She gives some laddus to guests and family members; still 5 laddus remain. If the number of laddus mother gave away is l , how many laddus did she make? Ans $(l + 5)$
- Oranges are to be transferred from larger boxes into smaller boxes. When a large box is emptied, the oranges from it fill two smaller boxes and still 10 oranges remain outside. If the number of oranges in a small box are taken to be x , what is the number of oranges in the larger box? Ans $(2x + 10)$
- Ask them to make different situations on $s + 6$ ---if time is there
- Age – friend My friend is 3 years younger to his sister. What is his age?
- Age – self I am 6 years elder to my brother, what would be my age?
- Raju went to market to buy books. Cost of the science book is 20 Rs more than English book. How much money does Raju need to buy the science book?

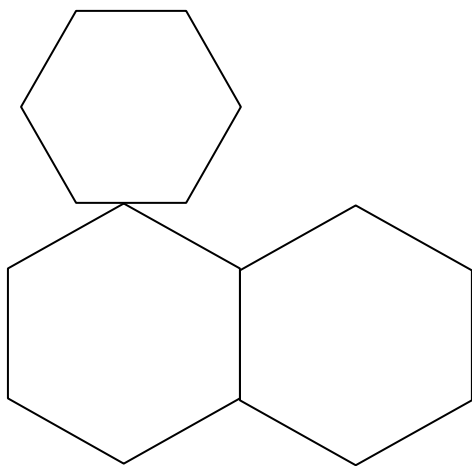
- *I spent some money for buying icecream and now I am left with Rs 6. How much money did I have initially?*

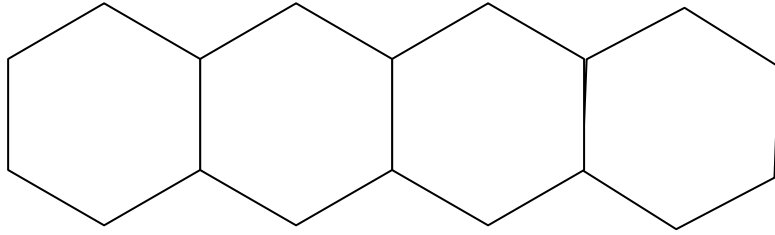
Questions for HW: exercise 11.1 (1,2,8) as H.W for C.W 3,6,7

Day 2

Opening - H.W discussion

- *T: let's do one activity today of making patterns.*
- *Teacher gives each crew matchsticks and asks them to make pattern of hexagons wherein the Hexagons are not separate and two neighbouring hexagons have a common matchstick. (draws on black board as well or project)*
- *T: find no of matchsticks required to make 1 Hexagon, 2, 3 . What if we have to find matchsticks for making 40 Hexagons*
- *T –We can using a table to find pattern which will help in finding ms for 40 hex.*
- *Teacher gives 12 min to every crew to reach the solution.*
- *2 min . making of table*
- *2 min individual think time*
- *8 min as crew to come up*





T: asks them to share their strategies to reach the solution.

Solution : $5n+1$, where n is the no of Hexagons

Lets see if we can use variable in other concepts

Day 3

For example, rules of Geometry.

T: what is perimeter of a square

S: perimeter of a square is the sum of the length of its sides.

T: Let one side be 4 cm, then what is the perimeter

S: $4+4+4+4$ or 4×4

T: if one side is 1 cm then what would be the perimeter

S: 4×1

T: what would be the perimeter of a rectangle, where length=4cm and breadth=6cm

S: perimeter of rectangle is sum of all four sides, $4+4+6+6$

T: can we write it as $2 \times 4 + 2 \times 6$

T: what if length= l cm and breadth= b cm

S: $2l+2b$

T: Find the formula for the total length of the edges of a cube....can show cube

A cube is a three-dimensional figure. It has six faces and all of them are identical squares.

S - The length of an edge of the cube is given by l Ans 12l----notebook end

Rules of Arithmetic

i) Commutative Property of Addition and multiplication

T: Do you recall what commutative property of addition for any two numbers like 5 & 6

S: $5+6=6+5$

T: which one of them are true:

$5 \times 6 = 6 \times 5$

$5-6=6-5$

$5/6=6/5$

(Revision of Commutative property)

is commutative property of addition and multiplication applicable for all whole numbers.

T; can we replace 5 and 6 as variable. how will we write the same expression

S: $a+b=b+a$

S : $axb=bx a$

Distributivity of numbers

T: Lets solve 101×37

S: $37(100+1)=3700+37=3737$

T: How will you generalize this using variable?

$ax(b+c)=axb+axc$

Notebook work – write the commutative and distributive property using variables

- **HW Exercise 11.1 Q. 11, Exercise 11.2 Qs (1,2,4 & 5)**
Closure

What did we learn today?

Algebra is a tool which helps us generalize rules and express patterns using letters. These letters are called variables, as they can take the value of any number.

Day 4

Open with HW discussion

Learning target

- **I can make an expression for a given situation using variables and numbers.**

Expressions with variables

T: What is a mathematical expression? What should it have?

S: Numbers and mathematical operations.

T : Can you give some examples of expressions with numbers ?

S : $4 + 5$, 6×7 , $7 - 4$, $8/2$ etc

T : These are arithmetic /numeric expression

T: Can we form expressions with variables also? What do you think?

S : Yes

T : Since variables take on values of numbers, we can perform mathematical operations (Addition, subtraction, multiplication and addition) on them also.

Or, in other words, we can form expressions with variables as well!!

For example, $x + 6$, $7 \times m$, $l/3$, $8 - n$

T – What do you think we will call these expressions ?

S – may give any answer

T introduces algebraic expressions

- **Difference between arithmetic expressions and algebraic expressions**

T: Do you find any difference between arithmetic expressions and algebraic expressions?

Take for example, the arithmetic expression $6 + 5$, and the algebraic expression $6 + n$.

S : we can find the value of the arithmetic expression, but for an algebraic

expression we cannot find the value immediately

For $6 + n$, the value of the expression can be found if we assign a numeric value to n . for example, when $n = 3$, the values of the expression will be 9.

T: Now let us look at some expressions and find out what they mean. You can think of both statements and situations.

For example, $x + 7$ means 7 added to x , or a situation like “Ravi had x marbles. Shikha gave him 7 more marbles. So now he has $x + 7$ marbles”

Teacher writes the expression on the board and asks the students to come up with what

the expression means to them.

Expression	What does it mean?
$Y - 7$	7 subtracted from y
$6n$	6 times n or n multiplied by 6
$a/3$	a divided by 3, or $1/3$ rd of a
$7a + 9$	First a multiplied by 7, then 9 added to the product
$9x - 1$	First x multiplied by 9, then subtract 1 from the product

Now, let us write some expressions for given statements :

- 12 added to y Ans. $12 + y$
- 25 subtracted from m Ans. $m - 25$
- m subtracted from 17 Ans. $17 - m$
- n multiplied by 15
- a divided by 3
- b multiplied by 10, and 8 added to the product
- x multiplied by 4, and 3 subtracted from the product

Daily life applications of expressions

(Show Slide)

(Take 2 as CW)

1. Radha has 3 more pens than Leela

- What will you take to be the variable?
- Expression for Radha's pens?

2. How old will Susan be after 5 years?

- What will you take to be the variable?
 - Expression for Susan's age?
3. Price of wheat per kg is Rs. 5 less than price of rice per kg
 - What will we take as the variable?
 - Expression for price of wheat per kg?
 4. Price of petrol per litre is 5 times the price of rice per kg
 - What will we take as the variable?
 - Expression for price of petrol?
 5. The speed of a bike is 10 km/h less than the speed of a car going on the same road
 - What will we take as a variable?
 - Expression for speed of bike?
 6. Rakesh has some chocolates and biscuits. The number of biscuits is twice the number of chocolates. Anita has 5 more biscuits than Rakesh has (biscuits).
 - What will we take as the variable?
 - Expression for number of biscuits Anita has?

- Notebook work

- T: Work out in your notebooks :

What do the following expressions mean?

$$19 - b$$

$$5x + 7$$

$$n + 8$$

$$10y$$

$$m/5$$

Write the expressions for the following statements :

- 8 more than sum of 7 and n
- 7 less than the sum of 3 and x
- b divided by 11
- 9 divided by x
- 10 minus n
- 15 times m

Write expressions for the following situations :

1. If n kg potato can make 10 samosas, how many kilos of potato do you need for making 100 samosas?
 2. Rekha's height is 10 cms less than twice the height of Monica. If Monica's height is h cms, what is Rekha's height ?
 3. Team A scored 200 runs in a 20-20 cricket match. In the first 10 overs, Team B scored n runs. How many more runs should Team B score in the remaining 10 overs in order to win the match.
 4. Aruna's speed of reading a book is twice that of Kiran's. if Kiran takes d days to read a book, how many days will Aruna take to read the same book ?
 5. Chetan's dad drops him to school in his car. He told Chetan that the car consumes n litres of petrol for the distance, one way. If a litre of petrol costs Rs 70, how much does Chetan's dad spend on petrol for a month having 20 working days, only for dropping and picking Chetan from the school ?
 6. Sometime later Chetan found that his friend Ketan also lives in his society. They decided to car pool. Now Chetan's dad has to drop Ketan only on alternate working days. Now how much does he spend on petrol for a month having 20 working days? How much money does he save because of pooling?
 7. 10 of you decide to go for a picnic and each person agrees to contribute Rs r for the expenses. At the last minute 2 of your friends drop out. How much more does each person have to contribute now?
- **HW exercise 11.3 Q. 3, 4, 6; Exercise 11.4 Q. 1 a, b, d, Q2, Q3**

Closure

What did we learn today?

Mathematical expressions can be formed using variables, just like with numbers, using all 4 mathematical operations.

Why do we need to form these expressions? (to represent daily life situations mathematically)

Learning Target 3

I can differentiate between an expression and an equation

Equations

T: Do you remember something about balance we did earlier?

S: give some answer, may be close to what expected

T: probe them further by raising questions like if I have one k.g Apple on one side what weight I need to balance it on the other side.

S: might answer differently some will say 500gm+500 gm weights on the other side; some may say 200 and 800 gms

T: write all correct responses on the board. Ask them, now tell me if I have $6+2$ on one side What should I write on the other side to balance it?

or if i write $6 + 2 =$, what all can come on the right side?

S: they will say $7+1$ or $5+3$ or 8.

T: Suppose I will write $6+2 = 5+4$, is this statement true?

S: no

T: why not

S: Because the total value on one side is not exactly the same as the other side

T : so, what do you think we can call this side ($6 + 2$)

S : may say left hand side or teacher will tell left hand side. similarly elicit for right hand side.

T: so equal means what is there on left hand side is equal to right hand side

T : what is $6 < 8$

S: 6 is less than 8

T: what is the difference between $6+2=8$, $4 + 2<8$

S: in first case both are exact on each side where as in other case 6 is less than 8

T: ok, can we give some name to this, when both sides are equal.

S: may say equation

T: if not teacher will explain that if left hand side and right hand side of any mathematical situation is equal we call it "equation".

T: can you give me an equation with some variable.

S: they say $6+x = 8$ or $x+2 = 8$

T: ok so can I say we can have equations with or without a variable

T: now tell me some expression using variable

S: they may say $x+6$

T: do you find any difference between $x + 6 = 8$ and $x + 6$?

S: $x + 6 = 8$ has an =, while $x + 6$ does not have

T: the first one with an = sign is an equation, while the other is an expression

T: what value can x take in the equation?

S : 2

T : why not 3 ?

S : because then the left hand side value will not be equal to the right hand side value

T : what value can x take in $x + 6$.

S: 1,2,3..... any value

T : so this is the major difference between an expression and an equation.

In an equation, a variable can take **only** that value which makes the two sides equal.

This value of the variable is said to satisfy the equation.

Notebook work

Which of the following are expressions and which are equations? Identify the equations with variable.

1. $7 \times 3 = 21$ (there are no variables)
2. $4 \times m$
3. $2x+6 = 16$ (there is a variable)
4. $l + 6$
5. $m / 7$
6. $m/5=20$ (there is a variable)
7. $14-3n=5$ (there is a variable)
8. $5 - p$
9. $6 + 10 = 16$ (no variable)
10. $p - 9$

H.W. exercise 11.5 Q1.

Learning Target 4:

I can arrive at a solution to a given equation using trial and error method

T: let us solve some equations. Write equations on board and ask students to come and solve them

1. $m+5 = 16$
2. $x-7=5$
3. $b/4=6$
4. $nx11=121$
5. $2x-1=9$

S: come and solve on board

T: how did you solve it ?

S: by making left hand side equal to right hand side

T: ok, so you have to keep trying values until the condition of equality is satisfied

T: Let us solve some riddles (show slides)

1. I am a special number
Take away from me a six!
A whole cricket team.

You will still be able to fix!

Ans . $x - 6 = 11$; $x = 17$

Notebook work

1. $3m + 2 = 35$
2. $8 + y = 18$
3. $17 - m = 6$
4. $6l - 5 = 25$
5. $m/10 = 7$
6. $4n - 2 = 38$
7. $P / 5 = 10$
8. $27 - x = 20$
9. $40x + 6 = 86$
10. $37 - y = 28$

11. Tell me who I am

I shall give a pretty clue!

You will get me back

If you take me out of twenty two!

Ans. $22 - x = x$; $x = 11$

H.W. exercise 11.5 Q 2, 3, 4 a), b) , 5 i), ii)

Word Problems Worksheet

Form expressions for the following:

1. If n kg potato can make 10 samosas, how many kilos of potato do you need for making 100 samosas?
2. Rekha's height is 10 cms less than twice the height of Monica. If Monica's height is h cms, what is Rekha's height ?
3. Team A scored 200 runs in a 20-20 cricket match. In the first 10 overs, Team B scored n runs. How many more runs should Team B score in the remaining 10 overs in order to win the match.

4. Aruna's speed of reading a book is twice that of Kiran's. If Kiran takes d days to read a book, how many days will Aruna take to read the same book ?
5. Chetan's dad drops him to school in his car. He told Chetan that the car consumes n litres of petrol for the distance, one way. If a litre of petrol costs Rs 70, how much does Chetan's dad spend on petrol for a month having 20 working days, only for dropping and picking Chetan from the school.
6. Sometime later Chetan found that his friend Ketan also lives in his society. They decided to car pool. Now Chetan's dad has to drop Ketan only on alternate working days. Now how much does he spend on petrol for a month having 20 working days? How much money does he save because of pooling?
7. 10 of you decide to go for a picnic and each person agrees to contribute Rs r for the expenses. At the last minute, 2 of your friends drop out. How much more does each person have to contribute now?
8. Sameer wanted to buy mud lamps for Diwali. He had Rs. 100. With this money he could buy m number of lamps. If the lamps cost Rs 2 less, how many lamps could he have bought with the same amount of money. Write the expression.

Reflections on Lead Teach Week

Semester 1

Date: 16.11.2015

What do I feel went well in today's session/s.....

Maths (Introduction of Algebra) : The flow of the class went well. Most of the class paid attention and participated well. Good questions came up from the class.

I am going to use today's learning in.....

I plan to change the seating of a few children who were getting distracted today because of being in the rear crews. I would recap yesterday's class and clarify some questions which I think remained in the children's minds.

The hardest thing for me was

**Explaining certain conventions- as children seemed not to be understanding the idea of "conventions", and getting the attention of a few children.
Also, the pace of the class – I was not able to ascertain whether I was going fast or slow.**

What could I possibly change/modify/focus in the next session.....

When I take up a question, I would spend sufficient time on it, without worrying about whether I would be able to complete the plan or not

The other points that have crossed my mind while reflecting today...

Date: 17.11.2015

What do I feel went well in today's session/s.....

Expedition: It was a good experience in class management. I felt good when children got completely engaged in the class after a lot of commotion, especially in the last period.

Children were thinking deeply and came out with wonderful responses which took forward the class in the desired direction.

The discussion on Buddhism went very well.

I am going to use today's learning in.....

I will use today's learning in planning for the hook next time. The hook used this time was too obvious and didn't serve the purpose.

The hardest thing for me was

Managing the class.

What could I possibly change/modify/focus in the next session.....

Maths : The concept of why a variable is needed and the need to arrive at a pattern is not yet clear to majority of the class. Probably need to take a little more complex example in order to bring in the need for a variable to express a rule for a pattern. Need to give notebook work in order to keep the class focused and prevent them from getting distracted.

The other points that have crossed my mind while reflecting today...

Date: 18.11.2015

What do I feel went well in today's session.....

Expedition (Edicts sources, Prinsep, Edicts crew work): Children were completely immersed in the lesson. Very good questions and responses from children about edicts. Effective jigsaw learning of edicts – each crew decoding one edict and sharing it with the class.

Maths: Good deal of the class discussion on pattern and then working it out on the board, and asking children to take it down in the notebooks gave me satisfaction that the learning of patterns will get consolidated.

I am going to use today's learning in.....

Expedition : sometimes it is okay to let a topic spill over to the next session- if it would help the class in better understanding

Maths : changing the lesson plan.

The hardest thing for me was

Expedition :Time management – needed more time for discussion

Maths : Children were totally disinterested in the topic. Only 30 per cent of them actually paid attention and were engaged. Having them to listen to me was the hardest thing for me today.

What could I possibly change/modify/focus in the next session.....

Expedition : I would ask more questions; I should have had each edict read aloud in the class and discussed in detail- could have let it spill over to the next class- was too conscious of the time

Maths: I would change the course of the lesson plan as children are not relating to the idea of patterns and making of table to arrive at the rule. Will take up word problems and then revisit patterns later- that may clarify the idea of the use of a variable.

The other points that have crossed my mind while reflecting today...

Expedition : When the class was not conscious of the short break starting, I could have continued the class and given them a break later, because the class was so immersed in the topic, the short break proved to be an interruption.

Because of extensive reading for making the lesson plan, I had a lot of knowledge about the topic. Though this is good in order to address the doubts and questions that children come up with, but I felt it was tempting me to speak more in the class, rather than letting children think and decode things.

Asking the children to write their understanding of all the five edicts was an impromptu decision, but I felt it was needed for them.

Maths: should have changed the course of the plan today – should have left the pattern problem and taken up something else, and then come back to patterns later.

Date: 19.11.2015

What do I feel went well in today's session/s.....

Expedition : Good observations from children after the reading and good questions leading to rich discussion on evolving needs.

Maths : The whole class was engaged. I felt children got a hang of why the use of variable. They were thinking on the problems and discussing among themselves, which showed emerging interest in the topic.

I am going to use today's learning in.....

The hardest thing for me was

What could I possibly change/modify/focus in the next session.....

The other points that have crossed my mind while reflecting today...

Expedition :I caught myself making repetitions in discussion

Maths :the class turned around completely because of a change in the lesson plan; what I thought to be a class management issue yesterday was actually a problem with the content of the session- children could not relate to it. Today when the topic interested them , they were all engaged

Date: 20. 11.2015

What do I feel went well in today's session/s.....

Expedition : timely completion of plan; again a rich discussion on Ashoka's rule and the role of dhamma as a unifying tool for the empire

Maths: good class discussion and involvement; revised certain topics and gave notebook work; was able to cover more of the lesson plan than expected

I am going to use today's learning in.....

The hardest thing for me was

In expedition- choosing between the two threads for closure that were running in my mind. I finally chose the one that was there in the plan.

In maths- it was difficult to judge whether I was taking too much of the portion ; though the class seemed receptive-majority of them participated in the class- whether it would be too many concepts at a time for them to digest. Also, I decided to skip some part of wrtining expression for simple statements as I thought they would be too easy for the class. Was it alright to do that- kept lingering in the back of my mind.

What could I possibly change/modify/ focus in the next session.....

The other points that have crossed my mind while reflecting today...

Expedition – closure should have been stronger. The whole class was of the view that Ashoka was not a weak king. They gave good arguments. But with that in view, I should have changed the hw ques and asked them to think about what all aspects made Ashoka a unique ruler in history. This would have involved more thinking than the question I gave(which was a part of the lesson plan).

Reflections on Lesson Planning:

First planning the entire lesson individually and then working collaboratively was a great learning experience. Conceptualizing the flow of the entire lesson, framing the right questions in order to steer the discussions, anticipating students' responses, allocating time for each part of the plan, the importance of detailing in the lesson plan, the multiple iterations, the importance of resource readiness, and finally a great experience of collective thinking and team work made the lesson planning an enriching experience.

Guidance from the co-ordinators was very insightful.

But I allocated more time to plan the expedition lesson than the maths lesson as I felt that expedition was something totally new for me, while the maths topic I am familiar with. But at the end I felt that the maths plan could have been more innovative.

Reflections on notebook correction:

Expedition : I got to know children's thought process on the topic. It was an enriching experience to read how children process the discussions and inputs given in the class and arrive at their own understandings. Some common aberrations and omissions in most notebooks also pointed to some loopholes in my teaching, or improper instructions.

Maths: From the notebook work I could make out that most of the class had understood the basics of algebra, which was very heartening.

My Learning about School Culture

My learnings about the school culture

Mode of Learning

The school aims at bringing in progressive education into the mainstream, so that the experiential way of learning is available to all, and is not restricted to a few.

The school's educational philosophy is an amalgamation of key features from many philosophies – Sri Aurobindo's, the Mother's, Waldorf Schools etc. One can find a glimpse of each of these in one or the other aspect of functioning of the school.

In order that the teaching methodology is effective for the large numbers, a basic structure is put in place and learning is not completely unstructured. Exploration is allowed within the structure. There are lesson plans which are the guiding principles for the class. Within the framework, teachers can improvise on their own and children can explore.

Subject areas are integrated for holistic learning. For example, concepts of history, geography and the sciences are taken together in the Expedition classes in the middle school, with one leading to the other, wherever there is an interconnection. Also, the arts – visual and performing, and sports are an essential part of the curriculum and classes are imparted systematically and with sense of purpose. For example, there are lesson plans even for the swimming sessions.

Deeper learning is encouraged in all spheres. For example, an annual art fest is held at the school for which the children work on a theme. There is also an after school science club called Anveshna.

A culture of reading is encouraged with reading programmes running for all grades, and books specially being indented for this.

Sense of adventure and exploration are instilled in children and furthered by the annual expedition called Khoj

Child Orientedness

The Child is the focal point of all policy decisions and practices.

Children are not asked to do / follow anything that teachers themselves do not do.

All the support staff- didis, housekeeping staff, drivers, guards etc are briefed together everyday and the idea that safety and well being of children is paramount is reinforced.

Safety is ensured through many practices. For example, the attendance record with the bus conductor, is cross checked with the attendance record of the teacher at the time of dispersal. Also there is a deviation slip which records if any child is not going back home by his/ her normal transport mode.

Freedom

The school atmosphere is that of **freedom**. There is lot of space given to children to question and to express their ideas and emotions freely. One can see a lot of informal interaction between teachers and children.

There is also lot of physical space given to children. This can be seen in the huge playground available for the children to play. And also the walls of the school are full of artefacts, drawings , paintings, and sketches made by the children. This shows that the school takes pride in the children's work and respects their creativity.

Even non-recognized and generally not accepted forms of expression like doodling are acknowledged and the middle school diaries have specific pages where children can doodle.

There is no prescribed uniform. Since clothes also represent the personality of a person in some way, therefore the freedom of choice is given in this regard. However the children are expected to dress simply, in comfortable clothes, and this code is adhered to by most children. Teachers are also simply dressed.

Reflection

Reflection is a part of life for everybody. Children have a reflective journal where they pen down their thoughts and feelings after a guided reflection process. Teachers have regular reflections facilitated by the programme leaders.

Feedback

Class Observation, feedback and debriefing are done regularly by peers and seniors for teachers. Children are encouraged to give authentic feedback to peers.

Continuous Learning

There is an atmosphere of continuous learning . Teachers also consider themselves learners. There is a lot of emphasis on providing training to teachers. They attend sessions relevant to their area of interest whenever there is an opportunity. For example, Sonika and Shaji's classes for IAAT are also attended by JP and MP teachers.

Collaboration

There is a lot of teamwork and collective thinking happening. In the classes children are organized in crews and most work happens in crews. There is a lot of peer learning happening for children. In some classes, there is a buddy assigned to a child who helps the child with the work assigned in class, after his/ her own work is done.

All the teachers of a grade have regular meetings and have detailed discussions on lesson plans. All the work like making powerpoint presentations, designing lesson plans etc are divided among teachers and then the resources are shared.

Collaboration is emphasized over competition. This is evident even in the sports day events (of JP) where all children participate in the events, but there is no concept of winning or losing.

Excellence is emphasized through novel ways. For example, the song " what I do , I do well" is sung by children everyday , so that it gets imbibed in their psyche.

The Inner Connect

School starts with a morning circle/ morning meeting which is aimed not only at establishing a connection among the children and teachers, but also the children with their inner self. Closing time involves a silent time when soulful music is played- again to centre everybody and enable them to collect their thoughts before dispersing.

Inclusion

Inclusion is also imbibed in the culture of the school as there are many differently abled children sharing the school space with regular children. One can see them sharing the same canteen space during lunch time.

There is a well equipped enrichment centre, working closely in collaboration with the regular class rooms. Ramps/ elevators are there to facilitate access.

There are counselors who work hand in hand with the class teachers and help them identify children with special needs. They also conduct regular meetings to equip teachers to handle children with specific learning disabilities like dysgraphia etc, which do not fall under the category of special needs, but yet need to be handled differently, and strategies are discussed to help them cope up with the class work.

Differentiated learning is in place, not only for slow paced learners or children with special needs, but even for fast paced learners. For example, reading programme books are issued according to the lexical score. Even the maths worksheets include problems to accommodate all levels of learners.

Social Awareness and Connect

Children are socially aware and work in collaboration with various NGOs in the field of education, health etc. Raahgiri was an off shoot of a project done at the school itself.

Discipline

There is an effort to inculcate self- discipline. There are teachers on duty in the corridors, canteen, the assembly area etc to ensure discipline outdoors.

Facilities

All the facilities, be it the medical centre, or the canteen – are well equipped and are being managed impeccably.

There are well defined policies for usage / booking of all facilities like the MP hall, Ashoka hall, the assembly area and advance notice needs to be given.

The day flow

The timetable for teachers is designed in a way that teachers have enough time to delve deep into the subject matter and discuss with their peers.

The day flow for children has a balanced mix of indoor and outdoor activities each day.

My Learning about Classroom Culture

- The class is organized in crews of 5 – 6 children each. Almost all the work is done in crews. Sharing happens first in the crews (commonly called Pair-Share) and then in the whole class. Both the composition and the relative positioning of the crews change regularly. The frequency is decided by the teacher. The crews are formed by the teacher with due consideration to the

strengths and weaknesses of each child, and children are paired in a way best suited to their overall development. For example, a sensitive child is usually placed with children of a gentler temperament.

- There is a culture target and learning target for each class. These are displayed in the class permanently and are revisited before each class by rewriting on the board. These are then decoded by the class collectively.
- There is a culture of participation and collective thinking. Classes are interactive, with the teacher probing the children most of the time. The atmosphere is more of collaboration than competition. Children speak their mind and question if they do not understand. They also present multiple strategies to solve problems.
- Roles and Responsibilities (e.g. cupboard in- charge, light in- charge etc) in the class are clearly defined and children identified for each. These are also displayed in the class.
- Children are encouraged to take responsibility whenever there is an opportunity, e.g. the class assembly.
- Creativity is encouraged by giving children the opportunity to create their own props related to a lesson.
- One can feel the absence of fear in the classroom.
- Assessments, weekend sheets are self checked by students.
- Most children actively pursue sports and go for after- school sports classes.
- Most children are avid readers and always carry a book with them
- **Displays**
 - There are displays pertaining to the topic that is being learnt. These keep changing.
 - Culture and learning target are displayed permanently.
 - Certain norms to be followed during the morning meetings, where a lot of sharing happens, are displayed in the form of ATL (Above The Line) and BTL (Below The Line). ATL are the do's and BTL are the don'ts.

- There is a 'Word Wall' , where children pen down new words learnt in the grade, in any subject area
- **Decorum**
- Discipline in the class is reinforced by positive affirmation, i.e. the crew that is focused on the task gets awarded a green card
- To get the attention of the class back, the teacher raises her hand and waits patiently, or does counting from 1 to 5. Once one student notices the teacher, he/ she prompts another and as a ripple effect the whole class becomes orderly. Voice is never raised by the teacher in order to bring back decorum. This is an accepted norm. If the class seems tired or bored in a long session, energizers are used.
- During transition from one activity to another or one class to another, the teacher asks the children to centre themselves by closing their eyes and deep breathing.
- Some time given to children to settle down when they come back from a sports class or arts class etc.
- Music is widely used for centring, guided reflection and visualization .
- Innovative practices are put to use, like making the child create his own big id card and wear it, when he/ she forgets to wear his/her id card, in order to enforce certain norms
- There is adherence to voice level norms during class discussions etc.
- **Opening and Closing of the day**
- The day starts with a parable read by the teacher, followed by the morning meeting. The morning meetings are structured in a way which helps children to connect with themselves and with each other. All anxieties are dropped off there and the right tone for the day is set. The day closes with the universal prayer "sarve bhavantu sukhinaha...", after the silent time.
- **Teacher Students Interaction**
- The role of the teacher is that of a facilitator. She has an implicit faith in each child, which is evident in her behavior.

- Teacher makes a sincere attempt to know each child along with his/her family background. There is frequent communication with the parents. Even notes of appreciation for the child are sent sometimes and not only areas of concern.
- Teacher interacts informally with the children during the snack and lunch breaks. Sometimes also gently nudges them to bring healthy food.
- Children seek permission to go to rest room, medical room and to enter back into the class. The teacher asks for the slip from the medical room when a child returns from the medical room.
- Sensitive issues like bullying are handled by the teacher very subtly, and not overlooked. The teacher has faith in the children.
- If the child is done with his/ her work, the teacher is okay with the child doing his/ her own thing like reading etc.

My Learning about Student Culture

- Children are participative – whether in the class or in the field. They ask questions, speak their mind and present multiple strategies for solving a problem.
- Most of them are avid readers –they always carry a book. Usually once the assigned task is done in the class, they start reading. As a result most of them have vocabularies beyond their age.
- They are sensitive to the special needs children and accept them as one among them.
- They introspect regularly and the guided reflection done in class helps them.
- Most of them actively pursue one or the other sport.
- Most of them dress in casual, comfortable clothing and are not conscious of their dressing.
- They are inquisitive.
- Honesty comes out as an important quality in them. They self check their assessments, weekend sheets etc, own up mistakes, and make corrections.
- Most of them resolve conflicts by themselves.
- They are free, self motivated learners, and take responsibility for their learning.
- They are good team players as a result of the crew culture and the various team sports that they participate in.
- They display high confidence levels.
- They have a culture of sharing. This is especially visible during the snack and meal times.
- Most of them have a creative streak – which is visible in their class room displays, corridor display boards, holiday home works etc.
- They display self-discipline and punctuality.

Section C

Village Expedition

1. The village expedition was a revelation of several realities. Though I feel I got only a glimpse of village life in those three days, but it managed to change some of my long held notions.
 - **The physical layout of a village**

I had a romantic idea of a village, with lot of trees, open spaces, big fields and mud houses .

But the village that I visited (Dumduma) was not as green as I had imagined . Most of the houses were brick and mortar houses with modern amenities like coolers, refrigerators, washing machines etc. Fields were small and scattered.
 - **Community living**

I had thought that the village being a small community , would be a well knit one, where people support each other.

But, apart from there being separate residential areas for different castes (Gujjars and Harijans have separately defined living areas), even within the same caste also, there was more of a sense of competition than co-operation. For example, I met a family where three women were trained in tailoring . When I suggested to them that they can start a training center to benefit other women in the neighborhood, they said if

everybody acquired the skill, it would reduce their income. So they preferred to keep the skill limited to the family.

- **Literacy and awareness**

Most people I met had elementary education, and were aware of government policies, subsidies etc, which was contrary to what I expected.

- **Rural vs Urban Life**

I had thought urban life and rural life are completely different from each other.

But when I visited the village, I felt the social structures that operate are more or less the same, the difference being only of degree. For example, gender roles - men take care of outside chores, women take care of the household- which holds true in a city as well. Many social practices like dowry system, caste system etc are present in the urban context as well, though less obvious.

2. If I were staying in the village, my focus would be on empowering women, as by helping a woman, the benefits would trickle down to the entire family, and then eventually to the whole community.

I would do the following :

- **Motivate**

I want the women to *realize* that *they are entitled to freedom of choice* . Right now, their unquestioning attitude is keeping them stuck to their age old status. Only when they are convinced of the need for change *themselves*, they would start thinking about it, and would be open to ideas and methods to implement any kind of change. For example, presently, most women are confined to their homes. They are not allowed to move about freely outside. And they do not find anything wrong with it. I would talk to them in small groups, that apart from running their homes, they are capable of doing a lot more; about the opportunities that exist, which can help them explore *their potential*. I will try to internalize the idea in them that they can be forerunners of change and if they take the first step, their daughters will have more freedom when they grow up. I will give them examples of women from different strata of the society who have made a difference to the community. For example, Kiran Bedi, Bachendri Pal etc

I will then talk to them about age old social practices, like child marriage, dowry system etc. and help them see reason. For example, child marriage- the implication that it can have on the health of a girl; dowry system – is it really needed etc.

- **Educate**

Adult education - While almost all children are enrolled in schools, there are some middle aged women who are illiterate, and many whose education stopped at a very elementary level. I will start taking classes for these women in their free time, keeping in mind the relevance element.

High school / college level education -While all girls get to go to primary schools which are nearby, families are not comfortable sending them to high schools and colleges which are outside the village, for safety reasons. I will help families to form groups and arrange a common transport like a tempo, for the girls to go to nearby places where the educational institutes are.

- **Help with administrative work**

I would help them get their ration cards, aadhar cards, BPL cards etc made so that they can avail of govt. schemes, get the children enrolled in govt schools etc. I would also get them to open bank accounts.

- **Procuring Finances**

Many village women want to be economically independent. In some families, especially with alcoholic husbands, it was a dire necessity, as there was no income to support the family. I will help arrange loans from public sector banks/ agencies, so that women can get started with some income generating activity. For example, if they can own some cattle, the milk produce can generate some income.

- **Social awareness**

I will brief them about the various govt schemes etc regarding education, health, employment opportunities etc.

I will also brief them about good sanitary practices, the importance of family planning etcetera.

Reflections on Junga

A Magical Journey Inward

The five day retreat at Junga was an eye-opener of sorts. The decision to undertake it itself was a big leap for me, given the family situation. But then, there I was.....

Fear of the unknown

I had been an unadventurous person all through my life till now. All the activities that we were exposed to during the retreat – rappelling, trekking, zip line, walking on fire – were all first time for me. I realized, what prevented me from trying anything new was my fear of the unknown- what lay ahead. But once I completed the tasks, the feeling of having done the un-doable was empowering beyond words

The first few steps

During the start of rappelling, I struggled to keep my faith and let go. When I finally got myself together, and it sunk in that only if I take the first step, I will be able to complete it, I finally managed to do it. During the zip line and the fire- walk also the first step was difficult for me. But the realization that without the first step, nothing can ever be achieved, made me go ahead.

Bonding

The quality time that we got as a team has done wonders to the group bonding. Each one was cheering the other during the activities. The reflection sessions after each activity further connected us – when we discovered our vulnerabilities and zen moments and shared them with the group. I felt totally accepted in the group and was able to find a connect with each one in one way or the other.

Cooking together and eating together as a group- each one contributing her bit and serving each other was also a very beautiful experience for me.

Group dynamics

For the first time in my life I realized the power of a group. All the tasks that we did, I am sure I would not have even attempted as an individual. The enthusiasm and positivity of the group was contagious and gave me the courage to go ahead and try and carried me through.

Power of collective dreaming

We had two tasks which involved delving deep into our dreams- the dream body task to enlist all our past dreams and the other one to put on paper our dreams for the future. During the sharing sessions, I

felt very strong positive vibrations. Though the dreams were personal, I felt that our dreams were getting power from each other.

Connecting with Self

Rarely do we spend so much time discovering our inner self. And the guided tasks helping us to delve deep were eye-openers. I discovered that there was so much inside me – good and bad- which lies buried deep under. Some of it needs nurturing ; some need to be brought out and discarded.

The process has begun.....

The 3 Rs

Only when I reflected on the retreat after coming back, I realized that the thin thread which held together all that we did in the five days , were the guiding principles – the 3 Rs- Relevance, Relationships, Rigour.

Relevance- At first the relevance thing looks puzzling, but then delving deeper I realized that if we transfer what was learnt in each activity to real life situations, I can do wonders with my life.

Relationships - The bonding that has ensued will definitely lead to some lifelong friendships that I am looking forward to.

Rigour - The routine that we had during the retreat – getting up at 5 in the morning, and going to bed well past 11, the whole day packed with physical activities and reflection excercises- has definitely set the ball rolling for rigour to become a part of daily life. It also made me realize that my capacity to work is much more than what I had imagined.

Anything is possible

The solo night made me realize this. And the dreaming excercises made me realize that everytime I had a dream, I also had a constraint (in my mind) attached to it. And then it was out in the open why many of my dreams have not come true—just because I never believed it was possible.

Take charge

I had to forego the 7 km trek to the solo night site because of my knees. So I could trek only a small distance, from where the vehicle dropped us. But during that trek, I took the lead and felt responsible for myself and my companions (there were three of us). I realized that it is innate in me to take charge, but I have hardly ever answered that call.

“Respect your body

This was a learning for me from Smriti. In spite of my arthritis, I really wanted to try doing the 7 km trek, and discussed it with Smriti, if there was a plan B in case I could not make it halfway. But then when she said that we also need to realistically take stock of things, and if there is a medical condition, it needs to be respected, I understood that being fearless is not about being reckless.

Main Action Points:

From the learning that I have derived from the retreat, I have decided to work mainly on the following:

Stop telling stories- I am not as judgemental about others as I am of myself. I now realize that I am not all that I **can** be, and hence I have to drop these preconceived notions of what I am. I am consciously doing it.

Stay connected- Though I always have warmth and regard for people, I am not good at expressing it and staying connected with them. I am consciously trying to do it now.

