

NURTURING CREATIVITY IN CLASSROOMS

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Creativity, the highest order of human potential influences human activities in all spheres. The nurturance of creative potential is a unique power of human mind for leading them to high level of intellectual functioning. The individuals, who will solve many of the problems of today and tomorrow, are at this very moment students in our classrooms thinking rests at the heart of the educational enterprise. Anything that can be done to help these young people to release their creative energies will be a step in the direction of better world. Our school curriculum and activities do not always give due recognition to the educational experience and proper environment which are conducive to the development of creativity. This may be due to inadequate understanding of the basic differences between creativity and intelligence. It is rightly stated by Vernon (1967) “The present education system is criticized by favoring the conformists – the pupil or student who is good at accepting the learning what his teachers tell him and thinking and writing on conventional lines, whereas, it discourages spontaneous and independent thinking.”

Guilford (1950) was the first to be vocal about the neglect of creativity in educational institutions in his address to the American Psychological Association. The massive movement launched around 1960 for nurturing creativity in classrooms became the most important slogan throughout America. At the same time, in India also persons like Raina (1968), Passi (1971) and a number of other researchers started feeling this cause. After that it witnessed a great spurt in the effort to study the nature and its nurturing in the classroom situation.

Achievement is a learned motive which serves as a source of strong motivation in creative achievement. Achievement causes greater power of attention, power of memory, fertility of ideas, self confidence and will power which are all important factors for creative achievement. An intelligent person is that one who is mainly responsible for dealing with given information in a logical manner to arrive at a single right answer for any problem. On the contrary, a person with creative ability moves in many different directions, generating new information and arriving at

varied original and unusual solutions to the problems. There is no denying the fact that both types of thinking abilities are required in our society.

The creative capabilities are important because they alone can bring technological developments leading to social progress. The countries where the nurturing of creativity in individuals has been encouraged are now in better positions in respect to economic prosperity and national development. A society which has failed to achieve its primary objective i.e. the cultivational development of creativeness cannot successfully compete with the scientific and technological advancement of progressively expanding imaginative cultural fabric of a fast developing country. Thus every attempt should be made to determine the extent to which the curriculum should be moulded for nurturing creativity in the classrooms.

Creative persons are distinguished more by interest, attitude and drives rather than by intellectual abilities. Creativity has its implication in the field of education in general. The goal of education is to develop capabilities, personal expressions, inventiveness and gifted leadership. There is a widespread recognition of the need for identifying and utilizing creative talent which is the richest resource of a nation. The development of creative abilities of every student endowed with specific pattern of interest is necessary in order to make it possible for him to realize his full potential. Therefore, it is relevant to see the role of the schools where the learners get much of their orientation for thinking in many directions and the home, where they spent most of their time, in the development of creativity. In urban areas, due to tuff competition in every sphere of life, there is much emphasis on the scholastic achievement of learners, where as, in rural areas no such external stress is imposed and learners are free to diverge their thinking in many directions. Maheshwari Public School has emerged as a pioneer in this direction, giving ample opportunities to the students to unlock their imagination

TEACHING STRATEGIES:

Teaching is an art and a creative teachers an artist (Piaget, 1936). Before we plan anything for our students, we teachers need to ask ourselves:

- Do we provide for flexibility within our planning and time tabling?
- Do we allow for opportunities to be spontaneous and creative?
- How do we follow up on children's interests and extend their learning?
- How well do our children co-operate in pairs or teams?
- How much opportunity do they get for teamwork?
- Can we identify those children who have enough self-confidence to be openly innovative?
- Do we provide enough (specific) opportunities to develop the skills and confidence of the other children?

- Do we consistently encourage children to seek alternative ways of resolving problems?
- Do we plan for children to use their own initiative?
- Do we value unexpected answers?

Frank E Williams (1972) prepared a model for imparting creative education to Elementary classes and Jr. Classes. He titled it as “a total creativity program for individualising and humanising the learning process.”

It has three aspects:-

1. Subject Matter Content: - Six schools subjects have been selected for preparing lesson plans.
2. Classroom Teaching Strategies:-23 techniques have been developed.
3. Student behaviour change through divergent thinking process in cognitive & Affective domain.

Strategies

1. Using paradoxes:
2. Use of Analogies.
3. Sensing of Deficiencies :
4. Thinking of Possibilities: Problems those are likely to arise in the future as a result of current happenings.
5. Ask Provocative Questions. Asking questions: How? Why? When? To go to greater depths.
6. Exploring the Mystery: This could take the form of detective work or problem solving as in Productive thinking Program.
7. Reinforcement of Originality: Unusual ideas from students may be reinforced
8. Learning how to Expect Change: How can modifications, alteration and substitution can be brought about.
9. Organised Random Search: How to formulate hypotheses and how to test them.
10. Teaching About Rigidities, Fixations, and Habits.
11. Skill of Search: Historical, descriptive and experimental search skills may be built up.
12. Tolerance of Ambiguity: Putting students in situations where answers are not clear cut.
13. Provide Many Opportunities for intuitive Expression: Students maybe provided situations in which they may resort to guessing.
14. Process of invention and innovation: Students may be told about the four stages of thinking with special emphasis on incubation and illumination.

15. Adjustment to development: Students should be told how development takes place and how they should adjust to it.
16. Study of creative People:
17. Interaction with Past Knowledge: Students have to learn how to explore the accumulated knowledge in order to find solution to problems.
18. Evaluation of Situations: When faced with a situation students should learn how to evaluate it.
19. Receptivity to Surprise: Students should develop receptivity to unexpected responses, ideas or solutions and be alert to their significance.
20. Creative Reading Skill: Reading should generate a number of ideas.
21. Creative Listening Skill: Listening to information should lead to idea generation, one thing leading to another.
22. Visualisation Skill: Students should learn how to express ideas in the form of visual images.
23. Listing of Attributes.

Children need to be presented with exciting learning opportunities – they need to learn to think, to make associations between concepts, to work collaboratively, take risks, to discover their own talents: to be creative. The following factors have to be remembered in order to foster creativity in the students.

- Maintain the focus of work upon activities that incorporate the children’s personal interests, knowledge and skills.
- Involve children in role-play activities that reflect ‘real-life’ problems.
- Use questioning to open up situations and encourage children to explore fresh avenues of thought.
- Make certain that materials are well – organised and accessible .Children can only make choices if they know what is possible or available.

*In order to make our classrooms, we creative teachers need to plan our lessons well to suit the needs of the student learners. **Let us take an example of a lesson plan: Class IV***

To Develop- Curiosity and original thinking

Through- English

Using- Intuitive Expression, Visualisation skill and interaction with past knowledge.

Topic – Poem Composition – Who lives here?

For Students: - Imagine some of the animals such as dog, cow fish, bird and beetle. Think of the places they live in?

Now compose a poem describing their homes for example

Who lives in the Web,

Hanging on the garden wall?

‘I do’, said the spider.

This is my home.

Draw sketches of animals and their homes too. To add to your poem.

Thinking independently and working collectively would make the classrooms very creative ones. Schooling plays an important role in shaping the adults of the future society. They embark on a journey that takes them into adulthood. The school provides an ambience where they can learn new skills and increase their knowledge .Their behaviour pattern is also formed. They learn how to behave in their peer group. Here teachers need to play an important role---- building a sense of community with the class.

- Provide a clear discipline code that is vigorously enforced and is backed up with clear consequences
- Surround children with a variety of opportunities for them to practice pro-social behaviour.
- Give children, both collectively and individually, many forms of recognition for good behaviour.
- Maintain a system of symbols slogans ceremonies and songs that heighten children’s collective identity.
- Provide a clear definition of ‘good character qualities’ and define them in relatively immediate and traditional terms.
- Create an environment promoting beauty and imagination so that children can explore their own creativity and sensory awareness through play.

CONCLUSION:

India is lagging behind, in scientific and technological progress in spite of great man power. Our country is beset with tremendous problems. Can we produce leaders who realise the uniqueness of nation’s problems and find solutions? Who will produce this stuff? Of course, the teachers. They should give up teaching through the tired methods of the past to create human beings who are comfortable

with change, who enjoy change, who are able to improvise, who are able to face with confidence, a situation of which they have no forewarning.

Our education is neither child centered nor life centered but examination centered. We produce educated persons who fail to carry creatively, the comprehension of the subjects studied in their lives. The teachers need to be concerned about a creative approach to teaching to keep the students motivated. Creativity exists and flourishes in humanistic and student centered educational philosophy.

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