
Module for Post-Graduate Diploma in Education Programme

METHODS OF TEACHING ARTS

(ENGLISH, FRENCH, RELIGIOUS STUDIES, HISTORY, GHANAIAN LANGUAGE)

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UNIT 1: THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

a. **What is teaching?**

- Teaching is the process of inculcating moral values, abilities, skills by an experienced person to an inexperienced person in order to ensure positive change in behaviour useful in developing oneself and the society. Teaching can be conducted in several method based on the nature of the subject and student.
- Teaching is made up of both instruction and procedures, a process to guiding students to the information they will need, and challenging them to engage in thinking about concepts they construct in their minds. All of these processes are needed in order to teach students to become fully functional thinkers.

Teaching is:

- Knowing what idea is to be communicated
- Communicating it well
- Actions of a teacher to assist the learner in acquiring or changing skill, knowledge and attitude (Clark and Starr, 1986)
- An effort to assist or shape growth of the learner. (Brunner, 1996)

b. **What Effective Teachers Do Right?**

Effective teachers appear to display certain characteristics, while ineffective teachers tend to make the same mistakes repeatedly. Below is a look at some of the things effective teachers tend to do right and less effective teachers tend to do wrong. (This is based on a scheme originally developed by M. Hildebrand, 1971.)

i. **Organization and Clarity**

The teacher:

- explains clearly
- is well prepared
- makes difficult topics easy to understand
- uses examples, details, analogies, metaphors, and variety in modes of explanation to make material not only understandable but memorable
- makes the objectives of the course and each class clear
- establishes a context for material

ii. Analytic/Synthetic Approach

The teacher:

- has a thorough command of the field
- contrasts the implications of various theories
- gives the student a sense of the field, its past, present, and future directions, the origins of ideas and concepts
- presents facts and concepts from related fields
- discusses viewpoints other than his/her own

iii. Dynamism and Enthusiasm

The teacher:

- is an energetic, dynamic person
- seems to enjoy teaching
- conveys a love of the field
- has an aura of self-confidence

iv. Instructor-Group Interaction

- can stimulate, direct, and pace interaction in the class
- encourages independent thought and accepts criticism
- uses wit and humour effectively
- is a good public speaker
- knows whether or not the class is following the material and is sensitive to students' motivation
- is concerned about the quality of his/her teaching

v. Instructor-Individual Student Interaction

The teacher is

- fair, especially in his/her methods of evaluation
- seen by students as approachable and a valuable source of advice even on matters not directly related to the course.

vi. The Teacher

Teachers are some of the few people who have the power to change the world because the future of the world is sitting in their classrooms. The following are therefore what we expect of the teacher:

- **Knowledge of the Subject:**

First off, this quality is an absolute necessity to being an effective teacher. It does not matter how motivated, passionate, or creative you are if you cannot teach your students what they are there to learn. How can you expect them to learn if you don't even know what they are supposed to be learning?

- **Motivation:**

To be an effective teacher one has to be motivated, motivated to learn and to help others learn. That motivation for learning and self-improvement is what separates the truly great teachers from the rest. They are always trying new ways of teaching and engaging their students and they are never tired of being students themselves. Effective teachers are always learning different ways of doing things and take the time to learn from other effective teachers.

- **Emotional Intelligence and Empathy:**

Understanding your students is an integral part in being an effective teacher. Being able to connect with students on an emotional level and help them through the problems that co-questioning me with growing up is what effective teachers do. For many kids, teachers are the ones they turn to for support when they can't find it anywhere else. This emotional intelligence and empathy can go a long way in not only helping those students be able to learn but in changing their lives as well.

- **Stamina:**

As most teachers will agree, every day as a teacher is an adventure, and you have to be able to handle it in stride and keep on going.

- **Passion:**

This is the most important characteristic of an effective teacher. Passion in teachers is what inspires students to want to do their best and to dream big dreams. Passionate teachers are not those who chose to teach because they could not do anything else. Passionate teachers are those who find true happiness in their profession and in the everyday aspect of helping kids discover who they are and who they want to be. The teacher is seen by students as approachable and a valuable source of advice even on matters not directly related to the course.

UNIT 2: REFLECTIVE TEACHING AND THE ROLES OF THE TEACHER

a. What is Reflective Teaching?

Reflective teaching is a process where teachers think over their teaching practices, analysing how something was taught and how the practice might be improved or changed for better learning outcomes. Some points of consideration in the reflection process might be:

- i. what is currently being done,
- ii. why it is being done and
- iii. how well students are learning.

You can use reflection as way to simply learn more about your own practice, improve a certain practice (small groups and cooperative learning, for example) or to focus on a problem students have. Reflective teaching means looking at what you do in the classroom, thinking about why you do it, and thinking about if it works - a process of self-observation and self-evaluation.

b. Who is a Reflective Teacher?

Reflective Teaching (RT) is a self-assessment of teaching, wherein an instructor examines their pedagogy, articulates reasons and strengths for their strategies, and identifies areas for revision or improvement.

The reflective teacher therefore:

- has the capacity to analyse what occurs in the classroom and adapt teaching (reflect on teaching)
- asks questions about the appropriateness and success of their teaching
- thinks about how to change teaching methods or classroom behaviours to improve learning
- thinks about what can be done to motivate students when they are not learning (receiving poor grades)
- asks self-evaluating questions:
 - i. How can teaching be changed or classroom behaviour improved if students are not successful?
 - ii. How can students be motivated if they are not getting good grades?

c. The Roles of the Teacher in the Classroom:

- i. **An instructional expert who plans, guides and evaluates learning:**
 - Subject matter constitutes the foundation for learning and thinking
 - Must be organised and meaningful so students can transfer it to a variety of situations and add more complex information.

Decisions have to be made as to:

- What to teach
 - What teaching materials to use
 - What teaching methods to use
 - How to evaluate learning
- ii. **As a manager who manages the learning environment taking decisions and actions required to maintain order in the classroom:**
- Laying down rules and procedures for teaching/learning activities
 - Modelling a positive attitude towards teaching and learning (a caring attitude towards learning and the learning environment)
 - Handling students' records.
- iii. **As a counsellor who deals effectively with day-to-day problems:**
- Be a sensitive observer of human behaviour and be prepared to communicate and work with students and colleagues.
 - An understanding of oneself and how you relate with people.

d. Five Popular Maxims of Teaching

Every teacher wants to make maximum involvement and participation of learners in the learning process. He therefore sets the classroom in such a way that it becomes attractive to them. He uses different methods, rules, principles etc. in order to make his lessons effective and purposeful.

Let us consider some of the principles or maxims. Teaching must proceed from the:

- *Known to unknown* – connect new knowledge with the learners' experience. When the child enters the classroom, he possesses some knowledge and it is the duty of the teacher to enlarge his knowledge. Whatever he possesses should be linked to new knowledge.
- *Concrete to abstract* – humans always learn by starting from the concrete. Our knowledge of the world begins as we make use of things we find in the world about us (particularly), we draw generalizations from concrete experience (abstraction). Concrete things are solid things that can be visualized but abstract things are only imaginative.
- *Particular to general* – learners must learn by studying concrete examples before they proceed to draw out or abstract from these examples a general rule. General principles are often difficult to understand hence the teacher should always present particular things before the general.

- *Easy to difficult* - not so easy that the students think it is not worth taking, nor so difficult learners are discouraged and lose interest.
- *Simple to complex* – simple must be from the point of view of the learner. Teaching and learning must proceed from the simple and gradually complex materials are added. The presentation of simple materials makes the learner interested, confident and feel encouraged in the learning process.
- *From empirical to rational* – empirical knowledge is that which is based on observation and experience about which no reasoning is needed at all. If it is concrete, particular and simple, we can feel and experience it. On the other hand, rational knowledge is based upon arguments and explanations.

UNIT 3: CLASSROOM DIALOGUE AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

a. What is Dialogue?

Dialogue can be described as a process whereby a knowledgeable person (e. g. teacher or peer) interacts with and supports another person with less knowledge and understanding (a student).

- A dialogue is an interaction that: Involves the ability to question, listen, reflect, reason, explain, speculate, and explore ideas; to analyse problems and develop solutions; to discuss, argue, examine evidence, defend, probe and assess arguments.

b. Classroom management

Classroom management is a term used by teachers to describe the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behaviour by students. The term also implies the prevention of disruptive behaviour.

According to Moskowitz & Hayman (1976), once a teacher loses control of their classroom, it becomes increasingly more difficult for them to regain that control. A well-planned lesson can fail if the teacher lacks the skill to manage the classroom. Effective teaching requires that the teacher be both a manager and motivator.

Effective classroom management is a collection of gentle but powerful strategies designed to create an environment that is most conducive to learning and enjoying school.

It is about trust and influence. It's about relationships and leadership. It is about students behaving and giving their best because they *want* to, not because they are forced to.

It includes strictness only in a sense that well-defined boundaries of behaviour—whose only goal is to protect learning and enjoyment are faithfully maintained.

A well-planned lesson will fail if the teacher fails to manage the classroom.

Effective teaching requires that the teacher to be both a **manager** and a **motivator**.

c. Classroom Discipline and Student of Engagement

Discipline is a very important aspect of management and motivation. Discipline is helping a child develop self-control by teaching, guiding and explaining what was wrong with the child's behaviour and what to do instead.

Punishment is used for the purposes of controlling and retribution. Learners do not commit crimes. Their mistakes call for a corrective disciplinary response.

- Differences between discipline and punishment
 - i. Discipline is not punishment
 - ii. Punishment is a reaction to disruptive behaviour
 - iii. Discipline is concerned with the prevention of disruptive behaviour as well as reactions to it. A teacher should be skilled in both.

d. Motivation:

Internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested and committed to a job, role or subject, or to make an effort to attain a goal. Motivation is the force or the drive that directs what we do.

Intrinsic motivation involves engaging in behaviour because it is personally rewarding; essentially, performing an activity for its own sake rather than the desire for some external reward.

Extrinsic motivation occurs when we are motivated to perform a behaviour or engage in an activity to earn a reward or avoid punishment. The external incentives and rewards that are used to get students to learn or work modify or change their actions. For example the use of:

- Non-verbal language to show approval, acceptance and interest
- Modelling/demonstrating behaviours, values teacher wants students to acquire
- Group activities which build on recognition and belonging
- Feedback:
 - ✓ praise
 - ✓ knowledge of results – communication of successful results leads to renewed vigour while indication of the needed corrections communicates specific means for achieving success

HOW TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS

- Encourage Students: you should encourage open communication and free thinking with your students to make them feel important.
- Model desired behaviours – show enthusiasm.
- Relate lessons to students’ prior knowledge to maximize involvement and use students’ ideas.
- Offer Incentives - offering students small incentives makes learning fun and motivates students to push themselves. Rewards give students a sense of accomplishment and encourage them to work with a goal in mind.
- Pay attention to the strengths and limitations of each of your students. Reward their strengths and strengthen their weaknesses.

- Make your classes relevant. Be sure students see how the content relates to them and the world around them.
- Provide opportunities for students to speak to the class.

f. Feedback

The intent of feedback is to improve performance. The way in which students receive feedback from others, however, is critical to positively impacting student learning and improving performance.

- Listeners continually send non-verbal messages conveying understanding or uncertainty, agreement or disagreement, concern or lack of concern, attention or inattention.
- This feedback when received can be used to modify the original information.

g. Reinforcement

In the classroom, reinforcement occurs as teachers manage the environmental events that follow students' desired ways of behaving so to increase the strength and future likelihood of that behaviour.

Reinforcement comes in two types—positive and negative:

- Positive reinforcement occurs when desired behaviour is strengthened by the presentation of a contingent stimulus. (e.g. by offering a reward when the behaviour is exhibited.)
- Negative reinforcement is a term described by B. F. Skinner in his theory of operant conditioning. In negative reinforcement, a response or behaviour is strengthened by stopping, removing, or avoiding a negative outcome or aversive stimulus.

Negative reinforcement occurs when desired behaviour is strengthened by the removal of a contingent stimulus.

- ✓ Reinforcement can be verbal or non-verbal.
- ✓ It can be used to establish desirable behaviour or maintain desirable behaviour.

e. Classroom Communication – Central to Teaching

- Good communication between the teacher and the student is essential for learning.
- Communication is a two-way process of talking and listening.
- The teacher must not just talk but learn to listen to students' inputs.

- **Listening**

It is an active process which requires:

- Paying attention to the speaker and the message
- Thinking about the information and non-verbal actions
- Trying to understand the message (selecting and organizing the information)
- Judging the worth of the information against personal beliefs, values and attitudes (evaluating the information)

- **Verbal Communication**

Verbal communication is the use of sounds and words to express one's self, especially in contrast to using gestures or mannerisms. Teachers talk to convey information. This includes the actual words used and the meaning.

- i. A well-organised verbal information tends to be learned better.
- ii. Messages that present opposing views tend to be learned best.
- iii. The more concrete a message the better it is learned.

- *Vocal Learning*

a) Voice brings words to life. Changes in voice loudness, pitch and tone affect the emphasis within the messages as well as meanings of words.

- ✓ Intonation reveals strong emotions, beliefs and prejudices. (It is not what you say but how you say it)
- ✓ It is essential that the teacher varies the strength of his/her voice to convey different meanings.

b) It is important that the teacher projects his/her voice so it can be heard by all members of the class. Skill in using voice can assist in keeping students on task and prevent loss of attention.

- *Pacing of the Lesson*

- a) Speaking too fast often conveys the message that the topic is not important.
- b) Speaking at a slower pace communicates importance of message and invites attention.

- **Non-verbal Communication**

Non-verbal communication helps to decide what our reaction or role will be in situations.

- ✓ Action speaks louder than words and we use non-verbal cues as the basis of inferences we make about each other or situations.
- ✓ Non-verbal expressions greatly influence our perceptions and attitudes.

Non-verbal communications include facial expressions, the tone and pitch of the voice, gestures displayed through body language (*kinesics*) and the physical distance between the

communicators (*proxemics*). These non-verbal signals can give clues and additional information and meaning over and above spoken (verbal) communication.

○ **Facial expressions:**

- ✓ Wrinkling the forehead communicates deep thought, disagreement.
- ✓ Raised eyebrows – a surprise at something being said the way we look.
- ✓ Eye contact – can be used to open communication, prolong communication or cut off communication. Direct eye contact especially accompanied by silence can be used to change behaviour. How?

○ **Body language**

- ✓ Gestures with the head, arms and hands may reinforce or emphasize a point communicating information.
- ✓ Posture or stance may communicate closeness, friendliness and security.
- ✓ Use of touch (pat on the back) communicates a sense of belonging, a caring relationship. This may be inappropriate for students in post primary school, and especially of the opposite sex.

Overuse of gestures may distract the listener from the message.

● **Language of Space and Motion**

- ✓ Movement towards a person communicates interest.
- ✓ Movement away from a person communicates lack of interest.

Knowledge and Understanding of Subject Matter –

Theoretical versus Active Knowledge.

- ✓ Theoretical knowledge is knowledge learned during the course of teacher training.
- ✓ This knowledge cannot be totally applied to the learning situation.
- ✓ Theories and principles must be actively adapted to the reality of the actual classroom situation before they can become useful. Theoretical knowledge is of limited value if it cannot be applied to the learning environment.

UNIT 4: TEACHING SKILLS

1. Introducing the Lesson

- ✓ Use of previous knowledge
- ✓ Linking previous knowledge to new material
- ✓ The introduction should be captivating and interesting

2. Questioning and Questioning Techniques

Questions are basic to questioning is basic to good communication. It is at the heart of good interactive teaching. It requires that teachers master techniques for following up on responses.

Questions must be:

- ✓ At the appropriate level
- ✓ Be of the appropriate type
- ✓ Be worded properly

3. Purpose of Questioning

- ✓ Questioning is part of everyday communication.
- ✓ Teachers usually know the answer to the questions they ask.
- ✓ Questions need to be presented in a way that will yield maximum results.
- ✓ Different questions require different levels of thought processes.
 - To find out what they know
 - Remind students of what they know
 - Develop a line of thought processes of thinking.

4. Categories of Questions

i. *Factual questions:*

Who? What? Where? These require recall of information. They are conversant because they allow only one right response.

ii. *Probing questions*

- a. Probing questions are not just about clarifying specific details, instead these questions dig much deeper than the surface. An effective probing question helps to get a person to talk about their personal opinions and feelings, and promotes critical thinking. They are used to develop classification (explain) or develop critical awareness.

Examples:

- What do you mean by?
- What is the basis of your answer?
- What are your reasons for this statement?

- iii. *Higher order questions*
 - These ask for analysis, evaluation, inference
 - They require students to think imaginatively
 - Requires critical thinking
 - Require more abstract or conceptual thinking
- iv. *Divergent questions*

A divergent question is a question with no specific answer, but rather exercises one's ability to think broadly about a certain topic.

 - Ask for opinions, judgement, interpretations, etc.
 - They are open-ended questions with many possible and no right answers.
- While it is good to make sure students can recall what they learn, more attention needs to be paid to the higher levels of questions that directs students to:
 - Explain facts
 - Find relationships between ideas and inferences
 - Make judgements
 - Form generalizations

5. Techniques of Effective Questioning

- *Wait time:*
 - ✓ Allow students to think
 - ✓ Ponder over the responses to questions. The result is:
 - Speculative thinking increases
 - The length of the student responses increases
 - Questions from students increase
 - Unsolicited responses increase
 - Failure to respond decreases
- *Redirecting*

This involves asking several students to respond to a question based on previous responses.

 - It builds broader participation in classroom discussion
 - Participation leads to more learning and stimulates interest
 - Non volunteers are given the opportunity to make contributions to the discussion.

6. Characteristics of Effective Questions

- Questions should be asked in a positive manner so that students will enjoy responding. If your students perceive your questions to be too negative or too aggressive, they will probably not want to answer them.
- The idea of questioning is to engage students in the learning process, not put students on the spot as punishment for misbehaviour. For example, if Sally is talking during instruction, you wouldn't want to punish her by asking her a question regarding the

instruction. By doing this you, as the teacher, have turned a positive learning opportunity into a negative one.

- Questions should be clear and to the point. While your goal as the teacher is to challenge your students, you certainly don't want them to disconnect from the process because they don't understand what you are asking.
- Ask a question and pause for a few seconds before calling on a student to answer it. This gives students a chance to think about the question and form an appropriate response.
- Try not to interrupt students while they are responding unless it is absolutely necessary. This tells students that their responses are valued and it makes the learning environment more student-centred.
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- Try not to interrupt students while they are responding unless it is absolutely necessary. This tells students that their responses are valued and it makes the learning environment more student-centred.

7. Questioning Guidelines

- ✓ Ask clear questions
- ✓ Pause to give students time to think
- ✓ Call on a student by name to answer
- ✓ Distribute questions fairly
- ✓ Ask one question at a time
- ✓ Listen carefully to students' responses
- ✓ Emphasize the correct answer

8. Reinforcement

- ✓ How the teacher reacts to students' answers has a powerful effect on the direction of the interaction in the classroom
- ✓ Praise and approval should be encouraged
- ✓ It is better to allow as many students as possible to contribute

9. Using Teaching/Learning Material

- ✓ Use a variety of materials
- ✓ Material should be purposeful and appropriate
- ✓ Materials should be of good quality
- ✓ Materials should be well presented

10. Organizing Group Work

- ✓ The size of the group should be appropriate for the activity
- ✓ Give clear and precise instructions
- ✓ Let the members of the group appoint their own leaders
- ✓ Monitor the activities of the groups

11. Chalkboard Writing

- ✓ Exhibit good handwriting
- ✓ Material should be well organised on the board – if possible divide the board into sections
- ✓ Ensure correct mechanics of writing- spelling, punctuation, etc.

Closure/concluding the lesson

- ✓ Use appropriate concluding activities
- ✓ Summary/ questions
- ✓ Practical activity – oral or written exercises

THE TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS

Planning

The key to effective teaching is planning. A well-planned lesson results in a well-organized lesson. Mental preparation precedes the writing of lesson notes.

- a) What content should be taught?
- b) What are the lesson objectives?
- c) What teaching/learning materials should be used?
- d) How am I going to teach the lesson?
 - i. What is the best way to introduce the lesson?
 - ii. How best can I present teaching/learning activities?
 - iii. How should I present the lesson
 - iii. How should I conclude the lesson?
 - iv. How should I evaluate my students?

Instructional Skills (Implementing planned lesson)

- ✓ Ability to communicate is central to teaching
- ✓ Arouse and maintain students' attention
- ✓ Use appropriate questions and reinforcement

- ✓ Manage the teaching environment well

Post Instructional Skills (Effective evaluation of lesson)

- ✓ Teaching involves well-planned and organized evaluation
- ✓ Information from evaluation must be collected and analysed
- ✓ Judgements must be made regarding the level of student achievement

UNIT 5: LESSON NOTES PREPARATION

Lesson objectives

They are specific and tangible and are necessary for planning a lesson. Be guided by the following:

- ✓ S – specific
- ✓ M – measurable
- ✓ A – achievable
- ✓ R – realistic
- ✓ T – time-bound

	DIMENSION OF LEARNING	ACTION VERB IDENTIFIED WITH DIMENSION	RANKING
A	KNOWLEDGE	The ability to: remember, recall, identify, define, describe, list, name, state, mention, etc.	Low Profile
B	UNDERSTANDING	The ability to: explain, summarize, translate, rewrite, paraphrase, give, examples, generalize, predict, etc.	Low Profile
C	APPLICATION	The ability to: read, write, produce, compare, differentiate, outline, create, compose, etc.	High Profile

Template for Planning Daily Lessons

Date:	Period:	Subject:	
Time:		Strand:	
Class:	Class size:	Sub-Strand:	
Content Standard		Indicator:	Lesson 1 of 2
Performance Indicator:		Core Competencies and Subject Specific Practices:	
Key words:			
Phase/Duration	Learner activities		Resources
Phase 1: Starter (preparing the brain for learning) <i>10 minutes</i>			
Phase 2: Main (new learning including assessment) <i>40 minutes</i>	Assessment:		
Phase 3: Plenary/ Reflections (Learner and teacher) <i>10 minutes</i>			

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