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INTRODUCTION TO METHODS OF TEACHING

UNIT 1: The Nature of Teaching

Unit Overview

The overriding purpose of this unit is to give you a clear mind-set about teaching. The reason for teaching is learning. The focus of school learning then is to get the learner to acquire subject content with the teacher as a mediator. Teaching is mediation and mediation of any kind requires enormous skill and a supporting attitude which cannot be automatically acquired. The teacher needs to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to mediate between content and the learner, which is to teach. The knowledge about teaching begins with an understanding of the nature of teaching. Without this understanding, the adults standing in front of children in the classroom may think they are teaching when in fact they are only talking with little effect. This unit discusses the nature and characteristics of teaching and will make us understand why we call teaching a profession. It will discuss the concepts in teaching, the nature of the teaching process and the attitude expected of the teacher. The following objectives will be expected:

Unit Objectives

1. Give reasons to support the views of teaching as an art and science.
2. Tell the difference between teaching and instruction
3. Tell what teachers are supposed to do to be seen as reflective teachers.
4. Mention the attitudes expected of teachers and tell why these attitudes are important.

These objectives should make you enjoy what you are reading here as they help you to stay focussed.

SESSION 1: Teaching as an art and science

Introduction

Teaching is business. Profits must come out of it to the child, parents, community and teachers themselves. Therefore time is money. Teachers who do not see it this way waste a lot of teaching time in doing other things. Other teachers even create a bigger mistake by blaming and attacking children who are unable to perform tasks on knowledge they are teaching or have taught. These issues show that teachers need to understand what teaching means in order to take the right decisions to in the classroom. This unit is therefore to expose you to what teaching is and the make you realize the source of the behaviour of a good teacher. It session will focus on the following objectives:

Objectives

1. Explain what teaching is.
2. Give reasons why teaching is considered as an art.
3. Give reasons why teaching is considered as a science.

1.1.1: What ‘teaching’ means.

Smith and Ragan (1999) use the term ‘teaching’ to refer to those learning experiences that are facilitated by a human being (not video, TV, textbook, or computer based program), a real live teacher. This means that teaching is a situation where a more experienced person engages in activities with a less experienced person in order to help the less experienced person to gain some knowledge or skills. This implies that the teacher is expected to be a more experienced and knowledgeable person than the learner. Another expert, Moore (1998) defines teaching as the actions of one who is trying **to assist** others to reach their potential in all aspects of development. The view of teaching as a helping activity is important because it means the teacher cannot use force when teaching, and teachers who insult or hit children when teaching them are wrong.

In our daily life, we come into contact with people who give us a lot of information. These include parents, peers and adult members of the community. What they tell us is supposed to influence us in new ways and change our behavior. To this extent they are all teaching.

Now, this view of teaching has been accepted by all professionals. What people have argued on at one time or another in the past is whether teaching is an art or a science and exactly what effective teaching is. Let us discuss the first one now.

1.1.2: Teaching as an art

Some educators argue that teachers are born and not made and that the ability to be an effective teacher cannot be taught. Do some teachers have better teaching instincts than others? If so, can these instincts be identified? If this is the case, and we believe that some people have more of these instincts and others have less, then we agree that teaching involves some personal skills and can be considered as an art.

Teaching as an art is explained in terms of the different skills and tools, verbal and non-verbal communicative skills and materials with which the teacher presents the learning activities in a meaningful way to the pupils. If these skills come automatically to some teachers and not much to others, then teaching can be considered as an art. In this case, it is the teacher’s competence in

term of the mastery in the **action system skills** and subject matter knowledge and **personality** that give meaning to the art of teaching. Let us look at some of the things that are considered in looking at teaching as an art.

One of them is personality. This may be said to be the totality of the physical and psychological characteristics that makes an individual unique. Since people have different personalities, and some have personalities suitable for teaching, it is an art. Another one is what is called **action system knowledge**. **These involve** skills needed for planning, and making decisions about what, when and how to teach, as well as managing the classroom environment for effective learning. People differ on their abilities to do this.

1.1.3: Teaching as a science

Dear learner, now that we have considered what makes teaching an art; let us also look at teaching as a science. Teaching as a science is seen in terms of the systematically tested theories and approaches to teaching. For instance, we have agreed that some people have instinctive characteristics that are good for teaching. Now, is it possible to identify how those instincts are displayed and train teachers on how to exhibit them? If yes, then one needs to scientifically verify those characteristics and then confirm them, before teaching others to use them. This is scientific.

Also, one major characteristic of science is its ability to predict and control the behaviors of the trend it studies. Teaching is a science because it is possible to predict the outcome of some treatment we give to learners. For instance, if you give verbal praise to pupils, they will put in more effort. Since you can predict this, you can control the behavior of learners by either applying or failing to apply the treatment.

If we look at it in these ways, then teaching is a science.

Now, going forwards, we realize that these two views of teaching cannot be arguments because they are both true. The two views are both acceptable in training good teachers. Today, most educators agree with Gage (1985), who argues that there is a **scientific** basis for the **art** of teaching. Thus, teaching can be viewed as having both artistic and scientific elements. Essentially, an increasing number of educators are accepting the viewpoint that teaching has specific artistic and scientific elements that can be transmitted effectively.

Teaching involves helping others to learn or to do something, to think and to solve problems and to react in new ways. It therefore involves the art of giving information. The situation under which the information is giving may either be structured or unstructured. The important thing however is that the information influences the individual and causes a change in behavior of some sort. This is the focus of teaching.

Searles (1967) described teaching as an art and a science. We have just noted that teaching involves elements of both art and science, and therefore it is both an art and a science. This means that we can practice and become perfect in applying our teaching skills like an art. We can also study the scientifically tested strategies and procedures for good teaching, and apply them.

Now, dear reader, it is hoped that you are clear about the issues that make teaching both an art and science. Having achieved that let us strengthen our understanding of teaching with one more definition. Nacino Brown et al (1982), define teaching as an attempt to help someone acquire, or change some skill, attitude, knowledge, ideas, or principle. It is an attempt to bring about desirable change in human learning, ability and behavior. With this definition, we can now conclude on this session.

Summary

In this session we have discussed the meaning of teaching and identified reason why we need to see teaching as a helping relation which leads to the development of human capabilities. We have also identified the reasons why teaching is considered an art and a science. It is hoped that with this understanding you will do your best to identify your strengths in teaching and overcome those characteristics which may set you back. Focus on developing the skills that make you a good teacher.

SESSION 2 Teaching and Instruction

Introduction

The distinction between teaching and instruction has not been clear to many teachers and they use these to mean the same thing. In doing this, they ignore some requirements of instruction such as careful planning and careful ordering of activities. In this session we will discuss the distinction and relationship between teaching and instruction and identify the characteristics of instruction to support the need for careful planning. We will also take you through the steps in delivering instruction on a topic.

Objectives

1. Distinguish between teaching and instruction
2. Explain why most of classroom activity is instruction.

3. Describe the characteristics of Instruction
4. Describe the process of presenting instruction on a topic.

Now, read on.

1.2.1: Teaching and Instruction

We explained teaching in the last session. We noted that Smith and Ragan (1999) define teaching to refer to those learning experiences that are facilitated by a human being (not video, TV, textbook, or computer based program), a real live teacher. Though this usually involves a systematic presentation of facts, ideas, skills, and techniques to students, it might not always be. Anyagre et al, (2003) indicate that teaching may involve random or structured information that leads to learning. Now, if we consider what has been said so far, two things stand out. First, teaching is made of those learning experiences that are facilitated by a human being. Second the information can be random or structured. A father showing his son how to make beds to grow cabbage is therefore teaching. The information the father delivers to the child is random and not structured, but nevertheless it is teaching. These two issues distinguish teaching from instruction.

1.2.2: What ‘instruction’ means.

Teaching is both random and structured but instruction is always structured. This means not all teaching is considered to be instruction. Driscoll (1994) states that instruction is the deliberate arrangement of learning conditions to promote the attainment of some intended goal (learning outcome). It involves some planning with goals set, some strategy use and some evaluation to ensure that goals have been met. This makes it structured. Instruction includes all learning experiences in which the instructional support is conveyed by teaching and other forms of mediation. In the educational environment, a teacher does not always focus learning experiences toward a particular learning goal. So the teacher’s activities sometimes involve unstructured activities even though most of it is structured. Now, looking at all these statements, notice that since teaching is both structured and unstructured, it means all instruction is teaching. However, in some cases, instruction is not face-to-face and no person is involved and such forms of instruction cannot strictly be called teaching. All classroom instruction however is teaching since the teacher, a person, is involved.

In the classroom, Watson and Osibedu (1987) explain the process of teaching to include the teacher developing personal knowledge, organizing learning experiences and evaluation.

Classroom teaching mostly involves information that is structured or organized in a form that ranges from simple to complex, basic to advance and concrete to abstract. This is instruction.

Instruction is systematic arrangement of experiences, leading to learners acquiring particular knowledge. Instruction includes all learning experiences in which the instructional support is carried out by teaching or other forms of mediation.

1.2.3: Characteristics of Instruction

Dear learner, now that we have realized the meaning of instruction, let us quickly identify its **characteristics**. First, in instruction learning experiences are planned and developed. So we need to plan all the learning activities we take children through. Second, every experience is focused toward one or more goals for learning. This means that as teachers we need to set our goals first before we teach and then teach towards them. Third, the arrangement of the learning experiences is intentional or deliberate. This means we have to know which activities to use with children to get the best results. Then we arrange these activities intentionally, in such a way that our goals will be achieved easily.

The process of classroom instruction

Next, we need to look at how instruction should proceed for it to be effective. This is the **process of instruction**. To do this we will use the process of instruction proposed by one Robert Gagne, a well-known educational psychologist. We will list and explain his proposal here.

1. Gaining attention :

In order for any learning to take place, you must first capture the attention of the student. You can capture your pupil's attention to start each lesson with a thought-provoking question or interesting fact. Curiosity motivates students to learn.

2. Inform learners of objectives

Early in each lesson pupils should be informed of learning objectives. This makes them know what to expect and helps motivate the learner to complete the lesson. These objectives should form the basis for assessment. Typically, learning objectives are presented in a certain form which we will discuss in a later unit.

3. Stimulating recall of previous knowledge or previous learning.

It is easier for learners to understand and remember information they learn when there are links to personal experience and knowledge. A simple way to stimulate recall is to ask questions about previous experiences, an understanding of previous concepts, or a body of content. It is better to teach by connecting the new knowledge you want to teach to their previous knowledge.

4. Presenting new content

This is where the new content is actually presented to the learner. Content should be chunked and organized meaningfully, and typically. It should be explained and then demonstrated. To appeal to different learning senses, a variety of instructional media and materials should be used if possible. We will discuss instructional materials in a later unit.

5. Providing learning guidance

To help learners understand and remember information for long-term storage, additional guidance should be provided along with the presentation of new content. Guidance strategies include the use of examples, non-examples, case studies, graphical representations, mnemonics, and analogies.

6. Eliciting the performance

In this stage of instruction, the learner is required to practice the new skill or behavior. Eliciting performance provides an opportunity for learners to confirm their correct understanding, and the repetition further increases the likelihood of retention.

7. Providing feedback

As learners practice what they have just learned, it is important to provide specific and immediate feedback of their performance. Questions and exercises can be used to find out how well they can perform. This should be used for comprehension and retention purposes, not for formal scoring. This means you do not have to record their performance at this stage. You are to correct them at this stage and they have not completed learning. Additional guidance and answers provided at this stage are called formative feedback.

8. Assessing the learner's performance

At the end of a topic of study, you may need to give your pupils an exercise or test to assess their performance for many reasons. This assessment should be completed without the ability to receive additional coaching, feedback, or hints, and may be recorded. It shows how well the pupil has mastered

the material. It typically results in the pupil being given a certain score or percent correct. A commonly accepted level of mastery in Ghana is 7 or more out of 10.

9. Promoting retention and transfer

Determining whether or not the knowledge and skills learned from teaching are ever applied in any situation remains unknown to teachers. Effective teaching lessons focus on performance as teachers plan, use materials and facilitate learning in such a way that pupils can retention and transfer knowledge. There is the need to repeat things learned in more instances. Homework and assignments are useful for this reason, although often disliked by pupils.

Summary

Dear learner, we have just looked at one of the fundamental topics that will help you to understand teaching and instruction. We have discussed the two concepts and how they are related. It is hoped that this will make you understand better why instruction in a serious activity that will have to be carefully planned and conducted. We have also discussed the way classroom instruction should proceed from gaining the attention of learners to the assessment of learning performance. It is hoped that you will use these ideas to make yourself a better teacher.

SESSION 3: Reflective teaching

Introduction

Needless to say, effective teaching is complicated. However, the better teachers are proactive –that is, they actively gather information and use it to take good decisions in the classroom. Good teachers are good decision makers. They are strongly committed to the importance of effective content delivery and tend to be task-oriented. They understand the demands of teaching their content, the characteristics of their students, and the importance of decision making in keeping students on task. Effective teachers know that good teaching is more than lecturing, discussing, and explaining. To produce the desired classroom results, teachers must be well organized, but above all, they must use time efficiently. The achievement of all these require skills in reflective teaching. In this session we look at the important issue of reflective teaching to understand why it is the main requirement for good teaching.

Objectives

1. Tell the meaning of reflective teaching.
2. Tell the difference between a teacher who reflects and one who does not
3. Explain the characteristics of reflective teaching.

Now read on.

1.3.1: Meaning of Reflective teaching

One current view of teaching that is receiving much attention is the concept of the teacher as a reflective decision maker. Donald Cruickshank (1987), the primary architect of **reflective teaching**, suggests that reflective teachers consider their teaching carefully and, as a result, are more thoughtful and alert. Essentially, according to Cruickshank, careful reflections on past experiences result in teacher growth and lead to more effective planning and teaching. Teaching practice tend to become routine with time and are repeated with very little or no forethought. Through reflective teaching, however, a teacher might examine student satisfaction with a lesson or examine whether all students were actively involved in a lesson. Reflective teachers learn to formulate their own rules, principles, and philosophies that can guide them to better practices. In other words, teachers who reflect on their practices-who submit them to examination-become better decision makers and, consequently, better planners and more successful teachers.

To be reflective means to think deeply about what you do. Reflective action involves a willingness to engage in constant self-appraisal and development. Among other things it requires a person who is flexible, analysis things carefully and has social awareness. If you apply this in your teaching it is both challenging and exciting. To be able to engage in good reflective practice we need to identify its key characteristics.

1.3.2: Characteristics of reflective practice.

1. Reflective teaching needs an active concern with what you are doing. To be reflective teachers need to be concerned and interested in the aims or goals of the lessons. They also need to be concerned with the consequences of their actions on their learners as well as how efficiency they do their work.
2. Reflective teaching means that teachers will have to constantly take a second look at how they are doing what they do. They need to constantly monitor and evaluate their actions and if they need to, revise what they are doing to achieve better results.
3. Reflective teaching requires a competent teacher. You need to know not only the content of subjects but also your methods and strategies of teaching. You need to be capable of choosing and using evidence-based classroom strategies and know how to support the development and learning of your pupils so that they can achieve high standards.
4. Reflective teaching requires certain attitudes. You must be open-minded, responsible and be willing to work with your whole heart. You must have interest in the success of your learners.

5. Reflective teaching is based on making good judgement. Good judgement should be based on good knowledge of evidence-based practices, but also on good observation and use of enquiry. Reading on issues concerning teaching is valuable.
6. Reflective teaching is best done through collaboration and dialogue with other teachers. This means professional learning is important. It is through such learning and collaboration that you can verify the quality of the decisions you take.
7. Reflective teaching requires creativity. This is because conditions and situations differ. You the teacher are an intermediary between external information on strategies and practices and what you do in the classroom. How to use what works elsewhere in your classroom requires creativity.

These are seven characteristics that reflective teaching needs to involve. Now you are entreated to understand them and use them to do a better job in your class. Have an open mind, learn from other teachers, try a lot of strategies and open your eyes and mind to see which strategies give you the best results and how you can improve what you do. Remember that doing reflective teaching gives you a learning experience. After a while it becomes a normal activity you do with good results.

Now, before moving away from the issue of reflective teaching let us identify a few critical ideas that make it necessary for us to do reflective teaching.

You might have heard the phrase “learning by doing”. This suggests that we can think about doing. That is thinking about what to do. However we can also think about doing something whilst doing it. This happens when in the middle of a lesson you immediately realise that you can teach what you are teaching better in another way. This is called reflection-in-action. This is a situation where reflection is occurring, not when you think about what you have done after the action, but about what happens in the action itself. For instance, if you are going to use a teaching aid at some point in the lesson, but soon after you start the lesson you realise some confusion on the faces of the children, you might realise instantly that you need to bring in the teaching aid now to clear the confusion. This is reflection-in-action. Therefore reflection does not mean waiting to think about your actions after the lesson.

Another important issue is what is called knowing-in-practice. This occurs as a result of the experience you gain as you continue to teach and to reflect. Over time you get to know what to expect from your learners and how to respond to them. You therefore meet fewer surprising situations in your teaching. You are getting more experienced; the problem here then is that you might miss an opportunity to improve what you do. You may find yourself drawn into a pattern of

errors which you cannot correct. In this case we say the teacher has “over-learned”. This is where reflection becomes important. Reflection helps you to correct your over-learning by criticising the understanding you have about how you are teaching. You become better as a teacher this way and improve how to deal with individual situations.

Summary

In this session, we have presented a few important issues that will help give you a good mind-set about teaching. We have exposed you to one important thing a teacher must have in mind right from the onset, which is reflecting on what you do. We discussed the meaning of reflective teaching and presented key characteristics of reflective teachers. We also looked at a few important things you need to know about reflective teaching as you proceed. It is hoped that you enjoyed this session.

SESSION 4: The role of teacher attitude in teaching

Introduction

In the previous session we mentioned some attitudes of a reflective teacher such as open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness. These are not the only essential attitudes teachers need to have. In this session, we are going to identify the meaning of attitude, and identify the attitudes teachers need to have in order to be effective in teaching. Then we will go on to look at the role teachers’ play and how attitude is important in fulfilling these roles. Enjoy the session.

Objectives

1. Give the meaning of attitude
2. Identify the essential attitudes from teaching.
3. State the role of teachers in the classroom
4. Tell the importance of teacher attitudes in the classroom.

Now read on.

1.4.1: What are attitudes?

According to Bany and Johnson (1975) an attitude is “a predisposition to act in certain ways towards a given object, person or situation”. It is an orientation towards an object or situation, which makes one ready to respond to it in a predetermined manner. For instance, teachers who have an attitude of trust in their students as capable individuals will give them opportunities and challenge in teaching, so that they can show their potentials. Teachers with an attitude of distrust of their student’s abilities will only want to keep telling and explaining to them. Attitude therefore predisposes the teacher to act in a certain way in the classroom.

Attitudes can influence the efficiency and effectiveness of teachers in teaching. Some teachers take the act of preparing for lessons and gathering materials and aid more seriously than others. The problem about attitudes is that even though they make teachers act quickly because many of them are not the result of careful thinking about a situation, their actions can also be unsatisfactory. Attitudes are motivated by emotions and this can be a problem because emotions can affect our behaviour also in negative ways. Teachers therefore need to be conscious of them and take control over them. For instance many Ghanaian teachers have an unacceptable attitude towards the use of instructional time and the use of punitive methods in student discipline. Sometimes such unacceptable attitudes are seen as normal and acceptable. Though attitudes are displayed individually, they are in fact social. This is because we share them with others. These are the facts about attitudes that make it necessary that we need to have a clear view of what attitudes teachers really need to make teaching positive.

1.4.2: Attitudes needed for teaching

1. Teaching is based on good relations between the teacher and pupils. There must be rapport, cooperation and acceptance between them. Therefore the teacher needs to have a friendly attitude in teaching. Effective teaching will require a teacher to be friendly and humorous.
2. A confident attitude is also necessary for effective teaching. Learners are reassured if their teacher is confident in his knowledge and delivery. Confident teachers conduct classroom activities effectively.
3. An effective teacher must also be one who accepts constructive suggestions and ideas from the learners as much as possible. As indicated earlier, teaching is a relation and it depends on mutual acceptance. Teachers who are so ego driven that they cannot tolerate suggestions and ideas, even criticisms, will not have comfortable learners.
4. An effective teacher needs to be responsible. He needs to take charge of establishing a productive classroom atmosphere by means of good organization and careful planning of classroom routines. A teacher should not have a laissez faire attitude when it comes to planning and organising classroom activities.
5. The teacher needs to be sensitive. Giving rewards and praises frequently to deserving learners during teaching and learning is what is expected of a teacher. This requires sensitivity, a caring and sympathetic attitude. Sensitivity goes with an attitude of concern and recognition. Some teachers do not see good things in their learners and only find faults and criticise learners. Such an attitude will surely make your teaching ineffective. You need to recognize the efforts of your learners.

6. Another attitude required in teaching is persistence. The results of teaching do not come easily. The teacher needs to be persistent in explaining knowledge clearly and in managing instructional activities. Whenever things seem tough the teacher needs to take a deep breath and find another way of presenting information.
7. The teacher has to possess a proactive attitude and avoid procrastination. Handling pupils' problems promptly before they get out of hand is important. Thinking ahead in planning, establishing rules and keeping students informed of your plans is important. Teachers who procrastinate will often feel frustrated as they find themselves rushing through hurriedly thought out actions.
8. The attitude of patience cannot be overemphasized in teaching. Handling lots of children with different personalities and moods requires a stable temperament. Teachers must be patient enough to avoid over-reaction to learner's misbehaviours. Teachers who are not patient create anger, dislike and frustration in their learners and cannot get good learner cooperation in such a situation. This will not augur well for effective teaching.
9. The teacher needs a business-like attitude. Moving swiftly from one activity to another is important. In business, time is money and teachers should be conscious of their use of time and resources.

Dear learner, you have been presented here some important attitudes that are essential for good teaching. Now, let us use some examples of what teachers do in the class to give an idea of the importance of attitudes in effective teaching.

- In marking pupils work, teacher sensitivity is important as learners are different. Teachers need not make comments that emotionally affect learners.
- In organizing classroom work, teachers need to be businesslike. It is important that they use time and resources effectively.
- Another importance of teacher attitudes can be seen in explaining and questioning. Impatient teachers get frustrated when children do not understand quickly.
- Teachers who do not talk politely to learners are not respected by their learners. Talking or speaking with people in class requires a friendly and empathetic attitude.
- In listening to pupils responses in the classroom, you need to be tolerant and have the patience to reinforcing their behaviour. Teachers who are not tolerant end up with learners who want to be outside the class or who refuse to cooperate.

These examples show possessing the required attitude is necessary for teachers to get cooperation from their learners, to have a good social climate in the classroom and the effective use of resources. Good attitudes also help teachers more able to explain knowledge to the satisfaction of learners and thereby improve learner performance. Also good attitudes are needed for effective planning for both teaching and managing the behaviour of learners. The good news is that attitudes can be learnt. Therefore if you do not possess some of the required attitudes you need to make the effort to acquire these during your period of teacher training.

Summary.

In this session we have discussed the kind of attitudes that a teacher needs to be successful in classroom teaching. We started with an explanation of what attitude means and the nature of attitudes. We noticed that attitudes predispose the teacher to behave in a certain way and this could be a negative attitude. In this case your realization of this state can cause you to make an effort to change it. We then looked at the kinds of attitudes expected of teachers and went on to look at the importance of having the right attitudes. It is hope that you have enjoyed this session too and are ready to try to develop the right attitudes for teaching.

UNIT 2: The teacher in the classroom

Unit overview

As a teacher you need to ask yourself whether you will be happy being a student in your own class. If your answer is yes, then you can probably consider your classroom a supportive one. If your answer is no, then you have more work to do to make your classroom a supportive one. This unit will introduce you to what you need to do to create a productive and supportive classroom environment for your learners. We will first look at the nature of good classroom climates; consider what should be put in place to achieve these and eventually how to organise class activities to achieve a supportive classroom status. It is hoped that you will enjoy this unit also.

Objectives

1. Explain how the teacher can create a positive climate for teaching
2. Give the importance of rules and regulations in teaching
3. Identify the areas of teacher decision making in the classroom and tell the skills the teacher needs to make good decisions.
4. Describe the ways in which interaction and communication is conducted in the classroom and their advantages.

SESSION 1: Classroom climates and interpersonal relations

Introduction

Teaching occurs within an environment and if the environment stimulates the interests of learners, arouses their curiosity and makes it possible for them to display and present their work, learning will be more effective. Environmental forces, especially the social relationships between the people (teacher and learners) can provide supportive, neutral or preventive conditions for effective teaching. This means that teachers need to behave and take actions in ways that make learners comfortable, feel relaxed and seek to enjoy learning. This is what we will be discussing in this session. We will be looking at how to create a conducive and productive climate for learning through good interpersonal relations.

Objectives

1. Explain the meaning of classroom climate
2. Identify what the teacher needs to consider in try to create a good classroom climate.
3. Identify the possible forms of classroom climates and their strengths.
4. Explain the strategies they will use to create a positive classroom climate for their learners.

2.1.1: Meaning of classroom climate

Classroom climate refers to the prevailing mood, attitudes, standards, and tone that you and your students feel when they are in your classroom. A negative classroom climate can feel hostile, chaotic, and out of control. A positive classroom climate feels safe, respectful, welcoming, and supportive of student learning. The classroom climate is not a static environment – the physical and psychological system influences the classroom climate. The classroom climate may be defined as the social, physical, emotional, and intellectual environment of a classroom. It includes all the prevailing circumstances that allow students to obtain knowledge from social interactions with teachers. For instance teacher's attitudes of hostility or acts that create fear or distrust among learners give students information of a negative kind. The good news is that a classroom's climate doesn't just happen—it's created! Regardless of your students' past experiences, there are things you can do to deliberately shape the climate of your classroom into a positive learning environment.

Classroom Climate is based on the idea that teachers influence student growth and behavior. The student's behavior affects interaction in the classroom. The responsibility of influencing these behaviors is placed with the teacher. The way the teacher organizes the classroom should lead to a positive environment rather than a one that is not conducive to learning.

2.1.2: Purpose of a Positive Classroom Climate

Teachers should learn to guide their students, not to alienate them. The safety of the student's well-being is paramount in their development of social ties with peers and their instructor. Teachers need to become more aware of how to organize groups of students and how the students are arranged can lead to a favorable environment. Well-organized classrooms are an important component to classroom functions as it leads to more dialogue and better performance.

Teachers should particularly realize that learners with special education needs tend to feel more excluded from the other students in the classroom. Such students include those with behavioral problems and those with learning difficulties. Students who do not have disadvantages are more inclined to participate as they feel more like they belong and have a higher belief in their academic abilities. Education becomes more enjoyable when students grow as a group, and this can lead to the reduction of students acting out destructively.

In order to affect students, a teacher needs to monitor and modify the influence students have on one another. Teachers are able to help students feel included by assigning groups and rearranging the seating

chart so less cliques are formed in the classroom. Combating bad behavior is a teacher's duty. Teachers need not only to take into consideration how the classroom is arranged, but also observe students' background, family life, grade, and many other complex issues surrounding life.

2.1.3: Forms of classroom climates

Dear student, after going through these ideas on classroom climates, let us take a look at some of the climates that teachers have been identified to have created. We will look alongside at the effect of each of them. You can then take a look at how you are handling your students to see where you fall and if you are doing a good thing.

1. Some teachers create an open Climate: They do so by allowing freedom of communication in the class and everybody understands what is going on in the class. Learners like their class and go about learning with happiness. I am sure you will like this type of climate in your class.
2. A teacher can create an autonomous Climate: In this case the teacher uses consensus to determine what Learners do in the class but he exerts some control over classroom interaction and insists on how interaction should proceed. This climate is similar to the open type except that in this case the control of the teacher is more recognized.
3. Other teachers take a more firm control of interaction and communication in the class and thus run a controlled climate. Such teachers are more focused on achieving the goals of learning with little concern for the preferences of learners. Learners are under more strict direction as far as their interaction is concerned and there is little time for friendly relations. Learners are happier when they are out of the class. I can guess that many of you are running this controlled climate in your class.
4. A teacher might also use a paternal climate where the teacher sees the learners as his children and he or she is their father or mother. The teacher fully controls and directs social and psychological activity in the class. Learners do cooperate well but do not have much likeness for the teacher who acts like a strict father or mother and will be happier when the teacher is absent. I guess this climate will also be common in schools you know.
5. Finally we can talk of what is called a closed climate with a strict teacher keeping check on children's communication and interaction, usually with threats, scorn and rebuke. Learners feel uncomfortable and are likely not to be cooperative or interested in schoolwork. They do not relate well with each other and misbehave whenever they get the least chance.

Dear learner, notice that these are just descriptions of what classroom climates can seem like and their effects. Every teacher may have his or her style but having a supportive class means that there should be

friendliness, sharing knowledge, enjoying group and individual work, helping each other and behaving like a happy family. This is the kind of climate every teacher should try to have. The way to get this is to try to get the cooperation of learners.

2.1.4: Creating a Positive classroom climate

It is important for the teachers to create a healthy and safe classroom climate so that the students can achieve what they are capable of. A hostile climate will just crush the spirits of the students. How can teachers create such a climate? Let us discuss this. A positive classroom climate for teaching can be achieved through the following methods:

1. Develop and reinforce classroom rules and norms that clearly support safe and respectful behavior. Having classroom rules helps you create a predictable, safe learning environment for your students. Rules give your students clear boundaries and opportunities to practice self-regulation and make good choices. When students feel safe and respected both emotionally and physically, they are able to focus better on learning.
2. Promote positive peer relationships. You want to create an environment where your students support and are kind to one another. Some ways you can do this are:
 - Notice and reinforce casual positive interactions between students on a daily basis.
 - Deliberately plan relationship-building activities and games that encourage positive interactions. These can be long-term projects, or short and simple games designed for students to get to know each other better.
 - Pay attention to the social dynamics of your classroom. Do some students have trouble making friends? Do some students have trouble getting along with others? Who has a lot of friends? Who has few friends? Interviewing your students one-on-one can help you identify students that have stronger or weaker social connections. This can inform your seating arrangements, guide your grouping and pairing decisions, and assist you in helping students form new networks of friends.
 - Have class meetings. Class meetings provide a safe environment in which students can discuss with you and each other topics that are important to them. You and your students can get to know each other better and build relationships through open discussions on subjects like: Following Rules, How to Get Help, Including Others at Recess, Solving Playground Problems, etc. This helps create a positive classroom climate built on trust and respect.

3. Nurture positive relationships with all students. You need to let your students know that you not only care about their progress in the classroom, you also care about them as human beings. Some ways you can do this are:

- Greet your students by name every time they walk in the door. This lets them know that you notice and care that they are there.
- Use warm, inclusive behaviors with your face, body, and words each day. Smile! Ask, “How are you feeling?” Look at your students. Notice and reinforce their positive behaviors with encouraging words.
- Ask your students personal questions that will help you get to know them and what’s happening in their lives outside of school. “How was your soccer game last night?” “Is your grandma feeling better?”
- Notice changes in students’ physical and emotional behaviors. Changes may indicate a student is in need of additional emotional support. Provide or find support for that student as needed.
- Spend and keep track of individual time with each one of your students over a set duration (such as each month).

Now, dear learner, is there a way you can see how well your classroom climate is doing? Yes! Check in with your children. Ask them if they feel safe in your class. Are students in our class kind to each other? Do students in our class follow the rules? Make adjustments as necessary based on your students’ feedback to ensure a positive learning environment for them.

Summary

In this session we have discussed the meaning of classroom climates and what we should consider as we try to create such a climate in our classes such as considering the individual differences in children including those with special needs as well as recognising the background differences of students. We have also looked at the forms of classroom climates including the open, autonomous and controlled climates. We ended the session with a discussion on the ways to create a productive classroom climate. It is hoped that you have gathered some valuable information from this session to improve your work in the classroom.

SESSION 2: Classroom rules and regulations

Introduction

Effective teaching requires a number of important elements to support the activity. These include a well-organized classroom, a businesslike attitude, motivated pupils working diligently at their learning tasks

and an atmosphere free from distractions and interruptions. Without these elements it will be difficult for teachers to be effective in teaching. In this session we will discuss one critical necessity in ensuring effective teaching, which is the setting and management of classroom rules and regulations.

Objectives

1. Explain the guidelines to follow in setting classroom rules and regulations
2. Identify the kinds of classroom rules
3. Give the importance of setting rules and regulations for your class.

2.2.1: The nature of classroom rules

Emmer et al (1997) stated that a rule identifies general expectations or standards. In stating such rules or expectations the teacher needs to be clear and specific. The function of a rule is to encourage good behaviour or prevent an unacceptable behaviour. Remember that rules must be based on the belief that children are in school to study and learn. They should therefore be in the interest of developing or controlling behaviour that will help to achieve this. Now, remember that in the classroom, both teachers and children have the capacity to make life very difficult for each other. Therefore in setting and managing rules the teacher must consider the need to keep a positive relationship with the children despite these rules. Rules should not be seen as a show of teacher power. If teachers set and manage rules in a way that children see as 'fair', they are more likely to cooperate in making the teacher successful. This is the reason why teachers sometimes need to negotiate and build consensus on some of the rules they set. It also means that when the rule is no longer needed, the rule should be discarded or changed.

2.2.2: Guidelines or suggestions for setting classroom rules

1. In setting classroom rules you first need to find out what the school rules are. This is because some of the rules may already be covered by school rules and you do not need to repeat them. For instance if the school rules says already forbids children from chewing gum in the class, you do not repeat this for class rules. Therefore the first class rule may simply be "obey all school rules".
2. Confer with other teachers in setting rules for your class. You will not like your children comparing the rules they face to what is happening in other classes. Also it is better the rules cover how children are expected to behave no matter the class.
3. It is better to have a few short general rules instead of a long list of complicated rules. Children often break rules before they forget them. A short simple rule such as "only one person talks at a time" is good because it covers many occasions where talking occurs.

4. As much as possible, rules should be stated in positive terms instead of negative terms. For example it is better to write “Only one person talks at a time” than to say “Do not talk when someone is talking”. Also “respect the privacy of other children” is better than “do not disturb other children” who are working.
5. Rules should be written down and posted in the classroom. When you only tell the students the rules is not as effective as when you post them in the classroom and refer to them whenever necessary, like when the rule is broken.
6. Make sure you obey all the rules even though you are the teacher. Learners need good role models. It is difficult to expect them to obey rules if you do not obey them. For instance if taking food or drinks in the class is not allowed then you should not be eating in the class as well.
7. You may want your students to add one or two rules of their own to the rules you have identified. If you involve students in the process of setting rules, it will make them feel more responsible. However, keep in mind that there are some limitations in this. For instance, many classroom rules are so important that you cannot leave them to students to decide.
8. Academic behaviour should not appear on your list of rules. Such things as doing homework, neatness in writing or providing correct answers should not be included. Rules help in maintaining classroom discipline which is about behaviour and not academic performance.

Dear learner, you will discuss these suggestions in your face-to-face and may add more of your own. You may also compare them when what is happening in our schools to see whether they will work. However as you set rules for your classroom, let us recognize that there are two kinds of rules. These are what we will look at next.

2.2.3: The two kinds of rules

The first kind of rules is general rules. General rules are those that cover a number of behaviours. An example of this has been cited in the suggestions above. Other examples are rules like-

- ✓ Take care of school property
- ✓ Be polite and helpful
- ✓ Keep the classroom clean
- ✓ Be of good behaviour in the library.

The advantage of general rules is that they offer flexibility in that a great deal of behaviour can be covered by a few general rules. The disadvantage of general rules is that they need to be well explained otherwise students may not know exactly what behaviour are acceptable and not acceptable in the

classroom. For example, students must be told that respecting others includes no hitting, no stealing, no teasing and so on.

General rules are more successful when used by experienced teachers who have learned how to encourage good classroom behaviour over the years. These teachers do not shout at or get angry at children. They use gestures or cues about good behaviour to show their displeasure.

The second kind is specific rules. Specific rules are rules that cover only one behaviour and are straight to the point. They include rules such as –

- ✓ Be in class on time
- ✓ Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself
- ✓ Listen to instructions carefully
- ✓ Have all materials ready to use when the bell rings
- ✓ Use polite language when addressing other children in class.

The advantage of specific rules is that they clearly state the expected student behaviour. The disadvantage of specific rules is that you might end up with a long list of rules. This is not helpful so you should decide which ones are most important and must have good classroom management skills to be effective.

Specific rules are probably better for new and inexperienced teachers. They can also be used by an experienced teacher looking for a better discipline system. However, note that you can always move from specific rules to general rules during the school year as the students gradually learn how they are expected to behave.

2.2.4: Why classrooms should have rules

1. Rules enable you to make an effective use of class time as everyone knows what to do and what not to do. It makes your lesson run like a well-oiled machine.
2. Rules make the classroom businesslike. They give the classroom a work-oriented atmosphere with everyone working to achieve objectives.
3. Rules make learners feel that classroom work is serious and everyone remains focused.
4. Rules help to prevent misbehavior. There is a saying that it is easier to prevent a ship from sinking than to save a sinking ship. Rules are preventive and if they are well understood and accepted, there will be minimal misbehavior in lessons.
5. Rules make the teacher confident in teaching. Teaching activities will run smoothly and this will give pleasure and confidence to the teacher. You refer to the rule whenever a child is trying to

misbehave and this is often enough to stop it. Therefore teachers are less frustrated and more confident.

Now, you will be expected to discuss these in your face-to-face and you can assist best with your own experiences if you are teaching in the classroom. This will help you understand better the importance of using rules.

Summary

The most successful classes are those in which the teacher has a clear idea of what is expected from learners and learners have a clear idea of what is expected from them. Providing such a setting for learning is called effective classroom management. One essential is the establishment and maintenance of classroom control. Classroom control involves two issues; steps for preventing inappropriate behavior and responding to inappropriate behaviour. In this session we have discussed the main task of the teacher in class control which is setting classroom rules and regulations. We have looked at what classroom rules are, the suggestions for establishing classroom rules, the kinds of rules to establish and the importance of setting classroom rules. It is hoped that you will make use of these ideas in running your class. Good luck on this.

Session 3: Decision making in teaching and managing the classroom

Introduction

In the last session, remember a statement was made that “preventing a ship from sinking is easier than is saving a sinking one”. In teaching and making a classroom no one should expect to be perfect. However, it is estimated that as many as ninety percent of class problems are teacher-caused and preventable. To avoid making mistakes in the classroom, you need good decision making. You need to know both the potential errors and always make a quick reflection of how will behave in relation to them. This is what decision making in the classroom is about. In this session we will look at some important issues about decision making and then make a list of the good and bad decisions that can affect your effectiveness as a teacher.

Objectives

1. What is the meaning of ‘decision making’
2. Identify the issues that teachers take decisions on
3. Explain the skills teachers need in order to take effective decisions

2.3.1: What is decision making about?

Decision making involves the thinking skills needed in choosing the best response from several options. It involves considering the advantages and disadvantages in the several possible options and taking a final decision on what to do in a given situation. Remember that you need to also consider the consequences of the action you choose. To take a good decision you must have the necessary knowledge on the issue. For you to have enough information to make a good decision, you need to have the ability to observe, interpret, compare alternatives and analyze information before making a judgement and taking a decision.

Teachers take a lot of decisions about instructional factors as well as the learner. They teach and manage the routine disruptions children cause in the classroom at the same time. In this mix they will probably take one decision every two minutes. Sometimes these decisions are taken on the spot with limited time to think about them. Let us look at the general issues that a teacher should take decisions on.

2.3.2: Issues teachers need to take effective decisions on

- What content to teach: The syllabus states the topics to be covered. However the specific sub-topics, what issues are relevant or not relevant and how deep to go in teaching content are all aspects the teacher needs to decide on. The teacher also has to decide where he can get the needed content to make him teach effectively.
- What the teacher will do to facilitate the acquisition of that learning: The teacher must decide on the methods and strategies to use in teaching and also on how to motivate students in learning. Also decisions have to be taken on how to get learners on task with minimum distractions.
- What to use in determining that students demonstrate learning has occurred: This means the objectives you set for each lesson and how you will assess to find out if they have been achieved.
- What materials to use in making your lesson effective: This includes decisions about what materials are relevant for the topic, where to get them from, how to present them in the lesson and when to present them. The teacher must have the materials needed to make learning effective.
- What plan to put in place for each lesson: Decisions here contain the merging of all decisions mentioned earlier into a coherent plan. You have to decide here how to sequence the activities as well.
- How to ensure that no child is left behind: Decisions need to be taken, sometimes instantly, about how to ensure that all learners are involved and all challenges learners are facing are considered and handled. The teacher needs to do this to make the classroom climate a supportive one.

2.3.3: Skills needed for effective decision taking

Dear learner, if you look at the variety of decision areas mentioned above you realize that the teacher needs to have certain skills in order to be effective as a decision taker. Let us mention some of them here.

1. Analytical skills: These are the skills needed to break down formation into the smaller parts that it contains, think about these parts more carefully and draw conclusions from them. In taking decisions the teacher needs to understand the detail and think about them more carefully.
2. Creativity skills: These skills are there when a teacher is able to use imagination, or the ideas he or she has, to create something new or take new actions that solve an issue satisfactorily.
3. Facilitation skills: Facilitation skills are the abilities the teacher uses to support learners in ways that make them to progress and succeed. These include providing the learners with resources and opportunities to perform.
4. Collaboration skills: These are the skills you use when working with others to achieve a common goal or goals. They include behaviours and attitudes that make teamwork easy and successful.
5. Leadership skills: These are skills that make a teacher able to lead learners in the classroom. They include the actions, abilities, attitudes and behaviour of the teacher that make the learners willing to be influenced by him or her.

Dear learner, you need to discuss at your face-to-face how these can make your teaching more effective. If you discuss them you will realise that throughout your progress in learning, and improving yourself, you will need these skills in to succeed. In fact, you can say that apart from job skills, these are the success skills in life.

2.3.4: Some decisions educators have made about teaching

Now that we have identified the key skills required of a teacher to be a good decision taker, let us next have a discussion exercise. Let us find reasons for some decisions that have been taken by some educators in the past. Our previous discussions mean that to be a successful classroom teacher you need to plan your lesson thoughtfully and thoroughly, provide students with a pleasant and supportive atmosphere and prevent distractions, interruptions, and disturbances. Some teachers have decided on some general tips to achieve these. You are expected to discuss these in your face-to-face sessions and try to figure out what made them take these decisions. They include the following:

- Emphasize the positive rather than the negative.
- Require students to raise hands and be acknowledged before responding.
- Do not allow students' hands to be raised too long.

- Do not spend too much time with one student or one group. Monitor the entire class.
- Gain the students' attention before beginning a new activity.
- Do not pace your talk and learning activities too fast.
- Do not use a voice level that is always either too loud or too soft.
- Do not stand too long in one place.
- Do not sit while teaching.
- You should not be too serious. Create some fun.
- Do not use the same teaching strategy or combination of strategies day after day.
- Use silence (wait time) after asking a content question.
- Use facial expressions and body language effectively.
- Rely less on talking to achieve classroom control.
- Ensure interaction with the whole class.
- Do not wait to collect student's exercises before assigning them something else to do.
- Avoid using "Shh" as a means of quieting students.
- Position yourself in the classroom effectively.
- Never use threats.
- Avoid using global praise. It does not help.
- Avoid verbally reprimanding a student across the classroom. You may do so privately and politely.
- Avoid interact with only a "chosen few" students. Rather spread interactions around to all students.
- Learn and use student names.
- Always give students a pleasant greeting on Monday or following a holiday and remind them to have a pleasant weekend or holiday.
- Do not overuse punishment for classroom misbehavior. Try alternatives.

Summary

We have come to the end of this all important session. One thing we need to remember about this topic is that your success in life and in teaching depends on your decision making skills. We have looked at the meaning of decision making, as well as the issues that teachers make decisions on such as content, materials to teach with, the way to teach and how to assess the performance of children. We also discussed the skills needed for decision taking and finally looked at a few of the prescriptions on how teachers should act in teaching, for you to discuss the kind of thinking that went into those decisions. It is

hoped that you have benefitted from this session and will use the ideas to improve your skills in decision making in the classroom.

SESSION 4: Interaction and communication in the classroom

Introduction

Teaching and learning in the classroom is done through communication. Communication is the sending and receiving of messages by one or more persons with some effect and with the opportunity for feedback. For the communication to have effect, it should be well sent, well understood, and well-acted on. The quality of communication is the most important factor that determines the quality of teaching and learning. The nature of communication in the classroom is what makes the content of learning either friendly or unfriendly. The teacher communicates effectively with the class on learning content, motivation, finding out learner needs and managing learning management. All these together make communication the process that mediates between the teacher and the learner. In this unit we will be discussing the nature of communication in teaching, the different aspects of interaction between teachers and learners in the classroom and how teachers can make communication effective.

Objectives

1. Tell the importance of Interaction and communication in the classroom
2. Identify the forms of classroom interaction and communication
3. Tell when the various form of interaction are used in class activity
4. Explain the importance of the various form of classroom interaction

2.4.1: The nature of communication in the classroom

Teachers often do most of the talking in classrooms and children do most of the listening. Teachers do not really listen to what children are saying or not saying. They are not certain when children are receiving or not receiving the content of communication properly. Because they are not listened to, children do not find lessons to be a friendly experience. Children therefore seem happy when teachers are absent. They are happy when lessons are reduced to mere conversation with little teaching content. This is very damaging to learning and performance.

Teachers communicate information to learners by talking, that is, through Verbal communication. Verbal communication refers to the actual or spoken words and their meanings. There are certain elements in this verbal communication which make it more or less effective. These elements together are known as vocal communication. They include voice firmness, loudness, modulation, tone, tempo, pitch. Each of these can make verbal communication capture more or less attention. However learning does not only

take place through teacher talk or words. Nonverbal actions sometimes determine whether or not learners understand what is being said. Nonverbal communication includes nonlinguistic, facial and body language. It also includes teacher movements, gestures, pauses, silence and some vocal cues. All such actions contain some cues to learners about what the teacher likes or does not like. Dear learner, you will realize from the nature of communication we have laid out that it is not a simple action as we think. In courses you will encounter later you will look more at the communication process to understand it better. Let us now turn our attention to the importance of communication in classroom teaching and learning.

2.4.2: Importance of communication and interaction in learning

- It can make learning content friendly or unfriendly
- Makes learners more responsible through inspiration
- Improves thinking skills
- Improves critical thinking
- Improves creative thinking.
- Improves learner confidence
- Improves logical and deductive thinking
- Improves listening skills

You will discuss these benefits of interaction and communication during your face-to-face meetings. Please note that gaining these benefits are not automatic. It depends on the way you conduct the interaction. If you do not ensure cordiality and good behaviour in the interaction, these benefits may be lost. Now let us discuss more on the forms of classroom interaction. This will expose you to how to use interaction in the classroom.

2.4.3: Forms of classroom interaction and communication

1. Teacher-student interaction and communication

Teacher-pupil interaction is the communication that takes place between the teacher and pupils, which is geared towards getting pupils to understand and perform learning tasks presented to them. For this to be effective, a conducive atmosphere must exist, so as to enable freedom of expression of views in a tension free classroom. It is also very important for the teacher in this kind of relationship to use praise and other forms of rewards to encourage pupil's to respond and co-operate.

Teacher –pupils interaction in the classroom is centered on the give and take strategy known as questioning. A question is a statement, which demands a response. Therefore, as the teacher asks

questions and pupils respond, so much information is exchanged for learning to take place. We will say more about questioning later. Some ways by which teacher-child communication takes place in the classroom include:

- When using questioning
- During Brainstorming
- During group work and projects
- When emphasizing speaking in the class.
- When using confidence boosting strategies such as motivation.
- When giving special attention to individuals.
- When planning lesson activities with children

2. Student-student interaction

Student-student interaction is the communication that takes place between the pupils, which is geared towards getting them to understand and perform learning tasks presented to them. Sometimes they interact in pairs or in small groups of 4 to 8 pupils. Once again, just as in teacher-pupil interaction, a cordial atmosphere of friendliness, where children like each other is necessary to make this effective.

Some avenues of child-child interaction and communication in classroom include:

- Informal group activity - pairs, dyads, buzz groups.
- Formal group activity – Small and large group discussions, debates, panel presentations.
- Group projects.
- Class and Group competitions.
- In playing educational games
- Group reading
- Role playing

3. Whole class interaction

Do you often teach pupils together without considering group and individuals? Have we you been instructing the whole class as a unit and at the same time? This is often so in the classroom in Ghana. We call this the whole class interaction. Whole class interaction is the type or method of instruction by which the teacher handles all the pupils together and manages them as a unit without putting them into groups. The teacher involves all the pupils at once, saying the same things to them at the same time and at the same speed. The following are some of the characteristics of whole class interaction

- The teacher gives instruction and manages the whole class as a unit.

- The teacher identifies the pupils need and sets a standard, which he expects every pupil to reach. The teacher then organizes instruction towards the set standard.
- Pupils must be of fairly equal ability, age and experience.
- The teacher involves all the pupils at once, saying the same things at the same time and speed and engaging them in the same activities.

Whole class interaction is the usual way of teaching because it has some advantages. These include the following:

- Children gain academically and are happy to learn together.
- It is economical since it saves time, effort and money as one teacher can teach many children.
- As children go through the same experiences, they realize they have a common goal.
- This makes them co-operate with each other and develop a team spirit.
- It enables whole class discussions. This is important because they exchange views which help in learning. It is also easier to correct common errors and handling common difficulties of children..
- Sometimes children are made to compete with each and his motivates them to do well.
- It becomes easy for the teacher to use some ways of exciting pupils to learn such as by praising them. Praise is more effective when the whole class witness it.

4. Small group interaction

This is the approach whereby the teacher divides the pupils or students into small groups for the purpose of reviewing information or solving problem. In this situation each group has a leader and a secretary for the execution of task given. Please note that grouping is always done to serve a purpose. Therefore it requires careful planning. You will expect the different groups to sit at separate places to work. It is not possible for you to be with all of them at the same time. This means that the task you give each group must be clearly explained. Another important issue you must note about grouping is that the number of members should not be too many or too small. It is believed that groups of five to seven are good. The best number will however depend on the kind of activity you expect them to do. How do you put them in groups? There are a number of ways to put them into groups. These are usually types of groups. The following are the common ones:

- Ability grouping is when teachers put high performing pupils together in their own groups, average pupils together in their own groups and low performing pupils together in their own groups.

- Mixed grouping is when each group is made up of a mixture of high, average and low performing pupils.
- Social/friendly grouping is when you put pupils who are friends together in groups, such as for a project.
- Random grouping is when you put pupils in groups without any consideration.
- Interest grouping is where you put pupils of the same interest together in one group, maybe to do a project in their area of interest.

There are some advantages in organizing small group interactions. These include the following:

- It makes teaching flexible because different topics can be covered at the same time during group work.
- Pupils learn to work as a team, thus creating the spirit of co-operation
- It encourages the active participation of all pupils in class work.
- It gives group leaders practice in social responsibility.
- It breaks the monotony of class teaching and offers pupils more stimulating class activities.
- Where materials and equipment are scarce, the group method is the best to use in class interaction.
- It develops in pupils self-reliance and discourages their over dependence on the teacher for all knowledge.

5. Individual interaction

Individual interaction in teaching is the type of classroom interaction, which allows the teacher to offer assistance to individual pupils. When this is done, it enables pupils to work at their own pace. This method of teaching addresses the individual differences of pupils. When used properly, it helps each individual pupil who has a problem, to master a part of the course. In individual interaction, the teacher spends time exclusively with one pupil, discussing work done and the progress made.

Individual interaction has certain features or characteristics. These include the following:

- Learning is made a personal activity in this type of interaction
- The individual learner is helped to master each part of the content before the next one is tackled.
- Time is spent exclusively with one pupils discussing work done.
- The individual will have to be encouraged consistently

- At the end of the whole exercise, the pupil takes a assessed, and is provided with instance feedback on performance.

You realize from discussing these features above that it will require great effort from the teacher to do that. This is true, but it is used all the same because it has great benefits. These include the following:

- It caters for individual differences because it allows children to learn at their own pace and are not put under pressure to cope with others.
- Children are more responsible for their own learning. This makes them learn to take initiative.
- It promotes independent learning.
- The teacher gets to know each child better and can identify their strengths and weaknesses and provide appropriate remedies.
- The child receives better personal attention since the teacher knows each child's special needs.
- Individualized teaching ensures the full participation and involvement of pupils in the lesson.
- It enables the teacher to monitor each pupil's progress closely since regular feedback is available.
- It is also very useful for reading lessons.
- There is opportunity for the child to complete against himself and develops real sense of achievement, self-esteem and security.

Individual interaction is difficult to organize with all children. However, it is important that some children in the class with special needs are identified and helped through individual interaction to make progress.

Summary

In this important session we have discussed an issue which is responsible for determining effective or ineffective teaching in the classroom. This is how interaction is made possible in teaching and learning. There will be more to study about this in another session but in this one we have covered what interaction and communication means. We have also looked at the forms of interaction such as teacher-child and child-child interaction as well as their features. In child-child interaction we went further to look at different ways of grouping children to have effective child-child interaction. We hope you enjoyed the session and will make good use of it in your classrooms.

UNIT 3: Teacher Planning

Unit Introduction

Planning is at the centre of teacher. You cannot succeed as a teacher without careful planning. Many students are put under your care to learn many things. This is not easy but you can only make it easy through planning. Planning involves both knowledge of the way to plan and the content of the subjects, but it also involves some and psychological issues such as the nature of the children, the environment they come from and what they are learning for. In addition to this planning includes designing lesson plans for teaching, planning how you will deliver and how you will assess. Also, teachers have the responsibility to respond to students needs and interests and have to plan how to do this. All these descriptions show that teachers plan for a variety of reasons. This is what we will cover in this unit. We will discuss the various aspects of teacher planning, what they are meant for and how they are done. It is hoped that you will find it interesting.

Objectives

1. Explain the factors that influence teacher planning
2. Describe the components of year planning.
3. Describe the components of weekly plans
4. Describe the structure of a daily lesson plan.

SESSION 1: Factors that influence teacher planning

Introduction

Teacher planning is a complex process. This means that many factors have to be considered in doing it. The factors each have their various content and character. In this session we are going to discuss the factors that go into teacher planning in general and at all levels of teaching. This will enable you understand the planning issues that are involved when we look at specific actions teachers need to take. You will therefore need to pay close attention to these factors.

Objectives

1. Identify the student characteristics that influence teacher planning
2. Identify the content characteristics that influence teacher planning
3. Identify the context characteristics that influence teacher planning
4. Identify the teacher characteristics that influence teacher planning

3.1.1: Learner factors in planning instruction

A teacher needs to know and consider the nature of your learners in order to plan effectively to teach them. You should not overestimate or underestimate their abilities. If you do not consider the

characteristics of your learners in planning to teach, they will find your teaching either to be too boring and simple or too high for them to understand it. The characteristics of the learner that influence teacher planning include the following:

- The age and level of development of your pupils: This includes their age. The type of activities you engage pupils in will depend upon their age and level of maturation. Also the kind of content should not be beyond their thinking ability and this depends on their ages.
- The intellectual ability of learners: This can help you to decide the activities that may suit the intellectual ability of our pupils so that they will not become frustrated. Teachers have many sources from which they can find out the intellectual ability of their learners. You will be exposed to this in later years if you studies.
- The Socio-economic background: Here, we mean where the pupils live, the main occupation of their parents and the major occupation of the area should affect the decisions you take in planning to teach. For instance, the learning activities as well as examples you will use may depend upon the kind of socio-economic background the pupils come from.
- Relevant previous knowledge (RPK): When teachers are planning for their lesson, they use the class level they are teaching to assume the things they ought to know, which their previous knowledge is. This is wrong and teachers should therefore put in an activity at the beginning of the lesson to find the R.P.K of the pupils.
- The attitude, interest and motivational characteristics of pupils. For instance learners who are highly motivated and work well together will require more group work than the teacher leading them most of the time.

3.1.2: Content factors in planning instruction

The content of the subjects have several components that can influence the teacher's plans. These include:

- The nature of the content. Some subject content is mainly facts. Science and social studies contains a lot of facts. Some subjects have mental procedures like mathematics. Other subjects teach about attitudes and values like religious studies. The teachers planning in terms of the activities and instructional materials to use will depend on the nature of the content.
- The syllabus coverage. The syllabus contains information to be taught. Some topics may be broad and others may be narrow. Some topics may require more detail and others less detail. This will influence the teachers planning especially of how much time to use on each topic.
- The relationships between the subject content. Some subjects are related. Also in many cases the teacher can recognize some relationships in subjects that do not even seem related out of

experience. This will influence teacher planning so that you can refer learners to how content in one subject can be used in another subject.

- The objective of the topic. Objectives are written in relation to the content of the lesson. The objectives could be broad or narrow and specific. The broad forms are known as educational objectives which cover what the learners will be expected to do when they finish school. The narrow and specific forms are instructional objectives. These cover what the learner is expected to do at the end of a specific lesson. Both broad and narrow objectives refer to the content of the subjects and influence teacher planning.

In general, these content factors influence various planning actions include the amount of time to use for the various topics, the activities to use in achieving the objectives and the materials to use in teaching the content.

3.1.3: Instructional context factors that influence planning

The instructional context includes characteristics of the classroom as well as any characteristics as well as any characteristics of the school and the community that may influence teacher planning. These include the following:

- The materials available in a particular learning environment. For instance, the materials you will use in teaching a particular topic in a particular locality may differ from another. This factor should be considered planning for teaching at many levels.
- The conditions of the classroom form another part of the learning environment. If for example a classroom has inadequate furniture you can decide to take some lesson outdoors. Also the size of the class, lighting and ventilation conditions are important. If such conditions are not satisfactory you may need to plan for more outdoor activities. The social climate of the classroom is part of the instructional context of your teaching.
- The immediate environment of the classroom has other issues that can influence planning. These include nearness to a noisy environment or a busy road.
- The scheme of work and time table is another instructional context factor that can influence your planning. It is better if certain topics come before others. You will need to know if the learners have already learnt a topic on the scheme which has given them some knowledge to help understand the next one. You will also be interested in whether you are teaching the topic in the morning or afternoon when you are planning.

You need to note that these instructional context factors discussed here are and not all you need to consider. There are other definitions of the learning context which are broader and include the

socioeconomic background and activities of the community. You will learn more about these in later courses.

3.1.4: Teacher factors that influence planning

Each teacher bring to the classroom has a different nature and this directly or indirectly influences his or her planning. Some of them include-

- Behaviour characteristics. For example a teacher who cannot tolerate noise might plan for more individual work.
- Teaching experiences. Teachers, especially reflective teachers, learn a lot from their previous experiences and this will influence their planning.
- Beliefs about teaching. Teachers who believe that teaching is facilitation and the teacher is a helper may plan in a different way from one who believes that the children know nothing and he has to tell them everything.
- Ideas about children and how they learn. A teacher who believes that children learn best by talking about their ideas will plan for more discussions.

Summary

Dear learner, in this session we have discussed the learner, content, instructional context and teacher factors that influence teacher planning in many ways. We have put them into these four groups or categories so that we can further explain them. However you might have noticed that even though each of them affect teacher planning, the categories also interact with each other. For instance some learner characteristics are involved in context and content factors. It is because of these interactions that you look at what is happening in a classroom as a whole. You can walk into five different classrooms and see entirely different types of lessons happening. This is what makes teaching so exciting and creative. It is hoped that you have followed the discussion here very well and are ready to do a better job in your classroom.

SESSION 2: Yearly planning for lessons

Introduction

Teachers should engage in different levels of planning. We have yearly planning and weekly planning. However we also have course and unit planning which and then weekly and daily planning. In this session we will be discussing yearly and weekly planning. No matter what the level of planning, decisions must be made with respect to the coordination of the course content, instructional materials and special needs of students. Therefore, in this unit we will be looking at these issues as well. That means we will be discussing other issues of planning such as team planning, teacher-student planning the

selection of instructional materials, and provisions for students who have special needs. Enjoy the session

Objectives

1. Explain the purpose of yearly planning
2. Identify and explain the elements in yearly planning
3. Identify the guidelines in planning for inclusivity in teaching.

3.2.1: Yearly planning

Yearly planning is long term in nature. It involves organising the content, putting it into sequence and drawing a schedule of when each will be acted on during the entire year. Yearly planning is one of the most important types of planning because if it is not well done it can create a problem for other levels of planning. Unfortunately yearly planning is often overlooked by new and inexperienced teachers. Teachers who fail to do any type of yearly planning often get lost as they proceed to teach because they do not know where they are going to with their instruction, so they cannot tell where they have reached at any point in time. When teachers fail to do yearly planning they miss the overall picture and as a result they fail to provide their pupils with any ideas of how one topic relates to another, throughout the year. Now, let us look at the purposes of yearly planning to enable us realize how important the issue is.

3.2.2: Purposes of yearly planning

Teams and individual usually engage in yearly planning for a number of reasons. These include –

1. To become familiar with the content to be taught. You can read more in advance on content you are not too familiar with.
2. To determine the sequence in which the content will be taught.
3. To include any new information, new materials or strategies that need to be added to what is already there.
4. To develop a rough schedule of when various topics will be taught during the year, such as during the first, second or third trimester.
5. To plan classroom routines.
6. To make adaptations to what is in the curriculum due to special circumstances you are facing in your locality or the needs of your pupils.

You need to discuss these during your face-to-face to get your examples of how these can be done. In yearly planning the teacher develops or writes out outlines of content, materials, activities, assessment and other documents that they will use throughout the year.

3.2.3: Elements of yearly planning

There are some elements involved in yearly planning. These elements tell us better how it is done and

what is involved. They include team planning, student-teacher planning and instructional material planning. They also include planning for inclusivity (children with special needs) and course planning. Let us now look at these individually.

1. Team Planning

Team planning can have tremendous value. For example, if all the social studies teachers were to coordinate their yearly plans, then the possibility of leaving out important topics or issues would be reduced. Careful planning as a team can make the activities you use much better. Team planning also facilitates coordination efforts among disciplines. The English literature teacher and the Social studies teacher, for example, could design their courses so that they were covering similar topics at around the same time. Students would have the opportunity to see the connectedness of the two disciplines.

Some countries such as the US, use interdisciplinary teams that plan as a group. These planning teams usually consist of a mathematics teacher, a science teacher, a language arts teacher, and a social studies teacher. In some schools, a reading teacher, and special education teacher may also be part of the team. These teachers plan for a common group of students. Team planning gives teachers the opportunity to engage in critical thinking and analysis. A team approach calls upon teachers to critically analyse the content of their respective courses so the concepts can be well understood. Teaming demands careful attention to detail so that each team member knows what to do, how to do it, and when to do it. In addition, it means that together they can evaluate content much better and ensure that plans are executed properly.

2. Teacher-Student Planning

Teachers can engage pupils from the Junior Secondary School level in the planning process. The extent to which pupils participate in the planning of their own learning activities varies greatly from classroom to classroom. In many classrooms, the only involvement students have is in the selection of class projects, report, and outside readings. However, by engaging students, the teacher gains insights into student interest and areas of weakness and strength. A teacher-student planning process promotes “ownership” of the curriculum. If students communicate that they already understand intended instructional material, they could be tested on the material. If, in fact, they do have a good understanding of the material in question, then valuable time and resources could be reallocated to other areas.

3. Instructional Materials planning

Essential to effective planning are the survey and preparation of available media and materials for instruction. Textbooks, audiovisual materials, supplementary reading materials, and supplies and equipment for group and individual projects should be examined and coordinated with your lesson. Spend time on reviewing films and computer software, review printed materials, and learn to use the

latest instructional technology. The use of a wide variety of instructional materials will improve your lessons and increase students' attention and interest. The use of videos and computer software in presenting examples of concepts, for instance, will serve as a lesson stimulus. We will address instructional media in detail in another session.

4. Planning for Students' with Special Needs

Some of your students will be slower academically, whereas others will be bright; some will be skilled socially, while others will be less interested in working with others. However, you must plan your instruction to fit the individual needs and interests of all students. Examples of lesson modifications include developing special worksheets to help teach difficult concepts, modifying assigned work, developing special study guides, giving oral exams, and obtaining and using special equipment with the physically handicapped or gifted.

Teachers with special students or mainstreamed students (handicapped students placed in regular classes) must learn to modify their plans and give differentiated assignments. You can do this by modifying or varying the length or difficulty of assignments. For example, in a science class, you might assign two tasks to your slower students, three tasks to your average students, and four or more to high-achieving and exceptional students. Similarly, you might require only half as much writing from English students who experience motor difficulties. Students occasionally might be allowed to assist each other or work together in groups.

Some guidelines for working with students who have special needs are as follows:

1. Gather information about the nature of the exceptional student's difference and how that difference might affect the learning process.
2. Get help from district special-education or resource experts.
3. Find out where you can get the equipment they need (e.g. print enlarger, Braille material, etc.)
4. Adapt the curriculum and your teaching strategies to better serve the needs of the exceptional students.
5. Individualize the curriculum as much as possible in your classroom.
6. Provide for the removal of barriers, both physical and psychological, that limit the full functioning of exceptional students in your classroom.

5. Course or subject planning

The most general type of planning you will perform as a classroom teacher is planning to teach the individual subjects and topics. Although in most cases the textbook forms the basic structure for such plans, it should not be the only one. Beginning teachers should use their textbooks and state-curriculum suggestions as instructional guides and should find other useful material to integrate into the basic text

structure. Experienced teachers, however, often structure their subjects and topics on the basis of experience and use the textbook and state-curriculum suggestions to supplement their experience base.

Summary

The components of planning need to be clearly identify and acted on individually to get a perfect whole. This session has exposed you to the necessary components of a yearly plan. We have looked at the purpose of yearly planning but have place emphasis on the element of yearly planning because these tell us how it should be operated using teams as well as student involvement. We have also focussed on planning for inclusivity which is very essential. We hope you have enjoyed this session and noted all the important factors in it.

SESSION 3: Unit, weekly and daily planning for lessons

Introduction

In planning for teaching, teachers, whether as a team or individually need to schedule the work at a number of levels. They need to produce teaching units related to their yearly plans, then break these down to weekly teaching plans and eventually use these to prepare daily lesson plans. This process is what we are going to present in this session. We will look at what planning at these levels comprises of and what makes them important.

Objectives

1. Identify the components of an effective teaching unit plan
2. Tell the coverage and purpose of weekly teaching plans.
3. Identify the components of a daily lesson plan
4. Give the reasons why the teachers needs to write a daily lesson plan

3.3.1: Unit planning

Courses are usually divided into a sequence of manageable units of study that represent portions of the year's work. Each unit is organized around a specific theme or topic, comprising a cluster of related concepts and ideas. For example, a unit in earth science might be titled "Plants," or a unit in English literature might be titled "The Short Story." Units provide a framework for the design of a course. In effect, a unit is a series of many intended learning activities and experience, unified around the theme or cluster of related concepts.

Unit planning can be deemed more critical than other levels of planning. The unit plan links the goals, objectives, content, activities, and evaluations you have in mind. These plans should be shared with students to provide the overall road map that explains where you are going. Such communication expresses to students what they are expected to learn.

The unit plan has several components. The plan is titled by the topic that represents the unifying theme for the unit. These topics may follow the chapter headings in your textbooks or the areas within your subject that the various curriculum guides direct you to cover. These topics could be derived through team planning or through teacher-student planning.

The plan should spell out your goals and specific instructional objectives. A somewhat detailed outline of the content should be included, as should learning activities appropriate to the content and to the learners. A list of needed instructional materials and resources should be provided. Finally, the methods you intend to use for evaluating student learning needs to be specified. More specifically, a well-constructed unit should include the following components:

1. Topic: presumably a subject suggested by a syllabus or textbook.
2. Goals and objectives: a list of your learning intentions in broad and specific terms.
3. Content outline: an outline of the material to be covered-with as much detail as you feel is needed-which should help clarify the subject and help you with the sequence and organization.
4. Learning activities: teacher and student activities-comprising introductory, developmental, and culminating activities-that, when arranged into a series of daily lessons, will lead to the desired learning outcome.
5. Resources and materials: a list of materials to be selected and prepared for the unit.
6. Evaluation: an outline of your evaluation procedure-including homework, test, and special projects-which should be planned and prepared prior to instruction.

Units vary greatly in scope and duration, depending on the class level and subject. Generally, they range in duration from a few days to a few weeks. There are several sources available for assisting teachers with their unit plans. In some countries, the syllabus is quite explicit, and the goals and topics that must be covered are mandated. When this is the case, the prescribed goals and topics are usually presented in terms of minimum requirements, so there is still plenty of justification for the careful planning of additional learning units. Even when a good deal of the course content has been predetermined, it is still necessary to plan the sequence, present the content, and test the outcomes. Some school districts might also have a mandated curriculum that must be included in the units plan.

The course textbook offers areas for unit planning. However, content must be selected and organized with regard to your goals and learners. You must recognize that a particular author's view of sequence, for instance, may not serve your needs of your students. Textbook are written for a wide audience and should be viewed as one of the tools for teaching a course, not as the course itself.

3.3.2: Weekly Plans

For most teachers, weekly planning is a fine tuning of their unit plans. In Ghana teachers usually engage in weekly planning to cover the whole term but with a weekly breakdown. Then they are revised during the weekend for the coming week. They are usually in specified books for that purpose and contain of a list of activities to be done in each day of the week. They are commonly called weekly forecast and involve columns which include the specified week references, teaching learning materials and remarks. The table below shows the format for the scheme of work also known as weekly forecast.

WEEK	WEEK ENDING	UNIT/ TOPICS	REF.	TLM	REMARKS

Purpose of weekly planning

Teachers engage in weekly planning for several reasons.

1. Weekly plans help teachers make adjustments in the unit plan for the year to take care of certain school schedules for the week such as sports, festivals and other external activities.
2. Teachers use weekly plans to make adjustments to their earlier unit plans to cover cases where, due to circumstances, topics that were to have been covered in the previous week were not covered.
3. They may be used for substitute teachers to be able to take over if the teacher is not well.
4. They are required by supervising officers.
5. Serves as a record of work for the period.
6. Put the syllabus in a more logical sequence.
7. Guides the teacher to read or research for specific information or knowledge.

Remember that this scheme should be flexible. You will be studying about the mechanics of how to prepare the scheme in later courses.

3.3.3: Daily Lesson Plans

Regardless of how well you have done your yearly, unit and weekly plans, it is your daily plans that really affect how well your lesson will go. The most detailed and specific type of plan is daily lesson plan, which simply defines the objectives and class activities for a single day. Thus, unit planning does not eliminate daily planning; rather, because the objectives, activities, experiences, and necessary materials have been specified in the unit plan; the daily lesson plan flows naturally out of the unit plan. However, the exact structure of the daily lesson plan depends on the type of lesson being designed.

Lesson plans should reflect the individual needs, strengths, and interests of the teacher and the students. Lesson planning should never be dictated by rigid standards that prevent and stifle creativity. Indeed, you will rarely carry out a lesson entirely as planned. You must anticipate what is likely to happen as you teach your planned lessons, and you must make modifications as needed. Good teachers expect to adjust their plans as they move along, and they have alternatives in mind in case they are needed. Needless to say, the fact that most plans must be modified as they are taught does not justify the avoidance of thorough initial planning. However, planning does not ensure success. The delivery counts for a great deal.

A good daily lesson plan should have;

- Mechanical Variables
- Objectives
- Relevant Previous Knowledge
- Advance Preparation
- Instructional resources
- Introduction
- Presentation stages
- Feedback, assessment
- Closure
- **Evaluation**

Now, dear learner, there is a lot you need to know about daily lesson plans. It is the main tool for effective teaching. For this reason it will be the focus of discussion in unit 4 of this course so we need not say more about it here.

Summary

Planning is a critical component of effective classroom instruction. Teachers plan alone or as a team. In doing this, they engage in yearly, weekly, unit and daily planning. Planning is not a guarantee that a lesson will go perfectly, but teachers who plan well increase their chances of being successful in the classroom. It is hoped that the discussion we have covered here will improve your desire to plan and deliver more effective lessons to the joy of your children.

SESSION 4: Selecting and using instructional resources

Introduction

If instruction is to achieve maximum effectiveness, learning experiences should be as direct as possible (for instance, through manipulation of objects, writing, and real-life situations). That is, students should be involved in “learning by doing” They should use as many of their senses as possible; when all the senses are engaged, learning is usually the most effective and the longest lasting. On the other hand, instruction can be provided through abstract experiences, in which students are exposed to words, numbers, and symbols. Abstract learning usually involves only one or two senses. In order to engage more senses, instructional materials of the right kind must be used and be used appropriately. In this session we will discuss the use of instructional materials in making teaching effective.

Objectives

1. Explain what instructional resources are.
2. Identify what to consider in selecting instructional resources for a lesson
3. Explain the importance of using instructional resources.
4. Describe how to make effective use of instructional resources.

3.4.1: What instructional resources are

We need to define instructional materials in the sense in which we are using it. We would say that instructional materials include any material which can be seen or heard and which contributes to the learning process. Other names for instructional materials are Audio-Visual aids, teaching aids and educational media.

Instructional resources are the collection of objects, and human and non-human resources that a teacher may use in teaching and learning situations to help achieve the desired goals of instruction. Most teachers have access to a variety of resources that can enhance teaching and learning. You sometimes hear the term ‘multimedia’. Multimedia means the presentation of instruction through any combination of teaching/learning materials such as written words, spoken words overhead transparencies, models, booklets, music, graphics, still images, video, computer, and various other hands-on materials.

The most common use of resources is to support “live” teaching in the classroom-for example, the textbooks, projectors, videos, and computers. The use of these instructional media can contribute to understanding, can motivate, can encourage participation, and can help maintain interest in a lesson. The effectiveness of the media depends on how the teacher organizes and uses them.

3.4.2: Selection of instructional resources

The selection of classroom materials is the responsibility of either individual teachers or committees. The selection of commercial materials, especially textbooks, are usually the responsibility of a district of

school professional committee, whereas the selection of materials for individual classrooms-magazines, pictures, models and so forth- is usually the responsibility of the teacher. The teacher is expected to make professional judgments about the appropriateness and worth of the materials to your students. Classroom materials should be carefully evaluated for their appropriateness against established criteria. At a minimum, the following general questions should be considered:

1. Do the materials fit your purpose and goals? Materials should fit your instructional intent as outlined in your unit and daily lesson plans.
2. Are the materials appropriate and well designed? The materials should be appropriate for basic school students and should be attractive, durable and appropriate in size. If it is in print, the print should be readable, with comfortable type size.
3. Is the reading level of the materials suitable for your students? Read through the materials and make a judgment on the level of readability.
4. Does the difficulty of the materials match the abilities of your students? Highly motivated students can usually handle more difficult materials.
5. Are the materials free of gender and cultural bias? This requires that you read through the materials and make a judgment.

3.4.3: Importance of Instructional Resources

- They save the teacher the trouble of providing lengthy verbal explanation.
- They attract the attention of pupils in what is being taught
- Instructional materials also provide an opportunity for pupils to participate in the lesson
- They also make it easier for pupils to understand what they are taught. Pupils in the Basic School learn best when we use concrete materials such as sticks for counting and performing mathematical operations. Also when pupils see, touch and hear what they are learning about, they understand it better.
- In using instructional materials, pupils communicate with each other and the teacher. As pupils get the opportunity to talk about the materials, describe what they see or what they are doing with them, they improve their ability to communicate. They also help to improve the vocabulary of pupils.
- Another purpose which is related to this is the ability to transfer or use what has been learnt in everyday life.
- The use of instructional materials also has the advantage of promoting the ability of pupils to remember what they have learnt for a long time. Each time the material gives them an additional mental picture. If an activity was involved, the active engagement of the learner further improves the ability to remember.
- The use of instructional materials also promotes self-learning. This means that pupils could be encouraged to learn on their own. This is due to the fact that they understand what they learnt

and are happy to practice it, which will also encourage further learning.

- Using instructional resources provides pupils with useful previous knowledge on which later learning can be based. After using good instructional materials in a lesson you may notice that several occasions would occur in later lessons whereby you can refer to the material you used to make pupils understand better. For instance, if you use a weighing scale once to teach, you would find later situations where you would continue to refer pupils to the instrument you once used.

3.4.4: Making effective use of instructional materials:

- First, you must try out the instructional materials you have prepared before using them in the classroom. This will help you to know for example, whether an experiment will work, or the materials will be sufficient for your pupils. Thus, the try-out will help you to know the possible problems that you are likely to encounter.
- Another way you can make effective use of instructional materials is that you must put your pupils into groups in situations where the materials are not enough to be shared among the children. For example, four children in one group with a set of instructional materials is better than a situation in which some of the pupils receive materials while others do not.
- Remember to present your instructional materials at the most productive part of the lesson. This is the time when the materials will make the greatest impression on the minds of the children. Let's consider a teacher who was teaching the topic, "parts of flowering plant", but completed the lesson before he remembered that there was specimen of a flowering plant he should have shown to the class. Do you think using instructional materials in this way, will have the desired impact?
- Create opportunity for pupils to work with the materials or manipulate them. This will help them to have a look at it, remember what they have seen and understand what they have learned better.
- After preparing and using the instructional materials, you should maintain and store them for future use. This will save the trouble and the cost of preparing new ones anytime you want to teach a particular topic.
- Face your pupils when using the materials as much as possible. Observe their reactions and attitude towards it.

Summary

In this session we have presented what instructional resources are what to consider in selecting instructional resources for teaching. You would have realized that you need to consider your pupils characteristics as well as the topic among other things. We have also discussed the importance of instructional resources and noted that they make pupils pay attention, take part in the lesson, enjoy your teaching and remember what you teach for a long time. This is what every teacher is hoping for. Finally we looked at how to use instructional resources effectively. It is hoped that you took note of this part carefully so that you can make good use of them in your teaching.

UNIT 4: Lesson planning

Unit Introduction

Lesson planning is the end result of all the other levels of planning. The yearly, unit, and weekly plans do not make daily lesson planning unnecessary; rather, because the objectives, activities, experiences and necessary materials have been specified in the earlier plans, the daily lesson plan flows naturally out of it. However the exact nature of the lesson plan depends on the type of lesson we want to teach. Lesson plans should reflect the individual needs, strengths and interests of the teacher and the pupils. This unit will present you with information for discussion on lesson planning. It is the reason why teachers teach well and you need to pay particular attention to the issues here.

Objectives

1. Describe the elements of a good lesson plan.
2. Explain the main elements of a good lesson objective
3. State the factors to consider in selecting learning activities.
4. Give the purposes of lesson evaluation.

SESSION1: Characteristics and components of a lesson.

Introduction

A lesson is the main source of school learning by pupils. It is expected to be effective, but this does not come easily. To be effective it is expected to have certain characteristics. This begins from the teacher's decision on what kind of lesson to teach. We will look at this here and also discuss the characteristics and components of a lesson. It is expected that you will take note of the actions each component represents so that you can build your lessons more effectively.

Objectives

1. What is the meant by a 'lesson'?
2. Tell the different kinds of lessons and the main purpose of each.
3. Describe the structure of a modern lesson.
4. Explain the components of a good daily lesson plan.

4.1.1: The nature of a lesson

Slavin (1991) states that a lesson is a process by which information, skills or concepts are communicated from the teacher to the students. **A lesson is a learning event comprising a**

series of sequenced steps involving interactions between learners and materials or teachers towards the achievement of stated goals of instruction. Teachers sometimes ask their pupils to find out things on their own, from other pupils or from sources like books and computers etc. These can provide important information for pupils. However the above mentioned are not the most common modes of learning in our schools. The process by which information, skills or concept are communicated from the teacher to students i.e., (a lesson) remains the major means for teaching and learning in schools. There are a number of different kinds of lessons based on the main purpose of the lesson. Let us look at them briefly.

4.1.2: Kinds of lesson

1. **A developmental lesson:** to teach new things to pupils..
2. **An inductive or deductive lesson:** a special form of developmental lesson used to develop a formula, law, rule or principle such as $(2\pi r)$. It deals with learner inquiry or investigation unlike the first one which focuses on teacher presentation.
3. **An appreciation lesson.** It is the kind of lesson that has the aim of capturing the feeling or attitude of pupils. As a teacher, if you want your pupils to appreciate a certain kind of good behavior, what you use is an appreciation lesson.
4. **A skill lesson.** This kind of lesson involves learning a procedural, cognitive or psychomotor performance.
5. **Revision lesson.** This is a lesson where the teacher revises all that he/she has taught the pupils so that they will understand it better.

We have mentioned about that a lesson involves a series of sequenced activities. This means that there are different things that happen in the process of a lesson. This gives the lesson a structure. Most lessons follow the same structure even though the content is different. The structure is what we indirectly use to write a lesson plan. Let us next look at the structure of a lesson.

4.1.3: The structure of a lesson

The structure of a lesson changes over time. During the last century the traditional forms of lesson structure made use of what was called the Herbatian steps (named after a great educator called Herbat). Since the 1990s this has gradually changed and it is no longer used. The current lesson structure is one proposed by Slavin. Slavin's steps were to be followed in a sequence as follows:

In the current lesson structure you should;

1. Give pupils an orientation to the lesson. Orientation can take the form of;

- an overview of the lesson
- Telling them the importance or use of what they are to learn
- Telling what would be expected of them in their course of the lesson.

2. Review skills needed for the lesson;

As a teacher you would want to make pupils recall and revise the relevant previous information. When this is done, it becomes recent or 'fresh' in their minds. The review activity can take the form of;

- Oral question or oral drill
- Written questions or quiz
- Teacher going over skills or concepts needed

3. Present new material

This is where new concept and skills are presented. Care must be taken when presenting new material to pupils. The sequence of presentation, the amount of explanation, visual and other materials you use and examples you cite would together determine how easily they would understand. The activities involved here are

- Presenting information
- Giving examples
- demonstrating skills
- Explaining concepts etc.

4. Question pupils

This is to identify concept that have been understood by pupils. Those misunderstood need to be identified and corrected. The teacher does this by;

- Posing question to pupils
- Inviting other pupils to comment on the answer their colleagues give.
- Correcting their misconceptions.

5. Provide an opportunity for them to practice the new information you have just taught.

This is where you give pupils the opportunity to practice what they have learned.

- Give pupils practice exercises.
- Give pupils the opportunity to practice new skills or use new information on their own.

6. Assess performance and give feedback

After giving exercises, the teacher should assess the level of mastery of pupils. This is done by providing pupils with a number of written questions in the form of an exercise or quiz.

7. Give distributed practice

Distributed practice here means giving pupils more practice exercise on the concept and skills they have learned. If they do not sufficiently practice what they learned they would not be able to remember after a short while. Homework is a usual way of providing distributed practice. The activities involved here are;

- Assign homework for distributed practice on new material learned.
- Check to ensure that the assignment has been done
- Review a variety of opportunities for pupils to use new material learned.

The steps here show the issues the teacher has to hold in his mind in taking children through the lesson. They do not show the activities learners will be engaged in. Such activity fall under the detail of presenting the new lesson and will be written in your lesson notes. Now, the next thing to remember is that you need some skills as a teacher to be able to conduct the lesson. Let us discuss these skills also briefly.

4.1.4: Essential skills in lesson delivery

1. You need to have sufficient knowledge and understanding of subject matter you are teaching.
2. You also need to use rewards and sanctions effectively. Rewards and praises and other motivating strategies are very necessary to keep basic school learners attentive and interested in your lesson.
3. Move swiftly from one activity to another. Wasting time in changing activities will lead to noise making by pupils.
4. Your oral speech must be loud and clear and you need to use simple language.
5. Good observation skills are necessary for you to notice children who are not paying attention, those who are engaged in different tasks rather than what you are all doing and those having challenges.
6. Maintaining pupils' interest and motivation as you teach, by using examples, moving from one place to another and creating humor once a while.
7. Addressing the needs of those with learning difficulties and gifted pupils in terms of subject matter content presented within the lesson

If you do all these and many more you will keep learners active in your lesson if you have prepared well. However the most important source of success in a lesson is how you plan for your lesson.

4.1.5: Lesson planning

This is the detailed plan of activities that the teacher will use to teach the lesson. It contains brief but sufficiently detailed step-by-step presentations of the actions and activities of teachers and students throughout the lesson period. In the absence of the original teacher a substitute teacher will use it and so it must be explicit enough.

Purpose of daily planning

1. Lesson plan enables the teacher to sequence what is to be taught. Writing the lesson plan will give you the opportunity to determine which activity should come first, which should follow.
2. Lesson plan enables the teacher to identify and gather materials required for teaching.
3. The teacher becomes confident in presenting the lesson. The teacher can only be confident when he/she knows what to teach.
4. It makes the teacher to research, read and consult some sources of information. This can make the lesson more interesting.

Features of a good lesson plan

A good lesson plan should have;

1. General information or background variable; this includes the date for the lesson, the subject, references with pages of books from which you made the references, the class, average age of pupils, number on roll, day, time and duration of the lesson. These variables provide information that helps you to decide on the appropriateness of lesson delivery, content and strategies.

2. Lesson Topic; the topic is the subject matter you are to cover in a lesson. Your topics should be short and concise. For example, parts of flowering plant (science) or adjectives (English).

3. Objectives; your objectives must state the value of the lesson to your learners. In other words, the objectives must state what skills, knowledge and attitude your learners are expected to acquire. Your lesson may have more than one objective depending on the time available. The teacher must remember to use performance verbs like list, state, write, discuss, name and identify in stating his/her objectives.

4. Relevant Previous Knowledge (RPK); the RPK consist of knowledge, skills, ideas and experience that your pupils have already acquired. This is the basis upon which you are going to build your new lesson. The RPK must not necessarily come from a previous lesson. It could be some general knowledge they have acquired from daily experience.

5. Introduction (set induction) : an activity used at the beginning of the lesson.

6. Teaching Learning Material (TLM). Indicates the teaching learning materials to be used in the lesson.

7. Teacher/Learner Activities; this refers to the things we are expected to do as a teacher in the course of a lesson. It includes the methods of teaching, use of TLM's, at the right time and in the right manner as well as other classroom interactions. These interactions may involve you

and your pupils or among pupils themselves.

8. Core points; core points are the skills, attitude, knowledge, ideas and other behavioural outcomes you want to develop in your pupils. They may simply be the subject matter content you expect your pupils to be conversant with. Your core point must be related to the objectives you have stated.
9. Evaluation; in the course of your teaching, it is expected to ask questions, give exercise in the course of your lesson, and after the lesson. These could be written or oral quizzes to pupils? These constitute the evaluation of the lesson. They form the basis for the remarks after the lesson. Evaluation helps you to determine whether you have achieved your stated objectives or not.
10. Remarks; remarks are written after delivery of the lesson to indicate the level of success achieved and difficulties faced.

Summary

The lesson is the end result of a series of hard work in planning and the beginning of hard work in delivering the lesson. In this session we have discussed the components of a lesson and mentioned the purpose of the various steps in a lesson proposed by Slavin, which is commonly used today. We have also presented the features of a good lesson plan but remember that most school districts or countries such as Ghana have their own formats that you need to follow in writing the plan. You will be introduced to the format for Ghana at your face-to-face.

SESSION 2: Writing instructional objectives

Introduction

Instructional objectives are sometimes called behavioural objectives. This is because they are behaviours that pupils are expected to display after going through the lesson. They have a special place in the lesson because they determine how the lesson will be conducted. The teacher and everyone else has to know what the end result of learning will be. In this session we are going to present you with the nature of instructional objectives, why they are important and the way they are written. This is a special skill you need to take note and it is hoped that you will enjoy the session.

Objectives

1. Give reasons why teachers need to write lesson objectives
2. Identify the kind of verbs used in writing lesson objectives and why such verbs are preferred.
3. Explain the elements of a good lesson objective.

4.2.1: Writing lesson objectives for teaching

Almost anything you try in the classroom will result in some type of learning, but not always desirable learning. To be effective, learning must have direction; it must have purpose. Your task would then be to decide on the specific learning techniques that will lead to the attainment of these. Thus, even though they are abstract, the purposes would be used to generate course content and related specific objectives. An objective is a description of instructional intent. It is measurable. Its accomplishment can be verified.

An objective is not a statement of what you plan to do; instead, it is a statement of what students should be able to do after instruction. It does not matter at all what the teacher does if students do not learn. Remember, the purpose of instruction is to get students to learn. Objectives, then, should place the emphasis on student outcome or performance.

4.2.2: Why teachers set learning objectives.

Teaching, can be seen as a six-phase process. Once the content to be taught has been selected, objectives must be written related to the selected content. The written objectives then set the framework for the instructional approach and the student evaluation. We write objectives for the following reasons:

1. **They set the Instructional Framework:** Objectives establish the framework for instruction; they compel you to provide the environment and sequence of activities that will allow students to reach the stated intent. For example, if your objective is the instant recall of specific information (such as the regional capitals of Ghana), your activities must apply to the recall of the information. If, on the other hand the objective is related to the use of information in problem solving, then practice in problem-solving procedures must be provided. Thus, objectives spell out general strategies and specific activities for their attainment. Objectives also prescribe exactly what skills or knowledge students must manifest as a result of instruction. In other words, your objectives will set the framework for the evaluation process.
2. **Communication of Intent:** Objectives also serve an important communication function. Through the use of properly written objectives, educators can show where students are, as a group or as individuals, with respect to the stated objectives. Administrators can communicate similar information to school boards or to the community at large. Objectives make it clear to students your expectations prior to instruction. Thus, when you communicate your objectives, students

know exactly what is expected of them, and they no longer have to guess what is important. They know whether it will be on the test.

3. **Teacher Accountability:** Teacher accountability means that teachers are responsible for the quality of their instruction and the progress of their students. Generally, teacher performance related to planning and instruction is measured through classroom-based observation and evaluation by administrators. Typically, student progress is measured by performance on nationally normed standardized tests. Teachers must show if they did the job they started out to do by their objectives. You must show that the intended learning outcome has taken place. You are being held accountable for the student’s acquisition of the desired learning as stated in the objectives.

This discussion on why teachers set learning objectives mean that it is essential such objectives are clear and measurable, because the evaluation will be determined by the objectives. That is, the evaluation must measure the outcome that is specified in the objective.

4.2.3: Stating Objectives

The primary purpose of school is to cause students to learn. Thus, as a result of your instruction, there should be a change in state within your students. This change in state must be overt (observable), with students acting differently than they did before being involved in the learning process.

Objectives must lay out everything you intend to accomplish but must not imply things you do not want to say.

Some verbs we use for stating Instructional Objectives

A	E	P
Add	Explain	pick
adjust	G	point
analyze	Graph	pronounce
arrange	I	R
B	Identify	read
build	L	recite
C	Label	run
calculate	List	S
choose	Locate	select
circle	M	sing
classify	Measure	sort

compare	N	state
construct	Name	U
contrast	O	underline
D	Operate	W
define	Order	write
describe		
draw		

4.2.4: Elements of good Instructional Objectives

Instructional objectives comprise of four elements:

1. Performance: First, spell out the terminal behaviour, or performance detail of the action that will be accepted as evidence that the objective has been achieved.
2. Product: Second, state the product, or what is to be produced by the student actions.
3. Conditions: Third, describe the conditions under which the student action is to be expected.
4. Criteria: Fourth, state the criteria of acceptable performance; you are describing how well you want the students to perform.

At times, not all of these elements are necessary. The object is to clearly communicate your intent. Now let us explain each of these in some more detail.

Element One: Performance

The first element of an instructional objective is the specification of what students are expected to do after they receive instruction. This action is clarified in your selection of a word, usually a verb that indicates what students are to do or produce. Because the purpose of instruction is to elicit a predetermined action, instructional objectives should always be written in terms of observable student performance. Special care must be taken in selecting the proper verb, so that you achieve clarity of language with no ambiguity in meaning. Subjective terms such as know, realize, and understand should not be used as performance verbs in writing your objectives. These terms are open to interpretation and have different meanings to different individuals. In a word, you should use terms that denote observable (overt) actions or behaviours. Verbs, for example – such as list, name, state, bisect, and graph – prompt observable behaviours that, in turn, will help you evaluate your instructional intent.

Element Two: Product

The second element of an instructional objective is to specify what is to be the result of the students' performance. It is this product of students' actions that you will evaluate in determining whether the objective has been mastered. This product can be a written sentence, a written sum, listed names, a demonstrated skill, or a constructed object. Students, for example, could be asked to produce a 300-word essay, a list of nouns, an addition of numbers, or the solutions to a set of linear equations. The product is the outcome that you've planned to result from the instructional process. In other words, it is what you want students to be able to do after your instruction that they (supposedly) couldn't do prior to instruction.

Element Three: Conditions

The third element in the statement of an instructional objective is to establish the conditions under which the learner is to perform the prescribed action. Conditional elements can refer to the materials, information, or special equipment that will or will not be available to students; any special restrictions as to time and space; and any other applicable requirements. Consider this example: "Given the formula, the student will be able to calculate the area of the rectangle to 2 decimal points. This objective tells students that they need not memorize the formula – that they will be given the formula and they should simply know how to use it. Note the use of "Given the formula" for the conditional statement. Terms and phrases such as "Given" and "With (Without) the aid of" are commonly used in conditional statement. Conditions must be realistic and clearly communicate expectations to students. They should make your desire more explicit. Following are other examples of conditions that might be included in an instructional objective:

After reading the story...

With a ruler, protractor, and compass ...

Within 10-minutes and from memory ...

These are a few examples of how conditions can be included as elements in instructional objectives. Essentially, you should attempt to visualize under what conditions you want students to show mastery and prescribe these conditions in your objectives. As shown in the examples, conditions are usually written as the first component in the objective, but their placement can be anywhere in the objective. For example, the objective "The student will identify, from a set of pictures of home utensils, items meant for serving food with 100 percent accuracy" has the conditional component ("from a set of pictures of home utensils") toward the middle of the objective.

Element Four: Criteria

The fourth, and last, element of an instructional objective is the level of acceptable student performance. This is where you state the lowest level of performance that you will accept as showing mastery. This component can be established in terms of time limits, percentage of correct answers, minimum number of correct answers, ratios of correct to incorrect responses permitted, an acceptable tolerance and other observable operations. These standards or criteria should be stated clearly so that students know in advance exactly what the standards are by which their performance will be judged. In other words, criterion levels should be stated as in the following specific examples:

... at least three reasons ...

... 9 of the 10 cases ...

... with no spelling errors ...

... within 20 minutes with 80 percent accuracy

Each of these criterion levels represents a well-defined standard toward which students can strive. Usually, such standards are selected rather arbitrarily on the basis of past experiences and class expectations.

Carefully, defined levels of desired performance are essential for effective instruction. However, you should take care not to set standards that are too high. You should know your students so you can set reasonable levels of performance.

4.2.5: Importance of instructional objectives:

1. After stating your objectives properly you will be guided to know how much time you will need to achieve that.
2. With well-stated objectives, you teach with confidence. That is, well-stated objectives will help you to be clear about what you are aiming at.
3. With well-stated objectives, you are able to monitor pupils achievement step by step and at appropriate levels.
4. The teaching strategies you will use depend on your objectives. If an oral performance is expected in the end, there should be oral drill in the lesson. Also, if a skill is to be performed in the end, the teaching strategy must include a demonstration and practice exercises.
5. If learning objectives are well formulated in measurable terms, it becomes easy to use the end performance of the pupils to determine the effectiveness of your teaching.
6. Well-stated instructional objectives can help you know how you are progressing towards the achievement of your objectives.

Summary

Lesson objectives answer the question “where are we going” or “what are we trying to achieve in this lesson”? To do this effectively your objectives need to be stated in clear and specific terms. In this session we looked at the way in which we can state lesson objectives to make them specific. We also looked at the elements of a good lesson objective.

SESSION 3: Writing lesson activities

Introduction

Some educators use the term instructional activities and procedures to refer to the same thing. However in a specific sense, it may be preferable to use the term activities. After determining lesson objectives, the next step in planning a lesson is to plan the lesson activities. This involves three tasks – selecting the activities, sequencing the activities and grouping pupils for the activities. These skills will be the focus of this session.

Objectives

1. Identify the factors that influence the teacher’s selection of instructional activities.
2. Identify some instructional activities that teachers commonly use.
3. State some factors teachers consider in sequencing activities.
4. Is it necessary to group learners for activities?

4.3.1: Factors that influence the selection of lesson activities

The next step after writing lesson objectives is to determine and state lesson activities. Activities influence learners directly whereas the other elements of the lesson plan influence students indirectly. As a result you need to take the characteristics of your learners seriously in deciding on which activities to use. You also need to consider the purpose of the lesson and its content. Some questions you need to answer are –

What are the pupils needs?

What is the age of the pupils?

What are pupil’s intellectual abilities?

What are pupil’s physical and mental characteristics?

What are pupil’s attention spans?

What is the lesson purpose?

What content is to be taught?

The activities selected should be appropriate to the purpose of the lesson as well as the lesson content. In fact, lesson activities usually vary from those that the teacher is more involved and tells the pupils what

they need to know by ‘telling’ them most of the time, to those where the teacher provides pupils with access to the information they need to learn and puts them in experiences whereby they learn the information themselves. The question is how much time should be spent on activities which the teacher involves in telling and those where the learners learn from personal engagement with information? This question is difficult to answer. What can be said is that it will depend on the subject, the amount of time for the lesson, the materials available and the preferences of the teacher. In unit 3 session 1, we discussed the factors that affect teacher planning and looked at student characteristics, task characteristics, instructional context characteristics and teacher characteristics. You may go back and read on those issues to inform you more about the selection of learning activities. In general however the factors that affect the selection of the appropriate instructional activities for a particular lesson include -

- Content and objectives of the lesson: Whether the content is cognitive, affective or psychomotor.
- Teacher characteristics: The teacher’s knowledge, skills and personality traits.
- Learner characteristics: The learner’s maturity and ability.
- The Learning environment: This include space, time and weather

Find below a set of activities for constructing lesson for your discussion

4.3.2: Activities for constructing lessons

Dramatization	Demonstrations	Student led-discussion
Seatwork	Library work	Simulations
Contests/games	Creative writing	Individualized instruction
Games	Blackboard work	Group projects
Role play	Group reading/free reading	Watching videos
Brainstorm	Teacher-led discussion	Cooperative learning
Drills	Peer tutoring	Reciprocal teaching
Experiments	Debates	Learning centres

4.3.3: Sequencing activities

The order in which you sequence your activities plays an important role in the effectiveness of your lessons. Sometimes the sequence is easy to determine. For instance if you want to teach from a story, you know you have to tell or read the story to the pupils first before discussion. Other times it is the nature of the content that will determine the sequence of activities. For example, changing mixed numbers to improper fractions must be taught before multiplying mixed numbers. Apart from the obvious situations,

many times you will have to make your decisions about sequencing activities after some thinking. There are a few guidelines to help you make such decisions.

First your activities should lead pupils get knowledge from simple to complex and from concrete to abstract. Pupils need to remember facts and concepts before they can apply them. They should not be able to draw or sketch a quadrilateral until they understand what a quadrilateral is.

Second, in general, pupils should not be asked to do something new and difficult for the first time on their own. Before they can do this you probably have to lead the whole class to demonstrate it, and then they do it in small groups before they can be expected to do it alone. Keep in mind, however, that there are times when you need to challenge pupils by asking them to try something new on their own. In this case pupils creativity can be stimulated. However if you think pupils will be frustrated by trying something new and difficult on their own, then you may follow the whole-class, small-group, individual sequence.

Grouping learners for activities

For many of the activities that you will use in your lessons, you will have to decide on the most effective way to group your pupils. Many activities can be conducted with the whole class, with small groups or on an individual basis.

Whole class activities: Presentations, teacher talk and teacher-led discussions and demonstrations are examples of activities frequently conducted with the whole class. One advantage of using whole class activity is that pupil engagement is usually high because the teacher has control over the pace of the activity.

Small Groups or Pairs: Peer-tutoring, cooperative learning, reading groups, experiments and learning centres are some activities that pupils can work on in small groups or pairs. Small groups and pairs may result in more participation by learners and makes use of fewer resources than individual participation.

Individualized activities: Individual projects, seatwork, free reading and individualized instruction are examples of activities usually conducted on an individual basis. The main benefit of individualized activity is that it can be tailored to suit the needs of individual pupils. For instance, pupils can work at their own pace. It also gives teachers the opportunity to help solve problems faced by individual pupils.

Summary

Earlier on, we said that a lesson is a series of sequenced activities. This means activities are the main thing in a lesson. In this session we have called your attention to this. We have presented a list of learner activities for your discussion and presented you with a way of deciding how to select activities for your lessons. We have discussed the factors to consider in selecting activities as well as sequencing them.

Finally we looked at the issue of grouping learners for activities. The ways of grouping are the same as what we learnt earlier in interaction and communication and you are expected to refer to this to help you understand better. Let us leave you with this question to think about. Is it necessary to group pupils for activity?

SESSION 4: Lesson evaluation

Introduction

Evaluation is a vital part teaching and learning. Evaluation must be done by the teacher to find out whether pupils are learning. It will also help to find out whether what pupils are learning is not too much for them. In fact, though evaluation is done for many reasons we can put them into two main groups. It provides information about pupil achievement and also information that can be used in planning the curriculum better. This session presents information on lesson evaluation which is important for those two reasons. We will look at more specific reasons why lesson evaluation, how it is done and the types of lesson evaluation. Enjoy your reading.

Objectives

1. Identify the steps in lesson evaluation
2. Give the purposes of lesson evaluation
3. Identify the types of lesson evaluation
4. Mention the strategies for lesson evaluation

4.4.1: The nature of evaluation

Evaluation is the process of making a judgement about the performance of pupils. In order to make a judgement however you must have some information about the pupil's performance such as test scores. When you give an exercise or test in order to find such information it is called measurement. Measurement information is therefore used for evaluation. So in talking about evaluation here we mean both of them but we will call it the process of evaluation.

Evaluation is more than just taking measurement. It includes the decisions you take about the pupils. Thus in the classroom, evaluation is about how well pupils perform or what pupils can do. Sometimes it is not just about test results. For instance you may want to evaluate how well your pupils participate in group work because attitudes can also affect their learning. We can look at evaluation as having four steps;

1. Preparation. Planning about the kind of information you will need or gather.
2. Information collecting. Giving pupils tests, exercises, projects and oral questions.

3. Making judgements. Considering what the information means and making judgements about whether it is good enough or not.
4. Decision making. Decisions about what you will do about your judgement.

In a lesson, the main thing you are interested in whether you have taught the pupils well and whether the pupils have learnt what you taught them well. You take this decision by checking their performance with your objectives to see if you achieved them.

4.4.2: Purposes of lesson evaluation

- Lesson evaluation can help teachers to identify the learning difficulties of pupils. Certain topics are generally difficult for pupils. You can only identify such topics from lesson evaluation. When this is detected, you then devise a way of simplifying the manner in which you teach that topic as a whole.
- Lesson evaluation gives the teacher an idea of the pupil's general rate of progress towards mastery of the knowledge, skills and attitudes being taught at each level. The rate of learning of pupils might vary from one pupil to the other. It might also vary from one topic to the next. This can be determined by constant evaluation.
- It also enables the teacher to know if pupils are achieving the set objectives. The teacher needs to find out why pupils are not achieving the set objectives. The teacher can find out by checking all the things considered in planning lessons as well as how it was actually taught. If the teacher does this, the situation may improve.
- Lesson evaluation enables the teacher to assess the effectiveness of the teaching strategy used. When you use a certain strategy and evaluate, you can tell from the performance of the pupils whether it worked or not.
- Lesson evaluation helps teachers to know enough about individual pupil performance. Knowledge of this will help teachers in counseling pupils.

4.4.3: Types of evaluation

In order to understand the uses of evaluation better let us consider the types of evaluation of well, because the types are related to the uses. Let us look at three main types – diagnostic, formative and summative evaluation.

Diagnostic evaluation is usually done at the beginning of the lesson or instruction on a topic. In this case it is done to find out pupils previous knowledge of a particular topic. However, sometimes it

becomes necessary to use it during the lesson too. In this case when the teacher thinks that pupils are facing some difficulties on the topic, a diagnostic exercise can be used to find out their difficulty.

Formative evaluation is carried out during teaching. It is used for providing feedback on pupils progress in learning. With formative evaluation you monitor instruction so that you can take actions to promote more effective learning. Most classroom exercise should be of this type.

Summative evaluation is the final stage in the evaluation actions. It is done for the purpose of finding out pupil's final achievement on the topic and give them grades. In doing this it also helps you to judge the success of your teaching. It is not only tests that are used to make this summative judgement. Other written work and projects can also be used.

The table below is for your face-to-face discussion for you to understand better the nature of these types of evaluation and their uses.

Type	Diagnostic	Formative	Summative
Purpose	To identify difficulties	To promote learning through feedback	To assess overall achievement
Nature	Many questions related to general knowledge	Few questions related to specific instruction	Many questions related to specific and general knowledge
Frequency of administration	Varied. Usually before teaching a topic	Frequently used during instruction	Once. Usually the last on a topic.

4.4.4: Strategies for Evaluating a Lesson

Some of the evaluating strategies include:

1. Class exercise
2. Oral questions
3. Observation
4. Assignments
5. Projects

You need to discuss how you conduct these evaluation activities in your classroom with your facilitator during the FTF and exchange ideas about how you use them. There is one other evaluation activity which needs to be mentioned here. This is the checking of pupils exercises. Checking pupil's exercise books gives information on individual pupils and helps you do better diagnostic evaluation to support their learning. It gives information on pupils who:

- Are doing good work
- Have improved their work
- Are not interested in their work
- Get most of their work wrong
- Do untidy work

What will you do in each of these cases to help the pupil? This is another issue for discussion in your meetings.

Dear learner let us now take a brief look at two issues of importance in using the knowledge of pupil's performance to provide feedback to them;

The first one is that in giving feedback you focus on encouraging the pupil. Consider the effort and strength of the child first before urging the child on what to improve. Also compare the pupil's performance with his or her own previous performance and not with other pupils.

The second is, remember to set an adequate number of exercises on each topic and mark them promptly. Give out pupil's exercise books to them to enable them work hard to either improve their performance or maintain it.

4.4.5: Post lesson Evaluation

Student evaluation should be an integral part of every lesson taught. During evaluation, you determine the degree to which learners have attained the expected objectives of the lesson. Once a lesson has ended, you need to have a clear picture of how well students have mastered the stated objectives. If there is a gap, and pupils have not achieved much of what you expected, you may have to decide whether to reteach the topic.

The post lesson evaluation may be based on information gained during question-and answer activities, group work, individual seat work, or completion of class activities. At other times, the assessment is formal (quiz or test). Whatever the means used to gather the information for evaluation, such information should help ensure that students are not pushed on to new content before they have mastered enough of the previous skills. You can often avoid many classroom problems if you conduct and use information obtained in post lesson evaluation. It is generally wiser to plan re-teaching for pupils who are having

difficulty with lesson concepts and to design enrichment activities for those having no difficulty than to proceed to the next lesson.

Summary

The lesson is focussed on the achievement of objectives set to guide its delivery. In the end evaluation needs to be done to find out if lesson objectives have been achieved. In this session we have informed you of what evaluation means and emphasized the purposes of evaluation. Apart from finding out if objectives have been achieved we have discussed the need to identify pupils with learning needs through evaluation so you can assist them. We also looked at the diagnostic, formative and summative types of evaluation and identified some strategies of evaluation for your discussion during face-to-face. It is hoped that you have enjoyed this topic also.

UNIT 5: Selecting Lesson methods

Unit Introduction

Teaching is an important human activity and like other human activities, views about how it should be done have been changing. In the recent past teaching was seen like assembly line where knowledge was passed down from teacher to pupils. Now, this has changed in the 21st century. Teaching is now seen as an active constructive process, with pupils seen as active participants in their own learning. They must learn new information in meaningful ways. In addition to this the new belief also says that learning is a social and interpersonal process. This means it must involve communication and dialogue between people. These views of teaching have resulted in many methods or strategies being proposed to make teaching effective. In this unit you will be exposed to a number of the well-known strategies. Strategies are what teachers do when they teach and what learners do when they learn. It is important to state again that the nature of the content and other factors influence strategies. Over the years strategies have been categorized in a number of ways. In this unit we will group them under teacher-led strategies, child-led strategies, Peer-assisted strategies and Individualized strategies.

Objectives

1. Describe the main teacher led methods of instruction
2. Describe the main child-led methods of instruction
3. Describe the main peer-assisted methods of instruction
4. Describe the main individualized methods of instruction

SESSION 1: Teacher-led strategies

Introduction

Teacher-led strategies are strategies that require the teacher to lead the instruction and make the decisions about how it will proceed. Such strategies are useful for teaching facts and basic skills. Such strategies allow for very little input from pupils and do not give much opportunity for pupils to play a role in their own learning. In our schools the best known teacher-led strategy is Direct Instruction. We will discuss this as well as a few other teacher-led strategies.

Objectives

1. Explain Direct Instruction and state the guidelines for using direct instruction.

2. Explain the Demonstration strategy of teaching and state the guidelines for using demonstration in teaching.
3. Describe the discovery learning strategy as used in teaching.
4. Describe the Brainstorming process of teaching.

5.1.1: Direct Instruction:

Some people call this active teaching. It is instruction led by the teacher. It includes presenting material in small steps, pausing to check for pupils understanding and then asking pupils questions or giving them small tasks for them to take part. This is mostly used for mathematics and language teaching but in Ghana it seems to dominate the teaching of all subjects. Direct instruction has the following benefits:

1. It is effective for teaching basic facts and complex skills as well as related facts.
2. It can be applied to the teaching of content which involves rules and procedures.
3. It is useful for teaching pupils who have a low ability or who need constant support from the teacher.
4. It allows the teacher to control the pace and timing of the lesson.

Guidelines for using direct instruction:

- a. Begin the lesson with a short review of previous learning
- b. Begin with a short statement of the objectives of the lesson
- c. Present new material in small steps, providing for pupils practice after each step.
- d. Give clear and detailed instructions and explanations
- e. Provide enough active practice for all pupils.
- f. Ask many questions, check for pupils understanding and obtain responses from as many students as possible.
- g. Guide students during initial practice
- h. Provide systematic feedback and corrections
- i. Provide clear instructions and practice for seatwork exercises and when necessary, monitor pupils during seatwork.

5.1.2: Demonstration:

Demonstration is a strategy that is explained as teaching by showing. The purpose of a demonstration is to allow participants to witness a procedure or an act so that they can apply it themselves. For instance mathematics teacher always demonstrate how to solve mathematics problems such as long

division, working simple interest and the like. A social studies teacher can use the map to demonstrate how to determine the tributaries of a river. Demonstration is therefore not only for physical skills but teachers demonstrate so many mental skills and procedures on the chalkboard. In reading demonstration is often used.

Demonstration has the following benefits;

1. It can be used for a variety of content areas and settings.
2. It is an excellent way of making abstract ideas well understood by making it seen through the visual presentation.
3. If well planned it can increase pupil motivation and interest in learning.
4. Because only the teacher demonstrates at first, the cost of materials for demonstration is low if any.

Guidelines for using demonstrations:

- a) Break down the body of knowledge or skill into its component parts and decide which part to demonstrate.
- b) Plan in advance and collect the necessary materials.
- c) Make sure pupils have the background knowledge to understand the demonstration.
- d) Explain the purpose of the demonstration.
- e) Demonstrate the procedure or new behaviour.
- f) Ask questions and engage in discussions.
- g) Students practice with teacher supervision.

5.1.3: Discovery Learning

Discovery learning can be defined as the learning that takes place when students are not presented with subject matter in its final form but rather are required to organize it themselves. In discovery learning, the pupil is presented with a problem to solve. The teacher designs a situation that makes the student play an active role. For this reason discovery learning can be called a teacher-assisted strategy rather than a teacher-led strategy.

Teaching by discovery requires the pupils to carry out the learning activities. Discovery requires the use of materials. The teacher must lead the pupils to organize what they are learning in order to discover some order and connections between the different parts of what is being learnt. The teacher must assist pupils to transfer this for use in different situations.

Guidelines for using discovery learning:

1. Plan ahead. Identify the problem, your role, role of learners should all be clear before you begin.
2. Take time to review the process
3. Make sure the problem is related to what is known or to some real life problem to heighten interest.
4. Pupils collect information on the activity
5. Evaluate and organize the information they have assembled
6. After the activity allow time for learners to share what they discover
7. When appropriate use it together with other strategies.
8. When first using it make sure it is short and simple so learners are not discouraged.

5.1.4: Brainstorming;

Brainstorming is a teacher-assisted strategy in which the teacher finds out from the students as many ideas as possible but does not discuss or judge whether they are correct or wrong until all possible answers are given by pupils. Both the teacher and pupils play an active role in brainstorming.

Purpose: To draw out a wide range of ideas and information from pupils .

Description:

- All ideas and experiences generated by pupils are collected and recorded without the threat of judgment or criticisms.
- Used to promote creativity and finding solutions to problems.
- Particularly effective in opening lessons.
- Helps in setting the pace for meaningful discussions in class or small groups .

Process:

- Tell the group the purpose - Invite students to call out as many ideas as they can possibly generate about the issue.
- No ideas are rejected or analysed-everything offered is accepted and encouraged.
- Write all ideas down on boards for all to see.
- Whole group or individual groups discuss and analyses the information collected. Clarifications can be sought at this point.
- Group and prioritize ideas. This can be done by consensus, vote or compromise.
- Through prioritization, group identifies key ideas to pursue or further investigate.
- Note: Ideas generated during the brainstorms are then used in subsequent lessons. Unused ideas will leave participants feeling as if they have wasted their time.

5.1.5: Other teacher-assisted teaching strategies include:

Drill and Practice: This is used when repetition is needed. It often deals with speed and accuracy

Discussion: such as

- Whole-class discussions;
- Small-group discussions;
- Panel discussions
- Debates
- Forums

Summary:

In this session we have presented you with teacher-led methods of teaching including teacher-assisted strategies. We have discussed the commonly used ones such as direct instruction and demonstrations and mentioned the guidelines you need to follow to use them effectively. We also looked at Discovery learning and brainstorming which are getting more and more popular as teachers are learning how effective these can be. It is hoped that this session has set the pace for you to improve your classroom delivery. You will be learning more strategies in coming sessions and courses.

SESSION 2: Child-led strategies

Introduction

Children as well as adults are full of activity. It is a natural part of our being. Except when they are ill or asleep, children can hardly keep still. They must be doing something. We all learn by doing, by getting involved in the action. Since activity is so natural to children, you, as a teacher can use it to a great advantage if you can plan your teaching to include a large amount of purposeful activity. It is because activities are crucial to the learning of the child that your work in the basic school is based on the expectation that teaching must be activity-oriented. This session will focus on child-led strategies of teaching. Such strategies are based on the need for active learning and the concept of activity.

Objectives

1. Explain the benefits of using activity methods with pupils.
2. Describe role play and the process of using role play in teaching.
3. Explain the play method of teaching and identify some examples of this method.
4. Explain the small-group method of teaching and state the process used in small-group teaching.

5.2.1: The nature of activity

Children are engaged in activity whenever they are doing something- playing, running, fighting, climbing, dancing etc. unfortunately some teachers think of it only in terms of physical activity, and a lot of noise. Speaking, reading, and thinking are also activities. Perhaps these mental activities are more difficult to practice than the physical types. Activity helps children acquire experience quickly because they enable children to practice often by repetition. The more you repeat a skill the better you become when you use it. This is because the more often we do something, the more it becomes as a part of our total part of the learning process.

Activity serves some **purposes** in the lives of pupils. These include helping pupils to -

- Develop a skill – drawing, measuring, self -control,
- Discover / acquire new knowledge through investigation, experimentation ,exploring (mixing oil and water to see what happens),and
- Apply the knowledge to useful ends (buying and selling, cooking, decorating a room), creating a shop in the classroom.

An activity may be selected to support a lesson or may cover the entire lesson as part of the work in a learning unit.

5.2.2: Benefits of activity in pupil learning

Apart from these we can look at some benefits of using activity learning with pupils such as -

- It makes learning enjoyable for pupils taking part,
- Sustains the interest of pupils for as long as it takes them to succeed in whatever they are learning,
- Is well within the competence of the age and ability of the children using it,
- Allows ample freedom for children to express themselves,
- Does not make the consequences of initial failures so serious or disturbing,
- Help the learner to gain a firmer grasp of what is learned by learning to a deeper understanding, and

The strength of using child-led activity as a method of learning has made teachers plan, try and test so many strategies in this direction. Many of them have led to very good outcomes. We will present a few of them here. Note that the various child-led methods do well with different ages of learners. Some are better for KG and lower primary; others are better with upper primary and yet others for Junior High Schools.

5.2.3: The Play Method

Children enjoy play. It is what they do all day when they are not asleep, sick, or resting. Play is an activity which does not necessarily result in a product. It may involve only one child or a group of them. It may require toys, tools or nothing. It may last a few minutes or perhaps an hour. Play is one major activity of children that contributes to their physical, mental, emotional and sound development.

How can we then harness such an unpredictable activity to help children learn? Child psychologists suggest that when children acquire new knowledge, they have immediate desire to use it. The girl who has to learn to ride or climb practices it, taking some risks. She may have a few accidents, yet she continues and perfects it eventually. New knowledge therefore invites the desire to experiment and it is this experimentation that is called play. Play enables the child to find those activities, which are satisfying and enjoyable. For the teacher to use the play method it is important that he knows when it can best be directed towards learning.

The teacher needs to limit play at irrelevant activities; and guide play towards useful activities. When you are able to link what you want the child to learn to the activities she finds most rewarding and enjoyable, she is likely to develop interest in learning as well as achieve better results.

We can also make children see the usefulness of what they learn by helping them apply it. When they learn about measurements they can play the tailor and his customer, taking measurements for a new dress. When they learn the social skills of greetings and receiving visitors, pupils play host to visitors.

The play-way method is not a specific method as such but a group of teacher tried and tested strategies involving children play. These are so many that what we have stated here is what they stand for. We believe some teachers in your school use some of them. You may find out more about some specific ones; their purpose and how they are used. Some examples are-

- Happy Mirror
- Happy Shapes
- My Magic Story
- Fruit Maths
- Bingo
- Stars and Numbers and many more

There are however other child-led teaching strategies that specific. Let us look at some of them.

5.2.4: Role play

When pupils/learners begin to imagine that they are somebody else (father, mother, nurse, market woman, police man, driver or teacher and pretend to do those jobs, they assume such roles to learn about

the people around them and their environment). Role playing is a strategy in which pupils act out an idea or situation. In most cases pupils do not write out or practice their dialogue, but in classroom teaching they often do.

Purpose:

- Apart from being fun, role play helps them to practice skills, standards, attitudes and social habits they will use later in life – cleanliness, bandaging, serving, sorting, mothering, etc.
- It helps children bring into the open many of their anxieties and worries such as those that have frightened or shocked them (such as quarrels between parents, injections at the hospital) until they come to terms with them,
- Their make – believe play which involves anger, violence, frustration act as safety valves through which they can release tension;
- Imaginative play, even when done alone, is a form of communication. Whether we talk of experimentation, creative play or role play, the teacher’s role remains the same as one of facilitation.
- The child needs an environment rich in material with which he can perform a good role play.

Description:

- Students are made to act out roles from real-life situations by expressing themselves in a manner consistent with the characters they are playing.
- Roles may be set up by the tutor or students themselves.
- Students then explore solutions to situations or problems through discussion.
- Avoid criticism of the participants themselves.
- Role play can be used in large groups or smaller groups if appropriate.

Process:

- Describe the role play orally or as a hand-out (developed by tutor or students).
- Give role play participants a time limit to prepare.
- Students act out role play as the character that they are portraying.
- Tutor facilitates discussions /analysis of behaviour portrayed or felt by participants.
- Students offer suggestions for changing their own behaviour/attitudes.

5.2.5; Small Groups (Diads, Triads and More)

We discussed small-group interaction and communication in an earlier unit. You are encouraged to read over this to understand the use of small groups as a teaching strategy. In this session we will expose you to the description, the purpose and the process so as to enable you use this approach which you are already familiar with.

Purpose:

- Small groups of approximately two to seven are used
- to help share ideas and or for problem solving.

Description:

- The smaller the group, the greater the chance of individual participation
- Students may choose partners or tutor assign partners according to some criteria .
- Possible tasks might involve writing objectives and lesson plans, curriculum design, analysing situations or reporting.

Process:

- One task is assigned to all groups or a different task is assigned to each individual group.
- The purpose of the task is clearly stated and a time limit imposed.
- How the group work is to be presented is clearly defined.
- Shared responsibility for presentation given to all members of any group.

Summary

This session focused on child-centered methods of teaching, which the most popular methods for teaching today are. We have discussed generally the purpose of using child-centered methods. We have also identified and described specific methods such as the play method which is especially beneficial for those of you teaching young pupils. Furthermore we described role play which can be used for all children and provided you with the process to use in teaching through role play. Finally we looked at small-group methods which are child-led. We hope you picked a lot from this session to apply in your lessons.

SESSION 3: Peer-assisted strategies

Introduction

All modern ideas about learning confirm that learning is an active constructive process, as well as a social interpersonal process. Having students work with peers has many academic and social benefits in terms of higher academic performance and better social behaviour including cooperativeness. It also leads to improved communication skills, better understanding and application of learning. When peers work together it generates a high level of motivation which increases intellectual activity and learning far greater than what can be achieved with learning as a whole class. Furthermore students' working with peers has been recognized as the best approach to making the classroom more responsive to individual learners and diversity. In this session we are going to discuss some benefits of pupils helping each other to learn and encourage you to use this approach. We will expose you to a few of these approaches.

Objectives

1. Explain the role peers can play in pupil learning
2. Identify the characteristics and importance of cooperative learning
3. Identify the factor to consider in using games in teaching
4. Outline the guidelines to follow when using peer-tutoring in teaching/

5.3.1: The role of peers in pupil learning

Pupils in the basic school have certain behaviour characteristics that make peer assisted learning

Necessary;

- They observe and imitate other children and so will learn more from other children who know than even teachers.
- Social interaction helps them develop social and emotional skills. This means many more aspects of development will be improved if they learn from each other.
- They develop confidence through interaction with others.
- They prefer to talk about what they learn. This gives them an opportunity to elaborate on their ideas, language and skills.
- They are more motivated to learn and enjoy success when they are engaged with other children.
- They relate with the world through their own perspectives and practice and learn better what they do with peers.
- They learn best in settings where they feel safe and valued and this is mainly with their peers.

Now, dear learner, if you read these ideas carefully, you will realize that peer-assisted methods should be the best for teaching. The only problem there is a lot of content cannot be taught with these methods because they involve information that children cannot handle on their own. Hence, the nature of the content should be considered when you want to use peer-assisted methods. Let us now discuss some of the more important peer-assisted learning methods.

5.3.2: Cooperative Learning

Co-operative learning takes many forms in the classroom. Its main characteristic is that it creates a situation where pupils depend on each other to learn. This is called “positive interdependence”. It makes pupils work and learn together in small-groups. Cooperative learning has the following characteristics:

- Uses small groups of three or four pupils (mixed ability groups) working on an assignment or project together in such a way that each group member contributes to the learning process and then learns all

the basic concepts being taught. Both individuals and the groups as a whole are held accountable for the outcome.

- Each member in the group is usually assigned a specific aspect of that group task.
- Members then work from individual tasks, discuss, refine and put these together in group settings to fulfil the group task
- They then share with the rest of the students.
- The performance and accomplishment of the team or small group becomes the source of reward for individuals in the group.

You will realize that it makes pupils highly focused on tasks to be accomplished. It also requires group co-operation and interaction for them to succeed. Also since every individual is involved it makes individuals responsible to learn. In this case it supports division of labour.

Some benefits of cooperative learning:

- It improves comprehension of academic content
- It reinforces social skills
- Boosts students' self-esteem
- Focuses on success for everyone

Cooperative learning involves a variety of peer-assisted strategies. There are a number of them that you can read about if you do a google search for instance. Some of the well-known ones are-

- Jigsaw
- Think-pair-share
- Round Robin
- Rally Coach etc.

5.3.3: Educational games

A game is an activity with a goal, rules and lots of fun. There are several issues with teachers, who use games, for teaching to take note of.

- Firstly, you must decide what purpose the game will serve in teaching.
- Secondly, you must select or invent a game. Often teacher's handbooks contain descriptions of games you can use for specific objectives.
- Thirdly, remember that games have rules to be followed otherwise the play may degenerate into arguments, quarrels and fights. Check whether the rules are simple, clear and few. These make it easy to follow and master. Rules often include how one wins if the game is competitive. Younger children cannot follow many rules.

- Four, you must consider how many people can play: whether individually, in pairs, as a group or as a class. The question of ‘how many, ’is important especially in the classroom because of supervision. In addition, “how many people” become important too when materials are needed.

In English for Primary Schools Teacher’s Handbook one, (Published by the Curriculum Research Division. Ghana Education Service, 1997) pp. 10 – 11 and pp. 25 – 31, over twenty-five games including the following have been provided:

1. Chain games
2. Basket games
3. Blind man’s buff
4. Lost property games
5. Kim’s game
6. You are right/you are wrong.

How to use games in teaching

- Familiarize yourself with the game. Read through the game, noting its purpose, materials required if any; number of pupils who play at a time and the rules participants have to learn.
- Play the game once or twice with a couple of people to get a feel of it noting possible difficulties your pupils may encounter at the start, how long does it take to finish the game?. Will this fit into your lesson?
- Assemble all materials a day before the game is played. Children may be required to bring some of these materials from home or they may be prepared ahead of time.
- Demonstrate how the game is played with one or two pupils in class explaining briefly any rules including how a winner is declared.

5.3.4: Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring is a peer-assisted strategy which uses students who have mastered a certain skill or body of material to teach others who have not mastered it. It can take the form of same-age tutoring in which the tutor and tutee are similar in age or cross-age tutoring in which older pupils teach younger pupils.

Peer tutoring can enhance cooperation, collaboration and support in teaching. It takes the role of teacher away from the teacher and gives the authority and control of learning back to the pupils. It is very rewarding as both tutor and tutee benefit by asking and answering questions. It also greatly improves students’ communication skills, self-esteem, motivation and adjustment.

The following guidelines should help you to use peer-teaching in your classroom:

- Identify a topic

- Prepare instructional materials
- Assign pupils to pairs
- Train pupils on how to be effective tutors
- Conduct group presentation to talk to all pupils
- Break into peer-tutoring groups
- Monitor progress
- Evaluate tutoring.

In using peer tutoring, the teacher may need to solicit pupil's acceptance in teaching before pairing them in a particular topic. In the end all pupils are encouraged to ask questions and participate in discussions about the topic area.

Other peer-assisted learning strategies you can find out about include:

Reciprocal teaching

Rehearsal Strategies:

Elaboration Strategies

Organizational Strategies

Summary

Peer-assisted learning methods are growing in popularity among educators. In this session we have exposed you to peer-assisted teaching as an important teaching method because it fits the nature of learners as social beings. We have discussed a number of peer-assisted strategies, including cooperative learning and emphasized the nature of cooperative learning that makes it attractive. We have also discussed the use of games in teaching and factors to consider in using games. Finally we looked at peer-tutoring and how to plan and use it. We have also emphasized how useful peer-tutoring can be for us in the classroom. It is hoped that you have enjoyed it.

SESSION 4: Individualized methods

Introduction

Pupils do not learn or master information at the same pace. Therefore, individualized methods are often needed to improve the performance of most pupils. This is especially important when pupils come from different backgrounds and have different abilities. In this session we will look at the nature of individual methods and their merits. We will also look at the main techniques used in individual instruction.

Objectives

1. Explain the benefits of individual teaching
2. Describe the forms of individualized instruction
3. Explain independent study and the tasks suitable for this method
4. Describe the steps involved in mastery learning

5.4.1: Meaning of Individual Teaching

Individual teaching is the intensive and regular monitoring of a particular pupil's learning progress. It is used each time the pupils in a class are asked to write an essay or tackle a set of mathematics problems. Each child works alone and his finished work is the result of his unaided effort. It is assessed and criticized by the teacher individually. When homework or assignment is given, it is the individualized method which is being used.

Benefits of individualized methods

- The teacher is able to give individual attention to pupils as he or she has a clear idea of each child's problems.
- The method develops initiative and independence in pupils
- It gives the teacher a clear idea of each child's progress
- It recognizes the fact that each child is unique and that in dealing with it therefore, each child's needs are different.
- Each child is enabled to learn what he needs at a pace that is most in keeping with his ability.
- It is most suitable in reading sessions where teachers need to hear pupil as he or she reads.
- The pupils can ask questions without publicly expressing his or her ignorance
- The pupils learn to be independent and responsible.

Some of the well-used individual methods of teaching are –

5.4.2: Individualized instruction

Generally individualized instruction uses learning plans that are made to meet the needs, interests and abilities of pupils. It can therefore take different forms, though these forms can be adjusted to serve the teachers purpose. The different forms can be planned to take care of the following:

- The learning pace of the pupils: Pupils do not work at the same pace. In this case they are allowed to work on an assignment or exercise at their own pace. Here the instructional content is broken down into a series of short and related activities or lessons. Faster pupils can move through them quickly without having to wait for others.
- The instructional objectives set: Instead of making all your pupils work through the same objectives you can use questions or test them to find out pupils who already have knowledge or mastery of some parts of the objective. Low ability pupils might need to work on all whether better pupils work on a small number.

- The learning method to be used: The third technique is to vary the method used to interact with individuals. Some pupils may work with textbooks, others with the teacher, a self-instructional package or computer assisted instruction.
- The learning materials involved: In this case some pupils may read slower than their classmates and some might have reading problems. If reading is the problem, textbooks at different levels of difficulty can be made available. Other materials like pictures for picture descriptions for instance can be different for pupils depending on their abilities.
- Apart from these forms, when pupils need to write compositions or do some projects these can be different

5.4.3: Independent study:

Independent study is an educational activity carried out by an individual with little or no teacher support. There is no reason for teachers to do what pupils can do for themselves. Upper primary and Junior High students for instance can do independent study. Independent study is self-directed learning. Teachers often need time for working with individual pupils. One way of allowing for this time is by structuring the time pupils engage in interesting creative tasks of their own such as-

- Reading and writing on a topic of personal interest.
- Reading and reviewing books of interest
- Acting as tutor to other pupils
- Making some items for the class

Such activities should be available for pupils who finish their exercises early. They should not be bored with more of the same exercises. Most pupils enjoy working independently on topics which are not the same as what is on their subject content but are within their own interests. These could be in soccer, cooking, adventure and the like. Reading and writing reports and compositions on such topics will be useful during independent study.

5.4.4: Mastery learning.

In the traditional classroom learning we are used to, most pupils are involved in all activities at the same time. Like the traditional learning, the mastery learning approach is also a group approach to learning. However it provides for a high degree of individual work. Pupils learn at different paces using different materials. The following steps are involved;

- Your first step in using the mastery learning approach is the write out objectives for it.

- The second step is to assess what pupils can or cannot do even before the instruction. Some pupils may lack the skills needed to succeed on the new topic. Other pupils may have already mastered what is expected in the new topic. Such pupils should not waste their time on the new instruction but are provided with enrichment activities or made to go on to the next topic on their own.
- The third step in the mastery learning approach is where the teacher teaches the new topic, using the traditional classroom teaching process. However, the pupils who have mastered the topic are not included here as they are on the new topic.
- The fourth step is then to do an assessment after the traditional teaching. Pupils who have mastered it are also directed to enrichment activities and those who have not will continue to work on the current topic.
- The fifth step involves the enrichment activities as this is where all pupils eventually arrive at. These activities can be structured as individual or group activities. All pupils will continue to engage in these enrichment activities to a reasonable level of mastery.
- The sixth and final step is when all pupils are given a final or summative evaluation to find out their levels of mastery.

Summary

The efforts of educators at improving the use of individualized methods of teaching are still going on. Depending on the topic you are teaching, individual methods can have very good benefits. However it works better with motivated pupils but unfortunately many pupils may not be that keen on learning. Also if many of your pupils lack the skill of thinking carefully about what they are engaged in, individual learning may not be very useful, Pupils can only benefit from such techniques under certain conditions. Therefore you will want to individualize your instruction at times. Study the various approaches we have discussed in this session and determine how you can apply them in your class. But be sure to remember that pupils need a teacher. They need your support in learning.

UNIT 6: Getting learners involved: Using Questioning and Motivating learners.

Unit Introduction

A question is an oral or written sentence that requires a response. It is one of the greatest tools that teachers use in their interaction with learners in a class. This is because they are very valuable in finding out what is in the minds of children, how they think and how they learn. In knowing these, questions help teachers to be able to help in promoting the development of children's knowledge, attitudes and skills. In order to help children learn the questions asked must stimulate thinking. Most often some teachers do not ask questions that stimulate thinking. Teachers therefore need to make an effort to develop their questioning skills. They need to make questions useful, know how to frame them, present them, distribute them and handle pupil's responses. This unit is written with the purpose of improving your interest in improving your questioning skills.

Objectives

1. State the functions of questions
2. Explain the strategies to use for effective questioning
3. Describe the effective ways of handling pupils questions
4. Explain the strategies to use in motivating learners in a lesson.

SESSION1: Functions of questions

Introduction

One of the most commonly held assumptions is that teacher's questions have an impact on what pupils learn. A second is that questions arouse the feelings of pupils on an issue. A third assumption is that people ask questions to obtain information. In this session we will focus our attention on a variety of functions that questions are assumed to serve.

Objectives

1. Identify the factors teachers need to consider in using questioning
2. Identify the uses of teacher questions in the classroom
3. Explain the main functions of questions in a lesson

6.1.1: Effect of teacher questioning

The questions that teachers ask in class are the best clues pupils have to determine what they should be learning. This means that teachers must know what questions do in helping pupil learning and how to use them. For teachers to use them effectively they must be aware of -

- The developmental nature of the children and how the questions can interest them.
- The content of the topic. You must know the content well enough to know what you want from the questions. Remember that learners depend on the teacher's knowledge.
- The step by step improvement that children make during the process of asking questions.
- The self-concept issues that questions can cause. Questions can frustrate pupils if they are not carefully used and this can affect their self-concept.
- When it is appropriate to ask questions.

6.1.2: Uses of teacher questions in the classroom:

Questions are used to -

- find out what the pupils already know about the topic of a lesson. This provides a foundation upon what the new knowledge is built or developed.
- assist pupils to make judgments on an issue or develop a line of argument.
- arouse interest and sustain it.
- provoke learners curiosity for them to inquire
- to assess or find out the effect of previous teaching
- serve as a revision of the main topics being discussed or focus attention on the most salient aspects of the topic being discussed
- indicate the pupils' level of intellectual functioning.

Think about these statements. You will discuss them in your face-to-face. Now, let us discuss why we ask questions in any given lesson.

6.1.3: Functions of questions in the lesson

Take a look at the functions of questions in a lesson and their examples listed below:

1. To assess learning.

- What is the most important idea you learnt in today's lesson?

- Can you explain this concept in your own words?
- Can you draw a diagram to illustrate this idea?

2. To ask a student to clarify a vague comment.

- Could you explain the point you just made?
- Can you explain what you mean?

3. To prompt students to explore attitudes, values, or feelings (when appropriate).

- What are the values or beliefs that inform this argument?
- What is your initial feeling about this idea?

4. To prompt students to see a concept from another perspective.

- How do you think that this issue is seen by someone who does not agree with you?
- How does that what we learnt in ratio apply to this new problem on percentage?

5. To ask a student to refine a statement or idea.

- When does that formula apply? Always? Only under certain conditions?
- Would you say, then, that you disagree with what Mark said?

6. To prompt students to support their assertions and interpretations.

- How do you know that?
- Which part of the story led you to that conclusion?

7. To direct students to respond to one another.

- What do you think about the idea just presented by your classmate?
- Do you agree or do you see the issue differently? Explain.
- Can you think of another way to solve that problem?

8. To prompt students to investigate a thought process.

- What are the reasons why you drew that sketch?
- What are the assumptions that these two arguments share?

9. To ask students to predict possible outcomes.

- What might happen if this practice were to be outlawed?
- What would be the result if a different set of assumptions were used to set up this experiment?
- Would you get a different result?

10. To prompt students to connect and organize information.

- How does this reading this help us understand what we read yesterday?
- Can you draw a graph or table to show this information?

11. To ask students to apply a principle or formula.

- How does this law apply to the following situation?

- Who can suggest how we might use this new formula to solve the problems we examined at the start of class today?

12. To ask students to illustrate a concept with an example.

- Can you think of an example of this idea?
- Can you point us to a specific part of the story that led you to that conclusion?
- Can you identify a painting or design that uses a mixture of colors?

Now, looking at these specific examples, let us discuss the importance of

Summary

Dear learner, in this session we have taken you through one of the most important activities the teacher engages in every lesson- asking questions. We have looked at the factors the teacher should consider in the use of questions and noted among other things that the developmental nature of the pupil as well as the need to ensure that the self-concept of the learner is not destroyed. We also looked at the uses of questions to the teacher and what questions are used to achieve in any lesson. Please read over to make sure you can apply many these ideas in your lessons.

SESSION 2: Encouraging learning through Questioning:

Introduction

The main purpose of questioning is to find out what pupils know. But we also use questions in another useful way, which is to encourage learners. Teachers provoke learners to think with questions and when they do so, we use their answers further. We either praise them, reinforce them to think further, or ask them further questions to make them improve their thinking. In all cases we are using questions to encourage them to learn. In this session we are going to expose you to some ideas and strategies in using questioning to encourage learning.

Objectives

- 1. Mention some of the common types of questions used in a lesson.**
- 2. Identify some of the cognitive form of questions used and their purpose.**
- 3. Distinguish between narrow and broad questions as well as convergent and divergent questions.**
- 4. Explain the strategies used in questioning to encourage learning.**

6.2.1: Types of Questions Used in Teaching

Questions can be put into types in a number of ways. One way is according to their framing, another is according to their purpose and yet another is according to their difficulty level. It does not matter how

teachers choose to put them into types but what is important is that they are supposed to stimulate thinking. Let us now take a look at some of the common types of questions.

First let us look at the most common way of putting them into types based on their purpose:

- Lower order questions: questions that require your pupils to recall facts learnt.
- Higher order questions: questions which require your learners to change the form of the original information in order to compare, analyze, etc.
- Probing questions: questions which steer up your pupils to give a more acceptable response whenever they give weak answers.
- Promoting questions: these involve questions that are reworded from their original form usually with hints and cues to help your pupils to answer.
- Focusing questions: questions which direct your pupil's attention. This question can be in the form of factual, empirical or productive questions.

Second, let us look at another way based on the kind of learning they are supposed to encourage in learners: Cognitive (mental), affective (feeling) or psychomotor (physical). In this course we will only look at the cognitive question types because they are the commonly used ones in the basic schools. You might meet the other types in further learning.

6.2.2: Cognitive questions:

This category of question is used to test the knowledge and understanding of the pupil. They include all the levels of thought processes.

- Comprehension- questions that test understanding and demonstrating, using words like; explain or describe
- Application – questions that ask the learner to use information to solve a problem with words like; solve, calculate, use, which, choose.
- Analysis- questions that ask you to explain how you solved a problem or the steps you took to do something with words like; Why, identify, how did you; etc
- Synthesis – questions that make you put together information to get an answer with words like; develop, produce, put together, write, illustrate, create, compose etc.

Other forms of questions that are useful include the following: Notice that these are not based on purpose or kind of cognitive thinking but on the level of thinking expected; narrow versus broad and convergent versus divergent.

- Narrow Questions: These types of question require your pupils to give factual recall or specific, correct answer.

- Broad Questions: These questions require pupils to go beyond simple memory and use their thinking process to formulate an answer.
- Convergent Questions: This involves different questions that are simply framed but require the same answer.
- Divergent Questions: These involve questions which have a number of, or several correct responses. For instance, when you ask questions which require application or analysis, then you are asking a divergent question.

6.2.3: Questioning strategies:

Let us quickly remind you that there are certain things that you must not do when using question as a method of teaching. These include -

- Repeating questions
- Repeating all the students' responses
- Not attending to the responding student
- Always selecting the same student respondents
- When you ask a question, do not allow the whole class to answer in "chorus"? Such chorus answers permit your learner's attention to wander as you are not monitoring feedback from individual learners in your class.

Therefore consider the following strategies when questioning

- Ask the question before you name the pupil
- When you ask a question, pause (wait time) so that everyone will have time to think about the question. Determine how long your pause should be, at least three seconds.
- Call on one pupil by name. you should do this randomly.
- If the question is complicated, state it more than once by varying the wording
- State the question clearly and concisely; this will set the whole class thinking.
- Encourage more complete and interesting answers.
- Listen to the answer.(Check how to react to pupil's response)
- Emphasize on the correct answer.

Dear learner, note that these are not all the strategies you need to use. Through experience you will learn a lot more. However what we have mentioned here will give you a clear idea of the nature of questioning strategies.

Summary

We have just discussed the types of questions that teachers use in the classroom and emphasized on the instances that favour the use of each type. We first looked at the types based on the purpose of the topic. Then we looked at the cognitive or mental forms of questions because these are the ones that interest teachers most when they are trying to achieve cognitive performance. Also we identified some other types not based on purpose or cognitive thinking but level of thinking such as narrow or broad, convergent or divergent. Finally we looked at the strategies we can use to make questioning effective in encourage pupil learning.

SESSION 3: Handling children's responses

Introduction

Teachers need to ask pupils questions but pupils also need to ask teachers questions. There are two critical issues to note in these two situations. In the first situation, when teachers ask questions, pupils respond, and teachers react on the pupils responses. The way and manner in which teachers respond is important. Teachers need to respond in such a way that learners are encouraged to want to respond again in future. The second situation is where pupils ask questions, but the concern about the teacher is the same. Here again teachers should handle pupils questions in such a way that pupils will be encouraged. In this session we will discuss the strategies teachers need to use in handling pupils responses and questions.

Objectives

1. Give reasons why pupils questions are necessary
2. Explain the ways in which teachers should handle pupils questions
3. Explain the ways in which teachers should handle pupils responses to their questions

6.3.1: Importance of pupil's questions

- Pupil's questions encourage class participation and interest in the lesson.
- They serve as a means for pupils to get some satisfactory answers on questions they may have on a topic not yet taught.
- They are instruments for satisfying their curiosity.

- This helps the teacher to evaluate their intellectual functioning so that they may adjust to it.
- These questions enable the teacher to deal with the pupils as individual who have their peculiar interest and problems.
- They may lead to further activity or assignment. For example, homework may be based on the review questions that the pupil may ask.
- The questions may also serve as a good starting point for the development of new lesson plan.
- They also serve as a valid area for the appropriate location of pupil's previous knowledge and for the development of a new lesson.
- Their questions reveal misconceptions or wrong interpretations of ideas, words and concepts on the topic under discussion.

6.3.2: Handling pupils Questions

Now that you have discussed the importance of pupils questions, let us now look at how to handle pupils questions. Remember it was indicated earlier that you need to encourage pupils to ask questions and answer questions. Therefore your ways of responding to pupils questions is particularly important. If you frustrate or make them unhappy with the way you respond to their questions you will lose the chance to use questions as a valuable lesson tool. This will affect your lesson seriously. Please take a good look at these

1. Request and encourage questions from pupils: Pupils will see that you have a genuine interest in what they're thinking.
 - Be aware of how your behavior and comments can set the tone for questioning.
 - A negative response (e.g., "We've already covered that") discourages further questions and may make students think you don't really want questions.
2. Make sure everyone hears the question.
 - Repeat it if necessary.
 - Ask the class if they heard the question; if not, then ask the student to repeat it to the class.
3. **Clarify questions.**
 - Say, "Do you mean that . . . ," or "I'm sorry, I don't understand the question," rather than "Your question isn't clear."
4. **Answer questions as directly as possible.**
 - Address your answer to the whole class.

- Ask students whether you have adequately answered the question.
5. Be diplomatic when students raise complicated questions, or persistently ask questions just for asking.
 - Ask them to stop by after class or see you in office hours.
 - If a student is simply confused, say, "Let me go over this point a bit more slowly."

We hope you have taken a serious look at these points..

6.3.3: Handling pupil's responses:

Now let us discuss the other side of the issue. When you ask a question you need to handle pupil's responses carefully for the same reason. You do not want your pupils to lose interest in answering questions

1. Wait for students to think and formulate responses. After asking the question, waiting 5-10 seconds will increase the number of students who volunteer to answer. If students do not volunteer before 5 seconds have passed, you do not have to answer your own question, which will only communicate to students that if they do not answer, you will do their thinking for them. If the students are unable to answer after sufficient time for thinking has passed, rephrase or reword the question.
2. Do not interrupt students' answers. You may find yourself wanting to interrupt because you think you know what the student is going to say, or simply because you are passionate about the information. Resist this temptation. Hearing the students' full responses will allow you to give them credit for their ideas and to determine when they have not yet understood the material.
3. Show that you are interested in students' answers, whether right or wrong. Encourage students when they are offering answers, by nodding, looking at them, and using facial expressions that show you are listening and engaged. Do not look down at your notes while they are speaking.
4. Develop responses that keep students thinking. For example, ask the rest of the class to respond to an idea that one student has just presented, or ask the student who answered to explain the thinking that led to her answer.
5. If a pupil gives an incorrect or weak answer, point out what is incorrect or weak about the answer, but ask the pupil a follow-up question that will lead that pupil, and the class, to the correct or stronger answer. For example, note that the pupil's answer overlooks the most important conclusion of the study you are discussing, then ask that same pupil to try to recall what that conclusion is. If he or she does not recall the conclusion, open this question up to the class.

6. Reward correct responses and correct wrong answers
7. Use response of one pupil as basis for further questions.

Summary

The interaction between the teacher and pupil in the classroom is best done through questions. Teachers usually ask more questions but pupils ask questions too. In this session we have focussed attention on the questions that pupils ask. How should we handle such questions to make pupils think further without making them feel bad even if their questions are out of line? We have discussed the importance of pupil's questions and provided some suggestions about how to handle such questions. We then went further to look at the way we should handle pupil's responses to our questions. Therefore this session has focussed more on pupils and how we handle them in questioning, which we think you will find very important.

SESSION 4: Motivating learners

Introduction

There is a lot of interest today in why pupils in our basic schools are not doing as well as is expected. This is not a concern in Ghana only but it is the same all over the world. Upon looking at the several possible causes of this situation the focus now seems to have settled on the need for classrooms to be more motivating places in which to learn. In the first unit of this course a question was asked whether you will be happy to be a pupil in your own class. The same question can be asked here. The purpose of this session is to discuss the way to motivate learners in your lessons so as to get them want to put up their best effort in learning and to enjoy learning.

Objectives

1. Explain what motivating learner's means and differentiate between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
2. Identify what you would consider in planning your lessons to make it more motivating to your learners.
3. Give the benefits of motivation in a lesson
4. Describe some general strategies for motivating learners.

6.4.1: What is Motivation?

The term motivation is derived from the Latin verb "movere" which means "to move". Motivation therefore is the process of moving pupils to want to learn and to put in more effort in learning. But remember that this has to be focused on achieving the objectives of the particular lesson. In classroom

teaching and learning, motivation can be seen as the process of arousing and sustaining interest in a lesson activity.

6.4.2: Types of Motivation

There are two types of motivation. These are intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic Motivation: This type of motivation comes from within the person. This means the pupil is interested in the topic or even the strategy being used for personal reasons. If you are talking about germs and illness and getting treatment, the daughter of a doctor or nurse in your class is likely to have intrinsic interest in this topic. Intrinsic motivation has its emphasis on interest and excitement.

Extrinsic Motivation: This type of motivation comes from outside the person or they are externally imposed. If the pupil gets to like a topic in social studies because the teacher used maps in teaching it, or praised pupils who were able to find locations on the map, this is extrinsic motivation. The motivation is from the teacher to the child. It is concerned with learning or behaviour that has connection with outside influence. It may come from such incentives as rewards, praise, grades, promotion, examination, teaching/learning materials, and teachers own personality.

6.4.3: Motivating pupils to learn

Motivating pupils is not an easy thing to do. The first thing to do if you want to motivate pupils in your lesson is to search the topic for clues about what you can use in the lesson to create something interesting and curious. It does not come by chance. The second thing will be to check the interests of your pupils. You need to know what makes them excited. Is it music, or soccer or some movies? Now, how can you factor this interest into the content of the topic? If you are able to find a way of doing this, then you are on a good path to success.

Suspense, which comes from curiosity, can often generate excitement, interest and involvement of pupils. As a result, begin your lesson with an unusual event or an interesting demonstration related to the topic. It may be something you created yourself, got from the internet or some other source. Using this curiosity evoking issue with questions to get pupils involved as a way of introducing your lesson will improve motivation in the lesson.

The use of models, diagrams and pictures in your lesson captures interest. In using them you always have to ask pupils their views about that they diagram or models are about. Too many teachers put up these instructional diagrams and speak to them or rush through their lessons without involving pupils. Such visual aids will only motivate if pupils are involved in telling what information they convey.

The use of questions that involve pupils in thinking is helpful. Also hypothetical questions help. This is a fictitious event or idea you create in order to ask a question. Questions that encourage thinking or divergent ideas and those which involve interesting hypothetical situations are interesting to pupils and

can motivate them. But note that their age and level must be considered if you plan to use such questions. For instance questions which begin with ‘what will happen if’.

Next, remember that pupils get more interested in a lesson if they know what is expected of them in the lesson. That means it will be useful to tell them what to be looking out for within the lesson. This makes them pay more attention looking for it and showing more interest. This is called giving them an ‘advanced organizer’.

6.4.4: The benefits of motivation on the lesson

Why has motivation been seen as a solution to the low performance of many pupils and groups of pupils. Let us find this out from the following benefits:

- Motivation enables the teacher to secure the attention and participation of his students in his lessons. Both attention and participation are very crucial for understanding and remembering.
- It encourages learners to learn with all seriousness such as for examinations.
- Motivation offsets or prevents boredom, fatigue or tiredness.
- It creates interest and excitement, which is necessary for learning. Anything learnt with interest is easily stored in memory and easily applied.
- It encourages learners to undertake activities with all seriousness. This is called conscious engagement. Pupils think more about things they are motivated about.

6.4.5: Some general strategies for Motivating Learners

Let us now look at some general strategies for motivating pupils. Under the heading ‘motivating pupils to learn’ above, we have discussed where the teacher needs to start from in order to have an interesting class. Now we will look at some general actions you should take as you teach to get your pupils motivated and involved in learning. These include the following:

- Use praises, rewards, approval, words of encouragement, etc.
- Make teaching practical through field trips, demonstrations, etc.
- Make the learning activity exciting and interesting by using appropriate and suitable teaching and learning materials and equipment.
- Give learners the opportunity to take active part in what is learned. For instance, let them make suggestions and contribute ideas.
- Introduce occasionally, activities such as games and competition among learners to arouse their interest.
- Set achievable goals and standards. If goals set are too high for pupils, learners may get discouraged.

Summary

Every teacher should have the desire to motivate pupils to learn. In this session we have provided you with information which should make you develop that desire. We have made you aware of what motivation means and the fact that it is what gives pupils the desire to learn. We have also mentioned the two forms of motivation – personal interest and imposed interest and we hope you realize that personal interest is the best form, though imposed interest is more commonly needed. We have also covered the benefits of motivation and provided you with strategies for motivating pupils in your lessons. It is hoped that the ideas you have gained in this session will make you more able to help your learners achieve better result.