

Newsletter



Teachers' Resource Centre

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What's Inside

Not What to Think, but How to Think...1

Integrating Curriculum and Global Projects...3

The Headlearner (Part 2)...5

V.M.Public School: Going for a Test-drive...8

Environment and Health...10

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Dear Readers,

We are back with another issue of the TRC Newsletter. The biggest news for us this quarter and for many in the field of education who deal with young children is the formalisation of the National ECE Curriculum. It took a lot of hard work on our part as we worked jointly with the Ministry of Education to put together the curriculum document. However, when we think about the many ways in which this child-centred, activity-based approach to education will benefit public school children, we realise that it was all worth it. On 22nd August 2002, the National ECE curriculum was launched in a ceremony in Islamabad and you can see what a wonderful success it was in the Newsletter's centre spread.

As a teacher one usually knows what is 'right' but not always how to implement it. For instance, most of us know that rote learning should be discouraged, but aren't sure about what to replace it with. 'Critical Thinking!' says Anjum Bashir in her article and offers some valuable suggestions on getting the thinking process going. The article on technology also gives ideas on becoming part of the global community through the Internet, and will guide you to websites your class might want to check out. Meanwhile the Headlearner continues to work wonders in her school with remarkable vision. You may remember her from the last issue and she's back, this time to discuss the induction process of new teachers in a school.

We are also carrying two interviews in this issue, one in the Urdu section and one in the English, which school heads may find especially useful. The health-environment nexus is covered in our environment section and the Urdu section also carries an interesting article on discipline. The article addresses a problem most of us come across and get exasperated by – the undisciplined child. Don't lose your cool, turn to the article and find positive ways to discipline.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Editor

Pedagogy

Not What to Think, but How to Think

Since acquiring critical thinking habits and skills takes a long time it is a good idea to start early, says the writer.

by Anjum Bashir

The goal of good education is to teach students to think for themselves, and not merely to learn what other's have taught. Knowledge and experience are not merely to be possessed but applied in practice. This requires judgment, an important characteristic of critical thinking.

The dominant practice in teaching is to teach students what to think so that they learn what the teachers know. In contrast, the critical theory is to teach students how to think so that they can find their own solution to the problems. Students should become individual repositories for storing strategies and approaches for gathering, evaluating, and using information. This requires a new perspective of the faculty role and new ways to design the curriculum and teaching strategies.

Here are a few definitions of critical thinking:

"Critical thinking is the process of purposeful, self-regulatory judgment. This process gives reasoned consideration to evidence, contexts, conceptualisations, methods, and criteria."

or

"...the mental processes, strategies, and representations people use to solve problems, make decision, and learn new concepts."

or

"Reasonable reflective thinking

that is focused on deciding what to believe and do." These definitions identify two major areas of critical thinking. One is a personal disposition: truth-seeking, open-mindedness, analyticity, systematic, self-confidence, inquisitiveness and maturity. The second is that of skill: analysis, evaluation, inference, deductive and inductive reasoning.

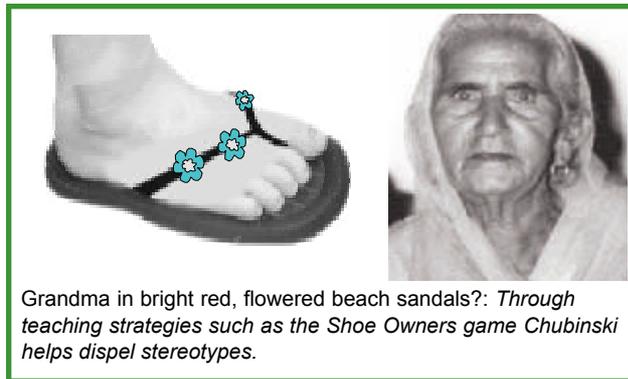
Research seems to support the idea that critical thinking is as much a habit of the mind as a "personal disposition to open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, and willingness to reconsider in light of new information." So, critical thinking is not only a skill, but also a personal attribute.

The internal and personal process of defining phenomena, establishing criteria, evaluating information, and choosing what is probably true and 'safe' to believe is essential to critical thinking. This involves the use of logic and inference. There is some research to support the notion that reasoning can be taught and that it is "possible to train such foundations of reasoning as how to use dimensions to analyze and organize similarities and differences and how to identify the structure of simple propositions."(1)

Critical thinking rests upon sound interpretation of written text: the well-balanced, coherent composition; the clear comprehension of what one hears; and the persuasive argument. It must rest upon proficient

reasoning skills that can assure competency in inference, as well as upon proficient inquiry, concept-formation, and translation skills.

If teaching critical thinking can improve education, it will be because it increases the quantity and quality of meaning that



Grandma in bright red, flowered beach sandals?: Through teaching strategies such as the Shoe Owners game Chubinski helps dispel stereotypes.

students derive from what they read and perceive and what they express in what they write, say, and do. Without these skills, we would not be able to draw meaning from written text or from conversation, nor could we impart meaning to a conversation or to what we write. We must begin with the raw subject matter of communication and inquiry –with reading, listening, speaking, writing, and reasoning.

Literature in psychology and education emphasises the need for faculties to develop their own definitions of critical thinking, determine criteria, measure outcomes, and revise the curriculum in light of findings. They need to be unified in their understanding of critical thinking as a concept, both theoretical and operational. The faculty also needs to achieve a consensus about methods and tools to be used for evaluation of critical thinking.

Mary Barton, an English instructor at Bishop Carroll High School has suggested three sets of data teachers can use to determine the level of critical thinking in students. The most superficial level of

"figuring things out" occurs at the verbal level: it's easy to say something. As teachers, we must listen to how students talk about their lessons. Next, it is a bit harder to read and understand how others "figured things out." As teachers, we must notice how students have interpreted what they

have read. Finally, the hardest way to "figure things out" is to write what you think about something and present your thesis as a speech. As a teacher one must look very carefully at the structure and substance of what students write and present orally regarding their lessons.

Since acquiring critical thinking habits and skills takes a long time, it needs to be taught throughout an educational program. It would seem a good idea to start as early as possible by including logic, debate, and speech courses in the curriculum. While there are numerous articles and ideas about how to teach critical thinking, there is one, which seems particularly outstanding.

Chubinski has developed teaching strategies based on Richard Paul's theory of critical thinking (2). For each of the skills identified in the theory, Chubinski has developed a strategy for teaching that skill. The skills include "identifying the problem, deciphering the purpose, uncovering the assumptions, recognizing and using different paradigms, demonstrating different methods of reasoning, examining data, creating alternate solutions, and evaluating one's thinking to improve it."

For example, in teaching students to uncover assumptions, Chubinski uses the Shoe Owners game. She presents a bunch of old work shoes to the students and asks them to describe the former owners. The students work individually first, and later in small groups to develop a description of the owners of the shoes. This is shared with the class. In the end, Chubinski reveals the real owner to the surprised students who were wrong or to the cheering correct students. The "bright red flowery, beach sandals of a grandmother" help dispel stereotypes.

To teach how to recognize and use different paradigms, Chubinski uses Paradigm Trades, which requires students to role-play various characters in a 15-minute scene. After this, each student identifies the goal of the character played.

Although critical thinking represents only one of many concepts that are interwoven in a curriculum, it is the current challenge in education –teaching students not to learn, but to think. Effective teachers themselves have to be talented in researching, learning, reviving, and adapting information to meet the challenge.

REFERENCE: Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum Project (www.kcmetro.cc.mo.us/longview/ctac/#N-12-)



A practicing clinical psychologist, Anjum Bashir has an MA in the subject from the Karachi University

and is currently enrolled in an M.Phil. programme. From 1996 to 1998, Anjum worked with the Liaquat National Hospital as a clinical psychologist. She has attended numerous training workshops and has presented papers at seminars. Currently she has a private practice and conducts workshops on child psychology at TRC

Integrating Curriculum and Global Projects

The Internet has made the world a global community., In this article the writer asks 'How can we participate in global projects on the internet during our school days that are already filled with specific curriculum goals?'

By Patti Weeg

The Internet today offers teachers and students many online global projects and beckons us to join the virtual learning community. Student-centered organisations such as 'Kidlink' offer activities and projects that encourage deeper levels of communication and a forum where participants exchange, organise and interpret shared information. Teachers look for stimulating projects that encourage inquiry and critical thinking. Still, the lingering question remains, how can we participate in global projects during our school days that are already filled with specific curriculum goals that we must address? Where do these projects fit? The answer is waiting in the corners of our creative energies. Instead of teaching skills in isolation, give them real world meaning. Provide your students with an audience and a purpose for what they do and a place to publish their work.

Kidlink Day

Hyperlink

<http://65.42.153.210/kidspace/start.cfm?HoldNode=951>

Over four hundred students from ten countries participated in this year's 'Kidlink Day' project. These students were six through eighteen years old. Kidlink students from around the world wrote a journal, by the hour, of their activities on

that day which we called 'A Kidlink Day.

The project's main page links to resources for teachers that include:

- Lesson ideas for using the project in the classroom
- Suggestions for writing interesting journals
- Extension activities by participants
- Evaluating student journals and participation in the project

The project provides teachers with an excellent source of data for use across many curriculum areas such as social studies, math and writing.

Social Studies:

- locating journal writers on the map, latitude/longitude, hemisphere
- identifying customs and festivals noted in the journals
- identifying local foods
- identifying study habits and values
- comparing the length of the school day in various countries
- identify subject areas that are favorites and those that are unique to the area.

Language Arts:

- writing for a specific purpose-to inform

- using appropriate style and conventions

- developing as writers using the writing process having had occasions to prewrite, draft, revise and proofread their journal writings.

- writing effectively by considering correctness, completeness, and appropriateness of their text.

Science:

- recording, analysing and comparing weather data and patterns
- becoming aware that land features help influence recreational activities of students in various parts of the world
- comparing the kinds of food kids like to eat for meals.
- observing good health habits mentioned in journals such as dental hygiene

Math:

- recording, organising and interpreting data
- comparing standard and metric measurement - daily temperature
- using percents and fractions to describe daily activity - students spend 10% of their day watching TV.
- totaling and averaging the hours of homework classmates are doing on a typical day

In typical journals, students could see common threads in their days. Students from three of the participating schools examined some of the following ideas in extension

activities after journals were published in KidSpace:

Hyperlink

<http://65.42.153.210/kidspace/start.cfm?HoldNode=3028>

- The hour kids wake up on a school day
- breakfast and lunch favourites
- transportation to school
- length of classes and school day
- favourite or least favourite classes
- after school activities
- time spent on chores after school time



An example of a self portrait made by a child for the Kidart Self Portrait Project.

- spent on homework or watching TV
- favourite TV shows
- the hour for going to bed at night

Another Kidlink project which included students from all ages is the 'Grandmother and Me' project. In many cases this project brought families together for dialogue and festivities in addition to addressing language arts skills and research.

Joy Boehm from HL Beeler Elementary in New Jersey joined the 'Grandmother and Me' project with students at

her school. At the end of the school year, second grade students at HL Beeler shared their project with their grandparents!

Joy posted a link to the Grandparent Party in KidSpace with this note:

"On May 22nd, we invited our grandparents to school to have a party and to see the Grandmother & Me Project. They loved it and so did we. You can see our party pictures on this link."

[http://www.evesham.k12.nj.us/beeler1/What are We Learning / Grandma _ Gabardi.htm](http://www.evesham.k12.nj.us/beeler1/What%20are%20We%20Learning%20-%20Grandma%20_Gabardi.htm)

Kidart Self Portrait Project

The objective of Kidlink's 'Self-Portrait Project' is to give young people the opportunity to express themselves through sculpture, painting, etching, pencil drawing, mobile, stabile, animation, and computer art. The project gives students an opportunity to increase self-esteem and expand their creativity.

Display of art can stimulate a universal dialogue between participants worldwide as the project progresses.

Students were also encouraged to build a psychological self-portrait; to think about the mental image that each teenager has of himself. To translate his own image without taking the physical features too much into consideration and using colors, graphic signs and techniques, freely.

A self portrait display was created by Erika T. Age 14, in Muggi, Italy Erika explains her art:

"It's hard to understand something about my inner nature by just looking at my self portrait. I'm an extrovert with many

friends - (color: azure). I'm sensitive to all emotions - (color: pink). I'm a very cheerful and natural girl - (color: yellow, bright orange.) I'm kind to people - (color: green), but at the same time also, a bit horrible, (nuances violet dark and light). By and large, I'm a very sweet girl - (color: white with pink nuances.)"

In short global projects are not an additional layer of 'work' for students and teachers added to the tight schedules of our daily classes. Consider the following learner outcomes as defined by one school system:

Writing: "use relevant descriptions, including sensory details, personal experiences, observations, and research-based information to make a topic or message clear to the reader"

Math : "represent and interpret quantitative relationships in a table or graph."

Social Studies: "describe and compare cultural characteristics of different groups of people"

Can global projects target these outcomes? Indeed, creative teachers can find the connections. Global projects form the tapestry where learner outcomes are seamlessly woven into creative works by students and teachers who yearn for more than skills taught in isolation.

Parts of this article appeared in our April-June 2001 newsletter.



Patti Weeg is a computer teacher at the Delmar Elementary School in USA. She is actively involved in teacher training and has presented at many conferences on integrating the Internet into the curriculum.. Patti has written a book, Kids@ work: Math in the Cyberzone and has received awards including MICCA Computer Education of the Year and Maryland Distinguished Technology Educator.

The Head Learner

The story of the headlearner continues as a new teacher joins the school and is struck by the amount of thought that has gone into the induction and review process.

By Gaynor Smith

With Mrs Jamil as head teacher, the school was becoming well known as a place where pupils were highly motivated to learn as much as they could and where teachers enjoyed teaching.

We join the school again just after the appointment of a new teacher, Saira to her first teaching post.

Saira had been delighted when Mrs Jamil offered her the job. She had heard that this was a good school, that the headteacher was demanding yet supportive of staff, and that she called herself a 'head-learner'! Saira thought that this was a strange notion, but she was keen to discover what it meant.

As the new term approached she felt a mixture of excitement and trepidation. What would her new colleagues be like? How would she manage a class of her own? Would she meet the expectations of the headteacher? Was teaching the right job for her?

Saira's teaching duties would not begin until the afternoon of her first day. This enabled the head to spend time with her, tell her about the school and find out how Saira was feeling about becoming a teacher. Mrs Jamil explained that Saira, as a young person new to the profession, would be helped by the school to learn as much as she could about the craft of teaching. She explained that the school was testing a system

of induction for new teachers and that Saira would be the first teacher to experience this.

As the head described the main features of the Induction Programme, Saira was struck by the amount of thought that had gone into it. The head explained that three teachers on the staff had researched



good practice in teacher induction, and that she, with the rest of her colleagues, had devised the school's induction programme which lasted for the first year of a teacher's career.

During the morning Saira learnt that for her first year she would have half a day every week out of class. This time was to be spent observing other teachers teaching, completing her 'learning journal' for the week, drafting her week's lesson plans or attending in-service training. Saira was also introduced to her Induction Tutor, Mrs Shafqat, an experienced and skilful teacher who had the specific role of helping people new to teaching to develop

professionally during their first year in school. As well as her teaching duties Mrs Shafqat had been trained to provide advice and guidance to new teachers. She would observe Saira teaching two or three times a term, offer her feedback and help her to set objectives which would improve her skills as a teacher.

At the end of her first day

Saira returned home with a lot to think about. In her bag was a copy of the staff handbook containing practical information about the school's policies and procedures. She also had a copy of her Induction Programme, which contained the following documents:

The Induction Year :

This document outlined the roles and responsibilities of the Induction Tutor, the Headteacher and the New Teacher.

Induction Tutor

1. Ensure the new teacher understands school policies and procedures
2. Set up a timetable of regular

TERMLY SELF-REVIEW

Name----- Date-----

This review is at the end of my 1st / 2nd / 3rd term of teaching.
It records the areas where I feel I have made progress and sets out my objectives for next term. My knowledge and understanding of ----- subject (s) has improved in the following ways:-----

I consider my planning to be very good / good most of the time / reasonable with some things in need of improvement / in need of major improvement.

The following are examples of my improved planning.

My classroom management has improved in the following ways:-----

The following are examples of ways I am developing positive relationships with pupils, parents and colleagues-----

Other areas I am pleased with are:-----

The areas I need to develop next term are:-----

fortnightly meetings with the new teacher

3. Observe the new teacher teaching within the first 4 weeks and then two times each term

4. Give feedback and help the teacher to reflect on successes and development needs

5. Plan further training/ activities to meet needs of new teacher

6. Develop own skills in observing, advising and coaching new teachers

New Teacher

1. Familiarise self with school policies and procedures

2. Ask for advice and clarification as necessary

3. Participate fully in the induction programme

4. Be observed teaching

5. Undertake a termly self-review using the teaching standards, feedback from induction tutor and reflective journal

6. Contribute fully to professional review meetings with induction tutor

Headteacher

1. Ensure induction programme is in place

2. Arrange that advice and training is available for the induction tutor (for example in the skills of observation and giving feedback)

3. Ensure release time is available for the new teacher and the induction tutor

4. Have termly meetings with induction tutor to evaluate the programme and progress of the new teacher

5. Meet informally with the new teacher to hear her views and ideas for improving the induction programme

Teaching and Learning Standards

(adapted from Teaching Skills research - Hay McBer June 2000)

High Expectations

Do You:

- encourage high standards of effort, accuracy and presentation?

- draw on pupil experiences or ideas relevant to the lesson?

- tailor lessons appropriately to challenge all pupils in the class?

- allow pupils to take responsibility for their own learning?

Planning
Do you:

- do you communicate a clear plan and objectives for the lesson at its start?

- provide as many relevant resources and materials as you can and have them ready at the start of the lesson?

- review what pupils have learned at the end of the lesson?

Methods and Strategies
Do you:

- involve all pupils in the lesson?

- use a variety of activities and learning methods?

- use a variety of questioning techniques to probe pupils' knowledge and understanding?

- encourage pupils to use a variety of problem-solving techniques?

- give clear instructions?

- listen and respond to pupils?

Pupil Management

Do you:

- keep the pupils on task throughout the lesson?
- correct bad behaviour immediately?
- praise good achievement and effort?
- treat different children fairly?

Time Management

Do you...

- structure the lesson to use the time well?
- ensure the lesson lasts for the planned time?
- use an appropriate pace?
- allocate your time fairly between pupils?

Assessment

Do you...

- focus on understanding and meaning? factual memory? skills mastery? applications in real life settings?
- use tests and competitions to assess understanding?
- recognise misconceptions and clear them up?

- mark pupils' written work in accordance with the school's marking policy?

- encourage pupils to do better next time?

Saira used this checklist to help her to reflect on how she was doing during her first month as a teacher. She recorded her experiences in her learning journal, which contained some of the following useful prompts and guidelines to help her reflect on her practice (see box on page 6).

After teaching for four weeks Saira had her first review discussion with her induction tutor. Mrs Shafqat listened carefully and encouraged Saira to think about what she was doing well and where she needed help and guidance. Saira wanted to improve her questioning techniques. She used some of her class release time to watch how another teacher in the school used questions to stimulate and encourage children to think creatively.

Later in the term, Mrs Shafqat watched Saira at work with a

group of children and was very impressed with the way she encouraged their learning through effective questioning.

The induction programme for new teachers was another practical way for the head teacher to demonstrate the importance of learning for teachers and pupils alike. The programme provided development opportunities not only for the new teacher, but for other members of staff as they learned about supporting and encouraging their new colleague.



Gaynor Smith is an education consultant with Education Bradford, UK. She specialises in the continuing professional development (CPD) of head-teachers and is an accredited trainer for Performance Management. Gaynor has co-edited a series of books on educational leadership

A Tribute to Teachers' Resource Centre

Teachers' Resource Centre is an N.G.O,

It's doing its best,

but it still has far to go,

It is not merely a working place,

Because everybody works hard,

no matter what their place,

All of them strive for excellence,

And this is TRC's real essence,

Everything here is well organised,

Look at the fabulous paintings,
they can never ever be priced!

If you visit it once, you would love to come
back for more,

The glory starts right when you step on its
floor,

Teachers' Resource Centre is a place full of
peace,

That's why all its members work at ease,

Here creativity is always in the air,

Whoever comes here, learns to share,

Attend the workshops here and see,

How fruitful training can be

**Written by : Muneeza Karim who teaches
class 3 at the P.E.C.H.S Girls' School.**

Thanks for the tribute Muneeza, Editor

VM Public School: Going for a Test-drive

In 1999, TRC carried out an extensive evaluation of the VM Public School. In the following interview to the TRC newsletter, the principal of the school gives her feedback.

By TRC Staff Writer

Troubled by the problems that set in when VM Public School went on a roller-coaster ride after being nationalised in the '70s and subsequently privatised, the management of the school approached Teachers' Resource Centre to have its primary section evaluated, as the starting point in salvaging the situation. TRC carried out an extensive evaluation of the primary section of this large and beautiful trust school located in a quiet part of Dhoraji, in Karachi.

In this interview, Ms. Zia Halai, the principal of the school discusses the evaluation process and explains why the school's management has now asked TRC to evaluate its secondary section.

TRC: Why did VM Public School decide to have an evaluation done?

ZH: VM Public School was privatised in 1984. Since then, the trustees have been trying to turn around the standard of education of the school. As

principal of the school, the trustees gave me the task and the logical thing was to find out the state of affairs and what was going wrong. So we requested TRC to carry out an extensive evaluation, identifying our strengths and weaknesses and recommending some remedies.

TRC: As the principal of the school weren't you already aware of the problems the school faced?

ZH: Of course when you are in a certain situation you can see the problems and I did too. But at the same time one needs guidance and training to start working in the right direction. It also helps to see everything in black and white.

Secondly, a qualified outsider can give you a more objective view of things. The evaluation was done primarily so that we could move forward.

TRC: Tell us a little about the school

ZH: VM Public School was founded in 1963 and at that

time the Rangoonwala Trust owned it. Since that time, the school had worked on a double-shift system, with the primary school students attending the afternoon sessions, while the secondary school sessions were held in the morning.

The problem started when the school was nationalised in 1972 and the medium of education was changed to Urdu. The standard of education was the first to be affected and during that time a lot of people pulled their children out of the school.

Today, the majority of our students are economically-challenged and most of them are from the surrounding areas. Most of the boys in the secondary section work in tailor shops or TV repair shops and are earning supplementary incomes to contribute to the family kitty. About 50% are on scholarship.

TRC: What were the problems you faced when you took over?

ZH: Because of the two shifts, with the primary section pupils coming in the afternoon, there was a serious time management and co-ordination problem. Then there was the problem of staffing as we had trouble finding good teachers for

the second shift. There were other problems too, such as the use of traditional methods of teaching by the teachers and the lack of formal lesson-planning.

TRC: What was the evaluation process like?

ZH: The evaluation carried out by TRC was extremely thorough. The evaluator made an extensive visit to the school and looked in on all the classes. She also met the teachers, pupils and the parents to get their point of view in order to thoroughly analyse the situation.



VM Public School Inset: Mrs. Zia Halai

Another thing I would like to mention is that instead of concentrating on just the bad in her report, she also highlighted what we were doing right – the positive aspects – in the school. Her recommendations were very good

TRC: How useful was the evaluation?

ZH: It was extremely useful and it played a decisive role in the management's decision to turn the school into a single shift one.

The report identified a lot of other problems, that we had not looked into such as the inappropriate furniture for the lower classes, as a result of which we bought proper furniture.

Then it also helped institute lesson-planning. Before the evaluation, teachers would plan the lessons in their heads and go take the class. After we were advised by TRC, we started a formal system of written lesson planning.

In addition, the report evaluat-

ed the curriculum and helped us take a look at our scheme of studies. Certain things, like the timing of certain lessons to coincide with national events, were carried out.

TRC: The evaluation also helped you draft a mission statement. How useful do you think that is?

ZH: It is extremely useful. It gives everyone in the school direction. I'll give you a small example: the mission statement stresses computer literacy and many of our teachers are now either computer literate or

attending computer classes to become computer literate.

TRC: What is your vision for the school?

ZH: It all comes from having a mission statement. I want the children at VM Public to be highly skilled communicators and for that fluency in both English and Urdu is necessary.

I also want them to develop critical thinking skills, so that they are able to think for themselves. I want to see VM Public School at par with other schools in Karachi and of course I look forward to good Matric grades (laughs).

TRC: What next?

ZH: The management was extremely pleased with the evaluation of the primary section and is now looking to TRC to have the secondary school evaluated.

We also want TRC to carry out a review of the changes made in the primary classes, as a result of the last report's recommendations.

TRC: Would you recommend the evaluation for other schools?

ZH: Definitely. Any school that will go through the process will come out the better for it.

ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH Part 1

The Third World's health statistics are scary. These have forced educational institutions to develop methodologies for health education

By Bilqees Seema Bhatkali

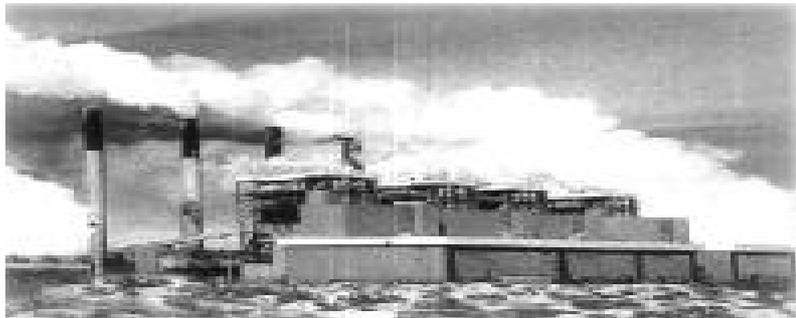
The reality is that we cannot expect everyone to think about the environment. But one thing a lot of people do think about is health. So it is worth exploring the health-environment nexus as it is easy to define how the environment affects our health. An unhealthy environment affects human lives and may even endanger their resistance to diseases or survival. There are many causes of an unhealthy or polluted environment such as the dumping of chemicals and other poisonous waste on land. Emission of smoke and other toxic substances from industrial areas into the air, the discharge of industrial effluents into rivers and the dumping of oil and garbage into the sea, are other ways pollution finds its way into our environment. The thick smog which results because of the high level of vehicle emission, has also become a big threat to health.

Over the years people have learnt the value of environmental health and the efforts of global society in this regard. In response to the agenda of the Earth Summit, which was held in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the WHO (World Health Organisation) formulated a new global strategy for health implications within environmental life and the rural and urban situation regarding health and environment:

- In rural areas, the major environmental threat to health is inadequate or unsafe water supply, poor sanitation, indoor air pollution, toxicity, pesticides and diseases.
- In urban settlements, the environmental health problems are many and exceed even the governments' capabilities for coping with these problems.

Uncontrolled rapid urbanisation and its growth have caused severe problems of air and water pollution, the management of solid and hazardous wastes and health issues.

Professor Dr. H.K.B-Dir, the Minister of Education in Egypt analysed the link between chil-



dren's health and school performance and concluded: "When children are hobbled by poor health, their weakened condition reduces their learning by up to 30%, and in many cases, forces them to end their school careers permanently or remain in school as failures". (Education for All, No.30, Jan-March, 1998)

One third of the world population, at any one time is ill, especially those belonging to developing countries. Among them there is an alarming number of children. Every year over 14 million Third World children under 5 die of a handful of diseases, due to the lack of health care in which malnutrition is a major contributor.

In developing countries, the statistics are scary, nearly 11,000 children die every day from diarrhoea, over 4,000 from measles, and about 2,750 from malaria. Many children die before going to school.

In developed countries, there is one doctor for about every 500 people. In poor countries

(excluding India and China), some 13,500 people have to share each doctor.

Pakistan is near the bottom of the pile amongst the 25 worst countries who have the highest percentage of population without access to sanitation services, 49% in urban areas and 94% in rural settlements.

Statistics such as the above have forced educational institutions to develop methodologies for health education. As a result the concept of 'Health-Promoting Schools' has been developed where teachers are encouraged to contribute to establishing such schools with the collaboration of their community.

In the next issue Bilqees will discuss the concept of Health Promoting Schools which has become a key player in environmental health education.



Bilqees Seema Bhatkali is a senior journalist and consultant with IUCN's Education & Communication Programme. She has a Master's degree in Journalism & International Relations and is currently enrolled in a Ph.D. programme. Bilqees has been an academic staff member and editor for 22 years and has devoted her life to environmental journalism.

History in the Making

We have been keeping you updated on the development of the Early Childhood Education Curriculum through the newsletter. On 22 August 2002, the National Early Childhood Education Curriculum was launched in a well-attended ceremony hosted by TRC in Islamabad. Dr. Atta-ur-Rehman, the Federal Minister for Education was the chief guest at the occasion. Also present were Tariq Farook, the Education Secretary, and Dr. Haroona Jatoi, Joint Education Adviser.



ڈاکٹر مظاہر رحمان اور سیمالک سرکاری اسکولوں میں عالمی معیار کے ابتدائی جماعت کا نصاب نافذ کرنے کے لیے کام کر رہے ہیں۔

Dr. Atta-ur-Rehman and Seema Malik: Working to implement global ECE standards in public sector schools.

Dr. Rehman (who also holds the Science and Technology portfolio) reiterated the goals of the new curriculum, saying that it was designed to “unleash

children’s creativity.” He praised the curriculum saying it sparked their curiosity by offering them a chance to grow as opposed to resorting to memorisation. Also present on the occasion were Randy Hatfield of the Aga Khan Foundation, Jonathan Mitchell of USAID and Maurice Robson of the UNICEF who pledged their



ڈاکٹر مظاہر رحمان اور سیمالک

Left: Seema Malik Right: Dr. Atta-ur-Rehman

support to the implementation of ECE in Pakistan’s public sector schools.

The National ECE Curriculum is the result of a public-private partnership between the Ministry of Education (Curriculum Wing) and the Teachers’ Resource Centre under the umbrella of the Education Sector Reforms (ESR) Action Plan 2001-2005 and will now be a formal part of the National Scheme of Studies.

The curriculum focuses on the holistic development of children in the 3-5 year age group with special emphasis on active learning.

Heads' Management Manual Out!

The heads management manual has finally been printed. TRC had been working on developing a manual to support and guide heads working in public schools. The manual is the result of a collaborative effort between TRC and heads of schools who actively cooperated in its compilation by providing valuable insights into the day to day administration of the school.

In the final stages the manual was reviewed by heads of public sector partner schools before going for a last appraisal to the Additional Secretary, Education, who has highly recommended its distribution among public school heads. The manual grew out of our Primary Education Programme and care has been taken to make the manual reader-friendly and useful.



Workshop in Kasur

On request from Save the Children Fund, TRC conducted a workshop in Kasur to train teachers on the effective use of the Pehla Taleemi Basta (PTB) in the classroom. The workshop was held from 17 to 19 September 2002 and was used to supplement the PTB, which has been distributed widely by SCF. Both male and female teachers, most of who are teaching in government schools, attended the workshop. The workshop was successful and participants gave extremely positive feedback.

The Pehla Taleemi Basta is an educational kit developed by TRC to help teachers use active learning methods in primary classrooms.



A scene from the workshop in Kasur