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ORGANISING LEARNING ACTIVITIES

3.1 Introduction

Lore worth learning, learn flawlessly
Live by that learning thoroughly

Thiruvalluvar, the Tamil poet, suggested in his Thirukural that flawless education must be learnt effectively. Teaching and Learning are two divisions involved in the process of Education. The most desirable learning outcome takes place only when the taught content is clearly known, understood and realized by the learners. So it is the utmost duty of the teachers to organize the learning activities for an effective classroom teaching. The teacher not only serves as a facilitator but also as an organizer in the field of learning.

Teaching means organizing learning activities according to the learning abilities of the student. These activities can be designed under self-learning method, peer-group learning, Individual Learning, small group learning or whole class-learning. The learning activities organized by the teacher must be student oriented. The teachers must create a congenial classroom climate for the children to master whatever they are expected to learn.

Intensive or deep learning can take place even in a challenging content or in new concepts, if appropriate techniques and motivation are provided by the teacher. On the other hand, harsh instructions and threatening atmosphere affect the learning skill of the students. A student learns according to his ability. It is essential to provide opportunities for the student to express his thoughts and opinions. The learning activities in the classroom must include reading, writing, speaking, drawing, expression of thoughts, discussions, etc.

3.2 Learning Activities

Observing the Learning Occurrence:

Learning occurs in the mind level. The five senses are the gateways of learning occurrences. It is also considered as a mind level registration. Motivation and relevant
opportunities serve as a means of learning. The outcome or the result of learning can be illustrated with the help of appropriate motivation. Motivation not only registers internalized learning but also helps to identify it externally. The facilitating factors and opportunities which cause learning occurrences are called teaching. Still learning is not a performing activity but an internal occurrence in the mind level.

Many teaching activities are useful for learning occurrences. If the activities are more suitable, learning is strengthened. On the other hand, inappropriate activities cause temporary learning occurrences which tend to disappear in due course of time. Let us analyze some of the techniques which provide teaching activities to make learning occurrences easy and strengthen learning.

**Relevant Learning Activities:**

The learning experiences should kindle interest in the children. The learning experiences which stimulate the learners, the apt opportunities which do not hinder the mind of the children and the learning arrangements which favour the attention and the desires of the children would undoubtedly serve as relevant teaching activities to achieve the objectivities of learning. The notion of “we are taught” alienates the children from the child approach of learning. The recent researches on children's relevant learning activities define thus: “We play, we wish to be as we are, and there is no thrust, interference and compulsion in our joyful group learning activities”.

**Children’s Desire**

The desires of children are joy based and knowledge based. So a child level approach is essential to analyze the desires of children. At the same time, the desires vary from one another. Still there exist some common desires and activities. While distributing activities, the common desires can be analysed in the following manner.

- Children do not like to be idle and like to perform activities.
- They prefer to be in groups and like to spend their time happily.
- They prefer gentleness rather than harshness and they expect love and care from their teachers.
- They hate others being strict; they prefer freedom.
- Children like to mingle with their age groups.
- Children are more inquisitive in knowing the information in detail.
- Children expect the teacher to be loving and caring.
- They hate the irritant behaviour of the teacher.
The uses of organizing child based learning activities

It is essential that learning activities must attract the attention of the children. The most apt activities retain the attention of the children in the lessons sufficiently and bring out the desirable learning outcome. It is important that the children understand and carry out the activities provided that they are organized in such a way so that;

- They enhance the span of attention.
- They remove the hesitation in participation.
- Provide opportunities for self-expression.
- The children become extroverts.
- Negative attitude and depression is reduced.
- Expected learning outcome takes place easily.
- Increases joyful experiences.

Child centered approach and Learning Activities:

While developing the learning activities, the children’s desire, interest, longings, attitudes, attraction, intrinsic motivation, feelings and emotions are to be considered. The interest and the desire causing factors must be the core of learning materials and teaching aids. Its components, colors and shapes must increase the learning outcomes of the learners.

Some learning experiences easily pave way for the learning occurrences. For example: Storytelling, story listening, singing, dancing, playing, running, searching, connecting, dismantling filling, to let fly, tapping, rotating, drawing, deranging, coloring, making animal sounds, dolls collection are some of the activities that can be provided as learning experiences. These activities would help learning to take place on its own course. In each lesson one or more learning objectives are to be achieved. To fulfill the learning objectives, learning activities or experiences are created. These activities have to be developed based on the ability of the students and multi grade environment. Let us see below the learning activities which make learning easy and joyful.

1. Individual Learning
2. Peer-group Learning
3. Self-Learning
4. Small group-Learning
5. Whole class-Learning
3.2.1 Individual Learning:

The learning skills of the children are not the same and they differ from one another. Each child has its own peculiar and different types of individualities. No two children have the same attitude. Therefore the training method must focus on the individual differences of the learners. So, in the Individual Learning Method, a learner’s needs, intelligence, individual motivation, pace of learning, abilities and the aim of life must be taken into consideration to help to learn on their own pace. It identifies a student’s strengths and weaknesses and the use of this information will help to plan learning activities to maximize their learning.

Significance of Individual Learning:

1. In this method, there is a chance to the learner and the teacher to interact with each other.
2. Teaching method is based on the individual learning differences.
3. The individual may be a member in a group or a class and his learning needs are served in this method by the teacher.
4. This method gives chance to a student to learn on his own pace.
5. It is a very expensive method.
6. No necessity for individual teaching in this method.

Based on the principles of this method, individual learning can be practised in the class room activities and in group.

Types of Individual Learning:

Generally, it can be divided in to two divisions:

Individual plan and Differentiated Individuals’ group activities.

Individual plans:

a) Individual assignment
b) Unit plan
c) Differentiated assignment

DIFFERENTIATED INDIVIDUAL’S GROUP ACTIVITIES:

~ Directed or supervised study
~ Flexible-differentiated flexible assignments
~ Other activities
INDIVIDUAL PLANS:

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT: Based on the differentiated learning abilities, learning levels and needs of the learners, give assignments and supervise the activities. Provisions must be made to the learners to assess their progress in their assignments. The doubts of the students are clarified by the teacher.

UNIT PLAN:
The assignments prescribed to the students are divided into smaller units. The smaller units are expected to be completed within the stipulated time. The students complete the assignments in accordance with their learning ability pace and experience. More assignments can be given for the gifted children. Differentiated individual assignments fulfilling the needs of the learners are given by the teacher. The students are guided by the teacher in their individual difficulty levels.

DIFFERENTIATED ASSIGNMENTS:
Problems oriented or topic related simple assignments are given. A framework of these assignments has to be prepared previously by the teacher. He also acts as a supervisor. The students are permitted to complete their work in accordance with their skills and pace. This activity provides opportunity to give shape to their interest, feelings and new thoughts. It also serves as an outlet for their creativity.

DIFFERENTIATED INDIVIDUAL’S GROUP ACTIVITIES:

DIRECTED OR SUPERVISED STUDY:
In this method, the teacher gives guidance and instructions in the beginning or he distributes the work sheets. The students follow the instructions in their activities. The teacher helps the students who seek his assistance. He also guides the class by dividing it into different groups.

Assignments are based on the children’s needs, interest desire and ability.

- Simple assignments are given to slow learners.
- Additional assistance for learning is provided as per their needs.
- Additional assignments are given for gifted children.

OTHER ACTIVITIES: In the schools, the following special activities can be given depending upon the socio-economical background of the students and their needs.

- Remedial activities
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- Special classes
- Special periods
- Off – campus projects
- Like minded group organization

ORGANIZING LIKE MINDED GROUPS:

These groups are organized based on the student’s abilities. Group activities are prominent rather than fulfilling individual needs. In this method, interested students benefit more than the less interested learners. But here the benefits of student – student learning and peer-group learning are available to the learners. Still organizing these groups have its own short falls. It is a challenging task to identify students with the same interest, habits, experiences, attitude, desires and skills. But the students can be grouped under cognitive level. The individual learning can also be classified as follows:

  - Programmed learning
  - Computer based learning.
  - Individual needs based learning.

PROGRAMMED LEARNING:

Programmed learning is a useful approach in the teaching learning activities. It is an individual technique. It is more useful in the classroom learning and self – learning. According P.F skinner, programmed learning is based on retention of learning principles constructively. According to Kulathi, programmed learning is a suitable technique for individual learning. The teaching tool or frames are useful for learning the programmed lessons or units. Learners can achieve the objectives of teaching by their self – study. They can use the content frames without assistance of the teachers. These frames would enable the learners to attain the desirable learning outcome.

This technique reveals the results of learning quickly, then and there. The teacher or facilitator only provides learning activities in the frames. These learning frames motivate individual learners and guide them for learning. The content split into a number of tiny steps and arranged into a logical sequence in the frames. It is based on stimulus- response principle. The learner provides response to the stimulus frame which is followed by reinforcements. There is no interference of teacher in the programmed learning.
CHARACTERISTICS OF PROGRAMMED LEARNING:

- The teaching content is split into a number of steps and they are written in the frame.
  - Frames are arranged into a logical sequence.
  - The student is required to respond to the questions in the frame.
  - There is provision for the student to confirm the responses immediately.
  - The responses are valued transparently.

The progress of the student and the quality of the contents in programmed learning can be enhanced with the help of the results.

They are two types in programmed learning:

- Linear programme
- Branching programme

USES OF SELF LEARNING:

- It enhances student’s learning.
- It involves the student in the teaching learning activities and helps him in self-learning.
- Can fulfill the needs of the student and as well the student can learn on his own.
- The programmed instruction method reduces the problems of the group learning.
- It strengthens learning as this method is based on the important psychological principles.
- The immediate responses (SR) in this method motivate the students further.

LEARNING THROUGH COMPUTER,
STAGES, USES, IMPORTANCE, TYPES OF LEARNING

The content of the software is installed in the computer and the students learn by operating the computer. It is called learning through computer. It is only a machine. It cannot think on its own. It is possible for the students to learn only when the contents are prepared in software and installed in computer by the computer experts.

STEPS:

- Every student sits in front of the computer facing the screen.
- Each student operates the mouse of the computer to learn the daily contents.
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- The students feed their names and other details through keyboard in the computer.
- Computer registers the progress of every student.
- The students answer the computer questions after reading the content as per his choice.
- When the students master the content, it systematically leads them to the other units of the lesson.
- The student learns with the computer as long as he likes.
- The computer guides the student to attain mastery in the content.

USES OF LEARNING THROUGH COMPUTER:
- Students can learn at their own pace and at their convenient time. Therefore education can be given according to the needs of the individual student.
- Continuous assessment is possible as the learning activities of the student are evaluated and stored in the computer.
- After the content is learnt by the students, the computer itself answers many questions which make continuous assessment simple and easy.
- Learning through colourful pictures, alphabets, light and sound effects increase the learning interest among the students.
- Difficult experiments conducted in the lab can be easily done and viewed in the computer.
- Computer caters to the needs of differently abled, students with learning defects, and gifted learner simultaneously and it can give best education to all students.
- When an experiment is repeatedly performed by many students, the computer provides sufficient suggestions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING THROUGH COMPUTER:
- Information is available quickly and clearly in the computer.
- The learners get information immediately and directly.
- Computer accepts different types of answers from the learners.
- The teaching units are presented in the lesson form with drawings and in lively activities.
- The computer decides the learning concepts based on the learner’s pace of learning.
TYPES OF COMPUTER BASED LEARNING

METHOD OF PRACTICE:

- The computer presents a series of exercises in connections with the content of the lesson and the students answer the exercises.
- The computer proceeds from simple to complex exercises to the learners.
- If the learners commit several mistakes then the computer gives easy exercises.
- Thus, the computer caters to the various needs of the students in accordance to their abilities.

METHOD OF INDIVIDUAL TEACHING:

In this method, the computer can teach a student. The student converses with the computer. The computer follows question and answer method for the student to learn.

SIMULATION METHOD:

This method assists the students to learn even the most difficult experiments conducted in the lab. For example: The segmented body of frog can be systematically arranged and analyzed in the computer data base with the help of diagram method. Computer is a field of storing information. For example: The information or the content of a school library can be stored in a computer and used whenever needed.

EVALUATION:

Computer helps the students to complete the problems very easily in Mathematics, Physics and Statistics subjects.

ROLE OF TEACHERS IN LEARNING THROUGH COMPUTER:

a. The teachers are freed from the traditional method of sitting and teaching in the classroom. Computer has paved way to the teachers to develop a new outlook in teaching

b. The new tasks are suitable for the computer based teaching curriculum and its lesson units are to be selected by the teacher.

c. The teacher in collaboration with the students decides the skills needs and interests of the learners and prepares the teaching units.

d. The teacher uses the suitable computer language, for each and every subject and prepares the plan for computer aided teaching.
DEFECTS:
   i. Knowledge of computer operation is essential. Computer facility must be
      provided to all schools and effectively maintained.
   ii. Computer learning reduces the personal relationship between the teacher and
      the students.
   iii. In the computer teaching system, only the highly motivated students can learn
      properly.
   iv. Mostly in this system students answer objective type questions. Due to this, their
      thinking ability creativity and language skill is likely to reduce.
   v. It needs software engineers and programmers. The quality of training relies on
      these experts.
   vi. The gestures, the feelings, (love, sympathy, happiness, anger, courtesy etc., )
      and the values (sacrifice, dedication, empathy, justice, punctuality, etc., ) of a
      human teacher are lost.

PERSONALIZED SYSTEM OF LEARNING:
   In this system, the learning skills of the students are not compared with one
   another where as their skills are compared with the targeted learning objective. Every
   student should attain 80-90% in the learning objectives in each subject to move to the
   next lesson.

   In this method, there is provision for every learner to progress in his own pace. In
   order to motivate the students, the teacher gives few hints. It contains particulars
   about movie, T.V., film strips, learning method, demonstration, model questions, other
   subject related books, guides, phamplets, reference and the learning objectives with
   the aid of these, the students learn on their own.

   All the students cannot achieve the learning objectives simultaneously because
   the learning skills of the students are not the same. Therefore, provision must be
   made for every learner to learn on his own speed. The content materials and learning
   methods are printed and distributed to the students. They progress in their learning by
   following the instructions without any assistance. The teacher cannot concentrate an
   the individuals in this method, the services of the gifted students are utilized. The
   achievement level of the learners by conducting quiz programmes. The teacher
   regulated the students learning process by his explanations to motivate them.
3.2.2 PEER GROUP LEARNING

Peer group learning is done by students who have equal or similar levels of interests, talents, desire, age and character. They are involved in learning activities. This method gives full freedom, develops involvement and creates analytical functioning in the learning activities. The individual learning differences are considered before developing multimember of learning activities of peer group learning.

It strengthens learning and emphasizes its objectives. It creates a favourable learning climate. It is eliminating loneliness in learning. It is based on the principle of child to child psychology. Peer group learning provides a rare opportunity to share and learn with the other students correctly.

When the students involve in the learning process, the transfer of ideas and information occurs among the group. It is a form of co-operative learning that clears similar types of doubts in their learning. The one-to-one discussion enhances the results in learning. Students prefer to discuss, to raise questions to know information with their age groups rather than elders or teachers. This approach of peer group learning is based on the principles of students’ interest.

The student’s attitude of confessing, accepting ignorance, expressing inability is taking place more freely only among the peer group or friends. So, the teachers must make use of this psychology teaching activities to enhance their learning skills.

There are maxims that provide information of the peer - “Good friends help to develop good habits”, “Tell me about your friend, I will tell you who you are”, “Avoid bad company”, and these reflect the peer group principles. So, it is the duty of the teacher to identify and organize the students with similar interest, desire and skill in the peer groups. The peer group learning activities must be peer oriented to exchange information, to debate and to share ideas among themselves to enhance learning. This technique would bring out the expected learning outcome from the learners in the subjects such as Language, Mathematics, Science and Arts.
USES OF PEER GROUP LEARNING:

- It promotes interest in studies and increases the span of attention among the students.
- These activities help the learners understand the school environment and other children.
- Peer group learning improves the skill of communication and children become independent.
- It strengthens the learning skill of the helper and also the listener’s skill.
- It develops helping attitude and creates interest in problem solving. It also develops knowledge –sharing and service mindedness.
- It enhances constructive friendship and co-operation.
- It enhances the student’s achievements and the quality of school education.
- It develops cheerfulness creativity interest in new knowledge, and in doing new things.

TYPES OF PEER GROUP:

1. **Action group**: This small group aims at knowing the truth and its relevance.
2. **Debate**: Selecting appropriate ideas or points and studying that
3. **Conversation**: An attempt to derive an acceptable concept on a particular topic by comparison, alternative ideas, and its relevance analyzing the Pros and cons of the topic or concept.
4. **Group discussion**: It is an attempt to reach a common consensus on a Concept or topic by its positive and negative impacts, practically and rearranging specific units.
5. **Self help group**: This group is to provide members with support, encouragement and assistance.
6. **Study group**: It is formed to study a common opinion or skill.
7. **Unified group**: A motivated group to perform in unison to achieve an act successfully.

POINTS TO PONDER IN ORGANIZING THE PEER GROUP:

→ Age group with similar cognitive features.
→ Similarity in interest, desire and motivation.
→ Kindness, compassion, affection and moral attitude.
→ Emotional acceptance.
→ Intelligence and cleverness.
→ Physical differences.
→ Subject level achievements.

3.3.2 SELF LEARNING:

Self learning is defined as a act of learning and evaluating either individually or with others by analyzing, knowing and understanding with interest to provide members with support, encouragement and assistance listening, observing, writing, drawing, questioning, understanding and compiling are few techniques for self – learning.

This method helps the students to try and learn according to their learning abilities quickly without wasting their time. The properties of learning materials for self learning are as follows:

- It must be easy to handle and in smaller units.
- It should be beautiful to attract the children.
- Each material possesses single concept learning.
- Material must motivate the students for further learning.
- They must rectify errors on their own.
- It should help to motivate new learning materials.

ROLE OF TEACHERS IN SELF – LEARNING:

The teacher reflects the previous knowledge of the students in the various steps of self learning.

The teacher designs the learning materials in such a way that the students involve in the learning activities with interest.

The explanations provided in the learning material must be clear and easy to understand.

The steps involved in the self learning should be specific, continuous and arranged in sequence.

SELF – LEARNING IN ABL METHOD:

Learning can be attained by doing the activities of the learning materials, by practicing continuously and by involving in group activities. It does not mean that the teachers are not needed in self – learning. It is sufficient, if he helps the children to create an amicable classroom climate and guide the needy learners. This Activity Based Learning method is being implemented in our schools from I std to IV std.
SELF – LEARNING MODELS and ACTIVITIES:

Example: In the lesson ‘About you’ in III std, the students are given the following things in small bundles. They identify the different items by achieving the skill of “Smelling”.

- Crushed ginger
- Chopped onion
- Crushed cardamom
- Crushed garlic
- Sandal
- Camphor
- Jasmine
- Face powder

The students smell the bundles and identify the things with their eyes closed. Then they write the relevant words in the activity cards. Likewise they are trained to identify different things either by tasting or touching them.

Lesson based matching cards are shuffled and kept in a box. The learners are asked to match them correctly.

USES OF SELF – LEARNING:

- Children can learn themselves according to their skills and pace.
- It answers the participation of a child in each and every learning activity.
- It enhances the memory skill.
- Students involve in the activities completely.
- Motivation is developed among the learners.
- It paves way for continuous learning.

3.2.4 SMALL GROUP LEARNING:

Man is a social animal. The pertinent motto of education is to make a man sociable. It is noticed that there exists variable behaviour differences are noticed in the activities of man with the children, with the peer group and with the elders.

GROUP LEARNING METHOD FACILITATES:

Co-operative attitude is seen in the exchange of ideas with the other members in the group. It helps in the transparent transformation of information by the learners. It provides the opportunity of understanding and effective relationship. It gives exposure
to problem solving method and leadership quality training. It forms a fearless and independent tension free learning climate. The small group learning provides sufficient explanations, clarity of intellect and activity skills. There is transparent opportunity, learners participation and motivation. Therefore it is certain that the quality of one’s activities depends upon the other learners and his interactions with them.

Children prefer group participation to individual learning for their learning activities. In group their participation, interaction with others takes place in a desirable manner. As a member, his mentality, thought, feelings and activities function in a different way.

A group consists of members having similar common objectives. It is essential that the thoughts, feeling and acts of the members are similar in the group.

A small group may consist of four or five members it can also be a big group with more members. In the learning activities in a small group are discussed in detail below.

The class students are divided into small groups consisting of four or five members and each group identifies a group leader to undertake the learning activities. It is known as small group learning the following points to be kept in mind while forming small groups in the school.

a. In all small groups, the gifted learners, the average students and the help seeking students for learning are equally distributed.

b. The group members should be friendly with each other and also they should also be adjustable.

c. The group leader affectionately leads the other students to achieve learning objectives.

d. Groups should be comparable and are equally distributed in all aspects.

e. The same group cannot be retained for all subjects. Different groups for different subjects are formed because of the variations of the learning abilities among the students.

**ACTIVITIES OF SMALL GROUP:**

A well designed objective is essential in each and every activity. The group activities must be time based with the achievable learning targets. Every student in the group is to be assessed regularly. The teacher guides the students to achieve the learning objectives through the major group learning activities like discussion, explanation, learning and understanding through friends and achievement skills. The
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groups which achieve the objectives within the stipulated period are to be appreciated. The small groups can be reshuffled and rearranged depending upon the necessity of the students.

When the members need a change it can be arranged. The group leader possesses the qualities of a guide, must be affectionate and adjustable. It is important to supervise the group activities.

MERITS OF SMALL GROUP LEARNING:

♣ Assistance and co-operative attitude develops among the students.
♣ The level of achievement increases due to competitive attitude among the groups.
♣ One member’s learning and understanding helps the others to understand and learn through discussion or transfer of information.
♣ The group activities strengthen the learning concepts and deep understanding.
♣ This method benefits every learner as they clear the doubts in learning immediately.
♣ This technique is more useful for casual, relaxed and natural way of learning.
♣ It enhances the democratic qualities and the leadership qualities among the learners.

THE TEACHER ADAPTS THE FOLLOWING TO BE A SUCCESSFUL FACILITATOR:

1. He is a guide, model and motivation. He strengthens learning.
2. He is affectionate and friendly he has patience. He stimulates interest.
3. Interacts quietly with positive approach.
4. Corrects the student’s learning.
5. Guides the learners to think and do on their own.
6. Gives sufficient time for the learners to derive the correct answer.
7. Solves the problems faced by the learners during the process.
8. Guides towards learning objectives.
9. Provides ample time for students self-expression and he is very precise in his expression.
10. He motivates the students by providing a favourable learning climate to share their thoughts and express constructive concepts.
3.2.5 WHOLE CLASS LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Whole class learning involves multiple activities like creating readiness for learning, understanding the teacher’s explanation, asking for additional information, following the teacher’s principles and values, questioning, discussion, conversation, clarifying doubts, self-expression of concepts, conference, seminar, symposium, demonstration, workshop etc.,

In the whole class learning, the learning activities are more than teaching activities i.e. students participation is more. Some of the activities like symposium, seminar, debate, conversation, and workshop are discussed below. No individual achievement is focused but it enhances the whole class group objectives. The quality of actions in a group develops in this method among the learners.

It paves way for self – expression and brings out the inner skills of the learners naturally. The teacher must be rich in his resources, he should give importance to learner centered approach, involve in the teaching learning process for the best outcome, prepare necessary and relevant tools and instruments for the contents. If the teacher possesses and fulfills the above mentioned qualities, it is evident that the whole class learning method will strengthen the desirable behavioural changes in a short period.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

The students assemble in one place in order to achieve a learning objective through speech, listening and activities. It is called group discussion.

ROLE OF TEACHER IN GROUP DISCUSSION:

The teacher regulates the group discussion of the students. The teacher chooses and gives the title for discussion. Generally the title will be special types of question answering what? Why? How? The students answer the topic by providing constructive suggestions, ideas and solutions. They are discussed in the group. For example:

1. What are the changes that ABL has brought out in the quality of education?
2. Describe the possibilities of India becoming a superpower by 2020.
Students come out with different types of answers for this question. A common concept might arise from the varieties of answers given by them. Favourable, feasible, practically viable concepts which will meet the immediate needs are accepted in the discussion.

The teacher is the head of the group discussion. It is the utmost duty of the teacher to select the topic questions, to help the students organize the concept coherently for discussion and to accept the structured and updated concepts of the students.

**CONDUCTING OF THE GROUP DISCUSSION:**

The teacher and the students assemble in a particular place at a specific time. Every member has been allotted a time slot and he has the right to address his concepts about the particular topic to the other members in the group.

If the selected topic for discussion is not relevant to learning objectives, it becomes an overall personal opinion of members in the group discussion. The learning objectives like complete understanding, attitude change, problem solving, moral development, language proficiency in expression are focused by the teacher to make the group discussion more appropriate and effective.

“Techniques to enhance the standard of education in the rural schools”, discuss, register the concepts and its relevant questions during the discussion.

**DEBATE:**

A problem can be solved through group discussion some complicated topics cannot be solved in the discussion. In this type of situation, debate helps to find a solution for it.

1) Which is to be given priority in the school curriculum? Arts or Science?
2) Who is more responsible for a child’s moral behaviour? Teachers or Parents?

*A debate on the above topic will find a suitable answer.*

**CONDUCTING OF DEBATE:**

There are two teams in debate. Each team consists of four or five orators. There is a leader in each team. The leader will in both the team will begin the argument and conclude the points favourable to their team respectively. The members of both the teams argue and counter argue by speaking the pros and cons of the topic.

One team will support for more arts subjects in the school curriculum. This team presents the advantages of arts subject and the disadvantages wit demerits of science
subjects while the other team will disagree and favours for more science subjects in
the school curriculum. It further brings out the demerits with disadvantages of arts
curriculum in school. Normally, each member is allotted five minutes to express his
views.

When the members finish their speech, the leaders of both the team conclude their
talk by presenting all the favourable points. The team leader in each team is allotted
seven minutes. The time duration in debate is flexible, and it can be changed
according to the programme.

**ROLE OF TEACHER IN DEBATE:**

The teacher serves as the judge he gives judgment after listening to both the
teams arguments and supporting facts without any prejudice.

The non-participants in the debate behave as spectators and enjoy the debate.
They also take down notes.

**USES OF DEBATE:**

- Arguments and counter arguments in debate paves way for sound thinking.
- It enhances imaginative skills and sense of humor among the students.
- It eliminates stage fear, develops presentation skills and augmenting ability.
- Irrelevant concepts are rejected in debate.
- Clarity in thinking.
- It develops the skill in briefing, mastery in language skill and decision making.

| “Scientific development supports culture or spoils the culture?  
| ‘Scripts in Tamil films promote Tamil prose’.  
| Debate and register the concepts. |

**SEMINAR**

The classroom seminar is conducted for the students to participte and discuss
on the stage. The teacher presents conducts the programme as the chief guest.

**AIM:** The aim of seminar is to provide opportunities for the participants to speak on
particular topics. Simultaneously the non-participants come to know the common
concepts about the topic.
ROLE OF TEACHER IN THE SEMINAR:

The teacher announces the topic ten days prior to the seminar. He gives opportunities to five or six students to speak in the seminar. The teacher conducts the seminar as the chief guest. The teacher begins the seminar by giving an introduction on the topic, its relevance and its importance in brief. Then he calls upon the members one by one to speak on the topic.

The speakers in the seminar present their concepts on the given topic within the stipulated time. After their speech, five to ten minutes are allotted to the spectators to clarify their doubts by asking questions. The speakers reply to the queries. After the question hour, the seminar comes to an end when the teacher correlates and sums up all the relevant concepts of the topic.

1. Merits and Demerits of globalization.
2. Save the environment, save the world.
3. Individual’s moral value is otherwise known as Aids education.
4. Indian culture is the gateway of the world.

Arrange seminar on the above mentioned topics and prepare records.

Symposium

Symposium creates opportunities to the students to analyze and speak on a topic deeply and broadly.

The teacher announces the date of the symposium ten days before, He declares the topic and its sub topics to the speakers in advance and also guides them to approach and analyze in different ways. He permits five or six members to speak in the symposium.

The teacher as the head of the symposium speaks briefly about the objective and importance of the topic. Then he invites the speakers one by one to deliver their speech. Each speaker broadly, deeply and vividly approaches the topic or sub topic and expresses his different views. He is permitted either to speak or read the material. The non-participant spectators gather information in the symposium. There is no question hour in the symposium. The teacher at the end sums up the speeches of the speaker. The manuscript / paper presentation of the speaker can be compiled and published as a book.

For example, if the Objectives of Education are declared as the topic for symposium, the sub topics like the Nation’s progress, divine consciousness, individual welfare, communal harmony, economic enhancement and development of moral values can be given to the speakers to analyze broadly and deeply.
Workshop

Workshop is a mixed type of teaching method integrating the process of discussion and action plan. Workshop stresses the students to teach an activity. Unlike seminar which gives priority to speaking and reading, while symposium gives more importance to competency training, Workshop develops the skills of analyzing the content based activities. The major objective of workshop is to develop the individual’s competency. The student’s knowledge and their activity skills are properly guided to learn a new technique. The teacher who wishes to organize a workshop must practice the following.

Aim: The students assemble in a hall or in a big class room. The teacher specifically mentions the activities to be performed in the workshop by the students. He briefly speaks about the objective of workshop and its benefits.

Workshop Activities: Generally in a workshop, an expert either explains or demonstrates a new technique. He may be from the same institution or from another institution. The students carefully listen to his explanation and keenly observe his demonstration. The students are well equipped now. They enhance their learning by doing it.

Small group work: In the workshop, the teacher plans the activities. The students are divided into small groups. Each group consists of not more than ten students and each group has a leader. Each student in the small group learns by following the new technique. The expert supervises the activities of the students and clarifies their doubts too. The leader of the small group prepares a report at the end and shares it with the other members in the workshop.

Evaluation: The students assemble once again to assess their activities. The leader in each group reads the report of his teamwork. The teacher and the expert evaluate the small group activities at the end of the workshop.

Analysis: If students are unable to complete their activities even at the end of the workshop hour, they are instructed and guided to finish the work.

In the symposium on, “Question Bank Preparation”, the expert explains the contents, types of questions, objectives and structures in detail. Each teacher trainee prepares a question bank in small group learning.
Every student is exposed to the knowledge of new techniques and he uses the knowledge of the new technique in the workshop.

Workshop not only emphasizes reading, speaking, and understanding but also paves way for learning by doing.

It provides opportunities to know the techniques for teaching and learning.

### 3.2.6 The role of Information Technology in learning activities:

In this computer age, the influence of Information Technology benefits both the teacher and the students in classroom. The day to day happenings of the world can be serially displayed and explained in the screen. Information technology is able to provide real life experiences to the students on any type of information and incidents which take place in the different parts of the world.

It helps the students to speak English language correctly. It brings live images of social events and scientific programmes and it also creates more interest in studies. Radio, Television, Over Head Projector, Tape-recorder, computer, internet, tele-video conferencing and multimedia are the instruments of Information and technology. The growth and development of scientific technology has modernized all departments like express postal service, fax, telephone, telegram, telex, E-mail, teleprinter, pager, cell phone, web camera, printing, etc. Researches reveal that the utilization of information technology thoroughly in the learning activities will enhance learning. India has achieved its best in the field of information technology. E-Mail can be sent immediately from any place to any part of the world.

Teachers can get new information through websites whenever required. The teachers can serve as facilitators to collect necessary information from the website for different subjects. It can be stored in the computer database for future use. For example, it should be clearly explained to the learners that Google and Yahoo search engines can be used to collect specific content related information.

This method is appropriate for individual learning and self learning. It enables to share the content oriented information among the group members through E-Mail and chatting. The computer websites can be used in the peer group, small group and whole class learning methods. Based on the learners’ information retrieval, a learner can find solution to his new thinking and difference of opinions among learners.

The students become motivated when they are involved in the information technology methods. This motivation helps to improve their skill in the elective subjects and also enhances the necessary skills needed for their class.
This method helps the learners to get their doubts cleared even without the assistance of the teachers or as well in absentia.

**3.2.7 Basics of Group forming - Competency- Situation- Requirement.**

Generally the groups are formed based on the competency, situation and requirement. Teaching an individual is one method. Teaching to a group of students in the classroom is another method. Teaching to different groups in a class is a simple and variable method. It is easy to identify the individual differences and needs.

In group method it is easy to help them by finding out their needs. Though teaching the students individually is the best method, but it is not economical. Teaching to a class of students is cheaper but it is not possible to fulfill the different requirements of the individual learner. But group learning technique balances the pros and cons of these two methods.

It is very easy to implement the group method in the class room. It enables to implement conducive learning atmosphere and experience. More opportunities are available to the students to share their ideas and opinions. The child centered approach emphasizes learning in the peer group by listening, practising and discussing. Group method stimulates interest among the students. It helps to develop co-operative attitude and helping tendency. It enables evaluation by students themselves. Constructive and creative skills are being shared in the group methods.

Therefore the members in the group method develop social harmony and good qualities. A gifted learner in this group induces the other students to benefit themselves through him. In the multigrade teaching, there are more possibilities of discussions in the contents taught by the teacher among the members.

Groups can be formed on the basis of gender, friendship, locality, awareness, height, attitude, achievement, necessity and environment. However in the primary education, the class room climate, competency, situation and the requirements must be considered while forming groups.

**Competency:**

It is a common sight to note that the competencies of students are different in a classroom. The groups are formed with the aim of transferring competency into knowledge among the learners. The presence of one gifted learner in each group is extremely necessary. He would be able to guide the slow learners. This helps the other members to talk freely, to practice, to listen, to look, and to question the gifted learners to achieve the objectives.
All the students cannot be equally competent in all the subjects. So, subject wise competencies of the learners are identified and groups may be formed accordingly. For example, a student with high level achieving skill in English may lag behind in mathematics. So, the member in the group must possess achievement skills in all the subjects invariably.

Even the slow learners have opportunities in this group to learn from the peers slowly in small units and improve themselves. Continuous monitoring of the students and providing sufficient instructions with more group activities is essential in the group method. It is easy to form groups based on the competency level of the students.

**Situation and Requirement:**

Situation is a deciding factor in fulfilling the requirements of a group, its numbers and its activities. It comprises of multiple factors. The relevance of group method depends upon the situation of a school or classroom. The availability of space in a classroom decides the number of groups. The situational requirements like climatic conditions, availability of rooms, teacher’s supervision and the time duration decide the groups. Attempts are being carried out either to attain an objective or to overcome or rectify the defects. The groups are to be formed according to its needs. Any group which neglects its needs will not bring out the desirable outcome.

**Conclusion:**

Changes in the teaching methods have become inevitable today in order to provide opportunities to every individual learner to perform his best in spite of natural differences in the competency level of the students. Generally there are three important keys for best teaching. They are the Frequency, Re-inforcement and variety. It cannot be predicted whether the children in the similar age group has the same maturity level. As the quality and the efficiency of the learners differ from another, a same type of teaching method will never bring the desirable result. Further chances are not given fully to the gifted children and at the same time slow learners are left uncared. So, it is best for the students to learn through their learning activities individually, collaboratively and in small groups.