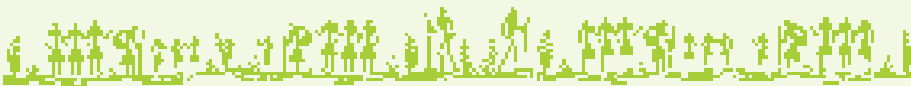


# Chapter 6



## Implications for Schools

### 1. Role of Teachers

Examination systems today are complex. They meet the requirements of many stakeholders and multiplicity of functions. The purpose of an examination may variously be one of certification or of selection, of institutional accountability or to provide an instrument of social change.

More often it is indeed an amalgam of many functions. Those who engage in educational reform must take account of the full range of stakeholder requirements and ensure that a degree of coherence in those requirements has been achieved.

Reforms which encourage school-based assessment, create new pressures of accountability and place greater reliance on the professional judgement of teachers. Pedagogies which work in one educational context - perhaps with more generous resourcing levels and optimum class sizes are not necessarily transposable into other contexts. A rich dialogue between policy makers and teachers is required to ensure effective implementation. Opportunities for professional development, for in-service training and for guidance via the production of exemplar materials and handbooks become vital. Educational reforms which call for new pedagogies - the incorporation of ICT into the curriculum, say, and the encouragement of e-learning are possible only by large-scale commitment to training for teachers.

Modes of assessment emphasizes investigative approaches to learning and the application of skills, knowledge and understanding. The approach recognizes that 'recall' becomes a relatively less useful skill for individuals in today's world of rapid change - instead *understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating* and *creating* - the higher order skills of a reworked Bloom's taxonomy become more relevant.

Of all those involved in children's education. it is the teachers who feel the most responsible. This is expressed in their desire to help all children acquire knowledge, skills, positive attitudes and values and face life with confidence. In order to find out how children are doing in schools, teachers spend a lot of time in assessing children. Most teachers view assessment as an important part in their daily school routine and thus this is a very important part of what they do on a daily basis. Why is this so?

Teachers give a number of reasons for this. One important reason is that it is necessary to know if the child has learnt what she/he was expected to have learnt. The second is to find out what is the child's progress over a certain period of time. However, there is a third reason that has been given more attention by not only teachers but all of us as well i.e. finding out what the child has achieved in different subject areas. This could be because we are all





concerned about providing 'good quality' education and feel that one way of making sure this is happening is by evaluating the child's achievement in the subjects being taught through tests and exams. Testing has its own purpose but if we really want to help children learn better, we need to consider what do marks or grades obtained by children through tests or exams actually tell us about a child's learning or progress.

While assessing children it is important to appreciate differences amongst them and respect the fact that they will understand and respond in different ways while learning.

Children are not 'empty vessels' or 'blank slates', to be filled up with information and knowledge that only the school can give, as is generally believed. It is important to build on experiences that a child brings to school. New learning is thus to be developed needs to be based on what the child already knows and understands.

#### **Some important aspects are that-**

- Every child can learn if allowed to do so at her/his own pace and follow her/his own way of learning.
- Children learn more through play/activities and learn better from each other and if they actually 'do' things.
- Learning is a continuous process. Thus, children's learning does not take place in the school. Therefore, classroom learning should be linked to what happens outside the classroom and at home.
- Children 'construct' their own knowledge and do not only learn when and what the teacher teaches. This means that every child makes sense of what information he/she is exposed to based on his/her previous experiences and learning. Only then does the child arrive at his/her own understanding and conclusions. Each child has a unique approach to acquiring knowledge. This process goes on continuously.
- Children at the primary stage learn better and more easily through experiences, play, exploration, trying out various things and actually 'doing' different activities.
- Children learn in a spiral and not a linear way. Thus revisiting concepts again and again helps them to understand better. The act of learning involves a process of establishing connections among facts observed/ experienced or realized by children. The new learning, therefore, is to be based not only on the preceding facts and information but could be related even to things acquired long back in school, home or elsewhere. Hence, learning does not proceed in a linear manner.
- Children learn through the mistakes and errors they make.
- Learning takes place in a holistic manner, thus, an integrated approach to learning is better.

Source: NCERT



Assessment of the outcomes of learning goes along with the teaching-learning process in a continuous manner. In order to undertake a holistic assessment, all aspects of learning need to be given due recognition. The manner and modalities however may vary. While teachers are regularly observing the progress of children some periodicity would be necessary. It implies maintaining a profile for each child. This is required in order to reflect upon, derive feedback, plan and implement measures to enrich and enhance children's learning. This will call for a judicious cycle to be followed. One cannot undermine the fact that while informal observations continue, fortnightly looking back and quarterly reviews are generally recommended to promote and enhance learning among children.

#### **Thus assessment may be on:**

- **Daily basis**- interacting with children and continuously assessing them both in situations inside and outside the classroom.
- **Periodic**- once in every 3 to 4 months, teachers may check and reflect on the information collected. This however should not be in the form of a test/exam but for purposes of reflection.

## **2 Methods of Assessment**

Before choosing any method it is necessary to decide the kind of arrangement that is best suited for the type of information needed. There are four basic methods of organizing assessments, namely:

- **Individual assessment** - which focuses on one child while she/he is doing an activity/task and thus recognises individual work and accomplishments.
- **Group assessment** - which focuses on the learning and progress of a group of children working on a task together with the objective of completing it. This method of organization is found to be more useful in order to assess social skills, co-operative learning processes and other value related dimensions of a child's behaviour.
- **Self-assessment** - refers to the child's own assessment of her/his learning and progress in knowledge, skills, processes, interests, attitudes etc.
- **Peer-assessment** - refers to one child assessing other children. This can be conducted in pairs or in groups.

What is observed across all schools is that during assessment the most commonly used methods are those developed by teachers themselves. Among these are **paper-pencil tests/tasks, written** and **oral tests, questions on**





**pictures, stimulated activities** and **conversations with students**. Small class tests are used by most teachers as a quick and easy way of assessing the learning progress of children. These are generally conducted at the end of a unit/ month. No doubt these are useful but they need to be used carefully. The kind of questions and items used should, as far as possible, not have predetermined answers but be worded in ways so that children have space to generate and express individual thoughts and ideas in a variety of ways. Test items that promote thinking and analysis rather than recall of textbook material need to be included. Put simply, items should provide the scope for a variety of responses from children.

### **3 It is Possible-You can make it happen**

Assessment can become a useful and interesting process. To realize this you need to be careful about:

- Being clear about why you are assessing the child.
- Not labeling children as, *slow, poor, intelligent, dull* on *making comparisons between children*.
- Using a variety of ways to collect information about the child's learning and progress in subjects and across curricular boundaries.
- Collecting information continuously and recording the same.
- Giving importance to each child's way of responding and learning and the time it takes to do so.
- Reporting on ongoing, continuous basis and being sensitive to every child's responses.
- Not making negative statements or using technical language during assessment or while providing feedback to the child, parents or others.
- Providing feedback in clear and simple language, which will lead to positive action and help the child to do better.

### **4 Inclusive classroom**

**A school can deal with the differently abled students by forming teams consisting of the school Counsellor, class teacher and peer mentor or buddy. Given below are two Case Studies which have helped differently-abled children.**



### CASE STUDY - I

Ratish is a bright child with a range of interests and strengths. He joined a school in Class VII in 2008. He at that time felt vulnerable, frustrated and used to give up any attempt to learn.

#### Attention / Concentration

##### Status Entry

- His attention / concentration went through huge fluctuations.

##### Interventions

- He was made to focus on tasks by using various strategies / aids / repetition and reminders.

##### Current Status

- He showed lack of interest when the task was too long.

### Social / Emotional

##### Status

- When he joined he was hardly audible, unable to understand social subtleties.

##### Interventions

- Here the team (*teachers, educators, Buddy*) helped him in making and keeping friends.

##### Current status

- Now he interacts and communicates with others in verbal and non verbal ways.

##### Verbal

- Small - talk / conversation
- Sharing jokes
- Sharing / discussing (Sports / Music / Movies / Cartoons)

##### Non Verbal

- Active Listening
- Body Language

He also participated in the school Dramatics Club and is an involved member.





### Self Esteem

As self esteem is a basic human need and it makes an essential contribution to life process, Ratish lacked self worth as he did not get enough support of his family. He is quite self confident now.

### Academic

Ratish is a good visual learner.

- He is encouraged to do the writing work in the school.
- He is helped by frequent reminders by the school team (*teachers / educator/ buddy*). He is made to proof read the test before submitting.
- He is given consistent support and intervention (*Structured remedial plans in the form of flow charts notes / webs charts*)
- He still needs direct instructions and extensive guidance.

YEAR 2008 :            To motivate Ratish, he was assessed on 60% oral and 40% written for one complete (VII) academic year.

YEAR 2009 :            This year he was made to do the class syllabus completely but will be reassessed if (VIII) he is not able to clear the modified paper of the same level.

### Case Study-II

This concerns Shantanu a case of Cerebral Palsy

Shantanu - (CP) - Cerebral Palsy Spastic.

Shantanu is hard working and a responsible child. He has the potential as he has good cognitive skills / abilities.

### Concentration

- He is able to focus on the task.
- He needs instructions and support in learning.
- He has poor management skills.



### **Behaviour**

- An attention seeker.
- Sometimes lazy and does not work want to hard
- When ever found idle, he is seen sucking his thumb.

### **Social/ Emotional**

He is very verbal and interacts with his peers. He interacts and communicates in both verbal and non verbal ways.

### **Self Esteem**

Earlier he was not very confident but can now exchange ideas and can talk about himself. (*teachers / others*)

### **Academic**

#### **Current Status**

- He was able to do the mainstream syllabus.

#### **Interventions**

- He was helped with a few modified papers to make it easier.
- The modified papers can be of the same level if required.

He is given consistent support and intervention in the form of Remedial teaching

## **5. Assessing Co-Scholastic Aspects**

**All teachers need to be involved in Assessing C0-Scholastic Skills of children.**

### **Why should Students be Assessed by other teachers in addition to the Class Teacher?**

- Reduces Subjectivity
- Makes all teachers involved
- Makes all teachers accountable.
- Removes Biases
- Distributes work load among teacher
- Reduces the work load of the class teacher
- Simplifies work with regularly maintained record (on computer)
- Provides a point of reference to all teachers.





### HOW should Assessment be done?

- Record - Format of form
- Collation by class teacher

### Record Keeping for Co-Scholastic Skills

#### STUDENT ASSESSMENT FORM

(Academic Year - \_\_\_\_\_)

Name of Child : \_\_\_\_\_

Roll No.: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Teacher's Remarks :

Scholastic B

Work Experience :

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Art Education :

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Physical Education :

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#### Co - Scholastic Skills

Activity Incharge \_\_\_\_\_





1. Creative/Literary :

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2. Scientific :

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3. Performing Art :

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4. Club Incharge :

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Class Teacher's Remarks (Life Skills & Attitudes Values )

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Name and Signature of the Class Teacher

**Note :** Record of students should be kept for a period of ten years by the school.





## 6. Empowerment of Teachers

### Orientation of teachers

No educational scheme can succeed unless the teachers are adequately prepared for executing it and have faith in it is worth. This preparation will presume the visualization of a realistic scheme and the development of comprehensive procedures for its operational implementation. Teachers need to be provided orientation about the scheme. For providing orientation trained resource persons need to be created.

The content of such training/orientation programmes, has to incorporate both the scholastic and co-scholastic areas of learners' growth. The development of improved evaluation tools and their appropriate use, is an important aspect of these courses. In respect of the scholastic areas, this could mean the preparation of objective -based questions and balanced question papers, scoring of scripts and analysis and declaration of results. In regard to the co-scholastic areas, those courses will need to cover the preparation and use of rating scales, inventories, checklists, schedules and the procedures of assessing different areas of skills though them. Training in methods of collecting, recording, compiling and interpreting evidences of learners growth will be other crucial aspects of these training programmes. Teacher along with heads of their institutes should develop professional learning networks, mentoring and coaching.

## 7. Areas of Concern

- The early monitoring of formative assessment data will ensure that final summative assessments do not come as a surprise to parents. These 'early working' systems enable the family to become more involved with the remediation program and are strong positive characteristics of the school to the parents and the community. It is imperative that effort should be put into the monitoring and moderation of teacher assessment by the principal as inappropriate assessment may expose the school to negative scrutiny.
- Skills assessed in the co-scholastic areas need to take into account broad range of teaching strategies, Group working, individual or group assignments projects, debates, presentations etc will build skills.