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Foundations Of Learning: Exploring The Panchaadi Approach In Early Education

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ABSTRACT

The National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCFFS) is India's first integrated curriculum framework for children aged 3-8. It aims to provide an integrated approach to Early Childhood Care and Education. The NCF emphasizes that a single method of instruction won't fully develop students' potential. Teachers must plan their teaching process to create a broader learning space for students. Effective teaching relies on principles that guide instructional strategies, creating a holistic environment for holistic development and meaningful learning experiences. . Effective teaching is a carefully planned activity with the goal of creating meaningful learning experiences rather than an unplanned endeavor. The foundation of effective teaching is planning, which includes creating and arranging lesson plans, instructional techniques, materials, and evaluation methods. Regarding this, NCF-FS explains the planning of teaching as a crucial stage in the learning process. Panchaadi is a five-step learning process that offers a structured framework for instructional planning, encompassing five key steps. The Panchaadi aims to enable students to not only gain knowledge but also conceptualize it and use that knowledge in real life. The NCF-FS has five steps, or Panchaadi, for the Foundational Stage: Introduction, Conceptual understanding, Practice, Application, and Expansion. Teaching Process in the foundational stage should incorporate care and responsiveness, providing children adequate opportunities to experience, experiment and explore.

Key words: NCF-Foundational Stage, ECCE, Panchaadi, Learning, Teaching, Learning Process

Introduction

The National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCFFS) is the first ever integrated Curriculum Framework for children between ages 3-8 in India. The NCF for Foundational Stage envisions an integrated approach to Early Childhood Care and Education for children between the ages 3-8 years. Education is changing day by day with new innovations, as are the methods and pedagogical approaches to education. A single method of instruction will never help the teacher to develop students' full potential. Teachers have to plan the teaching process in such a way that it enables a broader space for students to learn. Effective teaching relies on principles that guide instructional strategies, creating a holistic environment for holistic development and meaningful learning experiences. Regarding this, NCF-FS explains the planning of teaching as a crucial stage in the learning process. Panchaadi is a five-step learning process that offers a

structured framework for instructional planning, encompassing five key steps. The Panchaadi aims to enable students to not only gain knowledge but also conceptualize it and use that knowledge in real life.

Principles Of Pedagogy: Foundation For Effective Teaching

At the heart of effective teaching lies a set of principles that underpin all decisions related to instructional strategies in the classroom. These principles serve as guiding lights, illuminating the path towards creating an environment conducive to holistic development and meaningful learning experiences.

Safe and Stimulating Environment:

The foundational stage lays the groundwork for a child's educational journey, and thus, it is imperative to cultivate a safe and stimulating environment that fosters exploration and growth. Joyful and sensory-rich activities not only spark interest but also set the stage for deeply meaningful learning experiences.

Central Role of Play: Play becomes a fundamental component of learning and

growth during the foundational stage. Play, whether unstructured, supervised, or guided, facilitates social interaction, imagination, and exploration. A comprehensive approach to learning is ensured by embracing a variety of play activities, such as outdoor activities, music, and conversations.

Nurturing Relationships: The foundation of successful teaching and learning is the relationship between the educator and the student. Teachers and educators build nourishing relationships that foster trust, confidence, and a sense of belonging by listening intently and being totally present.

Emphasis on Physical Development: Classroom activities are created to enhance gross and fine motor skills, which in return fosters the development of socio-emotional and cognitive skills, in recognition of the critical role that physical development plays in overall growth.

Individualized Learning: Teaching strategies are customized to meet each student's specific learning needs in recognition of the individuality of every child's educational journey. Ensuring that every child's potential is nurtured

and celebrated requires providing opportunities for varied engagement and active participation.

Language as a Vehicle for Learning: Language is essential to good communication and understanding, especially when it is the child's native tongue. A smooth integration into the learning process is made possible by embracing linguistic diversity and providing scaffolding for language transitions into school languages.

Contextualized Learning Experiences: Deeply ingrained in the diverse fabric of children's lives and environments are learning experiences. Local rhymes, stories, and cultural components are incorporated by educators to establish connections with children's lived experiences.

Building on Previous Understanding: Teaching practices are scaffolded to build upon children's prior knowledge and experiences. Through a methodical progression from basic to advanced concepts, teachers facilitate a seamless advancement towards a more profound comprehension of ideas.

Holistic Development: Classroom processes are designed to address all

domains of development, including physical, socio-emotional, cognitive, aesthetic, and cultural dimensions. A balanced approach ensures that learners are equipped with a diverse skill set essential for lifelong learning.

Planning For Teaching: Crafting Effective Learning Experiences

Effective teaching is a carefully planned activity with the goal of creating meaningful learning experiences rather than an unplanned endeavor. The foundation of effective teaching is planning, which includes creating and arranging lesson plans, instructional techniques, materials, and evaluation methods.

Components Of A Teaching Plan

A well-crafted teaching plan incorporates several essential components to ensure coherence and alignment with curricular goals and learner needs. These components according to NCF-FS 2022 include:

Competencies, Learning Outcomes, and Objectives: Clear articulation of intended learning outcomes guides instructional planning and assessment practices.

Activities: A diverse array of teacher-directed, teacher-guided, and child-led activities cater to varied learning styles and preferences.

Duration and Sequence: Thoughtful sequencing of activities ensures a logical progression of learning experiences while considering time constraints.

Content and Material: The selection of appropriate content and teaching materials enriches learning experiences and supports conceptual understanding.

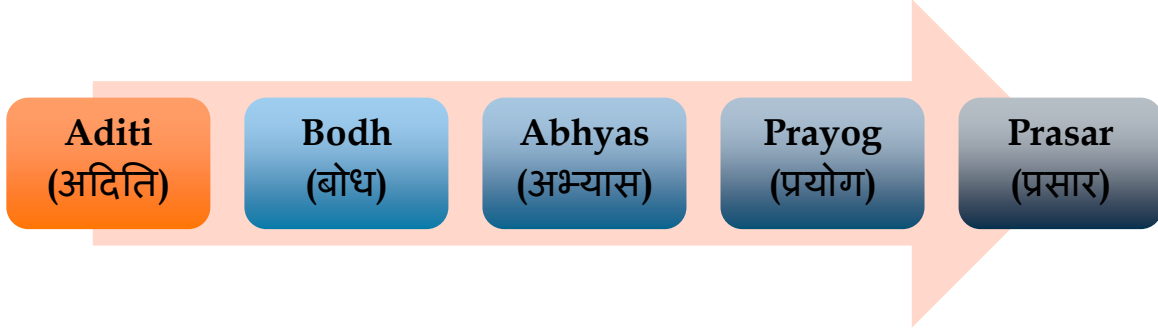
Classroom Arrangements: Purposeful classroom arrangements optimize learning environments, fostering engagement and collaboration.

Strategies for Differentiation: Tailoring instruction to meet diverse learner needs ensures equitable access to learning opportunities.

Assessment Methods: Formative and summative assessment strategies provide insights into student progress and inform instructional decisions.

The Five-Step Learning Process: 'Panchaadi'

The 'Panchaadi' learning process offers a structured framework for instructional planning, encompassing five key steps:



Aditi (Introduction):

Building links with existing knowledge prepares the ground for novel educational opportunities. When introducing a new concept or subject to students in the foundational stage (ages 3 to 6), the teacher makes connections between the students' existing knowledge and the new subject. This guarantees that the students' learning is interesting and meaningful. Teachers must revise their prior knowledge and ensure they have the students' undivided attention. Games, puppetry, and rhymes are a few of the engaging and attention-grabbing activities that can be used with students. Next, by asking thought-provoking questions and plotting them on a chart, the instructor encourages students to engage in the learning process. This permits the instructor to proceed to the subsequent phase, where

pupils can investigate, test, and pose additional queries.

For example, different educational materials can be used to introduce children to concepts such as addition or subtraction. Children can be introduced to addition and subtraction with a funny song or short story. Also, children can be introduced to the subject by playing a game related to addition and subtraction in the classroom.

Bodh (Conceptual Understanding):

Deeper conceptual understanding is fostered by exploration, inquiry, and discussion. Through play, inquiry, experimentation, discussion, or reading, children can acquire basic concepts. With the help of interesting, straightforward, and understandable examples, this method seeks to increase awareness and realisation of new information. In order to support self-learning, educators should take into

account the learning preferences of each student and employ a variety of techniques. Bodh is an important phase in the teaching-learning process, and to guarantee that students successfully understand the material, teachers should employ diversity, creativity, and inventiveness.

During these activities, encourage your child to ask questions and express their ideas. This will create an open dialogue that will help them understand the concepts more thoroughly. By adding these engaging and practical activities, you not only reinforce the weak idea but also establish a fun learning atmosphere that fosters critical thinking, curiosity, and a solid foundation for learning in the future.

We could do various activities in the classroom to help children develop conceptual understanding of summation. Like placing two baskets full of chocolates in front of the children and taking turns adding and subtracting chocolates. Here our aim is for children to gain this conceptual understanding of addition or increase means addition and subtraction means subtraction. With this activity, conceptual understanding can

be strengthened by giving more practical examples to the children.

Abhyas (Practice):

Bringing together knowledge and skill acquisition is accomplished through practice activities that reinforce learning. In order to improve knowledge and skills, practicing through a range of interesting activities is the third step. At this point, the teacher assesses the student's conceptual comprehension or competency by assigning brief assignments that serve as a follow-up to solidify the conceptual learning. Without the teacher's assistance, the students practice in groups or individually, and the degree of success in finishing the assignment serves as indicator for the children's comprehension. Here, the students actively participate in the lesson, and the teacher primarily observes. The key to learning retention is abhyas. Being a teacher is more than just practicing. The teacher needs to concentrate on perfect practice.

As a teacher, your goal is to give the student opportunities to practice and apply the concepts they have learned. Having fun and engaging activities at

home can greatly contribute to a child's understanding being reinforced.

These practical experiences help them acquire critical life skills like patience, teamwork, and problem solving in addition to solidifying their understanding. Teachers who actively engage with their students' learning journeys establish a nurturing atmosphere that develops skills and knowledge that last a lifetime.

Children can practice summation through activities and games such as bead games in the classroom as well as other games outside the classroom. The children's experiences of buying chocolate at their own store can be discussed in the classroom with more follow-up questions to practice addition and subtraction.

Prayog (Application):

Applying acquired knowledge and skills to real-world contexts promotes transfer and practical application. Incorporating the acquired knowledge into the child's everyday activities constitutes the fourth step. When learned material is applied in real-world scenarios, it is further demonstrated what was previously reinforced and retained.

When kids can connect what they're learning to what they're seeing in their environment, it becomes relevant and meaningful. Children occasionally repeat the learning cycle when they cannot relate or perceive discrepancies between the application and the learning. They do, however, have the means to experiment and explore now. They make an independent effort to ascertain the cause of the same before coming up with a plan of action.

A smooth integration with everyday life is the goal here. The ability to apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in practical settings is the ultimate aim of education. As a teacher, you can facilitate these connections for your students by providing opportunities for them to see how their knowledge relates to their daily lives.

At this point, learning is driven by internal motivation and takes on a concrete form. Prayog is a crucial phase in the educational journey. This stage maximizes learning and turns it into a purposeful endeavor. This step emphasizes how important it is that all education have real-world applications.

The baskets taken at the beginning can now be used for the application of summation before the children. For example, children can be given 5 chocolates in a basket and asked to make a total of 10 chocolates in the basket. As per today, chocolate can also be said to be reduced.

Prasar (Expansion):

Sharing and extending learning experiences through collaborative activities enriches understanding and reinforces neural pathways. Children share their knowledge with their peers through a variety of activities, including games, storytelling, singing, and conversation, during the last stage of learning. By fortifying the learning experience and developing a neural pathway in the brain, this process reinforces learning. The significance of imparting knowledge to another individual is demonstrated by the Feynman Technique of learning. Children show genuine interest in the subject matter when they grasp new material in a deep and organic way. They gain a deeper comprehension of the idea as a result, enabling them to use and produce what they have learned. A

solid foundation of knowledge is established through instruction and reinforcement of learning.

The ultimate objective is for kids to share what they've learned with others, which will cement their comprehension and give them a sense of achievement. By encouraging their kids to impart their newly acquired knowledge to others, parents can help their children through this stage. No matter how tangible, learning isn't finished until the student can impart what they've learned to others. Knowledge sharing facilitates internalization of the lesson by the learner. Sharing creates the chance for debate and cross-checking against other viewpoints. Additionally, it is a chance for the learner and others to adjust, absorb, and make room in their perceptions for related information. Understanding is strengthened through sharing new ideas, and a neural pathway is formed in the brain.

At this point, the teacher has finished transferring knowledge to the students, and they are free to investigate, try out, and clarify the idea on their own. Since Prasar is the last stage, it should be carefully planned. When knowledge is

shared, it is retained. The goal of this crucial step is to make knowledge concrete.

Other Important Considerations for Planning

In addition to the core components of a teaching plan, educators must consider various factors to optimize teaching and learning experiences:

Planning for Differentiated

Instruction: Tailoring instruction to meet diverse learner needs requires careful observation and thoughtful planning. Small group instruction and varied activities accommodate differences in interests, capabilities, and learning styles.

Scaffolding and Gradual Release of

Responsibility: Providing structured support through scaffolding facilitates learning progression, while the gradual release of responsibility empowers learners to take ownership of their learning journey.

Reimagining Homework: Homework, when designed thoughtfully, extends learning beyond the classroom and fosters meaningful connections between school and home. Engaging, contextually relevant tasks promote

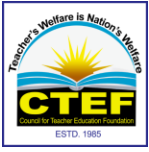
independent inquiry and reinforce learning in authentic ways.

Conclusion

In summary, a comprehensive strategy that combines careful planning, creative teaching techniques, and pedagogical principles is necessary for effective teaching at the foundational stage. Through the integration of pedagogical principles and a methodical approach to planning, educators can establish dynamic learning environments that cater to the unique needs and potential of each student. To guarantee that every child receives a strong foundation for lifelong learning and holistic development, it is crucial that we uphold these principles and practices as we navigate the complexity of education in the twenty-first century. By means of reflective practice and continuous professional development, educators can effectively enhance their pedagogical approaches and foster engaging educational opportunities that enable juvenile learners to prosper in a constantly evolving world.

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