

Teacher Education Institute (TEI)

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Introduction

Our approach to education is an integrative approach. It seeks to bring about growth in the child by accepting that different qualities should be developed in harmony and balance. It pays particular attention to the balanced growth of affective and cognitive faculties; in modern terminology the development of the right hand side of the brain as well as the left. Only when there is harmonious development can the “whole” being emerge.

The approach considers that there are three main stages of child development and that content and curriculum must relate to the type of thinking and feeling that the child possesses at each stage. Each main stage lasts approximately seven years with certain subdivisions.

Children in the first stage (up to the age of about seven) learn in a different way from both the primary school and the secondary school child. A great deal is learnt through imitation and much content relates to the ability of children to engage in a whole variety of activities. There is very little emphasis on cognitive development during this stage, the inner experience of children determining the structure and style of teaching.

In the second stage the development of affective qualities is very important. The stage lasts from about seven to around fourteen; at the lower end children have to make very big psychological adjustments as they move out of their own private experience into the outside world.

Their thinking at this time is not like that of adults and we should look upon them as possessing quite different experiences. Their thinking is pictorial and the affective, imaginative and creative have a very big influence on the way they approach, respond and study subject matter.

After fourteen the emphasis is on intellectual development and the way the adolescence adjusts and develops adult thinking. It is a time when the teenager finds his way into the adult world. Initially with caution and insecurity but gradually with confidence and assertiveness.

If content and curriculum have related to different types of experience and consciousness through the stages, there should exist balance and harmony between cognitive and affective. The student will not only learn more but will show a healthy curiosity to the world we live in.

Unfortunately the trend of modern education has been towards a one sided cultivation of children’s cognitive faculties. Unlike this approach (which almost views education as a science) our approach seeks to provide a coeducation of the Arts and the Sciences.

Certainly no method attempts more seriously to see that creative and artistic experience is not divorced from analytic and scientific thinking. Thus not only do children study arts and science throughout the school but the sciences are approached from an artistic standpoint and something of the objectivity of science is brought into the arts.

Each subject in the curriculum is taught when the child is naturally receptive to it and whatever is taught must be absorbed into natural rhythms that all children possess. It follows that teachers need to possess the eye of the true artist to relate subject matter to inner experience.

Please visit our web site <http://members.cox.net/tei> to view examples of countries are implementing policies that are sympathetic to our approach and countries, for whatever reasons, are implementing policies that are unsympathetic to it.