



## Interactive Module on School Leadership

Developed by  
**SLA, SCERT Assam**  
in collaboration with NCSL - NEIPA, New Delhi

# Enriching School Leaders for Creating Child-centric Learning Environment in the Schools of Assam

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This module will enable school leaders to:

- 1 Understand the philosophy and principles underlying child centered pedagogy.
- 2 Examine the importance of transforming the teaching –learning process in the light of NEP 2020
- 3 Identify effective strategies to address diverse and multi-level learners
- 4 Develop skills to design participatory, experiential and inclusive learning environment.
- 5 Cultivate reflective and democratic classroom practice that empowers both teachers and learners.

Through reflective exercises, learning resources and classroom based activities school leaders will be encouraged to internalize and implement practices that foster joyful, equitable and transforming learning experience for every child.

By the end of this module, school leaders will feel inspired and empowered to create learning spaces where children’s ideas, interest and questions guide the flow of learning. They will gain renewed motivation to embrace their role as facilitators of joy, discovery and lifelong learning.

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The process of teaching and learning is undergoing a paradigm shift in the 21st century. Contemporary education emphasizes not merely the transmission of knowledge but the holistic development of the learner as an active participant in the construction of meaning. This module, ‘Transforming the teaching – learning process through child centered pedagogy’ seeks to guide teachers in rethinking their pedagogical practices to make learning more engaging, inclusive, and learner oriented.

The National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2023 provides a detailed roadmap for effectiveness of pedagogy in Indian classrooms. The NCF 2023 is built on principles that promote inclusive, equitable and dynamic teaching practices. At its core is the Panchapadi-Five Steps Learning Process, which offers a structured approach to teaching and learning. This module for school leaders explores the key elements that enable effective pedagogy and the importance of meticulous planning for teaching, all within the context of the NCF-SE 2023



Creating an environment of respect and care is foundational to effective pedagogy. Schools must be safe spaces where children feel secure and valued. This involves fostering relationships based on care, equity and respect. School leaders and Teachers must demonstrate empathy and responsibility, ensuring that all children have equal access to learning opportunities. This caring environment encourages students to participate actively and reach their full potential."Our schools are committed to providing an environment where children feel secure, and relationships are governed by care, equity and respect.

Any form of discrimination based on religion, caste, gender, community, beliefs, disability or any other factor is unacceptable"- (NCF-SE, page 104).

Child centered pedagogy is grounded in the belief that every child is unique, capable and curious. It reminds us that children are not empty vessels to be filled but active thinkers, creators and explorers of knowledge. It emphasizes learning experience that respect learners' individuality, encourages creativity, and promotes critical thinking. The teacher's role transforms from that of a knowledge-giver to a facilitator who nurtures exploration, dialogue and discovery.



*Child centered Pedagogy, inclusive classroom, Autonomous learner, democratic classroom*



## Think and Reflect

Answer the following questions:

● **Do I give students to participate in decision making in my school?**

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● **How do I create space for multiple viewpoints and respectful disagreement?**

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● **What strategies do I use to ensure all voices—including quite ones- are heard?**

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● **Do I give students choices in activities, tasks, or projects?**

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● **How do I encourage students to set their own learning goals?**

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## Let's remember: ✨



### Autonomous learner

Learners take ownership of their own learning actively managing and setting their goals.

keywords



### Inclusive classroom

A welcoming learning space where all students regardless of background, ability, culture, learning style, pace level, intelligence, feel valued respected and have equal access to learning



### Democratic classroom

A student centered learning environment where students have shared power, voice in decision fostering responsibility, inclusion and a sense of community through collaboration and discussion



### Learner centered

Shift from teacher as the knowledge source to the student as the active participant, making them responsible for their learning journey with the teacher as facilitator guiding personalized experiences

Write down any other word /words which is unfamiliar/new for you?

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## 2.2 CHILD AS AN ACTIVE LEARNER AND CONSTRUCTOR OF KNOWLEDGE



### Learning Objective:

By the end of this section you will be able to-

- Describe how children construct knowledge through interaction with their environment, peers, teachers and learning materials using constructivist principles.
- Design classroom experiences that allow learners to explore, experiment, question, reflect and construct understanding rather than receive information passively
- Create an inclusive classroom where children prior knowledge, cultural background, pace of learning and learning styles are valued and used as resources for knowledge construction.
- Reflect on your own teaching to ensure that they move from teacher dominated instruction to facilitation of active meaningful learning



## 2.2.1 Introduction

The traditional methods of teaching are based on objectivist view of knowledge. In objectivist paradigm, the teacher transmits knowledge to the learners who are considered as passive receivers of knowledge. It is believed that the teacher has all the knowledge and the teacher is the source of 'right' knowledge and 'correct answers'. In contrast, the constructivist paradigm is based on the assumption that knowledge is subjective and learners construct knowledge in the social and cultural environment in which they are embedded.

Piaget, Vygotsky and Novak have suggested different theories of constructivism. Piaget suggests that children construct knowledge individually whereas according to Vygotsky, social interaction is important for the construction of knowledge. Driver, Novak and Posner believe that classroom interaction facilitates knowledge construction.

In a constructivist classroom, the teacher assumes the role of a facilitator and guide. Teacher becomes the manager and not the controller of the class. Students take the responsibility of their own learning. They question, state problems, design experiments and discuss their results with others. Students construct knowledge and do not receive knowledge as passive learners.

## 2.2.2 Constructivist View of Learning

Although constructivists like Piaget, Vygotsky, Novak and Posner disagree on some aspects of the knowledge construction process, they all agree on the basic characteristics of constructivism such as:

- Learning is not a passive receptive process but is instead an active meaning-making process required to solve meaningful problems.
- New learning depends on learner's previous knowledge, which may sometimes interfere with the understanding of new information.
- Learning implies the reorganization of prior conceptual schemes.
- Learning is facilitated by social interaction.
- Meaningful learning occurs within authentic learning tasks.



## 2.2.3 Constructivist Teaching

Constructivism was earlier viewed as a theory of learning, rather than a prescription for teaching methods. But now, constructivist teaching is an active reform issue and researchers have started experimenting and reporting the instructional practices which help teachers to nurture students as independent thinkers and constructors of knowledge.

Constructivism is based on the belief that learners actively create, interpret and reorganize knowledge in individual ways. These fluid intellectual transformations occur when students reconcile formal instructional experiences with their existing knowledge, with the cultural and social knowledge and contexts in which the ideas occur and with a host of other influences that serve to mediate understanding.

The instructional strategy, based on this belief, suggests that students should participate in experiences that accommodate these ways of learning. Such experiences include inquiry activities, discovery, problem-solving, discussions with peers and teachers, collecting and interpreting information from different sources, expressing their understanding in diverse ways, applying and validating their understanding in new ways etc. Teachers must provide authentic learning situations, complex learning environments and facilitate negotiations. Before teachers apply these practices in the classroom, they must understand that these cannot be grafted on traditional methods of teaching; these need a change in the culture - a set of norms, attitudes, beliefs and practices that constitute constructivist culture. The teacher's role is not to fill the empty vessels with superfluous knowledge, but it is to guide children to make sense and meaning of their knowledge and to give rational explanations of their knowledge.

**Constructivism** is an **ACTIVE** approach to teaching where learners **BUILD** their own knowledge through **engaging experiences**.



- Inquiry activities**  
Investigating to find out information
- Discovery**  
Uncovering or stumbling upon new concepts
- Discovery**  
Uncovering or stumbling upon new concepts
- Problem-solving**  
Finding solutions and making decisions
- Collaboration**  
Learning through sharing ideas
- Authentic tasks**  
Applying learning to real-life situations



## 2.2.4 Learner as Constructor of knowledge

The constructivist philosophy views knowledge as contextual and subjective. It cannot be transmitted to passive learners. Knowledge is always the result of a constructivist activity and students construct knowledge in the particular context in which the cognizing individual is operating. Constructivism provides a new theory of learning and also a new theory of teaching where learner is the main actor. Children construct knowledge by reconciliation of new information with their prior knowledge. Teachers are negotiators in the meaning-making process. Negotiation does not mean coming to terms or compromise; it means constructing heuristically powerful explanations. All constructivists agree that in the process of knowledge construction, learner is the main actor. New learning depends on learner's previous knowledge.

When children encounter new information, they use their own prior knowledge and personal experience to make sense of the new material. During meaning making process, children reformulate the new information, restructure their existing knowledge and reorganise their prior conceptual schemes. Learning is thus not a passive receptive process but is instead an active meaning-making process. Constructivist teaching considers student as an active learner and teacher as a guide in the learning process.

In traditional methods focus is on teaching strategies and teacher. Learners are passive receptors of knowledge. In such classrooms, lecture method predominates and teachers stress on complementing the voluminous syllabus. In constructivist paradigm teacher facilitates the process of knowledge construction by students.

Constructivism allows academic freedom to students and encourages cooperative learning and sharing of thinking among peers. Students use problem solving method, investigative projects, experiential learning, concept mapping and field surveys for constructing new ideas. In the process, they question the existing ideas, formulate and test hypotheses, draw conclusions, compare their findings and results with those of others, verify and validate their own beliefs. Students develop the habit of self directed learning.

## 2.2.5 Classroom Management and Organization

For effective management, the teacher can divide a class into manageable groups. Each group is assigned a specific task or the group can select a problem, negotiating with the teacher. The teacher should provide feedback by discussion with the group. Teacher must see that all students in the group participate in the learning. For organizing and conducting group activities effectively, the teacher should provide opportunities to all students to become actively involved in the learning task.



The teacher should provide learning tasks with cognitive focus. Effective use of group work requires careful planning and organization. Following suggestions may be tried out for effective group work.

- Students should be provided some orientation and training for working in groups. They should practice listening to others' ideas, giving their comments, respecting others' ideas thinking about and experimenting with others' ideas. Sharing of ideas should be encouraged and practiced.
- Students should have the practice of moving in and out of the groups quickly.
- Students should be seated at proper positions in the group prior to starting the group work. The transition from whole-class activity to student groups and back again should be accomplished with minimum of disruption.
- Students should be given clear and specific tasks to accomplish in the groups.
- Teacher should also specify the time within which students have to accomplish the task.
- Students should be required to produce a product as a result of group work.

Effective management requires that all students should have specific and meaningful tasks. There should be no loss of time in transition from whole class to groups and back. Clear directions, specific problem, allotment of specific time and continuous monitoring make group work more effective. Students should be encouraged to record their observations, debate the points of contrast and draw meaningful explanations. Though monitoring is a part of class management, it is useful in showing the right direction and providing the feedback. Feedback through evaluation is an important part of classroom transaction.

## ✦ Effective Group Work ✦

Tips for teachers to manage productive and collaborative group activities.

**Group Orientation**  
Provide training to work in groups: listening, sharing, respecting, experimenting

**Set Clear Tasks & Time**  
Give specific tasks & set a time limit to accomplish them

**Proper Seating**  
Arrange students so they can quickly form groups

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Arrange students so they can quickly form groups

**Monitor & Guide**  
Observe, encourage, and give feedback to groups

**Monitor & Guide**  
Require groups to produce a result & record observations



## 2.2.6 Strategies to address Multi-level learners

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
 Differentiated Instruction	Design content and activities to learners readiness level	Giving advanced learners analytical work while beginners work on basics
 Peer and group work	Mixed ability group promote cooperation and group learning	Pair a high achiever with a slow learner
 Activity based learning	Use learning task to meet different difficulty levels and style	Science experiments with varying complexities
 Individualized learning plans	Personalized pacing and goals for each child	Remedial worksheets for some and enrichment task for others
 Flexible assessment	Varied modes of demonstrating learning	Oral response, drawings, projects or written tasks
 Use of ICT and Multi media	Audio video aids caters to multiple intelligence	Educational videos, interactive Apps,digital storytelling
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### Summary

In a constructivist classroom the Teacher's Role in the classroom is that of--

- An Observer and facilitator rather than a lecture.
- A Planner who prepares tiered task and activities.
- An Encourager who builds confidence and motivation.
- A Reflective practitioner who assesses and adapts continuously.

## The Outcome of a Constructivist Classroom is as follows-



Learning becomes collaborative, meaningful and level appropriate.

Every learner feels valued and included



Improve participation and retention

Development of critical thinking and creativity



Development of critical thinking and creativity.

Personalized pacing and goals for each learner.



Reduction in learning gaps among students.

Educational videos, interactive apps, digital storytelling





## Think and Reflect

Answer the following questions:

● How do I currently engage learners in building their own understanding?

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● What opportunities do I provide for students to connect new ideas with their prior knowledge?

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● How often do my students actively explore, question, and experiment during classroom lesson?

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## 2.3 TEACHING LEARNING AS A JOINT EXPLORATION BY TEACHER AND LEARNER

### 2.3.1 Child-Centered Pedagogy



#### Learning Objective

By the end of this section you will be able to-

- Understand the concept of “learner centered” approaches;
- Identify the factors influencing learning and learners;
- Understand why it is important to understand the learners; and
- Identify various learner centered approaches.



## 2.3.2 Introduction

The Jomtien Conference(1990) discussed issues and challenges facing education and shared consensus on what is required to address these challenges to education. The recommendations of the Jomtien conference addressed the issues on “access”, “quality”, “relevance”, “equality”, “gender” and “efficiency” of education. It suggested a change in approach to education, form “individual to collaborative” and recommended a pedagogical shift from “teacher centered to learner centered” approaches. The Jacques Delors Commission Report (1996) on “Education for the twenty first century” proposed that the education system should be characterized by learning to be, learning to learn, learning to do and learning to live together. It recommends learner centered approaches to achieve these objectives of education.

Considering the changing needs of the learners and the society, The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) developed National Curriculum Framework (NCF) in the year 2023. The NCF (2020) emphasizes “learner centered approaches” to achieve the objectives of the curriculum.

The curricular content and its transaction must be relevant to the learners and should help them to become constructors of new knowledge and lifelong learners. For this, a pedagogical shift is required from teacher centered to learner centered teaching and from examination oriented to learning oriented evaluation.

This section discusses the concept of “learner centered” teaching, how teachers can understand the learners and why it is important to know the learners. The scope of learner centered approaches and selection of appropriate strategies have also been discussed.



# IS YOUR TEACHING STUDENT-CENTERED?





Observe the image and if your answer is yes , write down how?

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Lets read to learn more about learner centered !

### 2.3.3 Concept of Learner Centered Approaches

Traditionally it is believed that students learn from teachers and it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that students learn. Teachers are classified as good teachers or bad teachers depending on the kind of examination results they produce or the achievement of their students.

Teachers were seen as the main actors in the classroom and effects of their teaching on pupils' learning were studied. Even the studies on pupils' learning strategies emphasized "teaching pupils to use appropriate learning strategies"(Weinstein and Mayer 1986; Wandg and Palincsar 1989). These researches threw some light on the fact that students bring with them knowledge and experiences which influence classroom teaching-learning processes.

As pupils grow older and become more experienced in classrooms, they develop their own strategies for learning. Researches indicate that students of secondary stage tend to make use of more sophisticated learning strategies such as organizing material for meaningful learning, production of their own imagery to relate to what they are seeking to learn and use of rehearsal for memorizing information.

Research suggests that the amount of effort that students are willing to put into a learning activity and their degree of persistence is determined by their expectations regarding success and failure, the value they give to the activity and the extent to which they believe that their own strategic effort influences the outcome. An increase in a student's sense of personal control can lead to greater self responsibility, achievement, motivation and learning. From these researches we can derive that:



The “learner centered” approaches place learner at the centre of classroom processes. These take into account learner’s developmental stages, maturity, learning strategies, meta-cognitive and cognitive skills, prior knowledge and experience as, motivation and interests, personality, context and culture.

For implementation of learner centered approaches, teachers must understand the learners and their learning styles.

### 2.3.4 Understanding the Learner

In order to use the learner centered approaches, the teacher must understand various aspects of learner development such as cognitive and meta-cognitive skills, culture, personality, motivation and learning styles. This section discusses the processes of learner development which the teacher must understand for selecting appropriate learning experiences.

#### **Health and Physical Development:**

Learners’ capacity to learn depends upon their health and stage of physical development. Learners develop physically at different rates and the stage of development affects their capacity for new learning and self-confidence. Teacher must take into consideration differential rates of development of learners while selecting the learning experiences. Regular medical check-ups may provide some feedback to teachers about learners’ health and physical development. Schools may also provide physical development programmes for students such as exercises, yoga, sports etc.

#### **Mental abilities/Intelligence:**

Teachers can meet the specific needs of students by knowing their specific mental abilities. Gardener (1985) suggested that there are “multiple intelligences” or “mental abilities” such as-

- **Linguistic:** enables individuals to communicate and make sense of the world through language.
- **Logical Mathematical:** allows individuals to use abstract relations.
- **Visual spatial:** makes it possible for people to visualize, transform and use spatial information.
- **Bodily kinesthetic:** enables people to use high level of physical movement, control and expression.
- **Musical:** allows people to create, communicate and understand meanings made from sound  
Intra-personal: helps people to recognize and make distinctions about others’ feelings and intentions and respond accordingly
- **Inter-personal:** enables the capacity for reflective understanding of others and oneself.



Gardener’s analysis of specific mental abilities suggests that students have different kinds of abilities and potentials and teachers must select diverse learning tasks to develop these abilities. Teachers can thus influence the quality of pupil learning and can enhance the intellectual capacities of learners.

**Personality and Learning Styles:** Understanding the personality of the learner will help teachers in recognizing patterns of individual differences and in selecting the teaching strategies according to the individual’s personality and learning style.

**Meta-cognition and thinking skills:** Meta-cognition is the capacity for self-awareness regarding one’s own actions or mental power. Metacognition is particularly important at secondary stage when learning become more teacher directed. In secondary schools, thinking is challenged to become more disciplined and deliberate; tasks are set, problems pose and instructions given; criteria for success and failure become more overt. The result of all this is that a new degree of self-control is required and, in order to achieve this self-control, new forms of reflective self-awareness become essential.

Vygotsky also believed that learners would be supported by their self-regulation in addition to the assistance offered by teachers and peers in crossing their zones of proximal development. Here school instructions can help students in raising self-awareness. Meta-cognition also helps in developing higher order thinking abilities.



### 2.3.5 Key Elements that enable Effective pedagogy

Effective pedagogy is not a one-size-fits-all approach but rather a multifaceted strategy that considers the diverse needs of students. The NCF-SE 2023 outlines several critical elements that contribute to effective teaching and learning.

**Ensuring Respect and Care:** Creating an environment of respect and care is foundational to effective pedagogy. Schools must be safe spaces where children feel secure and valued. This involves fostering relationships based on care, equity, and respect. Discrimination of any kind is unacceptable. Teachers must demonstrate empathy and responsibility, ensuring that all students have equal access to learning opportunities. This caring environment encourages students to participate actively and reach their full potential. “Our schools are committed to providing an environment where children feel secure, and relationships are governed by care, equity, and respect. Any form of discrimination based on religion, caste, gender, community, beliefs, disability, or any other factor is unacceptable.”- (NCF-SE 2023, Page104)

**Building Positive Teacher-Student Relationships:** A strong, positive relationship between teachers and students is essential for cognitive and socio-emotional development. Building these relationships involves

- **Individual Attention:** Getting to know each student individually helps in tailoring learning experiences.
- **Active Listening:** Listening to students conveys respect and builds trust.
- **Observational Insights:** Observing students provides insights into their thinking and behaviour.
- **Encouraging Responses:** Encouraging students to express themselves helps in nurturing their creativity.
- **Promoting Inquiry:** Encouraging questioning fosters deep thinking and engagement.
- **Emotional Support:** Recognizing and responding to students' emotions helps them learn better.
- **Gentle Discipline:** Addressing inappropriate behaviour with compassion rather than punishment is more effective. “If a student behaves inappropriately, the Teacher should have a range of strategies to handle it, starting with gentle, compassionate one-to one interaction to understand what might cause such behaviour. Most students respond much better to such International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development [www.allsubjectjournal.com](http://www.allsubjectjournal.com) 78 strategies than to scolding or punishment.”- (NCF-SE 2023, Page-104)

**Providing Scaffolding:** Scaffolding is a teaching strategy that involves providing support to students as they learn new concepts. This support is gradually removed as students become more proficient. “Scaffolding refers to providing support, structure, and guidance during instruction. Scaffolding differs depending on the task but occurs when the Teacher carefully assigns students a learning task and provides support along the way until gradually fading as the student reaches expertise.”- NCF-SE 2023, Page-104



**Using Differentiated Instruction:** Differentiated instruction tailors teaching to meet the diverse needs of students. This approach involves varying the content, methods, materials, and assessments based on individual student needs. In large classes, teachers can create groups with similar needs and provide tailored resources and activities.

**Providing Opportunities for Independent and Collaborative Work:** Both independent and collaborative work is important in the learning process. Teachers should structure these activities to ensure meaningful participation and learning. "Working with others often increases involvement in learning. Sharing one's own ideas and responding to others' reactions improves thinking, deepens understanding, and also leads to new insights and ideas. In carefully crafted collaborative learning situations, students require each other's contributions to successfully complete a learning task because of which they need to learn to take on varied roles, such as observers, mediators, score managers, and note-takers based on the objectives of the task."- (NCFSE2023, Page-106).

### Summary

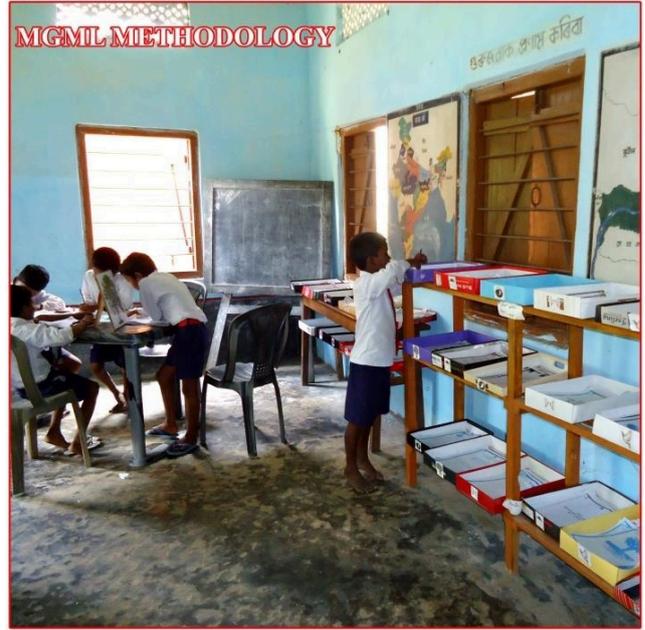
Classroom processes, particularly teaching-learning strategies, have been considered important for improving the quality of education in our schools. There has been increasing shift from "teacher centered" to "learner centered" approaches of teaching. The NCF(2020) emphasizes the use of learner centered approaches . Learner centered approaches take into account learner's capabilities, capacities, learning styles, context and culture. They are supported by philosophical assumptions and have strong psychological basis. These are based on constructivist philosophy that views knowledge as subjective and contextual.

Constructivists believed that learners construct new knowledge using their prior knowledge in the particular context. Learners are active and not a passive receptive process and knowledge cannot be transmitted to passive learners. Learning is an active meaning making process where learners reformulate the new information, restructure their existing knowledge and reorganize their prior conceptual schemes.

Learner centered approaches stress the importance of enquiry, observation, action, investigation , formulating hypothesis and evaluating new ideas and theories. The methods that can be used in a learner centered classroom include experiential learning problem solving, investigative projects, concept mapping, field survey and research, creative writing etc. Learner centered classes have scope for divergent learning styles. In order to effectively use these approaches, teachers must understand the learners, their prior experiences, learning disposition, context and culture. Learner centered methods cannot be grafted on traditional methods and require a change in the classroom culture.



The following picture shows a classroom .Observe the pictures



## Think and Reflect

Write down three things that you observe

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## 2.4 CREATING A DEMOCRATIC CLASSROOM



### Learning Objective

By the end of this section you will be able to-

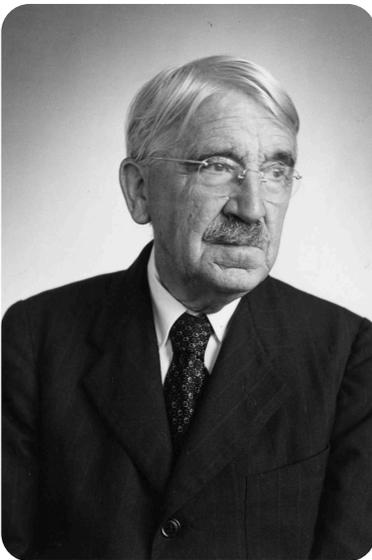
- Develop mutual respect and trust among students and teachers
- Encourage students voice and choice
- Promote collaboration ,empathy and accountability
- Prepare students for active citizenship in a democratic society



## 2.4.1 Introduction

A democratic classroom is one where students and teachers share responsibilities for learning. It promotes respect, participation, equality, and freedom of expression, mirroring the values of democracy within the classroom environment. In such a classroom, learners are not passive listeners but active participants in decision making, rule setting, and learning process.

John Dewey and Alfie Kohn both advocate for democratic classrooms centered on student led inquiry, collaboration and a shared democratic way of life, but their emphasis differs slightly. Dewey laid the foundation by promoting learning through experience and connecting education to a democratic society, while Kohl built upon this with a focus on intrinsic motivation, questioning traditional reward punishment system and fostering deep meaningful relationships in the classroom.

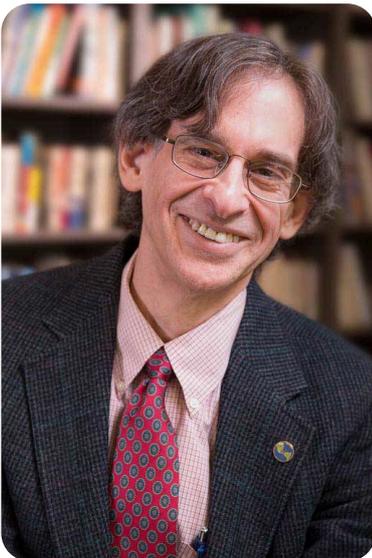


### John Dewey

**Experiential learning:** Dewey believed learning should be based on child's own experiences, integrating practical experience with theoretical knowledge.

**Socialization:** He argued that a truly democratizing education must socialize students into a democratic way of life and align with democratic values.

**Holistic Approach:** Dewey saw pedagogy as holistic process, encouraging active teaching methods that adapt to individual students' interest and inclinations.



### Alfie Kohn

**Student -led inquiry:** Kohn emphasis giving students the freedom to explore and struggle with ideas to foster true learning.

**Collaboration and relationship:** He focuses on creating a safe environment for learning and development through strong relationships and elimination of traditional reward/punishment system.

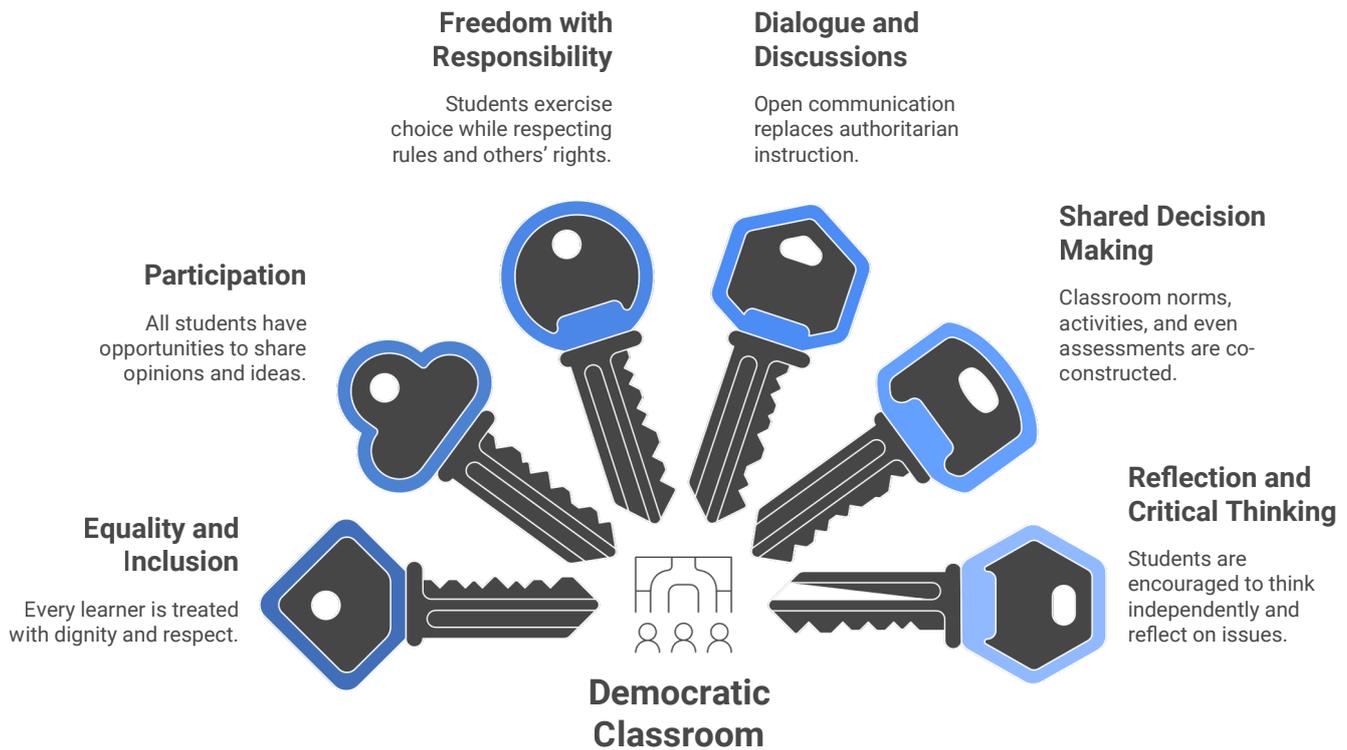
**Intrinsic motivation:** A key aspect of Kohn's Theory is the need to move beyond just facts and skills, and to cultivate a deeper, more engaged form of learning that is motivated from within.

**Active adult involvement:** Kohn stresses that adult must be actively involved in guiding this process, not just passively observing, to help students develop the critical thinking necessary for a democratic society

**Key words:** democratic classroom, experiential learning



# FOUNDATIONS OF A DEMOCRATIC CLASSROOM



## 2.4.2 Strategies to build a democratic classroom

Strategy	How it works	Example
<b>Co-creating rules</b>	Involve students in setting classroom norms	"Discuss among yourselves and write down five rules that help everyone feel respected."
<b>Class meetings</b>	Regular gatherings to discuss issues and solve problems	Weekly/Monthly "circle time" on what went well
<b>Choice in learning</b>	Offer options in projects, topics, or activities	Students choose between poster making or digital presentation
<b>Collaboration</b>	Encourage teamwork and peer work	Group problem solving in science, social science, or mathematics
<b>Student leadership roles</b>	Assign classroom responsibilities	Class monitor, library helper, co-club leader, cleanliness monitor
<b>Dialogic teaching</b>	Use questions to promote reasoning and dialogue	Debates, "Think-Pair-Share", Socratic circle
<b>Restorative practices</b>	Resolve conflicts through empathy and conversation	"Let's talk – how can we make things right?"



## Summary

### Teacher's role in the classroom

- Be a **facilitator**, not an authority figure
- Model democratic **values—fairness, patience** and **openness**
- **Encourage** critical questioning and respectful disagreement
- **Create** opportunities for shared ownership of learning
- **Listen** actively and validate all voices.

### Outcome of a democratic classroom

- Builds confidence and self esteem
- Improves communication and cooperation skills
- Prepares students for real world citizenship
- Reduces classroom conflicts and increases motivation



### Check your understanding

Choose the correct option and put a tick:

- 1 According to constructivist theory, a child learns best when:**
  - (A) Information is memorized and repeated
  - (B) Knowledge is transmitted directly by the teacher
  - (C) The child actively engages with experiences
  - (D) The child listens to lectures
- 2 “Child as an active learner” implies that learning is:**
  - (A) Passive and teacher-directed
  - (B) An active mental and physical process
  - (C) Independent of prior knowledge
  - (D) Based on rewards and punishments
- 3 Which philosopher emphasized that children construct knowledge through interaction with their environment?**
  - (A) B.F. Skinner
  - (B) Jean Piaget
  - (C) Edward Thorndike
  - (D) John Watson
- 4 A democratic classroom supports active learning because it:**
  - (A) Eliminates children's choices
  - (B) Encourages obedience and silence
  - (C) Allows participation, questioning and dialogue
  - (D) Focuses on rote learning
- 5 Which of the following best describes a constructivist classroom?**
  - (A) Teacher lectures, students take notes
  - (B) Students repeat facts after the teacher
  - (C) Students explore, inquire and collaborate
  - (D) Teacher controls all learning activities





## Check your understanding

- 6 Prior knowledge of a child is important because**
- (A) It interferes with new learning  
(B) Learning starts from what the child already known  
(C) Teachers must ignore it to avoid misconceptions  
(D) It does not influence learning
- 7 The role of the teacher in constructivist learning is mainly to:**
- (A) Dictate content to learners  
(B) Facilitate meaningful experiences  
(C) Enforce discipline strictly  
(D) Provide ready-made knowledge
- 8 Children construct knowledge when they:**
- (A) Repeat information  
(B) Receive direct instruction only  
(C) Manipulate objects and engage in activities  
(D) Remain silent in class
- 9 A key feature of “child as a constructor of knowledge” is:**
- (A) Brainwashing  
(B) social transmission only  
(C) Active meaning -making  
(D) Blind obedience
- 10 Which classroom practice promotes active learning?**
- (A) Teacher asking only closed -ended questions  
(B) Teacher giving worksheets without discussion  
(C) Students discussing, predicting and reflecting  
(D) Students memorising answers for tests

### References:

- NCF 2020
- NCFSC 2023
- Constructivist Approaches to Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers of Secondary Stage.NCERT
- Learning and Teaching by S.K.Mangal.

### Additional Readings:

- Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire
- Democracy and Education-A foundational classic by John Dewey

## Correct Answers

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
C	B	B	C	C	B	B	C	C	C





## AUTHOR PROFILE

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Mrs. Krishna Dutta Deka is a Senior Lecturer at DIET Jorhat with 27 years of rich experience in teacher education and academic leadership. She has been actively involved in the development of textbooks, curriculum frameworks, and training modules, contributing significantly to quality improvement in school education.



She served as the Coordinator of a project on MGML (Multi-Grade Multi-Level) methodology, promoting child-centred and activity-based learning practices. She has also developed contextualized learning materials for out-of-school children, supporting inclusive and equitable education initiatives.

