

Common problems of common teachers

1. Portions [syllabus] are vast. **No time** to teach properly.
2. **Too many holidays** and extracurricular work.
3. **Dictating Q&A** or writing on the blackboard] and checking the note books of students takes time .
4. **Too many internal assessments** and associated paper work.
5. **‘Project work’ is an added headache** to the teachers of all subjects .
6. New syllabus and **new books** make life more difficult.

Teachers of **maths and science** tend to be vocal about these points whereas language teachers seem to cope up with any changes in the syllabus or books . Of late, social science appears to have expanded itself to include commerce and economics at the school level itself.

These are some of the problems felt and stated by ‘common’ [= ordinary] teachers.

But there are equal number of **uncommon [= ideal] teachers** . They would like to ‘give’ something more to the students than required by the authorities . For them teaching is not a ‘job’ but a ‘noble profession’.

Problems of IDEAL teaching and learning [t&l]

7. Inflexible traditional practices and expectations - examples : only ‘blue-print’ based questions from a given chapter--- the practice of spoon-feeding even the syntax of the answers--- total predictability of ‘expected’ questions --- no scope of intra or inter disciplinary discussions---
8. Large gap between forward and ‘slow’ [=non] learners in a class [in govt as well as ordinary schools]
9. Absenteeism , truancy, lack [or short-span] of attention on the part of even ‘good’ students
10. Lack of interest or appreciation of good [t&l] techniques [both internal i.e hm & colleagues; and external [i.e. edu dept] --- other demotivating factors
11. Fear of failure or low results inhibiting trial of good [t&l] techniques by the ideal teacher.
12. Loneliness due to #10 above or lack of knowledge on the part of superiors or equals
13. The make-up of the syllabus and the textbooks – include exam and assessment goals –

Result

Pass % ,also first class, may be high or satisfactory - but the teacher knows he has dulled the ‘geniuses’ in the class to the level of regurgitators or repeaters.

With the cooperation of ALL the teachers [ideal] teachers can create an enjoyable environment for good [t&l] techniques --- automatically good results in exams will follow

What to do [suggested solutions]

1. **No time** problem : Identify time wasting practices and save time - suggestion: find ways of copying Q & A out of class timings - give Xerox, put up on the notice board- make on-line or whatsapp [ha!ha!] etc. – or let all copy from a few ‘fast’ students
2. **Too many holidays** - this is beyond the ordinary teacher’s scope - so, try home work [piece-meal or doing by parts method]--- try ‘top’ students helping the teacher and/ or the other students.
3. **Dictating Q&A** Try a combination of #1 ,#2 above

4. **Too many internal assessments** Here is the problem of understanding what is an assessment and why it IS recommended- TEACHERS SHOULD BE CONVINCED THAT it is not a tool for evaluation. AND THAT It is a method of finding what the class in general needs yet- and identifying who all [among the students] may need remedial methods, and what all [among the lessons taught] need revision. Therefore these [**internal assessments**] can help in better performance by the teacher. Thus make assessments more meaningful by structuring it to suit your method of teaching. Need not always be like any exam. To start with, one can try open-book exam system.
5. **'Project work'** can supplement assessment and help in finding appropriate remedial methods. Thus a good teacher converts this added headache to her advantage.
6. **New books** can sometimes pose formidable problems -. at the time and place of writing [September 2018, Mysore] , i find that the new textbooks for high school suffer from -----[a] verbose introductions [b] distracting and digressing 'boxes' and 'activities' [c] many 'posers' [questions sans answers] create dilemma to 'ordinary' teachers and quite depressing to some fresh candidates. [c] irrelevant 'comprehension questions. Only a coordinated effort among intra and inter school educators can help - **needs to be done** in the interest of the future of the student

What to do [suggested solutions]

7 to #13 above require an in-depth discussion of

- [a] the goals of education –
- [b] pedagogic methods for a given target group—
- [c] the challenge of motivating and sustaining the students' interest
- [d] definition of 'hard work' and achievement of the objectives –

A discussion of all these aspects will look like a course in B.Ed. classes and therefore dull . pointless and impractical.

So' instead, we can discover aspects of [t&l] which will be worthwhile for both the giver and the receiver –each should feel that one has done something -

We can discuss them here. Send feedback to engoneforall@gmail.com