

TESSA

Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa

Teaching Pack No.13

Middle Primary

Section 1	Literacy:	Supporting additional language
Section 2	Numeracy:	Working with weight
Section 3	Science:	Thinking globally: acting locally
Section 4	Arts:	Using artefacts to explore the past
Section 5	Life Skills:	Ways to promote spiritual well being

- Additional Resources:**
- **Group work in your classroom**
 - **Working with large/multigrade classes**

<http://www.tessafrica.net>



© This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike
3.0 License

13

Literacy: Supporting additional language

1. Approach to learning an additional language
2. Writing in an additional language
3. Making a book

Key question for the teacher:

How can you build supportive relationships in the additional language?

Keywords: pen pals; sharing local information

Learning Outcomes for Teachers:

By the end of this section, you will have:

- Begun developing relationships between students that support their learning in the additional language and help them reflect on their own learning;
- Provided opportunities for students to communicate with proficient or mother-tongue speakers of the additional language;
- Set up opportunities for communication with students beyond your school

Overview

Many students in Africa have few opportunities to interact with mother-tongue speakers of the additional language. Often, exposure to the language has to come through reading, listening to the radio or watching the TV.

Nevertheless, there are ways to get your students talking and writing to those who are more fluent in the additional language. You may also be able to help your students communicate, in the additional language, with students in another school.

This section looks at ways to do this.

1 Approach to learning an additional language

For people who learn language in a formal classroom, the phrases people use every day to interact with one another are often the last things that they learn.

There are ways to help your students to gain proficiency in phrases and sentences that they can use when they meet proficient speakers of the additional language. Each set of phrases or sentences should:

- be short and easy to learn;
- say something that the students need and want to say;
- be usable with a lot of people;
- allow the students to start a conversation and build a relationship;
- allow the students to learn more about the language from the person they are talking to;
- not provoke long responses from the other person.

Teaching Example 1

Liz Botha in East London, South Africa, was learning isiZulu as an additional language through a local language project called TALK. The motto of the TALK project was, 'Learn a little, and use it a LOT!'

She started by learning how to greet in isiZulu, and to tell people that she was learning isiZulu. She also learned to ask them to speak to her in isiZulu and help her with her language learning.

She looked for people to whom she could speak isiZulu, and found that there were a number of isiZulu-speaking hawkers selling fruit and vegetables in the streets near her home. She practised her sentences with them, and started to get to know them. She had a friend who taught her new phrases, and she found out, from her, how to ask for the price of something, and buy it. These were the sentences she used the next time she saw her hawker friends.

As time went by, she learned to tell them about herself and her family. Later, she told them short stories about what had happened to her the day before, or at the weekend. One of the hawkers, named Jabu, became a very special friend of hers, and taught her many new words and sentences. He eventually became involved in helping other people to learn isiZulu within the TALK project.

Activity 1

Ask your students where they hear the additional language spoken. Who do they know who speaks it well? Who could they speak to in the additional language? Consider individuals outside and inside school, and also people that

you could invite to your classroom. Consider a partnership with another school nearby, if it could promote interaction in the additional language.

Now that your students know who they want to speak to, work out what they would like to say to them.

Systematically, as a long-term project, help them to learn vocabulary. Concentrate on clear sounds and pronunciation. Let them practise in pairs.

Ideas for basic things to learn include:

- greetings and leave-taking;
- giving and asking names, and personal/family information;
- explaining that they are learners of the language and want help with learning more;
- buying things;
- talking about the weather;
- saying what happened yesterday;
- apologising, requesting, complimenting, etc.

Encourage them to practise with the people they have chosen to correspond with (above).

Spend some time each week asking about their progress.

What successes and difficulties have they had?

What new language have they learned?

What else have they learned?

2 Writing in an additional language

In this part, we suggest that you motivate your students to write letters in the additional language. This could mean setting up long-distance relationships with speakers of the additional language, or they could write to friends who are closer.

You could introduce a pen-pal scheme with another class. This can be a class in your country or in another country.

If you wish to be put in touch with a school in your own country or another country that is also making use of these materials, please contact National Teachers' Institute at ntikad@yahoo.com or at the following address: National Teachers' Institute, KM 5 Kaduna-Zaria Express Road, Rigachikun, Kaduna, Nigeria.

You can then set up a link between your class and a class of similar age at the other school, and arrange for every one of your students to have a pen-pal. This will give your students the advantage of having a friend to write to, and receive responses from, about matters of interest, using a common additional language or lingua franca. They will gain practice in reading and

writing for a real purpose, and learn a lot about the other person, their family, school, country and lifestyle.

Before you introduce your students to the scheme, make sure that you have sorted out issues such as the provision of, and payment for, envelopes and stamps. You may be able to put all the letters in a large envelope and post this to the teacher.

If students become confident writers and readers of letters while they are at primary school, they are more likely to be successful writers of letters later in life. As they write personal letters to friends, you can also introduce other styles of letter writing. This will equip them for later needs, such as applying for bursaries or jobs, letters to newspapers, letters of congratulation or condolence.

Teaching Example 2

The students in Mrs Linda Ezenwa's Primary 5 class were upset and couldn't concentrate on their schoolwork. One of their classmates, Oluchi, had been killed in a bus crash. They missed their friend very much. They were also angry because they had heard that the bus had faulty brakes.

Mrs Ezenwa encouraged the students to talk about how they were feeling. She realised that they wanted to do something, so she asked if they would like to write to Oluchi's family. She suggested that they write two letters: one in Igbo for her parents and grandparents and one in English for her brother and sister who had grown up in Onitsha. The students said that they wanted to tell Oluchi's family members that they were thinking about them and also tell them all the good things about Oluchi.

Mrs Ezenwa helped them with an outline for their writing. Each student wrote their own letter in Igbo. In the next lesson, Mrs Ezenwa helped them to write one letter from the whole class in English and then each student signed it.

With Mrs Ezenwa's help, they also wrote a letter in English to the bus company, requesting that all the buses be carefully checked to make sure they were roadworthy.

The class received replies to both the letters they had written. Mrs Ezenwa pinned these letters to the class notice board.

Mrs Ezenwa realised how this had motivated her students and given them important social skills. It had also helped them see the purpose of learning the additional language.

Activity 2

Set up your partner school by contacting the National Teachers Institute, details given at beginning of this section.

- Give each student in your class the name of a pen-pal with whom they can establish a relationship. (If this is not possible, try to get each student to identify a student in another class or a relative or friend away from home

they would like to correspond with.) If you already have a partner school, or you set one up, keep in close contact with your partner teacher, to discuss potential problems and find solutions together.

- Discuss with your class the kinds of things they might like to say in their first letter. Over time, they could exchange information about their lives, their families, their friends, their interests, their dreams.
- Agree a format for the letter (see 'Writing letters' below), and let them start writing. Go round helping them with words and phrases that they need.
- Let them revise and edit their letters in pairs (See 'Assessing pen-pal letters'). Take the letters in yourself, and give supportive and constructive feedback.
- Let students write out a final version of their letter, address the envelope and post it.
- With younger students, this could be a whole-class activity and you write what they want to say. They could write to another class in the school.

How can you support the development of these correspondence relationships?

How can you help where needed, while giving space for relationships to develop?

Writing Letters

Students are likely to find letter writing more enjoyable (in either their mother tongue or the additional language) if they feel there is a real reason for writing and that someone will be interested in reading their letters. There will be a number of situations where using the additional language would be more appropriate. In every case, you will need to discuss which language to use.

You can arrange with teachers in another school for students in each school to write letters to those in the other. You could also help your students to write a letter to a company to ask for a donation of money, goods or services for the school. If you have taken them to visit a place in your community such as a clinic, an agricultural project or a factory, you could help them to write a letter of thanks. There may be happy or sad occasions where it would be appropriate for them to write someone a letter of congratulations or condolence.

Whatever type of letter you choose, first discuss with students why people write letters and what they want to say in the particular type of letter chosen. Write their ideas on the chalkboard and help them to organise them into paragraphs. You may wish to use some of the following outlines.

When students have completed their letters, send them to the person or organisation to whom they are addressed. You could collect all the students' letters and put them into one large envelope with the appropriate address. If you and the students are lucky, you will receive a reply!

Outline of a letter to a pen-pal at another school (or country)

Dear

I am very pleased that we are going to be pen-pals. In this letter I am going to introduce myself to you.

My full name is I am years old. As I don't have a photograph to send you at present I will describe what I look like.
[followed by sentences with this description]

I would like to tell you about my family. [followed by sentences about them]
We live in [followed by sentences about the place]

These are some of my favourite things. My favourite food is
My favourite music is My favourite subject at school is
.....

At the weekends I like to

When I finish school I hope to

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes

[Name and signature]



Outline of a letter of thanks after a school visit

Dear

I really enjoyed our visit to

What I found most interesting was

I thought this was the most interesting because.....

If our school has a chance to make another visit I would like to
.....

Thank you very much for

Yours sincerely

[Name and signature]



Outline of a letter to a company requesting a donation

Dear [name of person or Dear Sir or Dear Madam]

I am writing to ask for your help. Our school really needs.....

We need this because

I am writing to you because [reasons why this company could help].

I do hope you will be able to assist us.

Yours sincerely

[Name and signature]

Assessing pen-pal letters

1. Does the letter create a lively and interesting picture of the writer? What details could be added to make it more interesting?

1. Is the information clearly expressed? Is the letter easy to read?

3. Are different topics dealt with in different paragraphs?

4. Is it in the correct tense? (A description is likely to be in the present tense.) Is each verb in the present tense or, if not, is there a good reason for a different tense? (You can decide what other structure features you want to focus on in this activity.)

3 Making a book

Producing books that the students have written and made not only enhances their self-esteem, but also provides you with welcome classroom resources.

This part builds on the idea of a Big Book. It suggests that you motivate your students to bring their writing and drawing to a final stage by putting a book together. This can be shared with others in the class, or with a person, group or school in another place.

You need to think about how to plan and organise an activity like this. You will need to think about the kind of book to make (e.g. folding book), the visuals and layout of the book, and the type of book (e.g. songbook, storybook or non-fiction book).

You will need to think about the resources needed and where to get them. You may have to involve students in collecting some of these before you actually start the work in class. This kind of planning and preparation is vital if your classroom is to be effective in helping students learn. You might find the additional resource useful on **Being a resourceful teacher in challenging conditions**.

Teaching Example 3

Mrs Umar, who teaches a class of 44 Primary 5 students in Sokoto, wanted to encourage them as writers and readers and so decided to make books with them in their additional language of English.

She told them that she wished to start a collection of books for the class and it would only grow if they produced some of their own books. They discussed what kinds of books they liked to read and she listed these on the board. The list included stories, poems, and books about sports and clothes. She then asked the class to form small groups of no more than six people interested in a particular kind of book.

Mrs Umar discussed with each group what kind of book they were going to write. One group decided to work in smaller groups of three to produce two sports books, one about football and the other about running. Another group wanted to write a storybook based on a traditional tale. Mrs Umar gave the groups time to plan their outlines before asking them to share their ideas with the rest of the class. The class gave feedback to each group. Over the next week, Mrs Umar gave the groups lesson time as well as homework time to work on their writing.

As each group finished their drafts, Mrs Umar read these through and gave feedback on ways to improve their books. The final drafts were completed over the next week and were put on display for the whole class to read.

Activity 3

- Suggest to your class that they make a book for their partner school (or for another purpose), containing songs, recipes and other local information. If

you have a recipe book, show it to them. Some recipe books include pictures, information and stories about places and people related to the recipes.

- Decide which songs or recipes they will include and how they will be presented.
- Decide together what else will be in the book. Think about illustrations, photographs, instructions for local games, stories or poems.
- Plan with your students who will do each piece of work, who will edit the work and when each task should be completed.
- Carry out the plan. If possible, make copies of the book, so that you can keep one and send one to your partner school. Ask your partner school if they can send you a book they have made, too.

Where resources are limited, recycled paper, old calendars, newspapers and magazines are materials you may be able to gather locally for making books. For further ideas, see the additional resource on Being a resourceful teacher in challenging conditions.

Numeracy: Working with weight

1 Estimating and comparing

2 Non-standard units

3 Weighing in grams

Key question for the teacher:

How can you build supportive relationships in the additional language?

Keywords: personal communication; pen pals; sharing local information

Learning Outcomes for the Teacher

By the end of this section, you will have:

- Begun developing relationships between students that support their learning in the additional language and help them reflect on their own learning;
- Provided opportunities for students to communicate with proficient or mother-tongue speakers of the additional language;
- Set up opportunities for communication with students beyond your school

Overview

When exploring weight with students it is important to use a lot of practical hands on activities in the early stages so that they are able to build up mental models which will help their understanding in later stages. In this section you will plan ways to introduce your students to the concept of weight by following three stages:

- comparing weights of two or more objects by holding them at the same time
- estimating and measuring weight of objects using non-standard units such as stones
- measuring and comparing the weight of objects using standard units

Central to this work is the use of simple balances and using standard units that can be made from cheap and readily available materials, to enable practical group work and active learning.

1 Estimating and comparing

Estimation is an important skill in both mathematics and science and a useful skill to cultivate for all students. Simple balances can be made with very modest resources that allow students to approach measuring and estimating weight through practical investigation. You may like to make simple balances and plan and carry out these activities jointly with a science teacher in your school. This can be done by helping students to compare and contrast weights in different ways.

Teaching Example 1

Mrs Nkumu in Nigeria was on a teachers' course at her local district offices and as part of the day's lesson on numeracy the facilitator told the following story to them. Then she asked them what they thought the girls knew and what would they do next with these students if they were in their class.

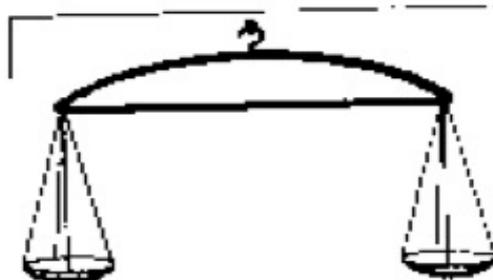
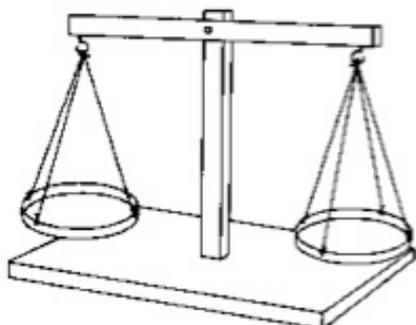
'Two girls, Ranke and Ade, were discussing the quantity of popcorn in two packets, A and B which looked the same shape and size. Ronke picked up the packets one after the other and was surprised that B felt heavier than A. She told Ade that B appeared to be heavier than A. Ade decided to put the two packets in the two pans of a simple balance. She observed that on the scale, packet B went down and so B is heavier than A. Ronke was right.'

The teachers worked in pairs and devised activities that encouraged estimation of heavier/lighter, then using a balance or scales to test their ideas. Each pair tried their lesson out with their class and reported back next session.

Mrs Nkumu found that her class enjoyed the lesson but that she did not have enough different objects for the students to use. Next time she said she would spend more time collecting objects and she would use smaller groups of 4-6 rather than over 10 each.

Activity 1

You will need 5 simple balances to carry out this activity and 5 sets of common objects e.g. stones, balls, tins, bottle tops etc. that could be used with the balances



Write instructions for your students on the board, see below, and show the class what you want them to do using any two objects.

1. One member of the group picks up and feels the weight of two objects, e.g. a stone and a bean, one after the other. Which feels heavier? Complete the table below.
2. Another member now uses the balance to compare the weights and completes the table
3. Repeat this for all the objects, comparing two objects at a time, allowing each member of the group to participate.
4. Pin your table on the wall and look at each other's results.

Objects	Which feels heavier	Which weighs heavier on balance
a ball and a bean	the ball	the ball
a bean and a stone	the stone	the bean
a bean bag and a stone		

Ask them to estimate which is heavier by giving the objects to 2 students to answer.

Now ask a student to test their idea out by putting them on the pan and let them decide.

Ask them which is the heaviest object and why they think so.

Organise your students into 5 groups, giving each group a set of objects and a balance. Ask students to find which object is heavier by estimating its weight and then by using the balance.

Ask them to fill in a table of their results to share with the class to see if everyone agrees.

You could challenge older or more able students to see if they can order their objects from heaviest to lightest before testing. How could they test their answers using the simple balance?

is lighter than		
a feather	—————→	a comb

2 Non-standard units

When developing understanding of the idea of weighing it is better if non-standard units are used to measure first. If students compare and contrast weights against non-standard unit bottle tops or beans they will quickly understand this is not sensible as the weight of different bottle tops and seeds

vary. This is made easier by making sure they have sufficient experience weighing objects against different non-standard units.

Only when students understand the need for a common unit should the introduction of standard units like grams or kilograms begin.

Teaching Example 2

Lizzy, a Primary school teacher, felt that having taught her students how to use a simple balance to compare weights of objects, they should now compare the weight of any object with that of a given chosen 'standard' object.

She assembled different objects and chose dry beans to be her chosen measure. Using the balance she asked two students to place an object on one pan and put enough beans on the other until it balanced. They counted the beans for each object and recorded their results.

Next she used some longer beans and weighed the same objects and recorded these results. She talked with the class about the difference in numbers between the two kinds of bean and how difficult it was to compare the weight of a stone and wood if one person used one set of beans and the other used a set of larger beans.

Activity 2

Before doing this activity, read the information provided below and collect together the following resources – enough for your size class.

- simple balances
- collect objects of similar weights to use as measures (e.g. bottle tops and beans)
- objects of different weights to measure (e.g. small bottles, tins or stones).

Student instructions for weighing activity

- (1) Put the object to be weighed, say 1 milk tin, in the left scale pan of the balance. Place one bean in the other scale pan. Which is heavier?
- (2) Add more beans one at a time, in the scale pan on the right until the two sides balance. How many beans do you require for this?
- (3) Repeat using bottle tops instead of beans.
- (4) Repeat (1) and (2) for each of the objects to be weighed.
- (5) Record your observations in the form of the table below

Left	Right
Object	No. of beans

Left	Right
Object	No. of bottle tops

- (6) Find out how many bottle tops weigh as much as 10 beans.
- (7) Find out how many beans weigh as much as 10 bottle tops.

You could just collect enough for one group and have each group take turns to do the activity while the others do different work.

Write the instructions for the groups on the board and explain what they have to do.

At the end, ask them to compare how it was different using beans or bottle tops to measure the weight, rather than just comparing pairs of objects. Note their answers on the board. Ask if they think this is a fairer way to measure.

Ask students to list the objects in order from heaviest to lightest – is this harder or easier than before? Why?

The previous activities should have shown your students that 'standard units' of weight are needed because without these it is not possible to accurately compare or know how much something weighs. This next part explores how you can introduce terms and develop their understanding of kilogram (kg), and gram (g) (1000 gram = 1 kilogram). You may want to bring bags of sugar and rice to class, to show their weight is recorded in grams or kilograms and for them to feel the actual weights or make some mock ones i.e. plastic bags filled with sand, stones etc. to the correct weight. If you can, borrow a pair of scales to do this.

3 Weighing in grams

If you do not have access to calibrated weighing scales or weights at school, it may still be possible to make approximate measurements of weight using your simple balances, and using some everyday objects that have their weight on them to test them against. The second focus in this part is on understanding the terms gram and kilogram and being able to convert one to the other. This kind of activity should only be undertaken when students are confident at weighing in grams and kilograms.

Teaching Example 3

Mr. Adu wants his students to estimate, measure and compare weights of 1 object in grams and kilograms. He asked permission from a secondary school science department to use their balances to make bean-bags weighing 100g, 50g and 10g (using different coloured cloth for each weight). He asked some of the parents who work in the local sewing shop to help him sew several sets for his class.

He demonstrated the weighing of objects in grams using the improvised weights and a simple balance, and then asked students to weigh objects to the nearest 10g, and record their results in a table.

Object	Weight
<p>The students were very enthusiastic and weighed nearly everything they could find in the classroom. Mr Adu listened to their talk as they weighed and was pleased to hear them using the correct terms easily.</p>	

Activity 3

Before the lesson, collect a number of objects that have their weights shown – tinned or packet foods and other goods (you only need the wrapper, not the whole good). Try to have enough to give each group of students at least two or three labels. It would also be good to have some labels for weights in kilograms as well as grams.

Ask groups to write down the name of the product, and its weight – ensure that they include the correct units (grams or kilograms). They could do this by using the actual bags and putting them in order on their table. Students could arrange and re-arrange the packages by weight from highest to lowest or lowest to highest or sort into groups:

- > 500 grams or
- < 500 grams

Then ask students to convert each weight from kilograms to grams or vice versa.

When they have finished ask each group to swap their sheets with another group and they can check each other's answers. Remind them that 1000 gram = 1 kilogram.

Discuss with your students why they might need to be able to convert weights in their everyday lives. This should encourage them to engage with the work more readily.

Display their work on the wall to show each group their achievements.

What did the groups learn and how do you know this? You could ask them to tell you what they think they have learnt.

Science: Thinking globally: acting locally

- 1 Artefacts of human life
- 2 Endangered species
- 3 Taking action

Key Question for the teacher:

How can you help students develop values of caring and concern for the environment?

Keywords: human footprint; endangered; environment; discussion; research; projects

Learning Outcomes for the Teacher

By the end of this section, you will have:

- Used discussion to help students become more aware of their values and attitudes towards the environment;
- Used different resources (articles, information books, web sites, photographs, drawing etc.) with your students;
- Helped your students plan, participate in and assess

Overview

We can feel very proud of Africa and being African. From research, scientists now believe that Africa is the ancient home of all people here on Earth. Southern Africa is seen as the 'cradle of humanity'. Isn't that wonderful?

Although human history is very short compared to the Earth's history, humans have developed the capacity to damage and even destroy vital elements of our natural world.

How can you help students participate in serious discussion about their environment? How can we encourage students to develop values of caring for their world?

1 Artefacts of human life

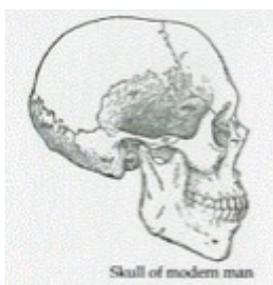
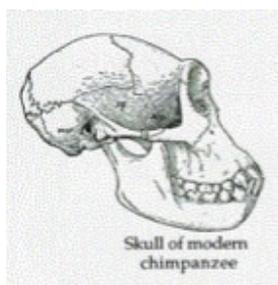
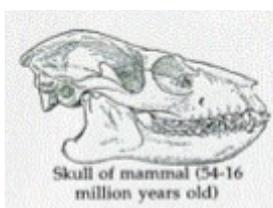
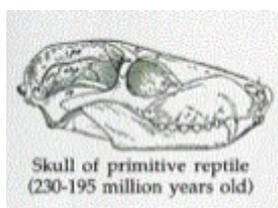
Earlier sections in this module considered how living things are adapted to survive in their environment. The great human adaptive advantage, developed here in Africa, is the ability to think of and make tools to cope with changing environments and to learn new things. For example, the earliest evidence of learning how to make and use fire is found in South Africa. (In **Teaching Example 1**, a teacher uses artefacts of human life from thousands of years ago, found on a local sand dune, to develop attitudes of respect for what early humans could do. This is one way of starting this topic with your students; you could also use some of the background materials in 'Out of Africa'. Make sure you give a purpose to this activity; ask students to find one idea that is new to them or to summarise the main ideas in a way suitable for younger students, perhaps with some pictures.

In **Activity 1**, you lead your students through thoughtful discussion that will encourage them to seek more evidence from a range of different sources.

The 'Out of Africa' theory of human origins

Most experts believe that the species to which we belong, *Homo sapiens*, evolved in Africa, sometime between 100,000 and 200,000 years ago. By 30,000 years ago, *Homo sapiens* had spread to all parts of the world apart from the Americas; by at least 11,000 years ago, every continent apart from Antarctica was populated.

Homo sapiens had more tools than their predecessors, including a wide variety of stone blades and tools made of bone, wood and ivory. They lived in larger settlements and there was more contact between villages and tribes. Communication through the spoken word and through art, engravings, sculpture and music became a vital part of human life. Later human developments – farming, civilisation, huge population growth, industry and control over nature – have occurred in the relatively short period of 10,000 years.



Adapted from: <http://www.harperchildrens.com> and Dorling Kindersley Eyewitness, *Early People*

Teaching Example 1

Alan is a teacher who grew up spending holidays on the coast of South Africa. Here, when the wind blows away sand in the dunes, it uncovers places long hidden. You can find broken parts of very ancient pottery and marvel at how it was made and decorated. You can find parts of stone that have been chipped and shaped to make tools for cutting, hammering and even grinding. There are also bits of bone that show evidence of having been shaped into awls (pointed tools) for piercing leather, or cut into tubes as beads.

Sometimes Alan takes his students there. When students hold these things and imagine people thousands of years ago, and the time and trouble they took to make these tools, he can see the sense of wonder in their faces.

Activity 1

First read the information provided below to yourself to give you some ideas about early technologies.

Technology is something that has built up over the ages; it is as old as the human species. And it is at the very centre of most human experience. It always has been and it always will be.

All the latest research shows clearly that human life had its origins in our part of Africa; Southern Africa is now known to be the ancient home of all people – the ‘cradle of humanity’.

As people developed here in Africa and advanced their culture, they found ways to use, adapt and change natural things to make their lives easier. They developed cultural and kinship systems. (Systems themselves are a kind of technology – a way to regulate human life and behaviour.)

Perhaps the first great inventions were bags, or baskets, and knots to tie things. Skins, parts of plants, and fibres were probably used, and knots, weaving and plaiting were invented. (Of course, dried gourds, or calabashes, could also be used as carrying containers.) Bags and baskets were probably invented by women to carry the food that they had gathered, so that they could carry more than a handful back to their homes. Also, they needed to be able to carry their babies safely, while they gathered roots, fruit and plants.

Once human hands were freed by the invention of bags and baskets, people could use their hands for other things. Hunting and other tools were also developed, using hard substances such as bone or stone. Long bones could be twisted or broken and shaped by rubbing them to form bone daggers for cutting or stabbing.

Rocks could be knocked and chipped to make stone hand-axes. The sharp flakes that were chipped off could be used for scraping skins to get leather. These tools could be used to make other tools. And so people evolved

more and more complex technology to make human life easier in one way –and perhaps more complicated in others.

From early on, people probably decorated themselves. They made ornaments like beads, bracelets and necklaces to wear. This required skilful technology.

Before long, people probably discovered that they could get certain colours from plants. They also found, crushed and mixed coloured minerals to make pigments to paint and decorate designs on their bodies. By cutting the skin and rubbing ash into the wounds, beautiful, permanent patterns of scars could be made. At some stage, tattooing was invented.

Of course, they also decorated the objects and tools that they made. We're sure that early people appreciated beautiful, carefully made things.

At some point, the control and use of fire became an important part of human life. This gave people some control over darkness, and a way to process certain foods by cooking or smoking. Control over fire meant that people could now move to live and settle in colder places. Fire could also be used to bake pots made of clay. This process turned the pots into stronger containers that could be used for cooking as well as storing.

Discovering how to find, mine, melt and shape metal was another important series of technological discoveries and inventions.

The taming and domesticating of animals was also a technological advance. This led to a nomadic herding lifestyle. In drier places, people learned to dig wells to provide their animals with water. Domestic animals could be a source and sign of wealth. Complex trading and bartering systems probably developed.

Learning how to grow crops led to the development of agriculture and settled farming. Control of water by irrigation was another technology that was developed.

Settlements turned into villages. Villages, in turn, developed into towns and cities. These towns and cities were complex systems that required many different jobs, which required specialised skills and technologies.

As human life got more complex, many other tools and systems had to be developed. Tools were used to make marks or records on stone or clay that carried messages or information of importance. Writing systems were developed.

Eventually, more complex tools and sets of tools turned into machines that could do the work of many people or animals. They could even do things that people had not been able to do before. When people worked out how to use the wind and water as sources of energy to work the machines, production systems improved. Using steam and coal was another major breakthrough, which led to the industrial revolution.

You can see that technological development leads to all sorts of other changes. Sometimes the changes are good and sometimes the changes can cause problems.



Today we live in a modern world that is dominated by rapid technological change. Do we control technology, or does technology control us? Understanding the uses of technology and being able to live and work as human beings in this modern world is a very important life skill for everyone to learn.

Original source: University of Fort Hare

Now, sit your students around you. Ask them to close their eyes and imagine themselves back in the very distant past. They are a family of hunter-gatherers, living off the land, making their own tools and seeing to their own needs for survival. Tell them to keep their eyes shut and to hold the answers in their heads to the questions you ask (later you will talk about the answers).

Ask them to imagine themselves waking. Where did they wake up? What kept them warm and safe in the night? What are they wearing? Who made it for them and how? What do they eat and drink? How is it prepared and stored? Take them briefly through the probable activities of the day. Focus on the tools, implements and other objects used.

Record your subsequent discussion in the form of a mind map titled 'The earliest technologies for a good life'.

2 Endangered species

There is strong evidence that all modern humans descended from a single population living in Africa about 150,000 years ago. Until only recently, humans lived in close harmony with nature, advancing the technologies that made their lives easier or better. Today, more modern technologies give us the power to harm or damage our world – and even its climate – in very dramatic ways.

This section looks at how you can explore with your students the impact we make on the world. What harms it, and what heals it? There are many plants and animals that have become extinct over time as part of natural processes, but human activity can also result in a species becoming extinct. Therefore, it is important to help students understand that their behaviour can have long-term effects on the Earth and our environment.

Teaching Example 2 tells how one teacher worked with his class to raise awareness of the effect of people on one species. In this type of activity, it is important to choose topics that are relevant to your students; **Activity 2** helps you build up a list of these topics. This can act as a starting point for further discussion, research and action. Older students might extend this work to look at how the issues are reported in the media.

Try to do some background research yourself before starting this work with your students. What are the endangered species in your country or local area? If you have access to the internet, it can be a great resource but you can also ask local experts, teachers in the local high school and other community members for help or to come in and talk to students.

Teaching Example 2

Kioko Mutiso talks to his class about the flightless dodo of Madagascar. This was a large bird (about the size of a turkey) that ate ripe fruit that had fallen to the ground. It built its nests on the ground because there were no natural predators on the island of Madagascar. Then, more sailors started visiting the island, bringing mammals including pigs, monkeys and rats. Over the years, the number of dodos decreased and by around 1680 the last dodo died.

Mr. Mutiso then organised his class into groups of four and gave each group six small cards, each with one of these phases on them:

- Fruit trees cut down to grow other crops
- Climate changed and became too cold for the dodo
- More people hunting the dodo for food
- More people picking the fruit from the trees before it ripens and falls
- More people hunting the dodo for their feathers
- Small mammals ate the dodos' eggs

Mr. Mutiso asked each group to read out the cards to each other and then to put them in order to explain why the dodo became extinct. He gave them 20 minutes for this task and during this time he went round each group asking them questions about their reasoning. At the end, each group shared their ideas on a class table. The most popular idea was eating the eggs and Mr. Mutiso confirmed that this was indeed the most important reason for the dodo becoming extinct.

He then asked his class if they have heard of any other endangered animals. The students mentioned elephants, tigers, dinosaurs and local endangered animals including the black rhino, the African elephant and certain plants.

They decided to research several of these animals to find out the reason why their numbers are going down. They wrote letters to conservation organisations to find out more information about the local animals and make posters of their findings for the classroom walls.

Activity 2

'What are we doing to the world?' In this activity, you use this question to increase awareness of both global and local issues regarding the environment.

Use the wall at the back of the classroom to make a large score sheet – draw a table with two columns. Head one column 'Harm' and the other column 'Help' or 'Heal'.

Every week, a different group of students collects last week's old newspapers, listens to the radio news or television and finds one story or picture which shows how people are affecting the environment. You might have stories about leaking oil pipelines, burning of forests, dumping rubbish, planting young trees,

opening a new road or recycling aluminum cans.

Students should summarise their story using these headings:

- What is the title of the story?
- Which part of the environment is affected? (Air, soil, water)
- How is it affected? Is this a long-term or short-term effect? Who is responsible?

The group presents its story to the class and then adds to the score sheet in the appropriate column.

When the sections are full, the class votes for the most significant choice in each column and these get pasted into a 'What worries us – What we like to see' book for future reference.

Think about how the group oral presentations could contribute to language assessment, you might find the additional resource useful on

Assessing learning.

3 Taking action

It is important that students are encouraged to value their own culture and traditions. Scientists are discovering that indigenous knowledge carries important understanding, but there is a danger that this local knowledge will be lost.

Teaching Example 3 shows how a teacher uses local news to link local and global issues around pollution, threats to animal populations and increased employment and facilities.

In the **Activity 3**, you build on the earlier discussion and research and take action with your students to improve the local environment. In this type of work, you need to think carefully about how you divide up the work and ensure that everyone has a chance to participate. Encourage students to reflect on what they have contributed to the group, there is some information in the box below about working in a group.

Ideas students may have about working in a group

Choose one of these methods to help your students to talk about how they worked together in a group.

1. Write each of the following words on to a card or on the board. Give each group a set of cards to help them develop three sentences to describe how they worked. They should try to use some of these words in their sentences:

decide,	persuade,	tell,	ask,
argue,	describe,	agree,	opinion,
listen,	share,	organise,	lead,

2. Write these statements onto a set of large cards (keep these for different group work activities). Display the statements around the room and ask each group to choose the statements that describe the way they worked.

Encourage your students to add further statements.

- Everyone in the group had a chance to speak.
- Everyone in the group was encouraged to speak.
- Not everyone spoke during the activity.
- We reached agreement in our group.
- We listened carefully to each other.
- Sometimes we found it hard to listen to others without interrupting.
- Not everyone in the group agreed with our way of drawing the poster.
- Not everyone in the group contributed to the poster.
- Everyone in the group was able to add to the poster.

3. Choose one or more of these questions below. Read it/them out to your class and ask each group to discuss the question(s) in their group for five minutes. Ask for feedback from some of the groups.

- How did sharing your ideas help you?
- Did everyone have a chance to speak?
- Did we encourage each other to share our ideas?
- Did we listen carefully to each other?

Teaching Example 3

There is a story in a local newspaper about how a large company plans to build a hotel near to the town on the beach, where many animals live and local people fish. Some local people are very upset about this and think it will bring pollution, and scare away animals and fish. Other local people are excited at the idea that there will be jobs in the hotel, and tourists to guide and buy local crafts. A local teacher, Mrs Rutebuka, sees this as a good opportunity to link language and science.

She asks her students to find as many copies as possible of this edition of the newspaper. She then cuts out the article so that each group (eight students) has a copy of the article. In their groups, the students then read the article and analyse the article under these headings (which Mrs Rutebuka has written on the board);

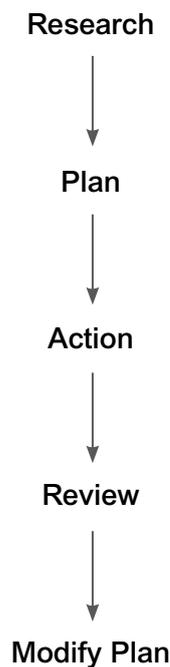
Person involved	What they want to happen	Why

After half an hour, Mrs Rutebuka stops their discussion and asks different groups to send a representative to help complete the table on the board.

She finishes the lesson by working with the students to write a summary of the story from the completed table.

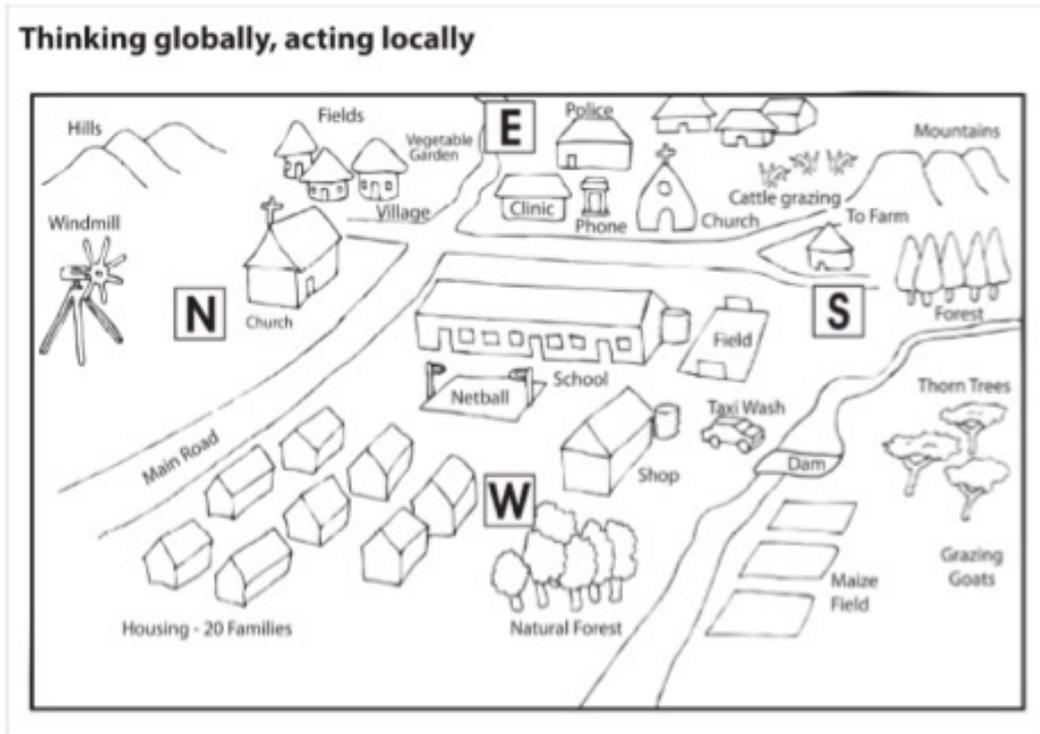
Activity 3

- Explain to your class that you want them to decide on a project where they take action to do something positive for the natural world.
- Brainstorm the aspects of local life that could be improved. Discuss and rank the ideas in order of importance.
- Next, divide your class into groups. Ask each group to draft a provisional action plan to present to the class. How will you decide which plan is sensible and realistic? Discuss this with the class and decide on 3-4 criteria for judging each plan.
- Ask the class to choose one plan and work out how you will measure the effectiveness of the project.
- Finally, try to put your plan into action. Use an action research pattern of:



Learning through action: a step-by-step approach

1. Encounter
2. The first draft



Adapted from: Umthamo 39, University of Fort Hare Distance Education Project

3. Representing what has been researched
4. Agreeing a plan
5. Designing a plan of action
6. Taking action
7. Assessing outcomes and reporting

Arts: Using artefacts to explore the past

- 1 Being a history detective
- 2 Traditional local customs
- 3 Developing an understanding about artefacts

Key Question for the teacher:

How can you use artefacts and other evidence to explore local and national history?

Keywords: artefacts; evidence; group working; local history; environment; questioning

Learning Outcomes for the Teacher

By the end of this section, you will have:

- Used artefacts to help students raise questions about and understand the past;
- Developed lessons that allow students to think about their national history in relation to their own identities;
- Involved local experts and the environment in your lessons to stimulate students interest in local history

Overview

Understanding who you are and having good self-esteem is enhanced if you have a strong sense of your identity and can see your place in the bigger pattern of life. Studying what happened in the past can contribute to this. Through the activities in this section, you will encourage your students to think about history as it relates to them. Using group work, inviting visitors into the classroom and using practical hands-on activities to investigate artefacts will allow your students to share ideas and develop their historical skills.

Handling artefacts or looking at pictures of them provides a means for you to draw attention to both the factual aspects of history and the interpretation involved. Something that will help you in this work is collecting resources as and when you can. Often it is possible to find old utensils and artefacts from the home and in markets.

1 Being a history detective

This part will help you to plan tasks for your students to think about how things that we use in our everyday lives have changed over time. For example, by looking at what we use for cooking now and what we used in the past, we can begin to think about how people used to live. We can compare utensils and, from this, speculate about what it would have been like to live in the past and use such artefacts. This will stimulate students' thinking about themselves and their place in the local community and its history.

Teaching Example 1

Mr Ndomba, a Standard 5 history teacher in Mbinga township, Tanzania, has decided to use artefacts used in farming in his lesson to stimulate students' interest and encourage them to think historically.

He organises the class into groups, giving each group an actual artefact or a picture of one. He asks the groups to look closely at their object or picture and to write as much as they can about it by just looking at it. His students do well, as they like discussion, and it is clear to Mr Ndomba that they are interested and enjoying speculating about their artefacts.

After a few minutes, he asks each group to swap its picture or artefact with that of the next group and do the same exercise again. When they finish, he asks the two groups to join and share their views of the two pictures or artefacts. What do they think the artefacts are? What are they made of? What are they used for? How are they made? They agree on five key points to write about each artefact with one group doing one and the other group the second. Mr Ndomba puts the artefacts on the table with their five key points and makes a display for all to look at for a few days.

At the end of the week, he asks each group to write what they are certain they can say about the object on one side of a piece of paper and on the other side they write things they are not sure about, including any questions. For him, it is not so important that there is agreement on what the object is, but that there is lively, well-argued debate on what it might be used for and how old it might be.

Activity 1

Read the information provided below before you start.

Using artefacts in the classroom

The opportunity to handle actual artefacts is a unique experience. For some reason that no one is quite sure of, the act of touching an object, which obviously has its own history and story, inspires everyone. Students will inevitably be curious about the artefacts and this will naturally lead to good discussion.

What is the purpose of an artefact handling session?

Artefact handling sessions can be used to:

- motivate students at the start of a new topic;

- attract and hold the attention of students;
- deepen their understanding of a topic they are studying;
- lead to an in-depth study within a broader unit of work;
- act as a bridge between several different subjects or units of study;
- assess students' developing understanding at the end of a lesson.

What questions should I ask during an artefact handling session?

The type of question you ask will depend on what you are using the artefacts for. The questions below should help you get the most out of using the artefacts.

- Questions about the physical characteristics of an object
- Questions about the design and construction of an object
- Questions about the importance and value of an object
- Questions about the function of an object

Teaching with objects – some approaches

Many of the approaches detailed below can also be used when interrogating documents, prints and paintings with students.

Visual stimulus

Objects can be used to stimulate discussion at the beginning of a lesson. The same objects can be used to recap what students have learned and to see if any of their ideas and understandings have changed in the course of the lesson.

Historical inquiry

A selection of objects can be used by students for an exercise in historical inquiry – obtaining information from sources. Allow time for students to look at the object carefully before exploring some of the following questions:

- What is it made of?
- What tools or techniques were needed to make it?
- Who might have made it?
- Did making it require specialist skills?
- Is it decorated? How?
- Who might have used it?
- What was it used for?
- Did it have a practical function, or was it used in other ways?
- How large or heavy is it?
- Is it a valuable or rare object?

Drawing comparisons and relating objects to each other

Use two objects or images side by side and ask students to draw comparisons, exploring the similarities and differences. Use groups of objects and talk about the relationships between them.

Representations and interpretation

Some artefacts may show evidence of a particular viewpoint or bias. Who created the object and for what purpose? Is it an item of propaganda? Does it tell the whole story? What doesn't it tell?

Other activities using objects include

Prediction activities – show students an object and ask them to work out which period of history it relates to.

Teaching Example – students can use a single object or group of objects to build up a Teaching Example, for example, life in West Africa before the slave trade.

Groupings – students can group objects into sets that have particular things in common (such as the materials they are made from, the country they originated from, how they were used). Students can consider how to curate a museum display by grouping objects in different ways.

Caption or label writing – students can write their own captions or exhibition labels, either from a modern viewpoint or as if they were writing at the time the object was made.

Emotional intelligence – students can list adjectives that describe how they feel about an object, demonstrating empathy as well as understanding.

Creative responses – students can respond to an object through creative writing, drama or art.

Which subjects can benefit from using artefacts?

Learning from objects is beneficial to subjects across the curriculum:

- History: sense of chronology, empathy and key skills.
- Science: properties of materials, observation, comparing, classification and questioning skills.
- English: asking and answering questions, contextual materials.
- Drama: stimulus materials, developing empathy.
- Art and Design: stimulus materials, contextual materials, still-life drawing..
- Ask your class to bring in any traditional objects that they have at home. Tell them that you want the object to be as old as possible, perhaps used by their grandparents or before. But remind them they have to look after it carefully so it is not damaged. They should avoid bringing anything very valuable. Have a table ready to display them on when the students bring them in the next day.
- Explain to your students that they are going to be like detectives and piece together as much information and evidence as they can about their objects.
- Ask them, in pairs, to look at all the artefacts and try to name each one and make a list of them in their books. Just by looking and holding, ask them to note what they think each is made of, how it is made and what it might be used for. You could devise a sheet for them to use.

As a whole class, look at each artefact in turn and discuss the different ideas. Agree which idea is most popular and ask the person who brought the object in what they know about it. Or send them home with some questions to ask and bring answers back to share with the class the next day.

2 Traditional local customs

One of the purposes of teaching history to your students is to allow them to understand and discover their own and their community's identity. As a social studies teacher, even of primary school children, you should always be looking for interesting ways of helping students understand this past, their history. Considering how local customs, everyday tasks and the objects used for them have changed helps build this identity.

Teaching Example 2

Mrs Noamasi has asked two older members of the local community to come to class in their traditional dress and talk about what has changed about traditional dress since they were young.

Before the visit, Mrs Noamasi reads the additional resource on Using the community/environment as a resource. - and, with her class, prepares for the visit. Once the date and time have been agreed, the students devise some questions to ask the visitors about what has changed over time.

On the day of the visit, the classroom is organised and the welcome party goes to meet the visitors. The class is excited but shy with the visitors. However, the visitors are so pleased to come and talk that everyone soon relaxes and there is much discussion about the dress they are wearing and the importance of each piece. The visitors also brought some traditional clothes that belonged to their parents for the children to see.

After the visitors have left, Mrs Noamasi asks her students what they had learned that they did not know before, and she is surprised and pleased by what they remembered and liked about the event.

Activity 2

This activity aims to put in place a frame that you, as a teacher, can use to conduct a classroom discussion about any aspect of social studies or history. In this case, we are looking at local artefacts and their traditional use.

- Arrange for your class to visit a local craftsman or ask them to come to school to talk with your students about their craft now and how it used to be.
- Before the visit, you will need to organise the date and time and what you want to talk about, so the visitor can prepare what to bring.
- Next, with your class, decide what kinds of things they want to know and what questions they would like to ask about the artefacts that the visitor might show them or they might see on their visit. Maybe the visitor could demonstrate their craft for the class.
- On the day, tell your class to enjoy the visit and to be respectful to the adults.
- In the next lesson, discuss their findings and ask students, in groups of four, to choose one item, draw it and write what they can about it from memory and the notes they took.

- Ask your students to put their work on the wall for all to read and see.

You may be able to organise a craft lesson with the visitor, so your students can try the particular crafts.

3 Developing an understanding about artefacts

History is always about balancing subjective claims (peoples' personal accounts and opinions) against objective (independent) evidence. When exploring artefacts, rather than oral or written evidence, the same balancing applies. There are definite things that can be said about a pot for example, i.e. its shape, what it is made of etc. Something like 'what it was used for' can only be speculation, based on what we use such pots for now. By looking at the pot carefully, consulting old drawings and paintings and talking to others, we can build up a more certain picture of how it was used.

This part explores ways of helping students question their thinking and understanding about artefacts

Teaching Example 3

Mrs Minka decides to use a book of letters of how children remember the events of the Yaa Asantewaa War against the British in 1979. She plans to use the book *A Story from Ghana: A History for Primary Schools* as the text for the lesson. She chooses to read to the class the speech by Nana Yaa Asantewaa that galvanised the men of Asante to go to war. After studying these accounts carefully, Mrs Minka realises that they are based on subjective evidence, what people say and think what happened. She thinks that it would be a good idea to compare them to more objective historical evidence in the lesson. Therefore, Mrs Minka gathers a range of documents and books written by historians that examine the events leading to the war which give an objective account of it.. She makes a summary of the key ideas to use in class. The students will need to consider what these two terms mean when studying an historical event..

First, she asks each group to read the chosen paragraphs from *A History from Ghana: A History for Primary Schools* and then asks them to look at her chart of key events and thoughts by respected historians. Do they see any similarities or differences in these accounts of the same event? They discuss whether the subjective accounts in the book can be supported by the objective historical evidence put forward by historians. They agree that both give insights. The book is people's perceptions and can vary according to their beliefs, but the chart just has facts.

At the end, Mrs Minka summarises for her class the difference between subjective and objective evidence when looking at the past.

Activity 3

- Ask your class to bring in any old items they have in their homes, such as traditional dress, old cooking utensils, woodwork, masks, bead and craftwork, pots etc.
- Remember that for your students things that are only 20 or 30 years old will seem very old. The important part of the exercise is for them to gather evidence about the artefact and, by looking at lots of old objects, to develop some idea of how to make sense of life in the past. If you can, make sure you have also collected some items, so that you can give to those who are unable to bring in anything.
- Ask your students, in pairs, to produce a sheet like the one below to display with the artefact.
- When the display is complete, ask other classes to visit your exhibition. You could even ask parents and the local community to come to see the exhibits. You may find out more from your visitors about some of your artefacts.

Student's name: _____

My artefact is a:

This artefact is made from:

This artefact was used for:

This is how this artefact was used:

This is how old the artefact might be:

Life Skills: Ways to promote spiritual well-being

- 1 Feeling safe
- 2 Being aware of students' personalities
- 3 Planning a celebration

Key Question for the teacher:

How can you promote spiritual well-being in your classroom?

Keywords: positive attitudes; storytelling; whole-school activities; spiritual well-being

Learning Outcomes for the Teacher

By the end of this section, you will have:

- Explored ways to promote positive attitudes in the classroom;
- Used storytelling and discussion to help students feel safe and secure;
- Identified individual behaviour to support students learning;
- Planned activities to help celebrate life with the whole class and school

Overview

Developing spiritual well-being in your students means that they can be happy and content in their daily lives, and can be at peace with themselves and others. Spiritual well-being covers all aspects of the students' individual lives, including physical and emotional aspects.

In this section, we look at some factors related to spiritual well-being and how to plan activities that will enhance this. You need to be aware of what upsets or reassures your students, and address these in your lessons. We suggest storytelling and whole-school activities for building spiritual well-being.

Your behaviour in school can have a big impact, both positive and negative, on students' behaviour and motivation to learn. So, too, can the ways students interact with each other.

We have already discussed some ways you can encourage your students to consider each other's feelings. Here, we talk more about helping them feel safe and more secure, because when they do, they will learn better.

1 Feeling safe

Everyone strives to be safe and secure. In many places, people build houses with strong walls, windows and doors so that they feel safe inside their property. Other people put guards on their houses and cars. And others even walk around with weapons for security purposes.

But these things only protect us physically. As we have seen, people feel emotionally safe when they are surrounded by people they trust. The best way to do this is to develop a supportive network of friends and partners.

At school, when students feel unsafe, insecure or worried, they cannot learn effectively.

Teaching Example 1

One day, Thuku, a Standard III teacher in Tanzania, found a worried little boy sitting among the other students and crying. The students were comforting him and asking what was the matter, using the kind of language they had learned for discussing feelings.

After some time, the boy explained that he was walking to school when three older boys with sticks had run after him shouting that they were going to beat him and take his bag and shoes. He ran away to hide in the school.

With the help of the other students, Thuku calmed the boy down by explaining how he was safe now. They told him that he was at school now, and the boys would not come into the school. Also, his teacher was with him, and the teacher would stop any boys from troubling him. He was surrounded by his friends, and they would protect him.

After school, his friends walked home with him and talked with his family and neighbours about what had happened.

The next day, Thuku decided to have another session with his students to discuss feelings of safety and security and how to support each other.

Activity 1

Organise a discussion on feeling safe and secure. Start by telling a story about the boy in the Teaching Example.

- Ask the students, in small groups, to describe situations at home and at school when they feel a) safe and secure, and b) unsafe.
- With the whole class, identify some general points about when we feel safe and when we don't. List these on the board.
- Ask the groups to discuss what they could do to make everyone feel safe and secure in the classroom and the playground.

Finally, draw up a list of behaviours that make people feel safe in the classroom and the playground and display it on the wall.

2 Being aware of students' personalities

What we like and dislike can affect how we learn. Activities that we like and interest us provide motivation, whereas activities we dislike can prevent learning.

Students' feelings and personalities have a big effect on how they respond to different activities. Some children are very shy and will not speak in front of others, whereas some love performing. Some students like working alone, others are better in a group. Some like to learn by reading, others by talking.

You need to find out what types of activities your students like and dislike to help you plan your lessons better. This will fulfil their spiritual well-being, which in turn will help them to learn better.

Teaching Example 2

Having discussed feeling safe with his students, Mr Adampthey wrote down some different approaches to incorporate into his lessons:

- Most children enjoyed playing with each other. Therefore, group games should appear in lessons regularly.
- Some children liked quiet periods. Therefore, he decided to make time for solitary activities such as reading, writing and drawing.
- All children liked singing and music. Therefore, he decided he could use songs to motivate them and make them happy.
- No child liked to feel scared. Therefore, he should be careful about being angry with them in class. He must also watch out for over-assertive or possibly bullying behaviour from the stronger personalities in the class.

Mr Adampthey thought about the individual students in his class and watched them carefully as they worked. He noticed how each reacted to different activities.

He used this information to plan lessons that included both solitary and sharing activities. He organised groups so that:

- nobody was isolated;
- there was no conflict of personalities;
- everybody was able to contribute;
- everybody enjoyed working with each other.

Activity 2

Think about the different personalities of students in your class and how they respond to the way you teach. Ask yourself:

- Which students always answer questions?
- Which students don't speak in class?

- How would you describe their personalities?
- Which students work well in a group?
- Who works well on their own?
- Which students behave badly when in a group?
- Who has difficulties working on their own?
- Now think about the activities you use:
- Which are the most popular activities?
- Which are the least popular activities?
- Which activities help the children learn best?

Match the students to the types of activities that best suit them.

How could you organise the different activities so each student would benefit?

Plan a lesson using these ideas. Carry out this lesson and then think:

- Were your ideas correct?
- How did the students respond to the lesson?

What would you change next time?

Read the information about celebrations overleaf.

Celebrations

Spiritual well-being means being happy with your everyday life. This covers a wide range of things, including:

- having good health;
- being emotionally supported;
- having good relations with those around you;
- being able to enjoy your daily activities, including study, work and play.

One way to help develop this is to identify and celebrate those events in life that make us happy, for example, special occasions like religious festivals, birthdays and special holidays.

Part of the idea behind these celebrations is to spend time with family and friends. During these celebrations, we enjoy their company and feel secure and happy. Celebrations often have particular foods, music, games and gifts that link to the celebration.

It is possible to celebrate life in a similar way at school. The school is like a community, and has many things that everybody enjoys doing together. Special days at school could tie in with, for example:

- Religious festivals like Eid and Christmas;
- National Independence Day;
- World Environment Day;
- World Literacy Day;
- Children's Day;
- Open Day;

- Speech and Prize Giving Day;
- Workers' Day;
- World Communication Day;
- World AIDS Day.

What sorts of activities could you plan to help celebrate?

When you provide positive support to your students, you help them celebrate their achievements. This can include:

- recognition of their success and achievements;
- recognition of their skills and talents.

Students respond well to positive support. When you celebrate their achievements you provide them with:

- encouragement;
 - motivation to achieve more;
 - improved self-esteem and confidence.
-

3 Planning a celebration

A celebration does not have to be a big event. Just saying 'Well done!' to a student is a small celebration and provides the positive support described above.

You can also celebrate as a class or school.

This part looks at ways to help celebrate skills and talents. These might not be academic skills and talents but things that the students are very good at or enjoy doing outside of school.

In celebrating these, you are showing that the school:

- recognises the range of abilities that your students have;
- supports the students in other aspects of their lives.

This will encourage your students to feel that school is a place where they are admired and respected in many different ways.

Teaching Example 3

Mrs Quartey had noticed that, during break time, many of the children played games that involved singing and dancing. She thought she could use this in her teaching. She asked the head teacher if her class could prepare a performance for assembly. The students were very excited. To plan, she used the following steps:

- She discussed with the class what they wanted the performance to be about.

- In groups, they discussed what different things they would include in the performance in the 15 minutes allocated.
- As a class, they chose to do an assembly about sharing and prepared a presentation, a short play and a song and dance. It was important to choose things that involved as many students as possible.
- Some children did not want to perform but Mrs Quartey was able to involve them in making costumes or acting as prompts.
- As they prepared their activities, Mrs Quartey checked that everybody was clear about their part. Individuals didn't have to speak in public unless they wanted to.

They performed to the whole school. It was very colourful and everybody liked it. The head teacher decided to make this a regular event, with classes taking turns to perform for the school or demonstrate what they had learned. It was a good way to develop students' confidence and self-esteem.

You might find the additional resource useful **on Using role play/dialogue/drama in the classroom.**

Activity 3

To help your students plan a celebration you need to explore various aspects with them first.

- Ask them, in groups, to name the different occasions they celebrate. Ask them to list different celebration activities. See Resource 2: Ghanaian celebrations for some ideas or to discuss further how they celebrate these events.
- Together with the students, identify an occasion to celebrate at school.
- Ask them to plan for the occasion – activities, plays, songs etc. Make sure everyone is involved in some way, even if they are not actually performing. Help them to rehearse.
- When the class is ready, perform the celebration for another class or the whole school. You could invite parents and the local community.
- The next day, ask the students to write a description of everything they did to prepare for the celebration. Ask them to identify what new skills they learned. Ask them what they would like to celebrate next.

Was it successful?

How do you know this?

How did the students respond?

<http://www.tessafrica.net>



© This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike
3.0 License