


Introducing

**CLE**

CENTRE FOR LEARNING  
LEADERSHIP AND EXCELLENCE

A close-up portrait of a woman with dark, curly hair and a bindi on her forehead, smiling slightly. She is wearing a gold earring and a necklace.

## Decoding NEP 2020 and online learning with Minakshi Balkrishna

Challenges in designing  
tools for 'Assessment  
for Learning'

The concept of  
'Passive Income'

Learner, parent &  
teacher - the academic  
tripartite

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QR reader available on the App Store, Play Store and  
Windows Store. Wi-Fi/Mobile data will be required.

# Why are competitions and contests important for teachers?

■ **RASHMI MARIAN FURTADO**  
Senior Editor, TeacherTirbe.world

Why don't human beings engage in the same activity day in and day out for a considerable time in their life? Why do we always look for variety? Why is it important for us to have accomplished myriad tasks and engage ourselves in numerous activities? There are several answers to these questions and we will discuss a few here.



**Activating the brain** – When we perform the same activity on a daily basis, we tend to get stuck in a certain pattern. This can condition our brain in a manner that may restrict our thought process. It is important to engage ourselves in activities that stimulate our brain in a manner that helps us break the monotony.

**Boredom and monotony** – It is important for us to ensure that boredom and monotony doesn't set in. Today, we have electronic equipment that perform multiple tasks. Our equipment has been upgraded, why shouldn't we? Shouldn't we humans ensure we participate in a variety of activities to ensure we stay relevant?

**Creating new experiences** – Experiences teach us a lot. The only way to go through this is to try something new occasionally, if not all the time. Remember new experiences can also provide us with the opportunity to make new friends.

**Doing what we preach** – We educators always tell our students the importance of recalling facts on their own and not depending on the internet. We also believe in application of knowledge rather than just theory. Is it not fair that we follow the same advice that we give our students and take part in contests like quizzes, paper presentations, etc., that improve our recall, application and thinking skills?

**Evolving as lifelong learners** – We educators try our best to imbibe the quality of being a lifelong learner in our students. We should do the same and expose ourselves to contests that will provide us with learning opportunities.

**When students see their teachers are a lot like them, taking part in contests, they relate better and open-up to them more willingly than otherwise.**

**Fun is serious!** – We educators always tell our children to 'Enjoy' or 'Have Fun'. Do we apply that to ourselves?




As adults we usually have a set pattern to the way we live and the way we handle our profession. It's important to move out of our comfort zones from time-to-time. The outcome of contests like quizzes may come to you as a surprise. TeacherTribe.world is hosting season 2 of the world teachers' quiz, Qnow it All this year. The stories that we heard from the participating teachers of season 1 were amazing. Stepping outside of their comfort zone was the biggest challenge that most of them had to overcome and the teachers' quiz did just that, opening the door for them to exciting new experiences.

Being part of a contest, that saw participants from 12 countries of the world and being able to qualify to multiple levels, boosted the confidence of the teachers in a manner they could not explain. Teachers often share that such contests help them connect with their students in a new way. When students see their teachers are a lot like them, taking part in such contests, they relate better and open-up to them more willingly than otherwise. Let us do everything possible to participate in events and contests that help us broaden our horizons, learn new things, and open ourselves to new experiences.

Happiness is not just for modern curricula; it is for us teachers too. This Teachers' Day let us all pledge to celebrate ourselves. Here's wishing all of you a Happy Teachers' Day!

Yours in celebration,



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*A natural writer, teacher and a passionate content creator, Rashmi has authored the Cu and Rio series and created the Keystones program on Values Education from Greycaps Knowledge Tribe. She is one of the founders of TeacherTribe.world. She is a sought after speaker at educational conferences, facilitator programs and for motivational talks to students at schools across India. She holds a Master's Degree from the prestigious NIT Suratkal where she also taught before joining Greycaps Knowledge Tribe. Rashmi is also a popular quiz host for schools, colleges and large corporate audiences. She has co-hosted the Tata Crucible quiz, Canara Bank National School Quiz and Travel Quest by Thomas Cook.*

# Challenges in designing tools for 'Assessment for Learning'

## ■ G. BALASUBRAMANIAN

*G. Balasubramanian is a doyen of school education in India. He has held several positions of leadership at CBSE, including Director Academics. He was the brain behind the introduction of several innovations at CBSE, which included frontline curriculum, communicative approach to language teaching, Information Technology, alternatives to homework, etc. He is also an author, poet and a sought-after speaker at educational conferences world over. This article has been taken from G. Balasubramanian's official website [balaspeaks.in](http://balaspeaks.in)*



The objectives of the assessment for learning are largely different from those intended for other contexts of learning. Before engaging into the design of the appropriate and contextual tools, the teachers need to keep in mind a few of the following facts:

01. According to neuro-cognitive psychologists, learning is all about formation of neural networks in the brain.
02. These neural networks are formed and deformed and re-engineered on a continuous basis during learning.
03. The strength of such neural networks (learning) depends on the quality of learning impacted by several influencers.

### IMPACT PREVIEW

- » Important facts on Assessment for Learning
- » Key factors in designing assessment tools
- » Tools of assessment



04. The quality of the retention of learning and its extent by the learner is subject to several extraneous and personal influences.
05. Learning leads to short-term or long-term memory depending on its need, its emotional content, relevance and utility for the learner. Oftentimes, learning could also become volatile memories.
06. Stressful learning has low retention levels in the brain.
07. Learning is impacted by learning preferences of the individual learner and the social context in which one is placed.
08. The process and style of learning for several disciplines of learning might vary from learner to learner.
09. Informal learning could have a positive or negative impact on the formal learning content and its outcome.
10. The learnability of the learner may vary from one to the other; and also, in different contexts and the learning environment for a specific learner.


**The instruments of assessment should be wide-ranging to cover the different styles of learning to let the learners make meaningful, responsible and relevant responses.**

## What are the key factors to be kept in mind in designing the assessment tools?

01. The tools used should be both formal and informal to facilitate the assessment of the entire universe of learning.
02. The tools should cover both the immediate content as well as its proximate influencers so that the extent of learning could be credibly assessed.
03. The tools should cover both objective and subjective elements to assess both the horizontal and the vertical parameters of growth or inadequacy in a holistic learning environment.



- [illegible]

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- A horizontal bar composed of several colored segments: pink, yellow, purple, blue, orange, red, light blue, green, and grey.
08. The language, the syntax, the triggers seeking responses should always solicit one and only response, to avoid overlap of contents, meanings and skills, thereby leading to conflicts of perceptions in assessment. Absence of clarity in tools might lead to multiplicity of perceptions in designing responses or incorrect responses.
  09. The tools could be interactive and facilitate in making multiple observations of the learning of a learner both immediately and over a period of time.
  10. The design of the tools of assessment should not have a negative intent either through language or difficult level to project the vastness of a learning gap, but should have a positive reinforcement to facilitate the bridging of learning gaps through diagnosis.

## Tools of Assessment: Formal tools of Assessment

**The challenges among the teachers in the design of the assessment tools include:**

01. The formal tools for assessment get already pre-fixed in their mind as a pattern.
02. Teachers tend to play with such assessment tools with which they have a higher psychological comfort level.
03. The teachers enjoy in engaging most tools in a repetitive manner to avoid further design challenges.
04. The workload pertaining to newer formats is demanding and hence there is a tendency to procrastinate engagement with such challenges.
05. The current professional engagements do not give adequate time and energy to engage into newer creative models.

All these and more act as inhibitors to purposeful designs for assessment for learning. Nevertheless, it is important to cross all these barriers to transform learning so that the system moves with ease to education 4.0. ■

# Decoding NEP 2020 and online learning

**with Minakshi Balkrishna**

Minakshi Balkrishna has a teaching and administrative experience for over 30 years. She has vast experience in teaching in international schools in India and abroad and has implemented the International Baccalaureate PYP programme and, conducted the Evaluation and self-study for the school she was working with. She has conducted several workshops to initiate the school teachers to orient in the mode of International curriculum, methodology and pedagogy. Her last tenure was from an international school as Executive Director.



She has attended workshops at Harvard Graduate School of Education for the future of learning, programme. She has attended several workshops to get insights of teaching and learning and trickled it into her school domain.

Her last stint was at Centre of Environment Education (CEE) as Program Director, Primary and Pre-Primary Schools, where she implemented a nature-based program for 3–6-year-olds.

Minakshi Balakrishna's passion in education has helped many a start up like wonder boxx, a science-based DIY kit, to help in concept and program. She is now an education consultant for several schools and is also on the advisory committee and on the board of some schools in Ahmedabad. She is an avid reader and likes books on education and management. This passion has delved into research in this field. She is pursuing her PhD in education and management from the Academy of Human Resource, Ahmedabad.

## 1. What or who inspired you to get into the teaching field?

In 1988, I started teaching in a school called Chettinad Vidyashram, Chennai. Dr. Meena Muthiah, the owner of Chettinad Vidyashram, asked me if I had applied for my B.Ed degree. I was a postgraduate in Economics from Stella Maris College, Chennai. I was not sure whether I wanted to be a school teacher, I had plans of getting into the corporate world then. I was also not sure if I could handle a bunch of kids in class. The two kids I had were a handful. When I communicated this to her, she said she had already filled and submitted my B.Ed application. Later I completed my degree in Education, this is how I began my teaching career.

The school was new with progressive ideas in teaching, and I was given the freedom to teach. The school was in a palace and some rooms were converted to classrooms and I was part of all of that. I was very enthusiastic to create and design lessons for children which were happy, fun and play-based. At that time, I did not know any of the educational terminologies, I wanted children to be engaged and enjoy their learning and saw how they responded. I was intrinsically interested in being with children. We had projects for children, and they had a great learning experience. My journey as a teacher had taken its first step.

I have worked in a lot of places. I taught in Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and then in Sao Paulo in Brazil. It was in Brazil that I got the taste of the International Baccalaureate programme (IB). This IB program kindled my curiosity and helped me understand what pedagogy looks like. Though I had completed my B.Ed., the IB programme helped me look at the aspect of education in a different way. It was so rich and helped children feel comfortable in their learning spaces giving varied learning opportunities. The best part was what the mission statement and this has stayed with me. A part of it was 'people with their differences can also be right'. This is profound.

## 2. Please share your thought on how teaching and education has changed to what it has become today.

The role of a teacher has changed a lot over time. Now with NEP 2020 being introduced, it will change further. A few years ago, education was textbook based and more chalk and talk. Some progressive schools did have

different methods of teaching and had art exhibitions, science fairs and literary weeks and so on. But at the end of the day, in most schools what a teacher asked in class and what the students knew was largely based on what was at the end of the chapter in the textbook.

Apart from the knowledge a teacher had in terms of the subject and proficiency, teachers depended on the textbook.

It was largely about reading the textbook and making the children understand, and thereby completing the lessons by the way of Q&A and examinations. A lot of this happened by rote. Children were never asked 'what they know', instead they were asked 'what they don't know'. Questions were usually knowledge-based – from memory and recall. Teachers had little exposure about educational pedagogy and lesson plans were more of what was in the textbooks. There was less methodology on how the lesson will take place.

**With the NEP 2020 there is a conscious movement to make a change, this transition has helped most schools to become progressive in pedagogy.**

Later, we moved to technology developed lessons where digital presence was seen in the classroom. Smart boards were introduced. Teachers could use these in class and show a lot of pictures, videos and drawings as educational aids. This too had some drawbacks. It became a tool to help the teacher reproduce things on the board. Here again, we were not helping the students to promote 'thinking'. Schools did not teach 'how to think'. What we saw, we perceived. What we perceived, we made conclusion based on it. Today, this has evolved to online teaching, due to the pandemic.

Now with the NEP 2020 there is a conscious movement to make a change, this transition has helped most schools to become progressive in pedagogy. There is emphasis on approaches in teaching and learning, emphasis on learning excellence, science and STEM orientation, environment awareness, the emphasis on SDG goals and global citizenship – connecting the local and the global. Children need real life experiences to connect their learning to construct their own meaning.

### **3. How do you think the pandemic has changed the way we look at classrooms and learning?**

The pandemic has completely changed the way teachers look at

teaching and how to engage children at home. The teacher is virtual, and the child is sitting at home and taking lessons. How to make the lessons engaging is the biggest challenge.

There have been multiple challenges for teachers. Some of the teachers have been stressed and some have had very uncomfortable moments. Some teachers were not very tech savvy, some did not even have laptops or computers at home. Things changed overnight, where teachers had to become tech savvy, had to prepare presentations and the real now became all too virtual.

Now the emphasis was how to prepare for an online classroom- preparing for an online class is different from preparing for a physical classroom. If you ask me, lesson planning is a very important part of a teachers' profession. To be creative, innovative, to bring a scientific temperament, language skills and vocabulary of a particular subject is very crucial. The emotional quotient is crucial in a class and in an online class,

it becomes difficult to make that connect. A lot of emphasis needs to be provided for communication skills, reading, writing, speaking and presenting skills. How to incorporate thinking skills, social skills, research skills, self-management skills become a challenge for the teachers. How to make an online lesson relevant, challenging and engaging is a paramount task for them. A click of a button, the world is a village. Living in a global village, teachers need to make things local and at the same time global. In a pandemic situation this can be extremely tough to provide the creative expressions in lessons.

**Online classrooms should be made as real as possible and should bring in multidimensional thinking which has three parts to it – critical thinking, creative thinking and 'caring' thinking.**

#### **4. Most of the teaching methods used by teachers, are meant for physical classrooms. How do you think teachers can effectively move their lesson plans to suit the online environment?**

First thing is to make an online lesson plan. I would start with how to make children think. We should move to research methods in classrooms. We can

start with hypothesis which will generate a lot of questions. The generation of questions will lead to inquiry-based learning. It will lead to the basic principle of epistemology which speaks of how we should investigate the world and then ontology, on how we view the world. So, in an online class it is important to bring about critical thinking and look at problem solving in a big way. We need to create lessons which will become real – why am I learning trigonometry? Why am I learning Geography? Where will I use it? Can I understand supply and demand with real examples?

Teachers now should look at metacognition, ‘thinking about thinking’, understanding the effective domain, the cognitive domain and the psychomotor domain. Online classrooms should be made as real as possible and should bring in multidimensional thinking which has three parts to it – critical thinking, creative thinking and ‘caring’ thinking.

**Start the lessons with a lot of questions – what is it that you know already and what is it that you want to know, and then proceed with the lessons.**

The classes are already auditory and visual. My suggestion is to make the classrooms kinaesthetic as well. If you are speaking of a concept in class today, tell the children to prepare on it and be ready. Engage them with some kind of an exercise. Otherwise, there will be a disconnect in an online medium where the teacher is saying something and the child is doing something else, oblivious of what the teacher is saying.

Another important thing is to reduce using animations! Children are already seeing so much of it. Show them real pictures, show the real stuff, do experiments with them. Start with an inquiry process with them where the children have to ask a lot of questions. Start the lessons with a lot of questions – what is it that you know already and what is it that you want to know, and then proceed with the lessons. This brings clarity in the learning objective and outcomes...

To continue reading the complete interview, log on to [teachertribe.world](https://teachertribe.world) ■



# CLLE: Leading the Learning Revolution

“We cannot return to the world as it was before” - UNESCO

The global pandemic has shed a harsh light on the vulnerabilities and challenges of education today.

The pandemic has accelerated a tectonic shift in instructional delivery leading to an inevitable adoption of the online learning mode. The unprecedented

disruption has impacted every stakeholder from policymakers to students causing widespread ramifications to the learning community in general. The challenges that have been long prevalent in the educational space have become accentuated, in the wake of Covid-19. Inequalities, are now becoming a serious impediment to learning, resulting in a pronounced ‘learning loss’, especially amongst the less privileged.



**Undoubtedly, every educator is now compelled to introspect and bring innovative thinking to address the future of learning and the learners.**

The mandate of educators, is no doubts, to prepare learners for a future that demands greater specialisation in skills and in-depth knowledge that is constantly evolving. Teachers, increasingly have a very important role to play to alleviate the stress and uncertainty that shrouds the minds of our learners, and to bring the focus back to learning, that enables the development of creativity and innovation in their learners.

Enhancing teacher preparedness to achieve desirable levels of individual and collective efficacy, is hence paramount for every learning organization. Innovation in instructional design and delivery to promote deep learning and student wellbeing are critical ingredients for the future of learning. As educators therefore, the need to pursue excellence in learning is

paramount. Encouraging the teacher fraternity to engage in continuous learning and improvement is vital to both the success and the continued relevance of institutions of learning.

The 'National Education Policy' (NEP), places special emphasis to adopting a 'Student Centric Approach' to learning, which pivots on a systemic overhaul of teacher education in our country. The tenets of this visionary document, aims to equip teachers with essential 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills that are in alignment with SDG, while promoting learning that is multidisciplinary and contextual. Its emphasis on building a profound knowledge of our nation and its ethos, is a commendable expectation, especially when we desire holistic development of our learners.

Teacher Education, both pre-service & in-service, has been a highlight of the policy. Every teacher is expected to undertake a minimum of 50 hours of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) as a mandatory requirement of the Policy. The importance accorded to teacher training is clearly evident, establishing the need for quality teacher engagement and learning opportunities.

Centre for Learning, Leadership and Excellence (CLLE), is a passionate collective of educators from various prestigious institutions like Harvard, UWA, etc., facilitating the development of innovative practices that foster capacity and community building in educators.

Through a collaborative framework that integrates continuous and relevant educational research, leveraging technology to impact and influence the future of learning, we promote a culture that values effective teaching and meaningful learning with a commitment to student well-being and success. CLLE also partners with leaders in education in our quest to nurture the growth and development of world class teachers. ■

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# Learner, parent & teacher the academic tripartite

■ **Abhilasha Pandey, PGT BIOLOGY**  
Kendriya Vidyalaya, INS Shivaji, Pune

*Abhilasha Pandey is an educationist and a teacher for the past 14 years. She has been working with Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) since 2014. Currently, Abhilasha is posted at KV, INS Shivaji, Lonavala, Pune.*

*An avid reader, Abhilasha is interested in educational psychology, pedagogy and neuroscientific research pertaining to teaching- learning.*



“He doesn’t bring his copies.”

“He can never sit still at home, how does he during class?” “Do not hesitate to scold him.”

“Please check his work at home.” “He never completes his homework.”  
“He never tells me anything about school”.

“She’s always studying at home, but never scores well in exam.”

And the most common in COVID times:

She said she needs the phone for studying because “everything is on phone”

Do these statements sound familiar? Some of these are from teachers to parents and some vice versa. How often have we teachers heard similar remarks of parents during parent -teacher or informal meetings? And how do we answer these? Are our remarks generalised or are they different for individual students? Do we find ourselves lost or do we have a guideline on

our interactions with parents? Is there a schedule, an agenda?

The answers to these questions may vary marginally, but irrespective, the aforementioned statements summarily describe our Parent Teacher's Meetings... all of them. And this is a major loophole in our academic culture. A void that is easiest to fill, warrants multifold improvements in student's academic performance as well as attitude towards the school system; and yet remains completely ignored. It is my aim in this article to address this parent teacher interaction and reframe the paradigm of this exchange from mere interaction to parent involvement, and then to parent engagement. Parents being the second most significant stakeholder (next to the student) in this equation; must be encouraged, motivated and guided to remain engaged in their ward's academic life.

As teachers, our aim is the evolvement of our students. The sole aspiration of parents is the accomplishments of their wards. I have often found it intriguing that the two key players in the child's life have so little interaction & negligible coordinated efforts to plan the learning curve of the child. In fact, these two partakers tend to observe the child from two entirely different vantage constantly speculating about the nature or extent of engagement of the other party.

Before proceeding further, how do we define the levels of interaction between the parent and the teacher? Level 1 is when the parent meets the teacher solely on two occasions- either on the result day, or in case of a severe misconduct. While prior is a hectic and chaotic event, the latter is perfervid affair. It is needless to say that these interactions address an unalloyed agenda.

Level 2 is parent involvement. Parents come to school periodically on a preassigned date and time. The agenda is open, and feedback based. While both agree on focal agenda, 'progress of the student', but both are

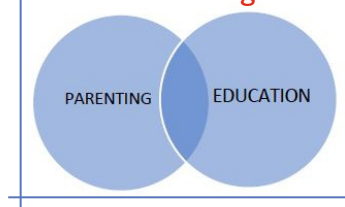
**The first step to parent engagement is the cognizance that parenting may be a crucial part of educational paradigm, but imparting education is much more than parenting.**

completely clueless on the benchmarks for the same. How do you assess the progress? Grades of assessments? Class Interactions? Peer Group Roles? You compare it to class average, or to previous performance? Probably all and none in particular. And therein we come across the statements at the article commencement. Effectiveness of this type of interaction can be chimerical at best.

What we need to implement is Level 3 or parent engagement. And this is what I intend to focus on in this article.

The first step to parent engagement is the cognizance that parenting may be a crucial part of educational paradigm, but imparting education is much more than parenting. These are two subsets of student growth with rare shared chunks.

## Student Learning Matrix



While each parent has the best interest of his/her child at heart, that interest usually needs a lot of guidance where academic growth is concerned. I reiterate that while educators are trained to guide and oversee academics, parents are not. In fact, most parents that I collaborate with, have either never received formal schooling or are too hustled to extract time for the child. Some may not even be able to make time for the parent teacher meets. Having said that, it is our responsibility as trained educators and architects of academics to help them manage time, optimize the involvement without compromising on its efficacy. Level three is for children of such parents, but not so exclusively.

## What is Parent Engagement?

Parent engagement is ensuring the following constructs.

01. Ensuring parent's physical presence in school building. This involves scheduling visits, organizing trips wherein the educator becomes a tourist guide, a curator; and makes sure parents are able to experience the daily presence of their child in each department/room the child visits during school hours. Physical association has a manifold impact, the two foremost being understanding the learning process of the child and creating

awareness of school's commitment, which further leads to appreciation & faith in the educator and the educational institution.

As significant is the physical presence of parent in school premises, at par are the difficulties associated with planning & execution of this event-

more so when it is done regularly and periodically. Besides scheduling a convenient time, there are issues related to coordination, language and cultural barriers and above all teacher preparedness to address perceptual differences. In order to address the issues of coordination, it is essential to build a determined and dedicated parent teacher association, with each member of the association committed to a singular target; to ensure learner

optimal performance. To address issues of cultural and language barriers, it is imperative that the educator has assimilated the essence of local culture. From a family point of view, entrusting an outsider with the growth and guardianship of their ward is more difficult than adjusting to poor academic performance. Building trust is a continuous and at times a strenuous process.... But isn't all of teaching?

**Research has shown that a regular weekly communication in form of brief, individualised messages to parents acts as an effective measure in ensuring parent engagement and support**

Finally bridging the perceptual gap. Striking a balance between your comprehensive understanding of every nuance of a field, and outcome-based perception of another individual, is an art. At every point of interaction, an educator must remember that the parent/family is a genuine and committed stakeholder in the learning equation. The stakes for the parent are much higher than either the learner or the institution. More the stakes, more are the insecurities and apprehensions, and with these is enthused every communication. It is crucial to address these insecurities and build a relationship of faith.

02. Construct 2 is determining the frequency of teacher-parent communications. Research has shown that a regular weekly communication in form of brief, individualised messages to parents acts as an effective measure in ensuring parent engagement and support. While these messages may not provide a detailed report of the student performance, they do determine the frequency and context of

dialogue between parent and child. It provides an insight to the riveted parent into a world where despite being absent, he/she is the cardinal element; thereby helping address the aforementioned insecurities.

03. The third and another critical construct is the content of the communication. The ideas, the substance and the lexicon. Foremost, the content should be constructive, action based. The object is not to provide a chronicle. Conveying what the child is doing right leads to complacency and has zero or even negative impact on student growth. An adverse remark highlighting poor performance antagonizes the parent. Though often overlooked in researches, a child has multidimensional impact on parent psyche. Child is an extension of parent, not just genetically but in every domain. An adverse remark is never against the child alone. It oppugns the parent, and the parenting, garnering resentment that finds justification in the insecurities and skepticism.

Then what should the content be? The content must be action based. Rather than phrasing the fizzle, focus should be on appropriate strategies. Areas of improvement should be precisely listed, trailed by a road map for identifying and overcoming the lacunae. To reiterate, parent's field of expertise is not teaching. Merely stating the flaw will lead to a consternation, but streamlining a course of action, will infuse a sense of hope and positivity. Academic performance is not a hill scaled; it is a gradual climb suffused with stalls and sprints.

Learning as we know it has undergone transformation in the year 2020. The school premises have become and will remain secondary learning centres. The plethora of virtual learning platforms are here to stay. As learners spend more time at home, the role of family is further augmented. Family engagement now is critical in achieving learning goals. Finally, individual situations require a microanalytic view. Technical advances in means of communication guarantee easy regular communication, but the content, mode and frequency should be carefully constructed. It is imperative to anticipate and plan for likely impediments.

'It takes a village to raise a child', says the African proverb. We may not have the luxury of village for our children, but we can definitely provide them a well-orchestrated society of parent-teacher, working harmoniously and meticulously in their interest. ■



# Education news

## MoU signed between Delhi Government and IB board for the government schools

The Delhi Government has signed a Memorandum of Undertaking (MoU) with the International Baccalaureate (IB) board for the students of Delhi Board of School Education (DBSE). This is to pave way for students from government schools to access educational facilities of the highest level.

The Chief Minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal, said that it is every parent's dream to send their children to IB-affiliated schools, and this MoU will help students in the Delhi government schools receive quality education. He also stated that there are two types of education systems in India. One for the rich and one for the poor. This affiliation with the IB board will help children receive international level of education facilities.



Earlier, Delhi did not have an educational board of its own and most schools were under the CBSE. Now, DBSE has been set up by the Delhi government as an independent board for the students studying in government schools.

This exercise will start with 30 government schools, where the government teachers will be trained by international experts. These experts will conduct verification and certification of schools, and decide about the assessment of children.

The education department of Delhi has also tied up with multiple knowledge partners for its state board, including the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

These will provide technical and managerial support to the board and the Schools of Specialised Excellence (SoSE).

According to the Tweet of Manish Sisodia, the Deputy CM of Delhi, IB board will be the knowledge partner for the DBSE to provide support in curriculum, assessment and teacher training.

SoSEs, under the Delhi Board of School Education, will cater to students of classes 9 to 12 who have aptitude and interest in specific domains of study including Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), humanities, performing and visual arts, and high-end 21st century skills.

## Names of the selected teachers for NAT 2021 announced

The Ministry of Education has announced the names of the selected teachers for the National Awards to Teachers (NAT) 2021.

Among the list of 44 selected teachers, nine are women. In the list, there are two each from Maharashtra, Assam, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

The award will be conferred to these shortlisted teachers on September 5<sup>th</sup>, by Ram Nath Kovind, the President of India.

The purpose of the National Awards to Teachers is to celebrate the unique contribution of some of the finest teachers in the country and to honour those teachers who, through their commitment and industry, have not only improved the quality of school education, but also enriched the lives of their students. ■



image credit: [nationalawardstoteachers.education.gov.in](https://nationalawardstoteachers.education.gov.in)

# Handwashing

## A little history

### ■ DR. VIVEK BALIGA

Cardiologist and Consultant Physician

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Hand washing has probably become the most talked about health hygiene practice in the last year. With COVID-19 affecting millions across the globe, hand washing as a primary prevention strategy has gained high importance.

The interesting fact is that hand hygiene is no new practice. We knew it all along. The medical faculty recognised it years ago. I even remember my mother asking me to wash my hands every time I touched anything dirty. During my junior doctor days, hand sanitisers were kept by the bedsides of patients to be used by health care staff between patients.

All this was done to prevent the spread of infection; infection that has already killed many globally, and I am not just talking about Coronavirus (see the list below of some disease that can be prevented by handwashing).

Here are some common diseases whose spread can be prevented by handwashing.

01. Cholera
02. Coronavirus (COVID-19)
03. Common cold (influenza virus)
04. Pink eye or Madras Eye (conjunctivitis)
05. Hepatitis A
06. Staphylococcal infection (MRSA)

07. E Coli O157:H7 infection (causes severe diarrhoea)
08. Streptococcal throat infections
09. Norovirus infections

## »» The history of handwashing

Handwashing as a sanitary practice dates to the 1800's, when mothers and infants in the Western world started dying at a staggering rate (nearly 4 out of 10) following delivery due to a condition called 'childbed fever' or 'puerperal fever'. It was caused by a bacterium called Group A and Group B Streptococcus, which exists even today. When this happened, people believed that disease was being brought into humans by invisible seeds or poisonous insects. However, the medical community had rejected this theory. The 'germ theory' remains the widely accepted one.

However, even prior to this, there existed other theories about how infection was entering humans. For many years, the 'spirits evil theory' suggested that all that happened with humans, good and bad, were related to evil spirits looming around us.

**If your hands are visibly dirty, it is better to use soap and water to wash off the dirt rather than a sanitiser, which only kills bacteria but will not take off the mud from your hands.**

Over the years, theories changed and slowly an understanding of how infection spread gained clarity. In the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, Anthonie Van Leeuwenhoek reported the presence of micro-organisms as a cause for disease.

But it was Ignaz Semmelweis, a physician, who was responsible for introducing and implementing hand washing as a method of infection prevention. It is the steps he introduced that was responsible for lowering the rate of puerperal fever. He was a part of the generation of doctors who actively participated not just in dispensing treatments, but also looking at medicine from a more scientific perspective through autopsies and microscopy.

Over the years, people began to revere doctors who participated in such

research and attributed their dirty clothing to all the work they did during their autopsies. People looked upon dirtier doctors as being better doctors. Doctors would move from the autopsy room or surgical theatre to the maternity ward for their rounds, without changing their clothes or cleaning their hands.

## »» The result?

Well, unsurprisingly, infections from the doctors clothing and hands spread from the corpses to mothers and infants. Doctors were the source of infection, said Ignaz Semmelweis; a theory that was rejected. In fact, a couple of years before Dr. Ignaz's theories were put forward, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, another physician, also published research in a journal regarding the role of doctors in the spread of infection.



Dr. Ignaz Semmelweis

Picture credits: npr.org

This was widely overlooked. Dr. Holmes suggested burning clothes after autopsies and cleaning instruments used for procedures. Dr. Ignaz suggested washing hands thoroughly, a step that helped lower the rates of puerperal fever dramatically. Sadly, his desire to control puerperal fever by handwashing, and a constant rejection by his medical peers of his theory, led Dr. Ignaz to become obsessed with it. One day, he was lured into a mental institution, where he was locked up in a dark room and beaten severely every day. He died 2 weeks later from a blood infection.

It was over 20 years later that the medical community recognised hand washing as a step toward prevention of disease spread.

While the above remains documented in history, I found in my research for this article papers that suggested that Prophet Muhammed advocated cleaning of the hands and feet, teeth brushing and proper ablution as a way to maintain hygiene years before the western world's theories were revealed to the world.

## »» A few things to bear in mind

I do not need to go through how to wash your hands the right way. I am

sure the plethora of WhatsApp videos and YouTube videos explaining how it needs to be done has educated you. But there are a few things you should know.



- To keep your hands clean, keep your nails well-manicured and less than 0.5cm long.
- Do not wear too many rings, as these can harbour bacteria in the gap between the rings and the skin (an area that is rarely cleaned).
- If your hands are visibly dirty, it is better to use soap and water to wash off the dirt rather than a sanitiser, which only kills bacteria but will not take off the mud from your hands.

While this information is important for you, doctors should also observe measures to keep their hands clean in between the patients they see. Let us hope cleaner hands will rid our world of COVID-19 this year. ■

# The concept of 'Passive Income'

**Aarti Tibrewala Darooka**, a chartered accountant and MBA, is an entrepreneur and financial literacy advocate. She has over 15 years of combined experience in consulting, advisory and travel industries. A national ranker in CA, Aarti is a published author, who has written a plethora of books for children's financial education and is currently helping build awareness for financial literacy for women through her platform, Sthreedhan.



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"What do I consider a teacher should be? One who breathes life into knowledge so that it takes new form in progress and civilization."

– Hellen Keller

Teaching is, perhaps, the most important occupation in the whole world. What it is not, however, is the most remunerative. Which is surprising, because what would a world be without teachers? If you go by Dr. Hellen Keller's words, a world without teachers would be devoid of progress and civilization. And yet, it is a profession taken so lightly by the powers that be that there is no economic incentive to be a teacher or even worse, a good teacher!

So, the onus of being rewarded for doing the most precious job on earth is on the teachers themselves, isn't it? How do you, as a teacher, feel rewarded for doing your job exceptionally well? With all your heart, soul and all the hours of your life that you can spare? How do you stop feeling shortchanged by a system that cannot survive without you but is not compensating you adequately for doing a stellar job? How do you accept that your need as a teacher go beyond Teachers' Day cards and roses?



How do you fill in the gap a world in which every person taught to do a job has more incentive to do it well than their teachers?!

In my opinion, while systemic intervention is required and an overhaul of the system would benefit not just the teachers but also the students, the only thing that is immediately in your control is to change your own perspective. And the best way in which teachers can tangibly take themselves out of the martyrs' list is by taking their financial future into their own hands. When I say this, I don't imply that teachers should start switching jobs to find greener pastures or go on strike to demand a hike, but that they should change the way they look at the money they do already earn. And this begins by getting rid of the notion that because teaching is a noble profession, teachers cannot and should not talk about money!

**Passive income is any source of income that can be earned without having to put in too much of time or effort to earn it.**

Money is not the root of all evil, the lack of money is. Teachers have a right to personal well-being and wealth like anyone else on this earth but the right kind of focus on this is lacking from teachers themselves. If politics, science, art and religion can be the subject of teachers' discussions around staffroom tables, why can't investments and savings? Perhaps we can take away the distaste that comes to your mouth when you think about these things in due course of time by doing three things – one, demystifying money matters; two, simplifying the basics of money management; and three, discussing accessible investment avenues.

A key thing that one often overlooks is the importance of creating alternative sources of income. You might say that when your day job takes up the bulk of your time, what scope is there of earning more? And this is where passive income comes into play.

Passive income is any source of income that can be earned without having to put in too much of time or effort to earn it. Examples of passive income include rent, dividends from shares, interest income, annuities from pension plans, royalties from books or other writing engagements, revenue

from a YouTube channel, etc. Creating sources of passive income might seem like a challenge right now, but with the right guidance and thought process, it is quite achievable within your means and available time.

What you could try to do is to create a list of things that are possible for you. Do you have an extra property that can give you a rental income? Have you put your savings into a fixed deposit or is the money lying in your savings account? Can you better the return on your FD by moving some of the money into another investment? Do you have a spare car that can be let out to a driver who works with a rental service? Do you have any innate talents that you have ignored through the years that can help you earn some extra money? Take some time out, answer these questions and we can embark on a path to financial redemption without you having to make any noticeable changes to your existing routine.

After all, there's no better time than now, is there? ■

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# We Recommend App

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Chegg Pre is an exclusive flashcard app where teachers and students can flip and learn from a collection of more than a 500 million flashcards. These cards are accessible for free, and it is one of the easiest ways to study, irrespective of the subject/topic.

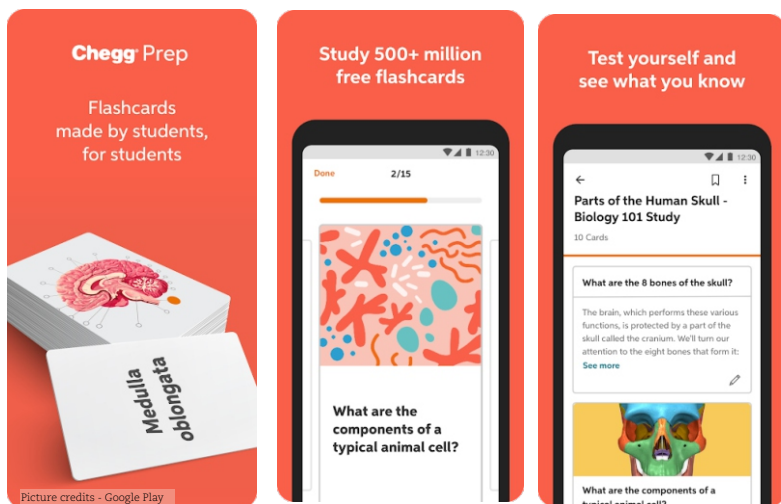
### »» Features on the app

1. Users can find the right, most relevant card from the database of over 500 million flashcards.
2. The cards can be accessed anytime, anywhere on the app, from any device.
3. Users can play quizzes to track their study progress.
4. Users can make their own cards or study from cards made by others to test their knowledge.
5. Users can study with expert content and get ready for exams for free.

### »» For teachers

1. Teachers can help students learn and study with Chegg. They can create their own flashcards for their course and share it with





their students.

2. Chegg is an online library of flashcards ranging from topics like science and engineering to foreign languages, math and coding. These flashcards can be stored and shared.
3. Teachers can stay connected with other teachers and see what is available for their curriculum.

## »» For students

1. Students can prepare their own flashcards for free.
2. They can test themselves and check what they know.
3. They can customise their study material with text and images.
4. Access and find flashcards across mobile devices and desktop.
5. They can find cards that is most appropriate for the subject they are practicing.

Teachers can create flashcards, study materials & interactive sessions on Chegg. The classroom can be made interesting and interactive by allowing students to create these digital flashcards and sharing it in class. ■

# The best gift for teachers' day!

■ **VARSHA PRASAD**  
Editor, TeacherTribe.world



"Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids to work together and motivating them, the teacher is the most important." - **Bill Gates**

Teachers are superheroes without capes. They go out of their way to make students feel comfortable and understand things in the classroom. This dedication and commitment of theirs is appreciated and recognised once every year, in the month of September, on Teachers' Day. There are celebrations in schools, teachers are gifted with cards and flowers, shows are put up, activities for teachers are organised and the day is made memorable for the teachers. But come the next day, the celebrations are forgotten, and the routine is resumed. Why is there only one day of the year dedicated for the teacher? Why is the recognition of a teacher's effort restricted to a day? I think every day of the year should be a celebration of the effort teachers put in. Every day is a reminder of the fact that teachers change the way the world looks. Every day is an acknowledgement that they shape our future.

In terms of gifts and presents, a teacher's best present is to see their students perform and do well in life. In a recent chat with a retired school teacher, she was recalling a conversation with her student who is now an IPS officer. She was elated that he connected with her after many years and credited her for the position he is in today. The smile and pride on her face cannot be described. There have been similar circumstances where teachers have beamed with joy knowing that their students are now in good, respectable positions.

In my personal opinion, teachers need to start celebrating themselves everyday and acknowledge the fact that they are doing a great job by touching so many lives. There are many ways in which teachers can celebrate themselves. Some of them are mentioned below –

01. **Dedicating some ‘ME’ time** – This is something that is necessary for everyone. For teachers who are busy with schoolwork, assessments, paper valuations and their personal work, getting some time for themselves to do things they enjoy doing is very difficult. To stay stress-free and relaxed, teachers do require some guilt-free ‘ME’ time.
02. **Recognising and honing their talents** – All teachers have one or the other talent which they put aside, to accommodate their career. Some are good singers, some dancers. While some have a flair for writing, some love playing a musical instrument. Some are good in sports too! Teachers can rekindle their interests and start spending some time dedicated to honing their talents.
03. **Reading** – Reading here can be reading a genre of book they love, or reading to know more about the education space, to increase their knowledge. This will help them stay abreast of what is happening around them, in turn helping them connect with students in a better way.
04. **Spending time on hobbies** – Teachers can indulge themselves in their favourite hobbies, like singing, gardening, reading, cooking and so on. This will bring happiness and joy and at the same time help destress.
05. **Destress** – Teachers need to take some time out to destress and relax. It can be in the form of yoga or meditation, breathing exercises or listening to music. Destressing can also have positive effects on ones’ daily routine and in school.
06. **Upgrading skills** – Teachers today need to be aware of what is happening in the world round them to communicate and converse better, in class with the students. It is also important to upgrade their skills by reading more on the topic, researching and maybe taking on a few additional courses online.

Apart from these, teachers can celebrate themselves everyday by staying positive and helping each other out. I know it is very easy to say but difficult to follow all these. But, we can aim at doing at least one or two of these to keep ourselves happy and relaxed.

Do you know of any method or activities which you, as a teacher, follow to celebrate yourself? If yes, do share it with me at [varsha@greycaps.com](mailto:varsha@greycaps.com).

Wishing all the teachers a very happy, fruitful and a positive Teachers' Day!

**Varsha Prasad**  
[#ProudToBeATeacher](#)

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Varsha Prasad is leading TeacherTribe.world initiative from Greycaps Knowledge Tribe, exclusively for teachers, as its Editor. She is also the Editor of TeacherTribe.world magazine. It is created by Greycaps Knowledge Tribe to celebrate the contributions of our teachers. She has played a vital role in creating many products, which ignite the curiosity of children, including the Global Awareness Program, also known as GAP in schools.



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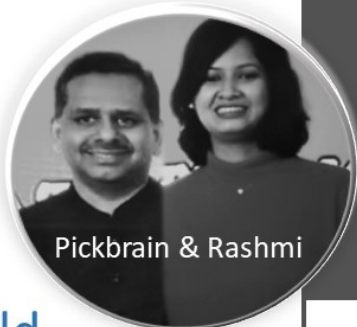
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