

Staff 2030: Future-Ready Teaching

An Economist
Intelligence
Unit report



Post-covid school
leadership
challenges

Black Fungus and
why it is a big deal

Guru 2.0
Teachers' new
version

TEACHER TRIBE — .world

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We recommend App - TED



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The Secret to Happy Learning

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



I am sure in the year that went by, all teachers have gone through more training and motivational workshops than ever. Interacting with different stakeholders in education has given me varied perspectives and broadened my horizon, when it comes to teaching. Being a part of TeacherTribe.world, I was fortunate to be a part of many such sessions.

One truth that I discovered in all these sessions was that teachers have the utmost humility to realise and admit that they need to improve, and they put in all the efforts towards the same. This got me thinking and I realised that other than specific training on operating certain technological platforms, all teachers need is to BE HAPPY! All of us have been so focussed on making learning a fun and a happy experience for students, that we have overlooked one very important factor – the TEACHER! The secret to happy learning is a happy teacher. A teacher being happy or unhappy directly affects the health and well-being of teacher himself or herself and the student.

A happy teacher connects with students better. Connecting with students is the most important parameter of effective teaching. While it comes naturally to many, others find it difficult to imbibe this trait. Happiness is a positive emotion, which keeps a person calm and open to possibilities. This positive emotion draws people closer to you and automatically leaves them wanting to connect with you. A positive emotion leaves a positive impact.

When your students feel happy in your presence, they will automatically connect with you.

Ever had a student in class whom you just can't get through to? And have another student who is always very happy in your presence and is more receptive to what you teach? Now, a third scenario, you finally had a breakthrough with a student you couldn't connect earlier, and she/he is suddenly receptive to you than before. I am sure all of you have experienced these scenarios and understand that students automatically become more receptive to teachers if they feel the teachers understand them and connect with them.

The secret to happy learning is a happy teacher.

According to human performance researcher Dr. David Rock, when teachers personally connect with students, care and show interest in them being supportive, they help produce serotonin in the students' brains. Serotonin influences a sense of well-being, which is helpful to regulate moods and relieve certain negative emotions. Serotonin opens students' minds to ideas and creates a desire to get to know teachers better and to be supportive towards them. When students feel good about themselves, endorphins are released in the brain, which helps students to relax and feel better. However, if teachers get angry, scold, or reject students in their interactions, it can lead students to be demotivated, prone to mistakes or indifferent.

Our experience and science have proven that a happy teacher is of utmost importance to happy learning. However, in the day-to-day stress that teachers go through, how do we keep our spirits high and keep ourselves happy? I would urge you to try the following steps –

- 1. Don't compare yourselves to others.** It's very important that teachers don't compare themselves to other teachers or people from other professions. This mostly leads to lower self-esteem and self-confidence.
- 2. Take time for yourself.** I am sure at many webinars that you have attended, you have been told to take time for yourself. It is

paramount that you do this. When we take time for ourselves, we unwind, we regroup and we focus on ourselves, which is extremely important.

- 3. Set realistic expectations.** This is crucial as overestimating may lead to failure and result in lesser self-confidence, while underestimating may not realise your full potential.
- 4. Create smaller success moments for yourself.** Set shorter, realistic and achievable goals for yourself every week. You will be pleased with yourself when you achieve these goals. The success moments that you created for yourself will propel you to aim higher and build your self-esteem.

All these techniques can be implemented in our routines and will ensure happiness. **Remember being happy has never gone out of fashion!**

Yours Positively!



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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.

Post-covid school leadership challenges

■ 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



As we pass through unpredicted tough times in our life systems consequent to Covid, the last twelve months has put all of us into new experiences. Issues relating to lockdowns, social distancing, fear of sickness, medical preparedness, cure management, low-income issues, restrictions to marketing and online working have also impacted our thoughts, actions, emotions and social relationships.

With a huge input of negativity from several external sources, many have suffered from Xenophobia – the fear of the unknown. Increased anxiety, emotional imbalance, depression, aggression and a sense of low self-esteem have haunted the community in all age groups including the school going children. Nevertheless, the school system responded positively to the situation by providing some basic inputs of learning to the children at



Picture credits - bmn.com

home. Though the quality of such knowledge inputs could be debated, questioned and left to audit, there is no denial of the fact that the focus was on student engagement to keep them emotionally and intellectually dynamic. The role of the teaching community needs to be applauded as they responded to the change with a sense of courage, conviction and knew the need of learning newer methods. Even when they could not rise to the expected standards due to limitations of technology and other reasons, their attitude was commendation.

With increased possibilities of schools getting back to their regular course sooner than later, the school leaders need to engage in some constructive thinking as to the kind of challenges they would meet. Though there could be many challenges which they have to face as and when they arise, most of them could be encapsulated into the following large concerns.

1. Psychological Rehabilitation

As the schools reopen, though the learners are expected to come with renewed energy and with a sense of happiness, the long absence from their routine, time and place of their study, the eco-system in which their displaced learning took place and the absence of emotional contact from the teachers will have a bearing on their psyche. The pedagogical interventions through technology would certainly have modified their neural architecture and to re-engineer it back to the classical model might take some time and need for psychological rehabilitation. Further, many learners might have been mute witnesses to sickness, death, financial challenges and other trauma at home. Hence there is every possibility that they need a lot of healing and a conscious considerate helping arm from the school. The role of school counsellors is likely to become more intense and engaging. The schools without such supports might have to take immediate steps to fill the gap if any. The school heads need to have a dialogue with their core team to develop a consensus in handling such issues.

2. Ensuring Safe Health Management

The reopening of schools needs to be done with extensive audit of health safety within the campus. Even a slight aberration in health management

issues may not be taken lightly, both by the parents and the authorities in place. The ball game would be to fix responsibilities for such issues. Such arrangements cannot be done in a lop-sided manner and have to be done with the support of medical professional and health inspectors. The entire procedure of health management concerns has to be put on record, listed and guidelines issued in clear terms. Parents need to be made aware of these steps. Small group of members from the teaching and the parent community could be made periodic auditors of such procedures. Violations if any needs to be recorded and steps taken to remedy the same. It is quite likely that the lapses on these issues might lead to reconsideration of the status of such schools.

With focus shifting to skills, experiential learning and integration of arts and other humanistic disciplines of learning, the learning packages will have to be designed to provoke curiosity and creative thinking.

3. Responding to New Systemic Needs

The entire school organizational system would need review and repositioning. All systems in school including transportation, medical audit of students, assemblies, co-curricular event and the like which call for large gathering, interactions would need a review. Further the school timings, student movements, parental visits, visits of external agencies in the school campus have to be regulated. The school leaders need to have a hawkish view to scrupulously examine the details at the minuscule level so that gaps if any are addressed. Possibly, establishment of some quality circles in the school for each major area that needs to be attended to, can be put in place. With extensive possibilities of technology intervention and blended learning on the anvil, the systemic approach to processes has to be refabricated to meet the new requirements.

4. Preparing for New Curricular Architecture

Alongside the covid challenges, the new NEP has also come into force. The school heads need to review their curricular architecture keeping in

mind both these emerging concerns. The future holds promise for a more liberal school system with empowering learnability of the learners rather than the directed learning models driven by authority so long. With online approaches and blended learning modes, and in some cases with flipped classroom approaches, the



Picture credits - Hindustan Times

entire design of the curricular delivery needs to be re-articulated.

With focus shifting to skills, experiential learning and integration of arts and other humanistic disciplines of learning, the learning packages will have to be designed to provoke curiosity and creative thinking. As such, with adequate focus on self-learning in the new NEP, the lesson plans of teacher would need a fresh vision and methods of operation.

5. Preparing and Delivering Blended Curriculum

Blended learning models would develop more as a necessity rather than a commercial availability. The school heads will have a challenging task of orienting, preparing and empowering their teachers to the newer pedagogies which focus on developing social consciousness and social construction of knowledge. The kind of sources and resources schools would need might put pressure on the fiscal domain of the school. With time-space constraints liberated, the schools might have to out-reach the learners with learning inputs to facilitate learning choices, learning styles and customized learning inputs. In short, the text-centric learning would get replaced with multiple sources for learning including e-content. Teachers might have to harness the technology to provide realistic learning experiences by empowering themselves with global dynamics in knowledge transfer and knowledge synthesis.

...continue reading on the [TeacherTribe.world](https://www.teachertribe.world) website. ■

Staff 2030: Future-Ready Teaching An Economist Intelligence Unit report

Teachers are superheroes! The enthusiasm and dedication with which they commit themselves to education is truly commendable. The best example for this is the way teachers stepped up and took over the pandemic to make sure children's education would not suffer.

When things changed across the globe due to covid, the education sector suffered some heavy blows. Schools were shut down. The school managements and teachers had a hard time finding a solution to this. Parents and caregivers were scared of sending their children outdoor but were equally worried of their children missing out on education.

Here, the teachers' superpowers were discovered. What was thought as a distant idea, was executed. Online classes were born. Teachers world-wide took over the humungous task of imparting knowledge to children digitally – a medium which was the students' turf but an unknown territory for most teachers.

What educators thought as 'futuristic', became a reality in no time. Online classes were conducted and are still going strong in most parts of the world. Educators and teachers have taken it upon themselves to make the best use of this medium to make sure children do not miss out

IMPACT PREVIEW

- »» **Teachers' role in the pandemic**
- »» **Findings of the Economist Intelligence Unit Report**

on their education. Teachers are now experts on Zoom and Google classes. They now easily navigate through the system, prepare engaging presentations, and evaluate homework digitally.

The pandemic brought about this major change and sudden shift in the way schools and classes work.

But what is the future? How are the

teaching practices going to change moving forward? Is this going to change the way schools and classes function?

Teachers are not being equipped with the skills and tools they need to deliver a next-generation education agenda—and optimism may be fading on the job.

Economist Intelligence Unit, sponsored by Microsoft, has come up with a report on 'Staff of 2030: Future-Ready Teaching'. The report explores how teaching is set to change by 2030, drawing on a survey of early-career and student teachers in primary and secondary schools, an expert interview panel and an academic literature review. It covers curriculum reform, teaching practices, technology and workplace environment. The survey reached 1,034 early-career and student teachers across ten countries.

Here are some of the important take-aways from the survey –

- The next generation of teachers back the reforms needed to deliver 21st-century education. From redesigning curricula to utilising novel teaching practices, from augmentative technology to more dynamic learning spaces, survey respondents largely support progressive reforms.
- Nearly all survey respondents agree that the purpose of education must shift to helping students know how to collect, interpret and apply information, rather than just learning it.
- A majority (60%) think new teachers will increase the use of technology by 2030. Half predict they will focus more on teaching social values and diversity, and nearly half (48%) expect an increased focus on social and emotional learning.

How will new teachers change the profession by 2030?



60%

Increase use of
technology



48%

Increase focus on
social and emotional
learning



47%

Devote more teaching
time to global issues
like climate change

Picture credits - Microsoft Education Blog

- Teachers are not being equipped with the skills and tools they need to deliver a next-generation education agenda—and optimism may be fading on the job.
- Only 26% of respondents think their training has equipped them for managing stress and burnout.
- Only 38% feel their training is equipping them to use digital technology. This is a worrying minority given that digital competency is now entering curricula in a growing number of countries and technology is anticipated to play an increasingly important role in the classroom.

Log on to [TeacherTribe.world](https://www.teachertribe.world) to read the complete, detailed study by Economist Intelligence Unit. ■

Black Fungus and why it is a big deal

■ **Dr. VIVEK BALIGA**
Cardiologist and Consultant Physician

Dr. Vivek Baliga B. is a consultant physician and cardiologist, and director of Baliga Diagnostics in Bangalore. He is a keen advocate of patient education and loves to blog about all things health related. Learn more about him at drvivekbaliga.com.

The article first appeared in Dr. Baliga's website heartsense.in



Here we go again. First we had COVID, now we have Black Fungus.

Over the last few weeks, there have been numerous reports on 'black fungus' in patients with COVID 19 infection. It sounds quite grim. Some articles have even gone on to declare it an epidemic.

I thought I would put together a short article on what black fungus is, and how it is being managed in the hospital. I have included in this article inputs from an esteemed colleague of mine, Dr. Rohit Udaya Prasad, an ENT consultant at Aster RV hospital, JP Nagar, Bangalore.

Here are some questions that are commonly being asked about this condition.

»» What is Black Fungus?

Black fungus is the term being used for a condition called 'Mucormycosis'. The most common type causing the infections currently is Rhizopus

arrhizus. It is an opportunistic fungal infection, which means it attacks patients whose immune system is very weak.

The fungal spores, called mucormycetes, are seen in soil, decaying leaves and compost. The spores of the fungus are floating in the air, and enter the respiratory system causing an infection. Normally, our immune system has the capability to fight a variety of bacteria and fungi. But when the immune system is down, various fungi and bacteria use the chance to infect the host, i.e. us. They can end up causing severe illnesses that need high-dose antibacterial and antifungal agents. These diseases themselves can have dire consequences.

»» Is this a new illness? How did it suddenly emerge?

Mucormycosis is not a new problem. It has been described previously in patients who have an immunocompromised state such as HIV infections, diabetes mellitus and cancer. It has also been seen in patients post-cardiac transplant. Black fungus has gained notoriety in the COVID times due to the use of broad-spectrum antibiotics and high dose steroids that are used to counter the Sars CoV-2 virus.

RISK FACTOR FOR DEVELOPING BLACK FUNGUS

- 1. Diabetes**
- 2. Cancer and cancer chemotherapy**
- 3. Long term use of high dose of steroids**
- 4. Prolonged antibiotic use**
- 5. Stem cell transplant**
- 6. Iron overload**
- 7. Skin injury such as scrapes, burns etc where the fungus can enter the skin**
- 8. Premature babies (affects the gastrointestinal tract)**

»» How does black fungus affect the body?

When the fungus enters the body, the body's defence mechanism i.e. neutrophils, line up like soldiers to fight the fungus. In those who have low immunity, the soldiers are fewer in number and a lot weaker. They are unable to fight the fungus, and this allows it to proliferate and begin to affect the body.

Mucormycetes have the ability to survive in an acidic medium. The spores gradually grow tiny prickly tips called hyphae, and these go on and attack the blood vessels. This leads to the blood vessel getting blocked. As a consequence, the tissue that depends on the blood supply from this blood vessel becomes necrosed and dies. The area becomes black in colour (dead tissue is black, like gangrene seen in diabetes), hence the name black fungus.

»» Why are patients with covid illness getting black fungus infections?

Patients with COVID infection require high-dose steroids and antibiotics as life-saving treatments. A decision to start steroids for patients is a carefully thought one most times, and often medical teams have no choice but to start steroids to save a patient's life.

Patients with diabetes tend to have a more severe COVID illness. The co-existence of diabetes makes it more likely to pick up black fungus. The high blood sugars in those with uncontrolled diabetes is a tasty food for the fungus, allowing them to grow at alarming rates.

“Patients who develop complicated diabetes, particularly diabetic ketoacidosis have higher iron levels in the blood, which is conducive for Mucormycosis to set in”, says Dr. Rohit Prasad.



Dr. Rohit Prasad

In those who have diabetes, steroid use is associated with erratic sugar control. Sugar levels can increase manifold. This can worsen the chance of contracting mucormycosis. Basically, the patient and the healthcare team are stuck between a rock and a hard place. Steroids will save the patient's life, but they might give them black fungus too. It's not an easy discussion to have with patients or their families.

»» What are the signs and symptoms?

Symptoms range from a simple stuffy nose to numbness of the face, blurred vision, headache at the front of the head, fever, double vision and a runny nose.

Swelling of one side of the face has been noted as well. If you look into your oral cavity, you may see black lesions. These may also be seen on the nasal bridge. When the nasal cavity is examined, an ENT surgeon can see ulcers and areas of black necrotic areas.

If it affects the lungs, patients may develop fever, start coughing blood and become breathless. In the skin, it is seen in areas of trauma to the skin and in skin burns. There is an area of redness that swells up and eventually becomes dark and necrosed.

I will limit my discussion to these for now, as a discussion on other types is out of the scope of this article.

However, do note that black fungus can spread through the blood to various parts of the body, leading to what is called disseminated mucormycosis. This is a serious condition that can lead to a coma and even death.

»» Medical treatment

Medical treatment will be started first in the form of antifungal agents. However, just medicines are **NOT** enough in managing this condition. This is because the blood vessels are blocked by the fungal infection. When antifungal drugs are given to the patient, they are unable to reach the affected areas through the bloodstream as these blood vessels are blocked.

If surgery is not performed, the treatment is incomplete. If you are asked to undergo surgery, do not delay it by over-contemplating the need for it. Remember, it can rapidly spread through the tissues and bones.

»» Protection at home

Over the last year or so, there have been numerous measures taken to 'sanitise' our homes, hands and possibly even our hearts. Our homes are a big source of fungal spores. I have mentioned earlier, black fungus spores are seen on rotten wood, decaying leaves, compost and soil. But they may also be present in some of the waste we have at home that accumulates during the day.

- Food waste can be a potential source, so keep your waste covered. Dispose the waste every day.
- Wet walls, mold formation on the walls and fungal spores within air conditioning ducts are also other sources. Make sure you get those treated by a professional.
- Wearing a mask, or even double masking can be very helpful. However, don't keep reusing the same mask all the time. Dispose them soon (if they are disposable) or wash them as often as possible.
- Home oxygen concentrators and humidifiers are an overlooked source of infectious agents. If you are using an oxygen concentrator at home, make sure you use distilled water instead of tap water.
- Also, ensure you get the equipment cleaned from time to time by a professional to prevent the overgrowth of bacteria and viruses in the pipes within.

Stay home, Stay safe

Enough said.

My thanks to Dr. Rohit Prasad, MBBS MS, ENT consultant, Aster RV Hospital for his valuable inputs in this article.

To read the complete article, log on to [TeacherTribe.world](https://www.teachertribe.world) ■

Guru 2.0

■ ANUNIDHI SHARMA

Teacher, Jain Heritage
A Cambridge School, Kondapur



The year 2020 was the year when teachers evolved and a new version of them came into being – ‘GURU 2.0’. It was the year when a new way of education became mainstream. Digital platforms of education have existed for some time but their reach, especially in India, remains a big question mark.

COVID and the pandemic threw life in general and the functioning of schools into turmoil. Schools have not opened from March 2020, since the lockdown was first announced.

School is a temple where the students interact with each other, where moral values are inculcated, where the students develop social skills, develop communication skills, and the spirit of teamwork is developed. Students develop their personality and their character under the guidance and supervision of teachers which leads to their holistic development. This temple has been closed for a long time now and the whole world is eagerly, anxiously waiting for its opening and daily operations. Do students miss the temple? Do students feel the absence of personal touch of non-parent adults/teachers? Does our society miss the impeccable contribution of teachers towards the students?

The young students are bored of sitting back at home. The parents are exhausted from meeting their children’s demands. In the past, many parents were not clear about the critical role played by a teacher. But this pandemic and isolation of the family at home has taught them the unmatched role played by a guru in their ward’s life.



Parents have realized and they appreciate and express gratitude towards the teachers and have understood that the teachers are the nation builders. There is only one profession that shapes all other professions, whether it is medical or engineering or business administration. 'Teach from home' was deemed far fetched and impossible, but look at the scenario today - teachers have learned a lot during the pandemic and have evolved into their next version. They have become more tech-savvy and spent hours learning and getting aware of the digital means of imparting education. This was done with the primary objective of continuing the education of children who would otherwise miss an entire year of their studies. They equipped themselves with the latest technology – learnt newer skills, prepared presentations, screen sharing, scheduling meetings, maintain excel sheets for results, correcting the answer sheets on the platforms like Google forms, sending feedback for each answer sheet received, etc., and even troubleshooting the hurdles faced by the parent and students in attending the classes. Working with a microphone, laptop and the mouse was once the work of a computer teacher. But now even the language teachers use it.

It is not easy for parents to spend the entire day at home with children, keeping the occupied. Even the students have realized the importance of their GURU. Psychology says that even the students need to talk about their issues with nonparental adults who give them a different perspective that a father or mother may not understand. Covid has transformed the thinking pattern of the students, teachers and even the parents in a positive direction. This year has been truly revolutionary in making education digital for a large number of students and taught teachers technical skills they never had. Teachers this year, while taking virtual classes, have done pathbreaking work that has brought meaning to students' life in this restrictive environment which has isolated them beyond any measure. They have dealt with students with more empathy, treating them with leniency, understanding various technical issues they face while taking virtual classes. Teachers could have very well given up saying they were never trained to impart digital training. Instead, they chose to learn themselves to ensure learning continues for students. They stretched themselves to create digital content using applications which they had not used in past. The teachers kept students' best interests in mind and went the extra mile with a sense of personal responsibility. We should salute their relentless devotion to the profession of education. A new hero has arrived – GURU 2.0. ■

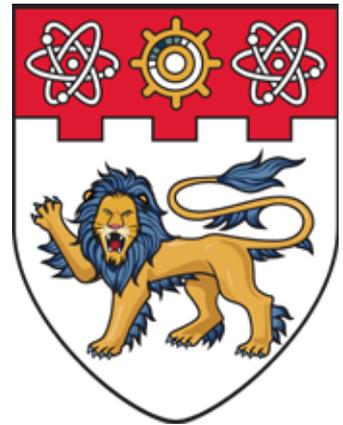
Education News

Times Higher Education's world's best young universities list out - NTU Singapore ranked No. 1

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has been ranked No.1 for the first time in the Times Higher Education's ranking of the world's best young universities for the first time. This was the only university in Singapore listed in the rankings. It held the third place in 2019 and second in 2020. NTU surpassed Hong Kong University of Science and Technology which was in the top spot since 2018.

NTU also holds the top spot in 'QS Top 50 Under 50', for the last seven years. This list ranks young universities using different metrics from Times Higher Education.

Professor Subra Suresh, the President of NTU said that the university is surpassing its international peers as it creates innovative pedagogical models to transform educational offerings and forges deep connections with the industry.



NTU Singapore

The president also added that as a part of their NTU 2025 strategic plans to transform learning, the university will strengthen and broaden interdisciplinary learning and provide new internship and research opportunities for undergraduate students.



Picture credits - Edwise International

NTU Singapore Campus

Apart from this recognition, NTU also achieved the 12th place in the QS World University Rankings, climbing one place from last year. It also ranked first internationally in the highly interdisciplinary field of Materials Science, in the QS World University Rankings by Subject released in March 2021.

New handbook released on 'handicrafts' for skill promotion in schools

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has launched a student handbook for the Skill Module on 'Handicraft' in collaboration with Handicrafts and Carpet Sector Skill Council (HCSSC). Launched in New Delhi recently, the handbook is for classes 6 to 8.



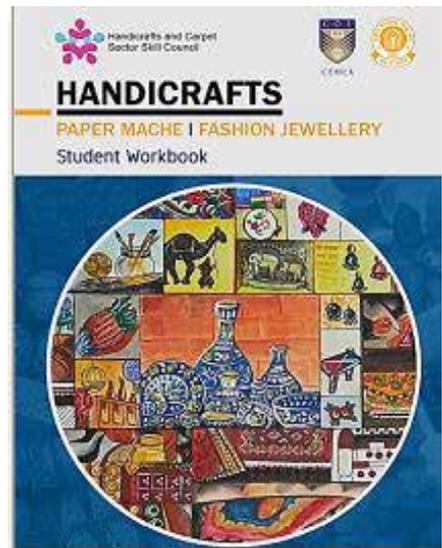
CBSE offers handicrafts as a skill module in these classes for a duration of 12 hours. The handbook will cover two modules – Paper Mache and Fashion Jewellery. This module focusses on practical activities and will give hands on learning experience to the students.

According to the chairman of CBSE, the aim of the module is to help create awareness about the rich cultural heritage and traditions of India as has

also been envisioned in the NEP-2020, and to help build an entrepreneurial mindset amongst students at a young age.

The CEO of HCSSC, has stated that only recycled materials have been used in the activities given in the handbook, helping develop good environmental habits in children. According to the director of CBSE, more than 700 schools have already opted to start this module and CBSE will be conducting training programmes for the teachers teaching this skill module.

The Student's Handbook/Workbook on 'Handicrafts' shall be available on the academic website of CBSE (<http://cbseacademic.nic.in>). ■



We Recommend App

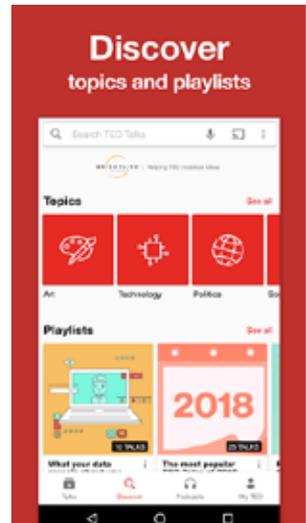
TED

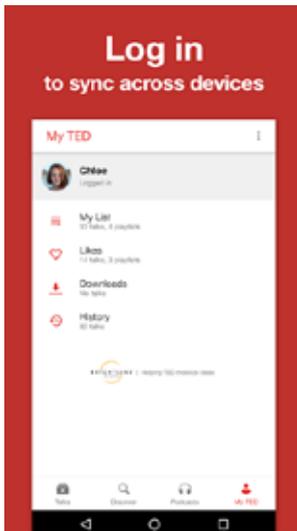
TED is a nonprofit, devoted to spreading ideas, usually in the form of short, powerful talks which are 18 minutes or less. The platform today covers almost all topics ranging from science to business to global issues, in more than 100 languages.

TED serves as a perfect companion for teachers, educators and students alike. New educators can plan innovative teaching strategies from the TED contents. Thousands of interesting and informative sessions by experts can aid teachers and students to learn more and have a productive discussion in classrooms. This helps in bringing out an enriched classroom with active students and unique lecture presentations.



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Features of the app

- The users of the app can explore more than 3,000 TED Talks from notable people, by topic and mood, from tech and science.
- The entire TED Talk library can be accessed with subtitles in over 100 languages.
- The user can customise the playlist based on interests and preferences.
- Videos can be downloaded for later use offline.
- The app also has access to the latest TED podcasts.

With the app available on both iOS app and Google Playstore, this is a highly recommended app for all to 'stay curious, informed and inspired'. ■

Teachers have the power to make an impact!

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



“The great aim of education is not knowledge but action”
– Herbert Spencer.

Schools have great impact on children’s minds. This could be by the environment, peers or experiences, but most importantly by the teachers. Children are missing the interactions they have at their schools. Also, the importance of talking to teachers face-to-face, listening to their classes in a physical classroom and especially the absence of a teacher is strongly felt – more so in children in primary and pre-primary classes.

There are some examples I recall, which show the importance of teachers in children’s lives. I interacted with a parent who faced a problem with her son. The problem was that the little boy wouldn’t believe his mother when she spelt the word ‘elephant’ and wanted his teacher’s confirmation on the same. He refused to complete his spellings homework until his favourite teacher approved of the spelling. Another little girl, who would refuse to wash her hands despite her mother’s multiple attempts, was now teaching others on how to keep their hands clean because her teacher had said it was important to do so.

This shows how significant a teacher is and the impact she/he has on children. Whether it is a physical classroom or the laptop screen, to students it doesn’t matter where their teacher is. It’s the teacher’s presence that matter to them. It may seem as this holds true only in the younger

classes, but as a part of TeacherTribe.world, we have interacted with teachers who have refuted this. Students in higher classes have been more than willing to help their teachers in navigating the digital classes platforms. They have also

volunteered to assist the teachers to manage the classes better, leading to form better teacher-student relationship.

All the teachers are enjoying their new role as 'online teachers' or 'online student buddies'.

What teachers say...

Teachers realise their impact. While the impact of online medium is being debated, teachers of different classes have different experiences to share. In a recent interaction with a few teachers, I heard various perspectives of online classes and their impact on children they teach. Though all of them shared different stories, there was one common thread – all the teachers are enjoying their new role as 'online teachers' or 'online student buddies'. They are happy to be a part of their students' lives, albeit digitally.

According to teachers handling preschool children, the younger ones are very excited and curious to be a part of these classes – it can be to just watch what their fellow classmate is doing or to just watch themselves on screen. The children were also happy to share their daily experiences with the teachers.

Teachers handling primary and middle school children shared that they noticed a lot of interest in the students to see and interact with their friends, and to be the first ones answering questions asked by the teacher. They were happy to recreate a classroom atmosphere, online.

The takeaway...

After interacting with these teachers, I did learn a lot of new things. Although there are many things to learn and to work around online

classes, it came as a life saver during desperate times. Though there are multiple setbacks and hindrances to this medium of teaching, online classes saved the day and become children's friend when they needed it the most – teachers could attend to the children's emotional needs when they needed it. Teachers could still see their students and interact with them daily. Most importantly, the teacher's aura was always present in children's lives. Teachers realised the impact and the place they have in their students' lives.

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Have you had similar experiences where your students made you feel happy to be an 'online teacher'? Share it with me at varsha@greycaps.com

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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.