

From Page to Practice; Integrating Literature as Social-Emotional Learning in 21st Century Classrooms.

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Introduction

Literature represents the intricacies of human relationship, values, realities of life and delves into the mindfulness of the learner and enhances the opportunity for social and emotional learning. Poetry, stories, plays or other various forms of expression of literature paves way for reflecting on the inner working of characters mind, through experiences, emotion and also strengthen the capacity for empathy and compassion. Literature unlocks the way for discovery, exploration and cognitive engagement. Also, the learner will be translocated to imaginative world, and offer a glimpse to the stories that comes beyond our experiences. Providing insights into the human condition, prompt us to consider responses to life's challenge and find ourselves in the literary pieces of art.

According to literary scholars Andrew Bennet and Nicholas Royle “Stories are everywhere, not only we do tell stories, but stories tell us; if stories are everywhere, we are also in stories”. Hence through literature reality of life is reflected, and creates a deeper understanding of human experience and navigates through complex issues of identity and self-expression. Hence in order to enrich the academic journey, literature is a fundamental discipline. Diverse perspectives, historical contexts and different narrations develops analytical and communication skills. Hence the discipline gains more attention and has significant relevance, even in the 21st century classroom, as it offers numerous opportunities for social-emotional learning and

equips students with the skills and perspectives required to thrive in the evolving world.

Social Emotional Learning

Social and emotional learning is a developmental process that helps students of all age learn skills to support healthy relationships and development. This serves as an integral part of education and development. Literature acts as a catalyst for the social and emotional learning. Through the discipline the individuals gain self-awareness, self-control and interpersonal skills that are vital for life. Being exposed to diverse circumstances and gather perspective transcends the experience of individuals.

The Correlation of Literature and Socio Emotional Learning

Exploring literature fosters emotional literacy, and allow individuals navigate through feelings. Incorporating literature into education from a younger age is vital, as it provides a strong foundation for academic success and personal growth. Though literature provides a wide possibility for development, the convergence of literature in education system follows certain limitations. Schools tend to offer a limited time for literature in the curriculum and under the constraints of covering the syllabus and preparing the students for assessments, the true aesthetics of literature remains unappreciated. Hence the values that could be imbibed through the discipline is ignored and the meditative and self-reflective nature of literature learning, loses its momentum. Certain challenges need to be addressed and it require constant effort from educators, policy makers and communities to catalyze the motive to gain true spirit of the discipline.

Literature And 21st Century Classroom

Literature is always the reflection of the complexity of human experiences. The stories we hear, are more than the narrative; the poetry we enjoy, are more than

the rhythm and the play we perceive, are much more than the dialogues. The value of literature could never be justified if the learner fails to appreciate the beauty in little things, value human passions and ignite the essence of learning social and emotional skills. For instance, while teaching poetry or fiction in the classroom, regarding a river, the objective should not be mere comprehension of the words arranged by the author, but the learner should be able to appreciate the beauty of the stream, link it with human passion and culture, recognize the tales each drop could gather and should be curious to safeguard the water body and realize the emotions the author portrayed through syntax, rhythm and the structure.

The 21st century classroom is diverse from the traditional teaching structure and the focus has tremendously changed. Critical thinking, creativity, communication etc needs to be emphasized and the skill appropriate approach is required. In order to adapt and cater the need, certain strategies need to be followed. To yield the benefits, the facilitators of literature learning process should be cautious and adopt certain strategies to support the learner to develop mindfulness and certain social skills. The education system, that tends to highlight science and other technological disciplines as significant, often ignores and restrict literature periods at schools as a leisure activity. Implementation of technology efficiently is crucial requirement, this open up wide opportunities and possibilities. Limiting the classroom activities in the conventional style wont meet the required objectives, hence learner must actively engage with their knowledge and skills and should be made capable to apply in real life situations. Thus they link with the content and gather more skills. The learner and the environment is being flexible, so the facilitator should also be adapted to new norms.

The diverse perspectives a narrative offer, contribute to foster empathy and enhance critical thinking. The learner is exposed to situations that never encounters

their existence and gain acquaintance with different perspectives and varied ideologies. The discipline construct ways for progress and enrichment. Characters often face challenging situations, moral dilemmas or internal conflict, which catalyzes the reader to consider their own ethics, beliefs and attitudes. Also, it stimulates the creativity of the reader. The narratives excite human thoughts and the reader envisions alternative realities and all possible dimensions of the instances.

The shared experience a reading process can create, contributes to a sort of community building in the classroom, that comprise students with varied ideologies and attitudes. Discussions in the classroom regarding literature can empower the social skills of the learner. Each piece of art, proffer emotions, that varies. The exposure to the varied emotions sustains emotional intelligence. The process of reading, is an act where the reader gets immersed into it, and attains mindfulness, by completely engaging in it. The experiences and knowledge create a new sense of perceiving the world, interpreting lives and acknowledging the values vital for prospering. Thus the 21st century classroom requires to be dynamic and innovative.

Remediation for the Challenges

Facilitators should be vigilant to choose the works of literature that reflect diverse thoughts and ideologies to explore the learner's self, with regard to their age, experience and elements that wake their curiosity. Rather than implementing rote learning procedure, and making them prepared for assessment, encourage open discussions about themes, characters and the conflicts, and promote social learning environment through peer discussions. Learning of literature can be adored, by associating teaching procedure to a real-life context. The poetry about a flower, can be appreciated by a learner with all its fundamental aspects, if it is taught amidst of a garden. The fiction of a village will be grasped by them if they attain a correspondence with a village and their interaction with the villagers can decipher

the level of understanding. If not possible in a classroom facilitated with all the scopes of technology can take the advantage of virtual field trips. Assessment should be done for values, rather than scores. For instance, the art of teaching gain victory, when a teacher reads a poem regarding the war and the young learner thinks of the sufferings and adopt measures to avoid even the internal war within them. In this context they should realize the need of harmony and peace for the world and it should begin from themselves, home and even from their classrooms. In short , educator can create a global impact.

Conclusion

Without technology, the facilitators attempt to integrate literature as social-emotional learning in 21st century classrooms fails to achieve the objective intended to gain. Utilizing digital libraries and E-books provide easy access to wide range of literary work. Encourage the students to choose or design the literary exposure, according to their interest ,also to enhance the learning procedure online tools and resources should be integrated. Gamification of literary concepts is another strategy that can be implemented in the classroom. Further exploration experience can be down through virtual reality and augmented reality. Hence interactive storytelling and exploring the settings of literary works in a dynamic way, enhances students' interest towards literature. As a result students become active participants in the learning process. The degree of power or autonomy for children should be provided, and this contribute to encourage the students a sense of control in lives. Paying attention to the words, tone and body language is important, as that hints a lot more meaning to the context and as a facilitator we should think of the consequences of certain actions in the classroom. The literature classes should be more friendly and accept the choices they make in order to attain goal, understanding the objectives is crucial.

Class climate should be positive, so that it enables a space for open discussion and learner feel secure to express their perspectives .

Influence of literature extends beyond the classrooms and marks an enduring influence. Through the process of learning literature, a socially responsible and emotionally intelligent individual is moulded. Literature learning should be integrated to the curriculum from the early stages of schooling and extend to higher education systems, so that the passionate scholars can be guided. The process evokes personal growth and also inspires and motivates young minds. The valuable lessons of resilience, perseverance, tolerance can be derived and prepares the learner to consider multiple perspectives and engages in thoughtful discourse in the whole way of life. Converging literature into every aspect of education, constructs better human beings. As C S Lewis states “Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become”. The scope of a 21st century classroom can conduce the process more reliable. Through interactive platforms, multimedia resources, virtual reality experiences and global connections the process of learning can attain, a greater magnitude.

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