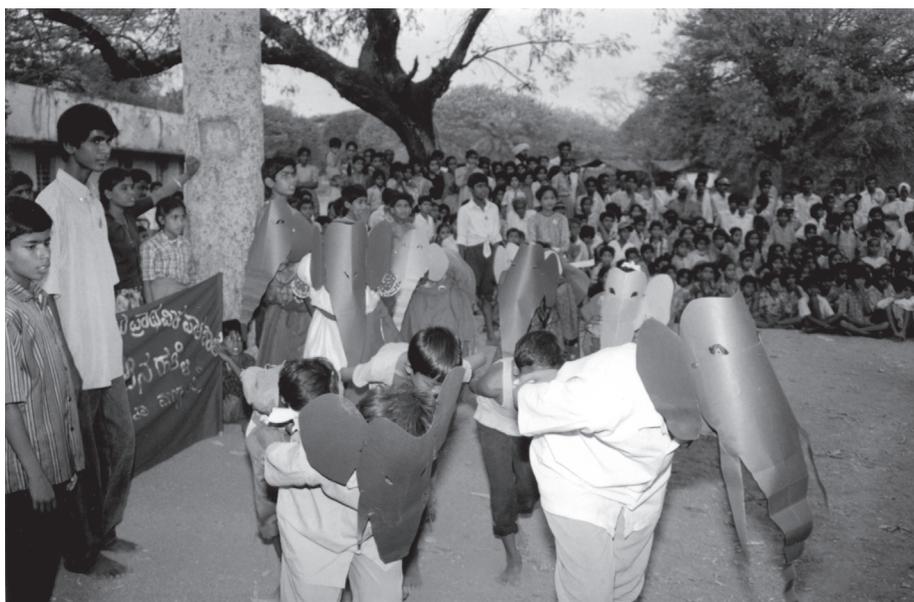


Creativity in EE

5

STRUCTURE

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objectives
- 5.3 Using Language for EE
- 5.4 Arts and Crafts for EE
- 5.5 Performing Arts for EE
- 5.6 Unit-end Exercises



If it has a chance, a child's mind will range over the whole field of imagination pertinent to its particular interest, breaking down all the barriers which we set up between relevant sorts of facts—history, geography, science, economics—and will bring to the service of that interest every sort of activity—imagination, understanding, language, practical and artistic skill alike.

5.1

We have seen how there is a possibility of bringing an environmental perspective into every subject. These need not always be in the form of introducing experiments, demonstrations or games. Many opportunities also exist to enhance the creativity of students, as they also get sensitized to environmental concerns and issues.

Language has numerous and valuable functions in the growth and development of the child's sensitivity and understanding. The language class provides an opportunity to work with children in a highly flexible, creative and enjoyable medium. Language has an additional advantage over other subjects in that children are already familiar with it when they come into the school system. They have already started using it to express themselves to suit their situations or meet their requirements.

Children of different ages enjoy group undertakings of creative activities which involve expression through painting, drawing, model-making etc. A variety of arts and crafts can be used to create awareness about the environment among children, while at the same time developing skills.

Children also enjoy play-acting or making believe, whether it is putting up a play, watching a dance drama, or participating in a group song. Skits and dramas provide lively opportunities to take on different roles and play a variety of characters that are usually quite different from their daily lives. This enjoyment and interest can be effectively harnessed in a number of ways for environmental education.

This unit offers some ideas on how EE can be creatively woven into these popular subjects.

5.2

On completion of this unit you should be able to:

- Use the language class as an opportunity to use varied media and a variety of activities.
- Create ways to bring an environmental dimension to art and craft activities.
- Design performances to convey environmental messages.

5.3 USING LANGUAGE FOR EE

The language teacher can play a key role in sensitizing and informing students about the environment, in helping them analyze issues and communicating them, while at the same time building language skills and encouraging creativity. Some examples of activities could be taken up in the language class are given here.

Additional readings

Identifying and using literary pieces (poems, essays, stories, excerpts from classical and modern literature, even newspaper/magazine articles) to supplement, enhance, enrich a concept/concepts from a lesson, can be an effective way to encourage students to not only enjoy good literature but also make linkages which may not be explicit or evident.

Co-curricular activities

Several opportunities arise in addition to the formal “language period” where both environmental awareness and as well as a variety, language skills can be developed. Topics for class/school elocution, debates, and discussions can effectively incorporate themes and issues related to the environment. Choice of skits, plays, and other programmes being enacted by students are also good opportunities to introduce green themes.

Poetry writing

Children from 8-14 years usually like to write poetry and often experiment with this form. Through encouraging them to write about the environment, teachers could give these efforts a focus. Here are a few preliminary exercises which could help to get the ball rolling. These exercises help in getting children to want to write poems by making it an achievable task, and by encouraging them to observe, think, imagine and articulate.

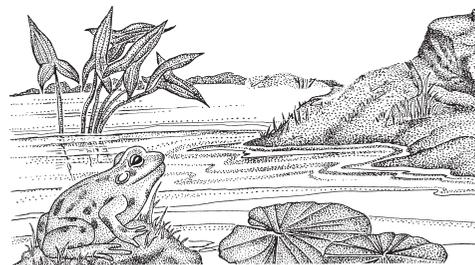
Haiku is three-line Japanese poetry dedicated to nature. These are usually poems which are composed as responses to, or impressions of, the world around us. Very few words are used, but in such a manner that reading them evokes an instant verbal picture.

The rules are simple: There are three lines in every poem. There are five syllables in the first line, seven in the second, and five in the third line. The lines do not have to rhyme.

Seasons form an important theme of Haiku. And also minute observations of small elements in nature—a blade of grass, a dewdrop on a flower petal, the flight of a dragonfly. The images attempt to emphasize a strong consciousness of the close interrelatedness of all things, living and non-living, that make up the universe.

Cinquain is the French word for a poem of five lines in which the first line has one word (a noun), line two has two words (adjectives), line three has three words (verbs), and line four has four words. The fifth line is just one word—like the first (a synonym).

An old silent pond
Into the pond a frog jumps
Splalsh! Silence again





Butterfly
Delicate, graceful
Flutters, finds, sips
Seems weak but isn't
Beauty

5 Steps to a Cinquain

To write a Cinquain, just guide the students through these steps and see what emerges.

Ask each student to think of any object in nature that he/she especially likes, or relates to, e.g. flowers, rain, butterflies, clouds... Ask them to close their eyes for a few seconds to picture their chosen object. This could be even more effective if done at a place where students can actually see, hear and experience the natural surroundings.

Now ask each one to begin by writing the name of the object they have chosen. This should be a single word, and a noun. For example: Butterfly.

In the next line, they must write two words describing the qualities of the chosen object. These should be adjectives, e.g. Delicate, graceful.

In the third line let them write three words of action describing something that the object does. These will be verbs, e.g. Flutters, finds, sips.

The fourth line must have four words describing how the child feels about the chosen object. (You can drop the rigid grammar and mix nouns, verbs, adjectives!), e.g. Seems weak but isn't.

In the fifth and last line write one word that conveys the sense of the first word. (Back to grammar— this could be a synonym), e.g. Beauty.

Let each child read his/her lines as they would read a poem. Encourage them to follow the same rules to create cinquains on other aspects of the environment.

Poetry Reading

Much of the beautiful poetry, folk songs, etc., in any language are related to nature. Not only can a language teacher choose such poems for teaching in the class, but can also use the poetry teaching exercise to bring in current environmental issues and concerns. For example while teaching the verse 'Tyger, Tyger burning bright', the teacher can not only highlight the awe and majesty of the tiger, but can also discuss the current situation of the tiger in India, the declining numbers of tigers, causes for their disappearance, and efforts being made to save them.

Stories and Essays

The usual creative writing exercises which are assigned to students can be given an environmental orientation. Children could be asked to write stories and essays on environmental themes and issues. Properly phrased open-ended topics can encourage children to think, analyse, research and write.

It would also be good to tie-up such writing exercises with an event. Such an activity can help the children crystallize their thoughts about the event. For example, when a class visits a zoo, an essay on something like: 'Thoughts of a Caged Lion' or 'Zoo: Haven or Torture Chamber?' can be given as a topic.

Debates and discussions organized in the language class can play the same role, and additionally give children the confidence to speak and express a point of view.

Plays and Skits

The language teacher can also encourage the students to write scripts for plays, skits, or TV spots. Dramatization of stories with environmental themes or real-life environment related conflicts or situations can be taken up. For instance, if the children know the story of Chipko, they may dramatize it. The students could take the teacher's help, finalize the script and put up the drama on any appropriate occasion. Or they could use a ready script and dramatize it. An example of such a script gives ample scope for improvisation on the part of the students.

Posters and Slogans

Students can be asked to write copy for posters, coin slogans for use in rallies etc. In each of these exercises, it would be useful to analyse what makes for effective communication in the identified medium e.g. slogans should be short and rhyming.

Interviews and Surveys

Important, if undervalued, language skills could be taught by getting students to conduct interviews and surveys. In this, they will learn to ask properly worded questions and listen, interpret, and understand what people are saying. These interviews should be done in 'real life' and may be done by individual students or in groups. The information gathered could also be used for some other project that the students are involved in. Interviews could also be included in a school magazine, or given to a local paper to carry.

Some interviews they could do: Interview the Municipal Commissioner on why there is garbage all over. Talk to the Zoo Director about his job. Talk to residents in an area as to how they can contribute to a better local environment. Talk to senior students in the school as to why they do not use public transport to come to school. Talk to people to find out their views on a controversial environmental issue that touches their lives.

Some surveys they could conduct: Survey of water resources and water availability in a community; garbage generation and disposal habits in a residential locality; survey of environmental health hazards in an area, etc.

Newspapers for the Environment

The language teacher could also bring home to students the importance of media in creating environmental awareness. Apart from following environment-related news as reported in the media, they could be encouraged to write on these issues. The different types of pieces in a newspaper/magazine could be analyzed and they may choose to write any one: e.g. a descriptive feature on an animal or tree; a report on an environment-related event or happening; an interview with an environmental personality; an analytical article on some issues, or reports on the findings of a survey. They would need to be guided



to do their research thoroughly in order to write a proper piece. These pieces could be sent to the local newspaper, especially the special children's pages, the school magazine, or other children's magazine.

A related activity would be encouraging children in the language class to write letters to the editor on environmental issues they feel strongly about, their reactions to reports in the newspaper etc. These could be sent to local newspapers to be considered for publication.

Advertising Appeal

Given the impact of advertisements on the minds of children, this would be a medium which would interest them. Children, depending on their age, could enjoy designing a hoarding, developing a spot, or writing copy for ads or jingles with environmental messages.

Such an exercise could lead them to analyse and discuss the ways in which products are sold to us, what images are used, what feelings are evoked, etc. This could lead towards a discussion of the ethics of advertising, the role of social advertising, the reality of an increasingly consumption-oriented society, and its impacts on the environment, etc.

The themes given to them could be selling an environmental product or environmental value, e.g. the benefits of a forest, or environmental ethics e.g. rights of animals etc.

Newswatch

Textbooks are important in order to clarify environmental concepts and teach students the science underlying environmental phenomena and issues. But there is another easily available resource—newspapers. Newspapers have the advantage of being readily and inexpensively available. Newspapers as a resource are also adaptable in that they can be used at different levels and related to different subject areas.

Newspapers are current, they deal with real-life issues. They help bridge the gap between the classroom and the real world outside.

They can be a rich resource for bringing home to students how environmental issues and problems touch our lives; to illustrate that these issues are not unidimensional, but have scientific, economic, social and political angles; that they are dynamic; that often there are many sides to a controversy, and there is validity in the various points of view. Here are some ways in which newspapers can be used to bring current environmental issues into the classroom.

Bulletin Board

A special bulletin board can be set aside in the school or class for environment-related affairs. A small group can be made responsible for each week's display. The students will need to follow the daily newspapers to clip out environment-related news and display this attractively, so that the whole school/class is attracted to come and read it.

Scrap Books

Individual students or small groups may also maintain environmental scrap books throughout the year. They can refer to a variety of newspapers and magazines and clip out information. They could classify the different clippings chronologically or topically, and paste the items in different sections of the book. The scrap book can include photographs, captions, illustrations etc. from magazines and newspapers, and also those added by students themselves.

News Reading

Once a week, some time may be set aside in the school assembly for an Environmental News Broadcast. The information for this may be gathered from newspapers, radio, TV, etc. and presented by one student to the entire school.

Analyzing Press Coverage

Older students could take up certain projects such as comparing the reporting of the same environmental issue in different newspapers, e.g. in different national dailies; different local dailies; English and other language dailies; etc. Some factors that they could consider in this exercise are (1) space allotted to the issue (2) where in the newspaper that issue is reported (i.e. which page) (3) which of the reports are giving various points of view (4) which newspaper seems to be supporting which point of view.

Radio and TV

With regard to radio and TV also, students can take up similar exercises. They could also write reviews of environment-related programmes that they see or hear.

Taking it Further

Such exercises will have the additional advantage that children will form the habit of reading the newspaper, and of taking an interest in programmes they may otherwise not pay attention to.

All these exercises will help make students aware of current environmental issues. On this basis, various other activities could be built: e.g. debates or panel discussions may be organized on a 'hot' issue; students could be asked to research and prepare their own analysis of some issue; experts may be called in to speak to the class on any issue which specially interests them.

Which of these ideas have you tried in your teaching?

Even if you are not a language teacher, which of these would help in teaching your subject? Explain how you could use any two for your teaching.



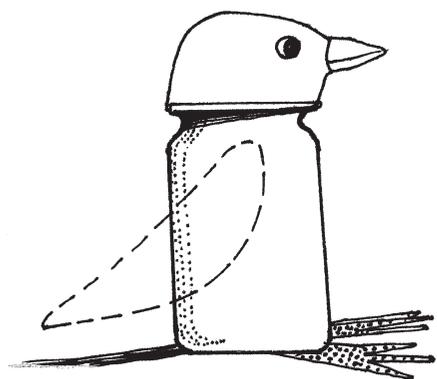
5.4 ARTS AND CRAFTS FOR EE

The point of crafts for EE is not just to make something. This is a valid objective for a craft class, but if the same exercise is to become an EE effort, there has to be some concept, attitude or skill related to the environment that is being built through the activity.

Some points need to be kept in mind when planning arts and craft activities so that the objective of creating environmental awareness may be achieved.

For example, while teaching children how to make a butterfly from chart paper, the following concepts can be discussed:

- What group of fauna does a butterfly belong to? (Insects)
- What are the physical characteristics of insects? (6 legs, 3-segmented bodies—this can be stressed when the children prepare and paste the legs).
- What are the noticeable features of butterflies? (They usually fold their wings; they have antenna—these points can be stressed when their body parts are being made).
- The variety of sizes and shapes of butterflies (may be discussed while cutting out the wings and body).
- The variety of colours in butterflies and the purpose of colouration (could be discussed while colouring or painting the wings).



Similarly, while making an earthworm from chart paper or clay, the body structure of the earthworm and the important role of earthworms in keeping soil fertile could be discussed. Children could understand why earthworms are called farmer's friend.

Or, while doing 'Best from Waste' activities, e.g. making a Bottle Bird from an old medicine bottle, or a toothbrush hedgehog, the following concepts could be discussed:

- What is waste? (that which we no longer have use for)
- What types of waste do we generate at home? (can be broadly classified as biodegradable and non-biodegradable).
- What happens to the waste we throw away? (Ragpickers retrieve what they can get a value for; municipal corporations dispose off large parts, usually through landfilling. But since the amount of waste we are generating is increasing, systems are not able to cope and we find garbage on the roads and streets.)
- What can we do about this (Reduce, Reuse and Re-cycle)

Experiences can be further enriched if the crafts teacher could plan activities in discussion with the environment studies or science teachers, so that there is a good link between the topics being taught to a particular class and the craft activities undertaken by them.

The Process

Since the purpose of the exercise is to internalize certain concepts through doing a craft activity, the stress should be on the concepts, rather than the actual product.

Children's creative talent and interpretation of the environment also need to be encouraged as far as possible. While one is trying to teach insect physiology and characteristics while making a butterfly, if a child is keen to colour it in impossible gold and silver hues, she/he could be allowed to, while gently pointing out that one is unlikely to see such a butterfly in real life.

Involving All Children

While most children like such activities, some may not, and yet others may not be specially talented in this direction. It is important to recognize these differences and allow children some element of choice in doing these activities. One way would be to get children to work in small groups as it could facilitate the sharing of different skills among children and no child feels left out. It will help in team building and generate lively discussion and interaction.

Craft from Waste

Many things which we consider as beyond use, e.g. worn out slippers, socks, plastic boxes, etc. could still be useful to make different craft items. These items can also be displayed in an exhibition on possibilities of recycling waste material, often organized as part of the clean-up campaigns.

Slipper Stamp

Students will be surprised to find out that even used slippers can be transformed!

Requirements: An old rubber slipper, a shaving blade or medical/surgical blade, water colours, ink or stamp pad.

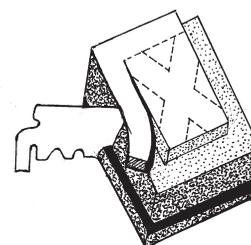
Cut a piece out of the less worn out and even part of the slipper.

Wash the piece thoroughly with soap and water.

Draw the outline of the mirror image of the letters or design you want.

Use a blade or knife to first cut a groove along the outline. Then cut away the part outside the outline in such a way that the design outlined is slightly raised above the rest of the piece. Only the part to be used as the stamp should be raised. The rest should be cut out.

Apply some colour or ink on this raised part (you could also use a stamp pad) and put your personal stamp on letters, your books, etc. Designs which are too complex to carve should be avoided. To begin with, use straight lines and simple forms.



Drawing and Painting

Themes given to children for drawing and painting tend to be limited to depicting festivals, landscapes, still life etc. These too could be made more “environmental”. That is to say, real-life situations, often those that children encounter, could be set as themes for representation. A discussion prior to starting the art work should stress that children’s work should be based on what they really see around them: A scene from a large city could depict traffic congestion, pollution, garbage, buildings etc. A typical “village” scene could include bare hills, dry rivers and ponds, and sparse vegetation.

Children could also depict scenes such as ‘What I see from my house window’, or ‘On my way to school’. They could be asked to project into the future, to depict an imaginary scenario where all vegetation has been replaced by concrete jungles, or how a city would look when hit by an epidemic, intense pollution, or nuclear war. They could also be asked to depict what they imagine as an ideal future scenario with respect to a home, a city, a rural area or a wilderness site.

Another activity that could be undertaken is preparing posters and panels to make up a single theme exhibition such as, My City, Water is Precious—Conserve it, Garbage—Problems and Solutions. Posters could also be made for a school campaign on a variety of themes: Save Water/Electricity, Keep Our School Clean, etc. Models on these themes could also contribute to enriching the exhibition.

These could include facts and figures which students could collect with guidance from other subject teachers also.

Experiments with using natural dyes and colours made from different kinds of vegetation etc. would also constitute an exciting learning experience. These could be used to make greeting cards, bookmarks etc.

Stones collected by children can be painted to resemble insects and other creatures, and used as paper weights.

Tree autographs are a great way to get younger children to learn more about trees through art.



Tree Autographs

To take the tree’s autograph, hold a blank sheet of paper steadily against the bark. Rub a crayon over the sheet to get the impression of the bark; the ridges will be coloured, while the cracks in the bark will remain blank. If possible, match the colour of the bark with the crayons you use, or describe the colour alongside the autograph. Take a leaf from the tree. Place it on a smooth solid surface with the veined side up. Cover the leaf with paper. Rub a crayon on the paper. You will get an impression of the leaf. Try this with different kinds of trees and compare. These are the trees’ autographs.

Making Models

Older children (Std 8 or so) may not like to do 'craft' activities, though they may still enjoy working with their hands and making things. Involving these children in making models, and preparing for an exhibition etc. would generate hands-on experience as well as participation. A variety of skills and concepts can be learnt through making matchbox models, say of the school/village neighbourhood or/town. They could also make models that demonstrate how certain principles work. (One example is Protective Cover p 48)

Think of any two topics that you teach, for which you could involve students in making models, charts or posters.

Sharing the Experience

Children like to show what they create to others. It might be therefore interesting to put up a display of environmental arts and crafts created by students for the rest of the school, parents, etc. In addition to displaying the products, the children should also explain both orally and through supporting material such as charts and posters also made by them what they have learnt while doing the activity both in terms of the skill - "how to make", and the content "more about the subject of their project". For example, if they have made things out of "waste" material they could discuss types of waste and recycling/reuse of waste. If they have made animal/bird models, they could talk about that animal e.g. snake, earthworm and its role in the environment. If they have made cards with leaf imprints, or used natural dyes they can explain the process to others. In case of models they can demonstrate how they work and what they depict.

Undertaken in this spirit, an arts and craft class can become a creative gateway to exploring the environment.



5.5 PERFORMING ARTS FOR EE

5.5.1 Performances

Performing arts are an excellent medium for environmental education. They help develop creativity and self-expression while challenging students to explore subject matter. Communication skills and the power of imagination and expression are developed within a meaningful, enjoyable framework.

Children can watch performances put up by others. This could be a play, a dance drama, a puppet show or any other. Viewing a good performance may move, provoke and disturb audiences to look at the environmental realities around them in a new perspective. The teacher then has an important role in reinforcing and consolidating the messages conveyed by the performance. Thus a teacher must spend a little time to discuss and draw out lessons learnt from the experience.

Children can themselves participate in this activity. They can write a play and perform it, or compose a song and sing it. Not only is this an intense educational experience for the participating children, but also has a learning value for their audience.

Younger children can be given simple scripts with prescribed roles and dialogues. The outcome could be predetermined or left open ended for children to decide. "I am a Tree" (p 24) and "Animal Court" (p 63) are examples of such scripts.

As preparation for a performance students have to study the subject and articulate it. Thus they get a chance to explore subject matter, and develop creativity, communication and critical thinking skills.

Preparing for and putting up a performance of any kind can also teach the children the importance of group work, of practice, can encourage their creativity and bring out hidden talents. They can see how an environmental message can effectively be communicated to a wide audience.

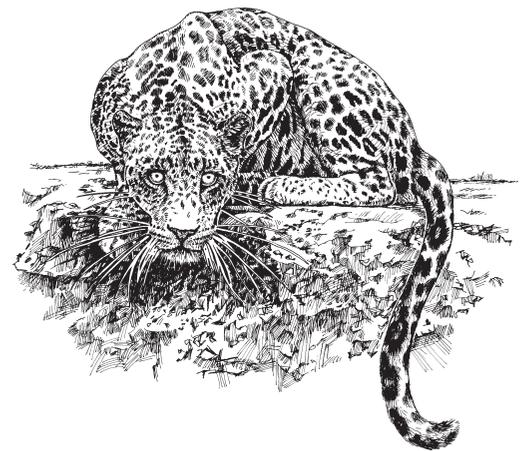


5.5.1

Animal Court

- Man:** To this green forest I have come
To look for the panther who has done
Much harm to me and my family
two of my goats he killed and fled
I search him now, I want his head
Oh monkeys on the trees so high
Tell me when you see him come by
- LANGUR 1:** Brother we will thank you so, If you can help to kill our foe
With quite an ease the climbs the trees
In search of his favourite food-monkeys
- LANGUR 2:** My long-tailed clan has always feared
The panther more than the lion's beard
For he can catch us where we leap and bound
In the branches high above the ground
- TREE:** We make the forest rich and alive
Offer food and home to many lives
My tender leaves are the langur's lunches
Too many monkeys would mean bare branches
The panther helps me stay healthy and green
By keeping the monkeys from stripping me clean
- SNAKE:** I know the panther is feared by all
But I must admit I do not want his fall
He helps my kind while on the prowl
By eating my enemy—the peafowl
- PANTHER:** Surprised I am that you should argue
From so many different points of view
I live my life as I was meant to, so what's wrong with what I do?
- ALL:** We may talk on about this without end
Here comes the wise elephant, our friend
Let's ask him to help us decide
What is wrong and what is right
- ELEPHANT:** Woven together in the web of life
We all need each other, so send your strife
Each plant, each animal big and small
United we stand, divided we fall

Thus spoke the wise elephant. Now you decide who's wrong and who's right.



5.5.2 Role Play

A role play creates a structured experience that is based on actual or real-life situations, e.g. the outbreak of an epidemic, or the adverse effects of pollution by an industry. The role play usually deals with issues that have many dimensions, and are open to different interpretations. There are neither set dialogues nor predetermined outcomes.

This exercise is more suitable for older students. The exercise is designed to bring out the fact that in real-life situations there are many actors, much complexity, and often no simple answers or clear-cut conclusions.

Strength of this approach

- Role play can help focus on real-life problems or issues.
- Role play exercises can be designed so as to raise awareness or develop understanding of an issue.
- It provides an opportunity to consider the many angles to an issue within a short span of time.
- Role play exercises increase student's ability to take other perspectives, and develop problem solving and conflict resolution skills.
- The format, has scope for spontaneous responses based on the participants own knowledge and experience.
- It is a simple low-cost method. It does not involve much material or advance preparation.
- It is an approach that allows active participation by students.

The Teacher as Facilitator

The role of teacher as a facilitator is to ensure that the role play is an educational experience. Advance preparation is required to successfully see through a role play. This involves several steps:

1. Choosing a problem or issue that students will be aware of, and that would help to achieve the desired learning objective, e.g. how mismanagement of garbage can lead to health and sanitation problems, how many pressures there are involved in protecting a green area [park] in a city, or a national park or sanctuary.
2. Creating a well-defined plot (The Scenario) describing in brief the problem/ issue: The plot should be presented in a way that the actors will understand the various facets without making it too complex or too simplistic.
3. Developing character briefs (The Roles) for each actor in the plot: These should indicate the personality, motivation and likely reactions to the given situation. The brief, while creating an impression of the character, should leave enough room for the actor's own interpretation and improvisation. The brief should be clearly presented in simple language. Unnecessary details should be avoided.

As the number of characters in a plot will be limited, the plot needs to be worked out so that it naturally involves a number of observers/onlookers.

4. Preparing slips of paper (Preparation) for each role with the characteristics, etc. clearly written.

Setting the Stage

The teacher should explain the reason for doing the role play and what it is expected to achieve, in terms of the learning Outcome/ Objective.

The process (Activity) should be described as well as directions about what the actors are expected to do.

The teacher can read out the plot/scenario loudly and clarify doubts, if any.

Role can be assigned to the different students—either by the teacher, or through students choosing their own roles. The teacher can try to give roles which depict a character which is quite different from that of the person assigned it. For example a quiet student could be given a leadership/dominant role, or vice-versa.

If necessary the teacher can individually brief the actors about the roles.

Once, the roles have been assigned and the role slips handed out, the actors should be given a few minutes to “get into” the character. Too much time may, however, hamper spontaneity.

Emphasize that once the role play begins, the role of the observers is as important as that of the main characters. Instruct them to make a note of any actions/points that cause a change in the course of the scene, why a solution was reached or not reached, etc. But remind them that they should not make comments that would distract the actors.

Once the students begin the role play, the teacher should withdraw quietly.

During the Role Play

As far as possible the teacher should not participate in the role play. But in case a particular exchange stretches for too long, or if the discussion is going off track, or gets too heated, or if there is a point where no one has anything to say, the teacher should tactfully intervene to bring the process back on track, or lead it to some conclusion.

After the Exercise

Allow students some time to get out of their assumed roles and back to being themselves.

Conduct a Debriefing session in which the situation enacted is analyzed. Students—the actors as well as observers—should be encouraged to share observations, feelings and what they learned from the experience. They could describe how they felt while enacting their given roles and what effect their actions had. Parallels with real life can now be drawn. Other possible outcomes or ways in which the situation could have been handled can also be discussed (Discussion).

Debriefing

At the end of the role-play take a five-minute break to allow the participants to distance themselves from their roles. Then ask each participant how he or she felt while enacting the given role and what was his or her reaction to the situation.

Encourage the participants to share their feelings, observations and understanding-not opinions or suggestions. Then ask the rest of the class (i.e., those who were not acting) to share their observations and understanding.

Then ask the rest of the class (i.e., those who were not acting) to share their observations and understanding. Some of the questions you could ask both sets of students are:

Was the role-play realistic? Why or why not?

What solution was worked out for the problem?

Could anything have been done differently? How?

What did you learn from the experience?

Debriefing is a critical step as it permits the class to analyze the role-play and discuss what happened. Without it the role-play would just be an entertaining activity but would not generate much learning.

Variation

You could divide the class into several groups and ask each group to enact the role-play simultaneously. The differing outcomes of the different groups enacting the same set of characters would highlight how different people react differently to similar situations.

Think of any two environment-related issues which could be discussed through a Role Play.



5.5.2



Example of a Role Play

The Scenario

Bhavanipur is a small fast-growing town. This beautiful town has a small hill called Chengji Hill. A beautiful lake called Rani Vav is found at the base of this hill. The hill due to its vegetation cover and the perennial water found in Rani Vav attracts a variety of birds throughout the year. Bird watchers around the city visit the lake to observe birds. Several students come here for their field study on birds. Many people come for morning and evening walks around the lake. However, these days due to neglect and misuse the lake is losing its serene beauty and has slowly become a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

These days it also attracts a lot many builders who wish to cater to their customers' needs –A large house with a good view from the balcony.

A large township was built near the lake by Revathi Builders, Krupa Estates and many others. The growing population leads to the expansion of the township. The workers of these builders live in a shanty town near the lake and use its waters for their daily needs. The “developing” township and the slum dwellers have made the water of the lake “dirty”.

A big new builder named Anurag Estates has planned to fill a part of the lake and build a huge apartment. A large number of Bhavanipur citizens are not happy with the plan and have planned to get a stay order on The Anurag Estates' plan. The Municipal Commissioner has called for a meeting to discuss the issue.

Attending the meeting are the following:

Municipal Commissioner; The Anurag Builder; The secretary of the Builder's Union; A Bhavanipur Citizen (against the builders), A Bhavanipur Citizen (who has booked a house), A Shanty town dweller; A Bird Watcher; A Reporter; Slum dweller (women), Retired person , An NGO officer, Washerman.

The meeting proceeds as the issue is discussed, and the most plausible solution to the problem is explored.

The Roles

Municipal Commissioner: You are a sincere Government Servant. You wish to discharge your duties with utmost integrity. Due to the actions of your predecessors, people doubt your sincerity, and look at you with suspicion. You are taking this opportunity to prove your sincerity and integrity.

The Anurag Builder: You are a person good at heart. Your goal in life is to make money in the most noble way by providing housing to the middle income and high income group. You have thought of constructing the building on the Rani Vav principally because, the land is cheaper and would facilitate a large share as profit, and also that it would help reduce the mosquito menace for the residents of the houses nearby which you had built earlier.

The Secretary of the Builder's Union: You are in complete support of Anurag Builder's idea that it would help reduce the mosquito menace for the residents nearby (some of whom stay in the buildings constructed by you too!). You are looking at the situation as the steps to bring down the unity amongst the builders.

A Bhavanipur Citizen (Against the builders): You love your city a lot. You have watched the beautiful lake deteriorate into a mosquito breeding pool and had decided to do something about that. You see the builders' plan as the last nail in the coffin to your beautiful town. Your plan to beautify the lake included a group action, which included:



Making a fence around the lake, Planting trees, Introducing “Guppy” fish to reduce the mosquito with the support from the malarial eradication department, to attract the birds, Educating the people about the importance of the lake.

A Bhavanipur Citizen (who has booked a house with the Anurag estate):

You belong to a middle income group. You feel that you will never get a better deal than the one provided by the Anurag Builder. You have already invested a good amount (more than 50 per cent) of your savings in this deal.

You are also scared that the money earned through your life might not be returned by the builder, and your dream project (of owning a good house) would not happen in the near future.

A Shanty town Dweller: You are a poor person involved in the construction work nearby. Anurag builder has promised you job for people in your slum with higher pay than that is offered now by the builders, if the residents of the slum support his project in the meeting.

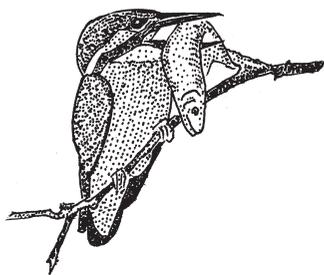
A Bird Watcher: You are a serious birdwatcher. You have observed some rare birds visit the lake during winter. You are maintaining a diary of your visits to the lake and also do bird counts regularly. However, due to increased human activities and the resulting pollution, their numbers have been dwindling. You have invited young school children to camp nearby, to develop their interest in birds. You have been fairly successful in this regard. You feel the construction would destroy the home of many water birds and these migratory birds will stop visiting this lake. You are highly disturbed by the news that the Rani Vav is in the danger of its very existence.

Retired person: You come to the lake for walks and like to sit near the lake and chat with your friends. You are not happy with the news because once the construction is complete, you cannot go to the lake and enjoy the serene beauty of the lake and the birds’ dance and songs which are very pleasing in the morning.

A Reporter: You are new to the profession as a reporter. You wish to make this in to a big issue and create a name for yourself in the profession. You try to question from all the parties concerned and make the issue into a sensational one.

An NGO Officer: Your organization has been involved in various projects of environmental development in the region. Your organization has been planning to save the lake and develop it as a sanctuary. You were in the verge of getting an international funding agency to develop the lake when you heard the news of the proposed building plan. You see this meeting as the last opportunity to save the lakes and other water bodies nearby.

Slum dweller (women): You have been using the lake for washing your household utensils and washing your cow. This place also serves as a meeting ground for you and others of your community. It helped you share your happiness and sorrow with friends and relatives. You are very disturbed that the lake would not exist for long.



Washer man: You are very disturbed as your livelihood is threatened. If the building is constructed, you are afraid that you can no longer use the lake for washing the clothes. You will have to find another place for your work and move with family.

5.6

1. Take one day's newspaper and plan five different EE activities that could be done through the paper.
2. List 3 activities each, using a different medium (e.g. arts, craft, performance, writing, role-play, etc.) that you could plan on the following subjects.
 1. Earthquake
 2. Biodiversity
 3. Pollution

Write the plan for each activity including the objective, the process, the briefing and the debriefing.

(credit points: 5)

