

Working in Classrooms

Teaching, Time and Space

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The SAIDE Teacher Education Series

Saide 
South African Institute
for Distance Education

Working in Classrooms

Teaching, Time
and Space

Learning Guide

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Preface

The SAIDE Teacher Education Series

Working in Classrooms is one of the modules in the SAIDE Teacher Education Series developed between 1998 and 2002.

This comprehensive multi-media series comprises:

- Learning Guides, which operate much as a teacher does in structuring learning, explaining concepts, exploring debates in the field, and direct readers to other parts of the module at appropriate times;
- Readings which function as a 'mini-library' of edited readings for further exploration of concepts, issues and debates raised in the Learning Guide;
- An audiotape which use interviews and classroom events to develop the issues raised in each of the modules (not for all modules)
- A video which bring issues and debates from the modules to life (not for all modules).

Although designed to support the learning guides, the readings, as well as the audio and video resources could also be used independently of the learning guides. Used creatively, they provide valuable resources to support existing teacher education programmes.

This set of learning guides with accompanying readers develop teachers' abilities to use theory in practice; and to understand, intervene in and improve their practice as teachers. The diagram below shows the inter-relationships of the modules in terms of curriculum coverage.

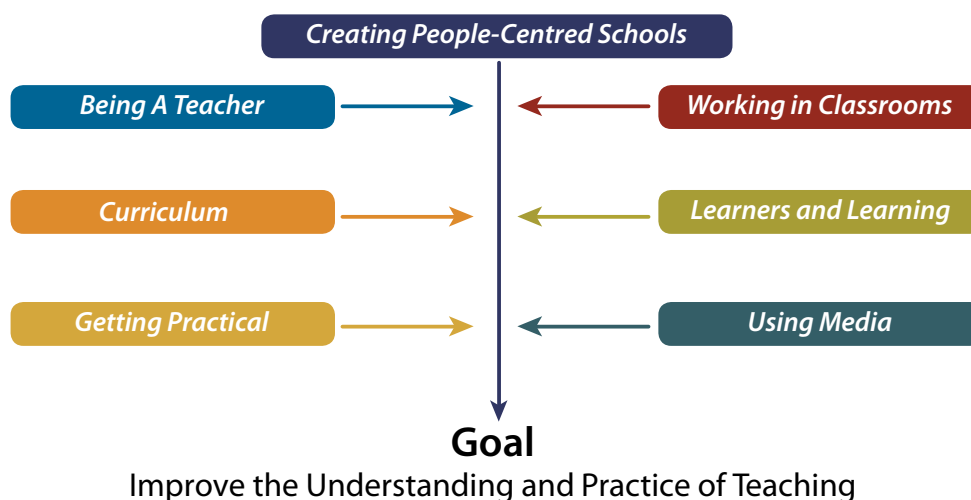
From within a framing context generated by *Creating People-Centred Schools*

- *Being a Teacher* and *Working in Classrooms* cover the professional and classroom contexts within which teachers practise
- *Curriculum* and *Learners and Learning* provide a theoretical understanding of resources or tools teachers may draw on
- *Getting Practical* and *Using Media* draw on the above in guiding practice.

Curriculum and *Getting Practical* are available in second editions from Oxford University Press.

The other titles are available on www.oerafrica.org.

Inter-Relationship of SAIDE Teacher Education Modules



Components of the Working in Classrooms module

Working in Classrooms looks at how arrangements of time and space shape school teaching; and at how teachers, principals and government departments of education shape the time and space for learning in schools. The module is theoretically informed by an understanding of teaching as a practice, and is practically useful in addressing the question of how teachers might best organise classroom space and time to promote systematic learning.

For students in initial teacher education, the module develops very useful understandings of the contexts in which they will practice; for practising teachers, it provides rich material for reflecting on their own experience. For all, it provides insights that are valuable for teaching and that may well disturb our understanding of basic issues we assume or just take for granted!

Learning guide

The different sections in this module present a coherent progression. However, these five sections are downloadable as individual units.

1. Section One: About this module

This section outlines the aims and structure of the module and explains how the writers intended the module to be used.

2. Section Two: Time and space in teaching

This covers what is distinctive about teaching. A useful conceptual framework is developed to help us to think about the nature of teaching as a practice that shapes, and is shaped by, time and space. The framework is, in fact, crucial for any understanding of teaching, and for using time and space for different activities.

3. Section Three: School time and space

Here we encounter the institutional context that shapes teachers' work. We deal with what is 'given' to teachers: departmental regulations; the school timetable; classrooms well or poorly equipped, and so on.

4. Section Four: Classroom time and space

This section deepens our understanding of how teachers use time and space to enable systematic learning. How can teachers exercise their agency and professional responsibility in working appropriately with the time and space available to them?

5. Section Five: Making learning time and space for large classes

The focus here is on strategies for managing the challenge of working with large classes in crowded classrooms. We also consider the importance of enabling learning beyond the classroom and outside of school time.

Readings

Although there are nine useful readings, the module prescribes only five; the other four are optional. As with other modules, the readings may be used independently in supporting other courses that already exist. There are three readings in each of the three sections:

→ **Section One: School Time**

→ **Section Two: Time and Space for Learning and Teaching**

→ **Section Three: Teaching, Critical Reflection and Conceptual Space.**

Not all the copyright holders of these readings have given permission to release them digitally, and so, although notes on all the readings are included, the full text is in some cases omitted.

The available readings can be downloaded from the Working in Classrooms module page on www.oerafrica.org.

Video

Four video clips provide a lively stimulus for thinking about teaching strategies that promote effective learning.

1. The nature of time and space in society in general. A learner and a teacher encounter new arrangements of time and space on their first day at a new school.
2. Timetables and the question of how much classroom time we actually have for organising

- teaching and learning. Teachers discuss various strategies, and we see a number of experiments in using classroom space in different ways.
3. After viewing a rather chaotic classroom in which things go wrong because of ineffective use of time and space, we see how teaching and learning can be much more purposeful in the same classroom – when time and classroom layout are used differently.
 4. Teachers' use of time and space to meet particular needs and we see the necessity for teacher flexibility in organising learning in different situations.

The clips can be downloaded from the Working in Classrooms page on www.oerafrica.org.

Acknowledgements

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The first edition was published by SAIDE/Oxford in 2002 under conventional 'All rights reserved'. This (slightly adapted) 2010 version is available digitally on www.oerafrica.org under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 licence to facilitate updating and adaptation by users. The processes involved in making the 2010 version available were managed by Ken Harley and Tessa Welch, with funding through the International Association for Digital Publications.