UNIT 3  TEACHING LEARNING IN GROUPS

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3.1 INTRODUCTION

In most of the classrooms, specially at the secondary and tertiary stages of education, the primary mode of curriculum transaction is by and large verbal exposition by teachers and uncritical reception by students. This mode of curriculum transaction is not conducive for the development of higher order mental abilities among students and does not make them independent learners. There is strong research evidence to suggest that social interaction in classroom invariably helps students to learn better. A variety of techniques capitalizing on social interaction have been developed and are often used by enlightened and resourceful teachers. A few such techniques have been discussed in this unit. A teacher’s role in the use of these techniques along with their advantages have also been discussed in the unit.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the rationale of the use of group techniques of teaching-learning,
- explain the nature of a group and its types,
- apply the techniques of tutorial, seminar, symposium, peer tutoring and brainstorming,
- explain the use of peer tutoring as a strategy of teaching-learning in classroom,
- explain the use of brainstorming in schools,
- explain the teacher’s role in the use of group techniques of teaching-learning,
- discuss the impact of group techniques on the learning attainments of students.
Planning Instruction

3.3 GROUP STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES

Teachers having experience of teaching both in full size classes and in small groups would agree that teaching and learning in small groups makes a valuable contribution to all round education of the students. Group teaching allows freedom to the students to interact freely and establish intimate contact with their teachers on the one hand and with peers on the other. However, to organize teaching and learning in small groups, you have to yield your position of authority in the lecture method to the position of a facilitator of learning in small groups.

What is the meaning of a ‘group’ in the context of teaching and learning in schools? According to Jaques (1984), “a group is not a mere collection of people. Its members should be collectively conscious of their existence as a group. They are interdependent as the success or failure of a group depends on the performance of each and every member of the group. Each member of the group influences and in return is influenced by other members of the group. Above all, a group is a social unit with its own norms, roles, powers and emotional relationships.”

Two or more people interacting for longer than a few minutes constitute a group. Besides, a group must exist long enough for a rudimentary pattern of interaction to develop. A group may be considered as an entity but at the same time, it is imperative to study the individual experience of its members as well as the size of group activities. As the size of a group increases, its characteristics undergo a change. In smaller groups leadership tends to be fluid and interchangeable. In larger groups, the likelihood of full face-to-face interaction decreases. The authority/dependency problem will almost certainly be sharper and more acute in larger groups.

3.4 GROUP TASKS AND TECHNIQUES

You as a teacher are expected to be clear about the objectives of instruction including those of your subjects along with the overall goal of education. The objectives of instruction may be stated in the form of competencies or skills to be developed among students. To realize a particular objective you have to organize a set of individual or group tasks. Let us take an example to explain the relationship between objectives and tasks. A teacher intends to develop the conflict resolution skills among his/her students. To realize this goal, the teacher can organize a variety of tasks, such as:

- Divide the class into sub-groups.
- Assign a conflict situation to each group and ask it to attempt its resolution.
- Ask the groups to present the strategies devised by them to the whole class.
- Organize discussion on the presentation made by different groups.
- Arrange at consensus regarding the desirable and effective strategies.
All the five tasks mentioned above are group tasks aimed at developing the conflict-resolution skills. You have to organize different types of tasks if the objective is changed. For example, if your aim is to develop students' awareness of strategies for resolving conflicts, you have to organize different types of group tasks, such as:

- Ask the groups to study literature on conflict resolution.
- Assign individual students to write papers on conflict resolution strategies.
- Ask the individual students or groups to present their papers for discussion.
- Ask the groups to study short stories, novels, plays etc., and analyse the strategies adopted by different characters to resolve their conflicts.
- Ask the groups to analyse the conflict resolution strategies adopted by different characters in a movie.

It is obvious from the above discussion that there exists a close relationship between the objectives and the tasks. However, when the objectives and the tasks are integrated into an established pattern of rules, roles and procedures, we have an ensemble of means. This ensemble or combination of means is called a 'technique'. You may be aware of a variety of techniques involving group tasks, such as seminars, tutorials, peer tutoring, symposia, brainstorming, etc. In the next section of this unit, a few techniques involving groups and frequently used by resourceful teachers have been discussed in detail.

Group techniques are different from individualized instruction which is carried out to meet the specific learning needs of each student. It helps to accommodate diversity of students. Individualization strategies comprise varying the time resources and materials available to the students for learning, the learning activities and the objectives. Technology can also be a valuable tool for individualized instruction. Learners require different amount of time to master a topic. Teachers accommodate this difference by giving more time to students who need it and enrichment programme/activities to those who complete their assignments early. Teachers can also accommodate individual differences by altering instructional materials or by supplementing existing learning materials and provide alternatives. A number of learning options, cassettes, notes, corrective instruction etc. can be provided to learn content and skills. Another way of individualizing instruction is to offer choices to students in the learning objectives they pursue. But before we go to the next section, you may like to know your progress.
Check Your Progress 1

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1. Define a group in the context of teaching and learning in schools.

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2. How are tasks related to objectives?

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3. What is a group technique of teaching and learning?

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3.5 GROUP TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING-LEARNING

As we have stated in the previous section, there are various group techniques of teaching and learning used by teachers. We shall discuss five main techniques in this section.

3.5.1 Seminars

The term seminar has different meanings in different contexts. You might have heard teachers using this ‘word’ in the context of in-service education or orientation programmes organized by institutions like National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) / State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) for teachers. Let us consider the following two statements.

• During the summer vacation, I attended a seminar on mathematics of three weeks’ duration.

• I have been invited to attend a seminar on the theme of ‘issues and emerging trends in mathematics education’.

In the first statement, the use of the term ‘seminar’ has been inappropriately used for an activity which in fact could be an in-service education and training (INSET) programme or an orientation programme. The objective of a training programme is to upgrade or sharpen the professional skills and competencies of the participants. In the second statement, the term ‘seminar’ has been used for an activity which apparently aims at generation of ideas in order to find answers to a specific set of questions or issues. In this sort of activity, all the
participants are on an equal footing. The trainer – trainee relationship is nonexistent in this type of activity.

In this section, the term ‘seminar’ has been discussed as a teaching learning technique which can be used by a teacher in the normal classroom. In this sense, the term seminar is generally taken to mean a group discussion with fairly intellectual aims, led formally or informally by the teacher and focused on issues arising from the subject matter rather than on student difficulties. A seminar can be organized in a group of 10 to 15 students. The theme of the seminar is decided in advance and one of the students is asked to make a detailed study of the theme and initiate discussion in the seminar by presenting a critical analysis of the issues relating to the identified theme. The seminar can be chaired and moderated by the teacher or by another student. The student who is called upon to act as chairperson shall have to make an intensive study of the seminar theme.

Seminar cannot be an appropriate technique for all sorts of objectives. For example, if you want to transmit some information to the students, seminar is not the appropriate technique. On the other hand, seminar will be appropriate if the objective is to develop critical thinking and self-learning skills in the students.
Planning Instruction

There are several ways of organizing a seminar in the class. The organization of a seminar can be part of the school timetable. In the period earmarked for seminar, one or two students may organize the ‘seminar’ on a topic assigned to them in advance or selected by them. They can make a presentation of the paper prepared by them, which should be followed by discussion in which all students should be treated as ‘equal’. The other alternative is to form sub-groups and ask them to prepare and present papers for discussion in a bigger group. Yet another alternative is to ask some students to initiate discussion by raising issues on some identified themes for discussion by the participants. In short, there can be several alternatives for the organization of a seminar. You can choose according to the requirement.

You can identify seminar themes around topics / lessons included in the prescribed curriculum of your subject. The theme should be such, which has scope for critical thinking and divergent view points as the technique of seminar aims at promoting learning through discussion, by providing an intellectual battle ground. It should certainly be different from a routine type of assignment. For example, you can organize one day seminars in your school. The objective of such seminars will be to train students for thinking as a group, getting adjusted to soft modes of reacting to individuals in the group and finally arriving at consensus on the major issues relating to the topic/theme selected. In order to get more insight into the subject on hand, students can be guided for reaching the right resources. Planning for one day seminar will comprise (i) choosing the right person to initiate thinking through his/her stimulating keynote address in the inaugural session, (ii) basis for formation of groups for group work, (iii) selection of suitable reference books, (iv) selection of an individual to preside over students’ group reporting sessions and (v) arriving at a few techniques for drawing out the best in individual student for discussion and interaction in the group during group discussion. Different organizational aspects are given below:

- An invitation to be displayed on the notice board to announce the date, venue, theme/topic and names of the chief guest, supervisor and group leaders.
- Orienting students about the theme, their role and resources to look for the theme.
- Inaugural session.
- Organization of the seminar – announcement regarding number of groups and names of members in each group, nature of work that would go on in group sessions, preparation of consolidated reports for presentation.
- Valedictory function or group reporting session.

One day seminars can manifest marked changes in positive direction in students’ attitude as well as thinking.

We shall now make an attempt to describe the technique with the help of an example. You may identify the issue relating to construction of dams on rivers and its impact on the socio-cultural life of people and economic development of different parts/regions of the country. The class can be divided into sub-groups to prepare seminar papers on different dimensions of the problem. A particular dam, which is still under construction, may be identified as the theme of the seminar. After discussion in the whole class, different sub-groups
may choose different aspects of the theme for the preparation of seminar papers or each group may present a comprehensive paper on the theme in totality. The aspects of the theme shall obviously include technical details, likely impact on the ecology of the surroundings, likely economic benefits, rehabilitation of the displaced persons and on the population of the area where they shall be resettled.

The seminars on the themes like the one mentioned above may be organized by the students of secondary and senior secondary classes. Hope you will organize some seminars in your class and assess their impact on learning.

### 3.5.2 Tutorials

The term ‘tutorial’ is very often used in the educational parlance, specially in the context of remedial teaching or small group teaching. The term is also being used for coaching institutions or tuition classes but this usage is not in line with the spirit of tutorial, which indeed is a group technique of teaching and learning. Its major purpose is to take stock of the progress of each student separately and, if necessary, provide remediation. The remediation provided in this manner is likely to prove more effective as it is individual specific as well as deficiency specific. The modus operandi of this technique involves one-to-one meeting between the teacher and the student, wherein the student presents his/her work on a specific assignment followed by a question-answer session between the teacher and the student. Thus, the student gets adequate feedback on the work already done by him/her and clarity about his/her future work.

The organization of one-to-one meetings with all the students on a continuing basis is indeed time consuming and puts heavy demands on your time. This problem can be overcome by constituting small tutorial groups. A tutorial group may comprise three-four students working on similar assignments. The students making a presentation of their work shall have the advantage of obtaining feedback not only from you but also from peers. Thus, in this technique, each student provides feedback to other members of the group and in return has the benefit of his/her peers’ feedback in addition to that of his/her teacher.

You can constitute the tutorial groups in several ways. One way of forming tutorial groups is to place the students having similar learning difficulties in a curricular area like science, mathematics, social sciences, etc. However such groups cannot be permanent in nature. The composition of the groups can be changed periodically or new groups can be formed in place of the existing ones keeping in view the learning needs/difficulties of the students.

In short, the purpose of the tutorial is to take stock of each student’s progress, to provide remediation wherever necessary, and to provide opportunities to the students to teach their peers as well as to learn from them.
Check Your Progress 2

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1. Complete the following sentences.

i) The term seminar generally means a group discussion with ___________ aims.

ii) The theme of the seminar should be decided ___________

iii) The discussion in a seminar should be initiated by ___________

iv) The major purpose of tutorials is ___________

v) The organization of one-to-one tutorial between the teacher and students is difficult because it ___________

2. In what different ways can you organize tutorials in your class?

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Activity 1

1. Organize a seminar in your class on a topic prescribed in the curriculum of your subject. Mention the different steps that you will like to follow.

3.5.3 Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring means students teaching students. Peer tutoring has been in vogue in many countries including India since the beginning of the present day classroom teaching system. A teacher teaching large size class or teaching more than one class at a time, had to take the help of senior or bright students in their day-to-day teaching responsibilities. The arrangement was known as monitorial system. In some cases, the teacher taught a particular lesson to the bright students who in turn would teach the same lesson to other students. Sometimes, the teacher assigned the task of teaching young children to the students of senior classes. The present day technique of peer tutoring has its
genesis in the monitorial system which was practiced in both England and India during the nineteenth century.

Even today, when the teacher pupil ratio is quite reasonable and a teacher, specially at the upper primary or secondary stage is called upon to teach only one class at a time, peer tutoring exists in one form or another. This may be a student initiated rather than a teacher sponsored activity. You might have observed students in the laboratory or elsewhere discussing their difficulties with their peers. Perhaps, it is due to the fact that students find it easy and comfortable to discuss their difficulties and problems with their peers. You can capitalize on this fact and institutionalize peer tutoring as a technique of teaching and learning, and periodically use it as a supplement to regular classroom teaching or other techniques of teaching and learning.

Educational researchers have advanced the following arguments in support of peer tutoring:

- It provides opportunities to the students for establishing close personal contact with a few students of the same age group which is not possible in a large class characterized by remote and impersonal environment. This leads to the feeling of psychological security in place of stress arising out of non-comprehension of the subject matter.

- It proves satisfying for the ‘tutor’ also as it enhances his/her motivation and self-esteem. Moreover, it helps the tutor to be an active learner as it has rightly been said that ‘teaching’ is the most effective method of learning. It motivates the tutor to master the subject matter he/she has to teach to his/her peers. It also motivates the one who is being helped.

- It proves helpful and economical for the teacher who saves his/her time and energy.

- It being individualized instruction is effective for all teaching situations, especially for skill learning.

- It develops a sense of responsibility and accountability among students.

- It encourages self-learning and develops independent study habits.

- It helps in developing mutual help and better understanding for each other among students as they plan and work together.

There can be several models of peer tutoring, such as one child teaching another child (child-to-child approach) or one child teaching a group of students. The ‘tutor’ child and the ‘tutee’ child (ren) may be of the same class or the former can be a student of a senior class while the latter is that of a junior class. In case the tutor is from a senior class, he/she shall have to miss his/her own classes when he/she is called upon to teach in a junior class.
You may be having bright students as well as some slow learners in your class. Slow learners need quality time in small groups where they may get individual help and encouragement. Some students just do not feel motivated for studies. Groups of bright as well as slow learners can be formed for peer tutoring. Bright students who have gained mastery over some concepts in a subject may act as tutors and teach the other student(s) in the group. This arrangement is called same-age peer tutoring. It can be used in any heterogeneous class in which students are at different levels of learning.

When students of some higher class are asked to teach student(s) of a lower class, the arrangement is called cross-age tutoring. Though in this arrangement younger students get more benefited from the teaching of senior students as compared to same-age peer tutoring, it is difficult to manage logistically.

Peer tutoring is specially useful for the organization of remedial instruction. For example, after giving a test to the students in mathematics you find that some students are unable to do multiplication and division of algebraic expressions, or to solve equations or other problems in mathematics. You may also notice some students who might have done exceptionally well in these aspects. Therefore, while preparing a plan for remediation, you may form groups of students having the same difficulties or weaknesses. In each group, one student, who might have demonstrated mastery in the concerned unit/topic may be included as the ‘tutor’.

It is neither possible nor desirable to designate some students as ‘tutors’ on a permanent basis. Some students may be strong in some aspects while others may be strong in some other aspects. The assumption is that every student is capable of teaching ‘something’ to others in the field in which he/she is specially interested. A student who teaches mathematics to another student or a
group of students may learn history or music or dance or football from the other student or from any other student in the group. This arrangement will enhance self-esteem of all the students which will not be the case if one student is always made to get lessons from his/her peers in all the subject areas and in all situations.

The technique of peer tutoring can be implemented as under:

- Identification of the topic(s)/theme(s) for peer tutoring. The performance of students in a test or the teacher's observation may be the basis for the selection of the topic/theme.
- Identification of tutors. An experienced teacher can easily identify such students.
- Formation of groups for peer tutoring and preparation of timetable for the same.
- Interaction with the 'tutors' for strategic planning.
- Monitoring of peer tutoring and providing on the spot guidance, if necessary.
- Plenary session for review and discussion on unresolved difficulties.
- Evaluate peer tutoring.

For the effectiveness of the process, tutors and their students who are to be tutored need to be prepared for the task before actual peer tutoring takes place. Following points may be kept in mind while providing effective training in this regard:

- Explaining objectives of peer tutoring for a specific skill or concept to be learned.
- Being on the task so as to help the tutored.
- Emotional support.
- Praise and positive feedback.
- Encourage verbalization both for the tutor and the tutored.

3.5.4 Symposium

Symposium is another technique which provides opportunities to a larger number of students to investigate a theme and then make an oral presentation in a larger gathering of students and teachers. A group of 4-5 students may be identified to organize a symposium on a theme. In fact, a list of themes for symposium may be drawn and groups may be formed in advance for each theme incorporated in the list. The groups may meet separately under the guidance of the subject teacher to identify important aspects or dimensions of the theme. Each aspect or dimension is assigned to a member of the group for in-depth study.

The group also discusses the strategy and sequence to be followed in organizing the symposium. It also discusses the sources to be tapped by each member for obtaining the requisite information. The group periodically reviews the progress of each member of the group. In addition, the group
members exchange their notes in order to know the points or arguments to be presented by each member. This will help to avoid duplication and overlapping on the one hand and will help a speaker to organize his/her presentation in the light of the presentation of the previous speaker on the other hand.

On the day of symposium, the speakers sit on the dias and other students and a few teachers take their seats in the audience. The subject teacher or a senior teacher may act as the chairperson or moderator. Each speaker makes a presentation for 10-15 minutes on a specified aspect of the symposium theme. After the presentations, members of the audience are free to ask questions, seek clarifications from the speakers, to make observations and additional points or to express divergent viewpoints. In the end, the chairperson may conclude by summarizing the discussion and highlighting the important points made by the speakers or members of the audience during the course of discussion.

After the symposium, the group members (speakers) shall again meet to examine the inputs provided by the audience and to modify or remodel their presentations in the light of the available feedback.

The success of this strategy shall depend on the selection of the theme, preparation made by the group and quality of inputs provided by the audience. The technique may not prove equally useful for all the subjects. A large number of suitable themes for symposium can be identified from the syllabi of science/social science subjects and languages at the secondary stage.

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**Check Your Progress 3**

**Notes:**  
(a) Write your answers in the space given below.  
(b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false.

   (i) Teaching is the most effective method of learning. ( )

   (ii) In peer tutoring, the student who is taught is the only beneficiary. ( )

   (iii) Peer tutoring has lost its relevance with the improvement in teacher pupil ratio. ( )

   (iv) It is desirable to form standing groups for symposium. ( )

   (v) Peer tutoring helps to enhance self-confidence and prestige among students. ( )
2. List the factors on which the success of 'symposium' depends.

3. Do you encourage peer tutoring in your class? If Yes, why?

4. What steps would you suggest for implementing the technique of peer tutoring?

3.5.5 Brainstorming

The persons who move ahead in this world and leave their footprints on the sands of time are invariably persons of ideas. Ideas bring prosperity for individuals and the organizations they work for. Every human being has the potential to generate ideas but unfortunately they fail to actualize their potential. Brainstorming is a technique which helps the human beings to mobilize their creative forces for the generation of ideas.

'Brainstorming' was founded by Alex F. Osborn as a brilliant counter attack on negative conference thinking. The technique of idea production has been tested and practiced in thousands of offices, laboratories and educational institutions. The purpose of brainstorming is to accumulate alternatives for any problem. Brainstorming is a strategy with which a problem can be attacked, in fact literally stormed by dozens of ideas. This technique can be used by teachers in schools to promote creative thinking among students.
A group of teachers and students sit around a table to brainstorm a specific problem. Every participant puts forward any idea which comes to his/her mind. No member of the group is allowed to discuss the merits or demerits, practicability or impracticability of a particular idea put forward by another member. In the brainstorm session, each member expresses his/her ideas without inhibition. He/she is stimulated by the creative thinking of other members. For example, a brainstorming session can be organized on the theme ‘Riots’. The students can be motivated to speak on the theme and say whatever comes to their mind with respect to riots. While expressing their views they may dwell on the occurrence of riots in different parts of the country, causes of riots, their impact on life and how these can be avoided. They may also, view riots from various points – owner and worker, disagreement among different religions, the traditions in different castes, unnecessary restrictions, necessary comforts, distractive attitude etc. They may also, say that riots can endanger the social and economic life of people, cause immeasurable and limitless loss to business, property, safety and security of people etc. After the brainstorming on different angles of riots students and teacher can develop a programme for the inculcation of positive values, change of attitude, feelings of brotherhood etc. for self awareness and national awareness.
Each participant in the brainstorming session is expected to follow some ground rules. These are:

- To withhold adverse judgement of ideas put forward by other members of the group.
- To accept cheerfully even wild, silly and crazy ideas because it is easier to discourage than to think up. Therefore, ideal persons should not be frustrated by the negative thinking of other participants.
- In addition to contributing ideas of their own, the participants may improve upon ideas of others or how two or more ideas can be joined together to form another idea.
- The participants advancing new ideas must be supported or encouraged.
- Only one focal point of a particular problem should be brainstormed at a time.

Organization of brainstorming session

A brainstorming session needs to be planned and conducted properly, otherwise it may degenerate into a usual type of group meeting. The following steps will prove helpful for conducting a successful brainstorm session:

**Selection of the problem:** With the help of your students you should select a suitable problem. The problem ought to be a real problem and not an imaginary one. It would be desirable to select only one aspect or dimension of the problem at a time.

**Selection of the participants:** The most important factor in brainstorming is, of course, selection of the right people and it should be done with care. The participants should have adequate background relevant to the problem under discussion. The number of participants should be around ten.

**Commencement of the session:** You should make proper seating arrangement for the participants in the room where the session is to be organized. Before starting the session, you are expected to explain the purpose and procedure of the technique. You can explain the technique as under:

- Every human being possesses judicial mind which is logical and functions on the strength of reasoning and critical thinking ability. At the same time, every human being has a creative mind also, which does not stand the test of logic. No doubt, human beings need both, but too often judicial mind completely dominates the creative mind. To facilitate the use of creative mind, ‘brainstorming’ technique is often used. This technique allows every participant to contribute any idea which occurs to him. This enables the group to produce a long list of ideas which is analysed critically by a smaller group subsequently.

- After initial introduction, the teacher shall explain the ground rules to the participants. One or two members should be appointed as recorders. They should have good understanding of the subject under discussion and at the same time should have good writing speed also. Time for the session should be between 15 and 30 minutes.
After the completion of the preliminaries mentioned above, the teacher asks the students to start advancing ideas. He/she rings the bell whenever someone uses a ‘killer phrase’ or gives a ‘killer glance’ or makes a ‘killer gesture’.

**Follow up:** After the session, you should critically examine the ideas that emerge in the brainstorming session with the help of another group of students. The ideas may be judged against the criteria of practicability, usefulness, worthwhileness, etc. It would be desirable to determine the indicators of various criteria in advance. On the basis of critical examination, the group shall be in a position to prepare a short list of useful and workable ideas for further scrutiny. This phase of the technique helps in the development of critical thinking among students.

Like any other sphere of human activity, the field of education is also beset with numerous problems which can be ‘brainstormed’, with a view to explore various alternatives for finding appropriate solutions. Several problems relating to various aspects of school life, education system, examination system, curriculum and syllabi can be identified for discussion by the students by using the technique of brainstorming. For example, the students of secondary classes may discuss ways and means to improve the standard of games and sports in the school or to improve the living conditions or social life in the school hostel.

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**Check Your Progress 4**

**Notes:** a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1. Complete the following:

   (i) ‘Brainstorming’ can be used in teaching-learning because

   

   (ii) Brainstorming is a technique of

   

2. List the steps you will follow in organizing brainstorming session.

   

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**3.6 ADVANTAGES OF TEACHING-LEARNING IN GROUPS**

The group techniques of teaching and learning have certain distinct advantages for the learners. They are:
• In small groups the learners get opportunities to establish intimate relationships with their peers. They learn valuable lessons in social development including social adjustment. They also get opportunities to lead the group in certain situations and to cooperate with the leader on some other occasions.

• The guided discussion as well as free discussion are the essential components of all group techniques. Discussion has always high intellectual aims. These techniques are specially useful for the development of higher order mental abilities like creative thinking, critical thinking, etc. The techniques like seminars, symposia etc. provide opportunities to the students for self study, which necessitates development of investigative or discovery skills.

• The group techniques have important implications for the affective domain of child’s personality. Since the students will have less inhibitions in small groups, they would express themselves freely, which is likely to enhance the level of their motivation and self esteem. It has also been observed that as a result of the use of group techniques, improvement takes place in the communication skills of students.

3.7 ROLE OF TEACHERS

Like all other techniques of teaching and learning, your role is crucial for the successful implementation of group techniques also. There is little merit in the view that the teacher’s role is minimal in these techniques as the students have to learn on their own. In fact, the teacher’s role is more challenging here as it is different from his/her conventional role of an instructor or lecturer. In the context of group techniques, you are expected to perform the following tasks:

• Identify a topic or theme to be handled by the students in small groups.
• Decide the technique which is most appropriate for the identified theme and having the potential to realize the stated objectives. Needless to say that different techniques will be required for different themes and objectives.
• Devise a plan for the implementation of the technique in consultation with the students.
• Constitute small groups keeping in view the background and interest of students.
• Provide guidance when the students are working in groups.
• Arrange presentations of group work and provide feedback to the students.

Thus, it is evident that you have to play an active role in the use of group techniques of teaching and learning. But, you have to create situations where the students learn on their own. In this sense, you have to perform the role of a facilitator or manager of learning.
Check Your Progress 5

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1. Complete the following:

   (i) Group techniques provide opportunities to the learners

   (ii) Group techniques are specially useful for the development of

   (iii) Group techniques help the child to develop emotionally by

2. Mention the tasks to be performed by the teacher for the implementation of group techniques.

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3.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, rationale for the use of group techniques has been discussed. Besides highlighting the importance of teaching and learning in small groups, it has been stated that group tasks have to be decided keeping in view the objectives/aims of teaching and learning. A group technique has been defined as an ensemble of group tasks and objectives.

A large number of group techniques of teaching and learning are in vogue in schools. These techniques have common objectives but have significant differences in their procedure or methodology. In this unit, five group learning techniques commonly used by teachers have been discussed in detail. The techniques discussed are: seminar, symposium, peer tutoring, tutorials and brainstorming. To give a seminar or to participate in a symposium, an individual student or a group of students has to make detailed study of a problem and, then to make a written or oral presentation. The main purpose of tutorial is to individualise instruction as far as possible and to keep track of the progress of individual students as well as groups of students. Peer tutoring provides opportunities to a child to teach others and to learn from others. The purpose and methodology of organizing ‘brainstorming’ have also been discussed.

3.9 UNIT-END EXERCISES

1. Identify a topic/theme for the organization of a symposium in your school. Further, identify four aspects of the theme for allocation to four students of your class.
2. Write group tasks involved in the organization of seminar in your school.
3. Write five topics suitable for 'brainstorming' by the students of your class.
4. How is peer tutoring different from tutorials?
5. What is the difference between a seminar and a symposium?

3.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answers to Check Your Progress 1

1. A group is a social unit with its own norms, roles, powers and emotional relationships. It is not a mere collection of people.
2. The tasks are the means to realize objectives.
3. A group technique is an ensemble of group tasks and objectives.

Answers to Check Your Progress 2

1. (i) intellectual
   (ii) well in advance
   (iii) raising issues relating to the identified theme
   (iv) remediation and keeping track of the students' progress
   (v) time consuming
2. Consult the text (subsection 3.5.1)

Answers to Check Your Progress 3

1. (i) True
   (ii) False
   (iii) False
   (iv) False
   (v) True
2. Selection of the theme; preparation made by the group; and quality of inputs provided by the audience.
3. Consult the text (subsection 3.5.3)
4. Consult the text (subsection 3.5.3)

Answers to Check Your Progress 4

1. (i) the field of education is also beset with problems.
   (ii) idea generation.
2. Identification of the problem; identification of the participants; organization of the session, and follow up.
1. (i) to establish intimate relationships with peers.
   (ii) higher order mental abilities.
   (iii) enhancing the level of his/her motivation and self esteem.

2. Identification of a topic or theme; selection of technique, preparation of plan for implementation, formation of groups, on the spot guidance, organization of plenary.

3.11 SUGGESTED READINGS

