

Science Teaching - a practical course

Credits: 4

January to May 2013

This was a hands-on, one-semester course, the goal being to get actual experience in teaching school science. Students designed teaching/learning sessions for particular purposes, according to their interests, the needs of the students they were teaching, and the teachers whose classes they taught. They tried out their designs in school classrooms and with children they invited to HBCSE. They documented their efforts through journals and audio tapes, and videos, and then came back to the class to present videos and discuss their sessions. Through analysis and discussion in the class they also modified some of their designs and tried them again with other students. Theory of pedagogy was discussed through examples and in connection with concrete applications. Some viewing and analysis of various other teachers teaching was also included. The emphasis was on using enquiry-based methods and constructivist approaches.

Assignments were as mentioned above, plus the following:

Write at least one paragraph on "Why I am at HBCSE" and "What is the purpose of education?" (submitted both at the beginning and again at the end of the course);

Write on "How is science teaching different from teaching any other subject?";

Write about the difficulties in locating and obtaining permission to teach in a local non-english medium govt. school;

Discuss an extract from "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" in relation to your teaching experience;

Discuss the pros and cons of teaching in different languages;

Think of possible uses for a given set of animal cards;

Discuss the films "Young Historians" and an Eklavya film on teaching mathematics.

References:

Young Historians (film by Deepa Dhanraj)

Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire

Deschooling Society by Ivan Illich

How Children Fail, How Children Learn, by John Holt