

New Era
Development
Institute

Teacher-Training Program



An Overview of
the Two-Year Primary Teacher-Training Course

July 2000

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Introduction

This document presents a brief overview of the Primary Teacher-Training diploma course at the New Era Development Institute. The Primary Teacher-Training course is a two-year course open to both men and women. This course has evolved with time, so this document is current for the 1999 – 2000 academic year.

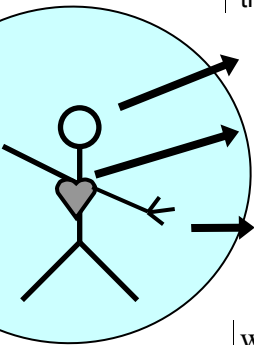
All NEDI students take the Core-Curriculum, which has been described in another document entitled “An Overview of the First Year Core-Curriculum at the New Era Development Institute.” Pre-Primary Teacher-Training and Primary Teacher-Training are two of the vocational options offered in conjunction with the Core-Curriculum. As such, the combination of the Core-Curriculum and Teacher-Training is an integrated whole designed to enable the students to develop knowledge, attitudes and skills with which they can serve their communities and earn a livelihood. Therefore, one cannot separate the Teacher-Training program from the Core-Curriculum.

The Teacher-Training courses are very practical. The students are taught selected theory so that they understand the basics of the education of young children, yet the emphasis is on the practical skills of teaching. The courses focus not just on academic education, but also on moral education.

Purpose of Training at NEDI

The purpose of the training program at NEDI is to create individuals who have a clear sense of purpose, are able to earn an income and have the desire and skills to contribute to the development of their communities.

During the first week of training, new students at NEDI are told that the expected result of training at NEDI is an individual with:



A NEW **VISION**,

A RADIANT **HEART**, AND

A NEW SET OF **SKILLS**

A new **vision** means that he will now have new ideas and understanding about who he is, what his nature is, what his potential is, what the purpose of his life is, how to bring about change in a community, etc...

A new or radiant **heart** means that he will have learnt what it means to love others, how to acquire qualities and virtues and that he will be practicing these virtues. He will also have a desire for change and want to do something.

A new set of **skills** means that now he will also know how to do things. This includes both technical skills in his trade or profession (how to repair things, how to teach, how to make things) and community service skills (how to help others change as he has changed, how to conduct children's morals classes, how to solve problems, how to teach health and afforestation classes, etc.)

Students are also told that NEDI graduates are expected to serve their community in three ways:

- **By their example:** their good behavior, becoming role models, leading others, transforming their own families
- **By their trade or profession:** establishing a business, introducing a new service, doing their job to the best of their abilities with a spirit of service and honesty, earning an income and supporting their family and contributing their services and skills to the community.
- **By their involvement in the life of their community:** teaching children's, health, afforestation, youth or women's classes, conducting village sanitation activities, organizing village days, conveying messages through cultural programs, participating in community events, helping solve problems using consultation, bringing about unity and resolving conflicts.

NEDI's Teacher-training graduates must have the knowledge, attitudes and skills to excel in all of these three areas. The combination of the Core-Curriculum and the Teacher-Training program together play an essential role in giving them a sense of

purpose and in helping them re-examine some of their beliefs, change their attitudes and behavior, and acquire the required skills of service.

Innovative Methods of Instruction

From one perspective, the methods of instruction in a teacher-training program are even more important than the actual contents of the curriculum. This is because teachers typically teach the way they were taught. If the instructor's aim is to produce teachers who will use methods that will engage the children in learning, the instructor must use these methods himself. Student teachers are far more likely to imitate the methods they saw their instructors use than the methods they have merely read about in a book. Therefore, very careful attention has been paid to the instructional methods used in NEDI's Teacher-Training program as well as in its Core Curriculum.

All NEDI classes use participatory methods in order to help the students learn faster and better. In particular, NEDI's Teacher-Training courses make extensive use of Cooperative Learning. Following are four innovative approaches used in NEDI's Teacher-Training program.

Participatory Methods

Students learn better when they are active agents of their own learning. Therefore, NEDI uses participatory methods in its Teacher-Training and other programs. These methods include:

- Role-plays in which the students play different roles and act out a situation. For instance, one child can play the role of a teacher and the others play the role of children in a class.
- Dramas, which are more formal than role-plays. Dramas include a script and are practiced ahead of time. They are often used to convey an important message.
- Projects, such as service projects that require students to make a plan and implement it.
- Consultation on an issue in order to make a decision or discover a truth.
- Discussion, either as a class or in small groups.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a relatively new approach to teaching that was first developed in the United States in the 1970's and 1980's. Extensive research has shown that students using cooperative learning not only learn faster and better than others, but also develop certain important social skills and virtues. This is because cooperative learning encourages students to interact with each other in a positive manner to help each other learn. Cooperative learning is at the heart of the NEDI Teacher-Training program.

Cooperative Learning Structures

The approach to cooperative learning we use at NEDI is called "The Structural Approach."¹ A structure is a way of organizing the classroom. Thus, the traditional

¹ See Kagan, [Cooperative Learning](#) for more information.

way of organizing the classroom, with the teacher asking questions to the whole class and a few students raising their hands to answer is just one of many possible structures (but it is not a cooperative learning structure). A much more effective way of questioning is, for example, the cooperative learning structure called “*Numbered Heads Together*.” In Numbered Heads Together, the students are organized into teams of four. The four steps of Numbered Heads Together are:

1. Students number off: each student in the team is assigned a number from 1 to 4.
2. The teacher asks a question.
3. Heads together: the students put their heads together and discuss the answer to the question. They make sure that everyone on their team is able to answer the question.
4. Teacher calls a number: the teacher calls a number at random, from 1 to 4. All the students with that number raise their hands to answer. The teacher can ask one or several of the students to answer.

Clearly, if you are a student in a team using Numbered Heads Together, it is in your interest to help the other members of your team learn. If your teammate’s number is called, it is up to her to give the correct answer on behalf of the team. Therefore, you will try to help your teammates understand the correct answer.

A teacher using Numbered Heads Together and other Cooperative Learning structures will find that her students not only enjoy the structures, but also learn faster by using them. In addition, they gradually develop a culture of cooperation in and outside of class.

All cooperative learning structures are content free – each structure can be used for more than one subject, and can be used for more than one age group. For example, the simplest cooperative learning structure is Pair Discussion, in which pairs of students discuss a topic or issue posed by the teacher. Often the students will ask each other questions about the topic. Pair Discussion can be used in many ways in English, history, mathematics, science, philosophy and other classes, and can be used by kindergarten children or doctoral candidates. Different structures are useful for different objectives in lessons.

Characteristics of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning structures are ways of organizing the classroom that encourage certain behaviors and attitudes:

- ***Simultaneous interaction.*** All the students in the class are interacting at the same time in the process of learning. They may be working in pairs or teams of four (for instance) discussing, asking each other questions, or writing in turn. Simultaneous interaction ensures that students are active agents of their own learning, not passive recipients.
- ***Positive interdependence.*** Cooperative learning structures are designed so that each student feels a desire to help the others learn. This is because a gain for one student is always associated with gains for the other students in cooperative learning. Students are “on the same side.” (In a traditional classroom, however, a

gain for one student is usually accompanied by a loss for the others. This leads to competition and sometimes enmity.)

- **Individual accountability.** Even though the students may work together in groups, every cooperative learning structure is designed so that each student is accountable for his or her own learning. Nobody can simply allow another student in the group to do all the work. Individual accountability is achieved in different ways for different structures.²

It is clear from the above that cooperative learning is very different from the traditional group work that teachers typically use in their classrooms. Most group work in traditional classrooms is not based upon the three standards of simultaneous interaction, positive interdependence and individual accountability. In order to ensure that these three standards are present, cooperative learning is highly structured, and the teacher maintains a great deal of control over what the students are doing.

Advantages Over Other Approaches

Because cooperative learning is so engaging, not only do the students learn faster and better than their peers, but they also find it relatively easy to learn effectively for longer periods of time. Not only do they learn more per hour, but they are also comfortable and attentive for more hours per day. NEDI students typically spend eight hours or more a day in class, which would be very difficult for them to handle without cooperative learning.

In addition to improving the quality of instruction, cooperative learning produces better relations between students of different religious, caste and racial backgrounds; better relations between boys and girls; and better classroom management. This is largely due to the fact that certain morally healthy behaviors and attitudes are learned automatically as a result of cooperative learning. Therefore, the students become more unified, self-disciplined and self-motivated.

Supported by the Bahá'í Writings

There are statements in the Bahá'í Writings that support approaches like cooperative learning. For instance, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said:

*“Most ideas must be taught [to the children] through speech, not by book learning. One child must question the other concerning these things, and the other child must give the answer. In this way, they will make great progress. For example, mathematical problems must also be taught in the form of questions and answers. One of the children asks a question and the other must give the answer. Later on, the children will of their own accord speak with each other concerning these same subjects”.*³

'Abdu'l-Bahá's description above sounds remarkably similar to the cooperative learning structure Pair Discussion. In Pair Discussion and many other cooperative learning structures, the students spend a lot of time questioning each other, just as 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructed. There is evidence that the students “*make great progress*” in comparison to other students as a result of cooperative learning. Also, since

² Kagan, 4:5 – 4:9

³ Bahá'í Education, Compilation, p. 56

cooperative learning engages the students in learning, they are likely to be more interested in the subjects studied and “*will of their own accord speak with each other concerning these same subjects*”. This is borne out by our experience here at NEDI.

Again,

“The shining spark of truth cometh forth only after the clash of differing opinions.”⁴

Cooperative learning requires students not only to voice their opinions but also to listen carefully to opinions voiced by others. Often a lively consultation results. It is very common for the students (and even the instructors) to achieve new insights as a result of this “*clash of differing opinions.*”

NEDI chose to use cooperative learning in large part because the staff saw that cooperative learning reflects many of the Bahá'í principles of education.

Demonstration Lessons

The trainer often gives demonstrations of lessons. Demonstrations are especially important when training the students to use specialized curriculum materials such as NEDI's Peace Education materials. The students play the role of kindergarten or primary children and the instructor plays the role of a kindergarten or primary teacher. A good way to follow up a demonstration lesson is for the students to practice teaching the same lesson to each other. Afterwards, they evaluate each other's teaching.

Microteaching

Dr. Dwight Allen and colleagues at Stanford University first developed "microteaching" as a technique for teacher-training. NEDI uses a version of this technique, modified for Indian conditions.

The purpose of microteaching is to enable the students to practice the skills needed in a classroom, receive feedback from others, and improve their teaching technique. When using microteaching in its simplest form, a student teacher will prepare for and teach a short five-minute lesson to her peers. She should focus on practicing one specific skill or method of instruction in her five-minute lesson. Afterwards, her peers give her feedback about what she did well, and what she could improve. She then re-teaches the lesson, trying to implement the suggestions of her peers. At the end, her peers give feedback again, often indicating improvement, and the student teacher evaluates herself and tells what she learned.

Microteaching is a very good way to modify or eliminate poor teaching practices and replace them with better ones. Since teachers generally teach in the way that they were taught, a special effort must be made to instill new approaches to teaching in NEDI's students. They must break away from the traditional (and often very poor) approaches that they experienced when they were in school. Microteaching is one of the methods for doing so.

⁴ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 87

Primary Teacher-Training Course Components

The modules of the Primary Teacher Training course have been numbered sequentially and listed below. The modules with numbers beginning with “TT” are general teacher-training modules, used for both Pre-Primary Teacher-Training and Primary Teacher-Training. In fact, many of these modules are appropriate for Teacher Training students at all levels (e.g. “TT 105: Cooperative Learning” is useful for all teachers, from kindergarten through university). The modules beginning with “PT” are specific to Primary Teacher-Training.

The Primary Teacher-Training course is made up of 34 modules over the course of two years, which can be divided into four main parts as follows, although there is a great deal of overlap between these parts. The rough sequence of modules is illustrated in the chart on the next page (or wherever).

English

First year

For the first three months of the first year, most of the class time is spent learning Basic English. One reason for this is that the students come to NEDI with widely different levels of English ability. Since they are being trained as teachers in English-medium schools, they need to learn some English. While three months may seem like a very short time, with the aid of Cooperative Learning we are able to bring almost all of our students to a basic level of competence in speaking, listening, reading and writing. The students continue learning English in a wide variety of ways throughout the remainder of the year.

TT 101: Basic English

During the first three months of both the Primary Teacher-Training course, the bulk of class time is spent on teaching Basic English. The primary focus is on speaking and listening, but after the first few weeks we also teach some reading and writing. The different approaches used to teach English include:

- Use of objects, pictures and the blackboard
- Role-playing exercises
- Mimes
- Games
- Videos
- Learning songs, rhymes and prayers in English that can be taught to children
- Discussing simple pictures and posters

- Handwriting/printing practice
- Spelling and grammar exercises
- Simple conversation practice, including the Side by Side textbook
- Studying primary school textbooks and books of stories and fables
- Reading a variety of simple books

In addition to the above formal methods of learning English, the use of cooperative learning greatly improves the English of the students, since they are constantly speaking and listening to each other or helping each other to write and read.

After the first four weeks of classes, NEDI makes a rule that all the Teacher-Training students must speak in English only.

PT 101: Intermediate English

After the first three months of the Primary Teacher-Training course, the amount of time spent on teaching English is reduced. Nevertheless, several hours per day are still spent on developing the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing English. The Intermediate English module includes:

- Grammar classes
- Classes using the Side-by-Side textbook
- Reading and discussing Aesop's Fables
- Free reading and reporting (using the whole language approach)
- Sentence building
- Spelling
- Videos
- Primary school English textbooks

Second Year

PT 105: Advanced English

By the second year of the Primary Teacher-Training course, the students' English is improved. Nevertheless, several hours a week are still spent teaching more advanced English early in the year. The Advanced English module includes:

- A continuation of the Side-by-Side textbook
- Primary school English textbooks
- Advanced grammar
- Paragraph writing

Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills of Teaching

Once the students' English reaches a reasonable level of quality, the students begin to learn the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to be good teachers. The most basic modules dealing with the knowledge, attitudes and skills of teaching are taught towards the end of the first year, and the more advanced modules are taught over the

in the first half of the second year. The theoretical and practical components are closely integrated.

First Year

TT 102: Advanced Cooperative Games

The NEDI Core-Curriculum contains a module on cooperative games (CC 114). The Advanced Cooperative Games module builds on and goes beyond this basic module. This module trains the students to teach cooperative games to young children in and outside of school and includes a focus on the purposes of cooperative games, methods of teaching them and ways of using them. The students learn and practice over 30 cooperative games that can be used with kindergarten and primary school children.

Cooperative Games are not competitive. There are no losers. The purposes of Cooperative Games include developing cooperation, unity, harmony, and helpfulness. Many times these games help break down differences between people. Cooperative games can be used as an important component of a moral education program.

While there is some theory, the majority of this module is spent simply playing the games, discussing and evaluating them and having fun.

PT 102: Primary Textbooks

In order to ensure that NEDI student teachers are familiar with the subject matter they will be teaching, they spend a lot of time studying many of the textbooks commonly used for different subjects in primary schools. This is also a way to help them learn English. In addition, this gives the trainer an opportunity to model the ways of teaching each of these subjects. For instance, when the students are studying mathematics textbooks for primary schools, the trainer uses many appropriate games, activities and cooperative learning structures. This module spans most of the first year and the first three months of the second.

In the second year, toward the end of the Primary Textbooks module, the students are required to also do the following:

- Take part in microteaching based on the textbooks they have studied in conjunction with the Microteaching module.
- Prepare lesson plans based on some sections of the textbooks in conjunction with the Lesson Plans module.
- Teach a few lessons to first year students based on the textbooks.
- Write questions based on the textbooks for the Evaluation and Testing module.

TT 103: Moral Education

The Moral Education module uses Green and Tender Branches: A Teacher's Guide for Character Education of children Ages 4 to 6⁵, a text developed by NEDI. Green

⁵ This book is has been modified for general use and re-titled The Light of a Good Character. It will be published soon.

and Tender Branches contains 30 lessons for Bahá'í children's morals classes. After studying the theory, the students practice teaching each of the components of a morals class (songs, prayers, games, stories, cleanliness check, attendance) using microteaching. Three lessons are then demonstrated by the teacher and practiced by the students. Finally, each student is given an opportunity to teach lessons to children in a school nearby.

TT 104: Microteaching

Microteaching is introduced at the same time as the Moral Education module. The purpose of microteaching is to enable the students to practice the skills needed in a classroom, receive feedback from others, and improve their teaching technique. It is explained that each student teacher will prepare for and teach a short five-minute lesson to her peers. She will be asked to practice one specific skill or method of instruction in her five-minute lesson. Afterwards, her peers give her feedback about what she did well, and what she could improve. They use the 2+2 evaluation method: they write down two things that the teacher did well, and two things that she could improve. She then re-teaches the lesson, trying to implement the suggestions of her peers. Finally the peers give feedback again, stressing any improvement, and the student teacher evaluates what she did and says what she learned.

The formal microteaching module is very short – just a few sessions. But microteaching as a method of instruction is used many times in other modules, such as the Moral Education module and toward the end of the Primary Textbooks module.

PT 103: Basic Blackboard Work

The blackboard is probably the most commonly used learning aid, especially in developing countries. The purpose of the Basic Blackboard Work module is to train the students to make the best use of the blackboard. The module covers:

- Placing, organization and how to make the best use of space
- Handwriting/printing practice
- Drawing on the blackboard

The focus is on clarity, speed and beauty, in that order. The Blackboard Work module does not produce artists; it produces teachers capable of making use of the blackboard swiftly and effectively.

PT 104: Apparatus and Arts & Crafts

In this module, the students learn how to make low-cost and no-cost teaching and learning aids as well as some simple items for arts and crafts classes. The instructor shows them the item, explains its uses, demonstrates how to make it, and the students make the item. Many of the learning aids are used in the Pre-Primary Teacher's Guide. The students also learn a few items of multicultural arts and crafts. The students are expected to use the apparatus that they made during teaching practice.

PT 106: Peace Education I

This module includes a brief introduction to peace education on the primary and pre-primary levels – its methods and why it is important. The focus is on the development of a peaceful classroom. The students also get a brief introduction to NEDI's Peace Class material. The instructor explains and demonstrates a few of the Peace Class activities and the students practice teaching them and then evaluate.

Second Year

PT 107: Primary Textbooks (Continued)

The Primary Textbooks module continues during the first three months of the second year.

PT 108: Advanced Blackboard Work

The Advanced Blackboard Work module builds on the skills developed in the Basic Blackboard Work module. In addition to further practice with writing and drawing on the blackboard, the students also practice cursive writing and printing in their notebooks and then on the blackboard. There is also a large theory component in this module.

PT 109: Cooperative Games Trainers

The Cooperative Games (CC 114) and Advanced Cooperative Games modules in the first year introduced the students to over 30 cooperative games. In the second year, they are asked to design, with the help of a staff member, a simple course to teach these games to the other students at NEDI. Thus, the second year students become trainers of cooperative games. In addition, they are introduced to more games.

PT 110: Observations

In preparation for Teaching Practice, the students do about 20 sessions of observation in primary classrooms based on Montessori materials. These observations are done at the New Era High School and occasionally other schools in Panchgani. Each observation session has a specific purpose, so in some cases the teacher whose class is being observed must prepare a special lesson ahead of time. After each observation is completed, the students discuss and evaluate what occurred in the class or the playground. They also write reports about each observation.

PT 111: Teacher's Preparation

This short module gives an overview of the importance of teaching as explained in the Bahá'í Holy Writings and a few important strategies of teaching and motivating students from the general literature. The main aim of this module is to orient the students to the importance of teaching as a profession and help them identify what makes a good teacher.

PT 112: Testing and Evaluation

The students learn the theory and practice of making simple objective questions for testing. They practice making questions based upon many of the primary school textbooks that they have been studying. They are also introduced to other approaches to evaluation and testing.

TT 105: Cooperative Learning

Although the instructors use cooperative learning from the very first day of classes at NEDI, the official Cooperative Learning module is taught shortly before teaching practice. There are sessions of cooperative learning theory, followed by practice of selected signals and cooperative learning structures. The instructor first explains and demonstrates the structure or signal, and then the students practice using it in small groups. They then evaluate. The students are required to use a minimum of six cooperative learning structures during the course of teaching practice.

PT 113: Lesson Plans

The students learn how to write lesson plans in a simple format. When they have learned to do so, they make special lesson plans to teach to the first year students. The students are required to make lesson plans during teaching practice.

PT 114: Poetry Teaching

This is a very brief introduction to poetry teaching. After a little theory, the trainer models good poetry reading and the students practice, using microteaching. The stress is on enjoyment and appreciation of good children's poetry.

PT 115: Educational Foundations

This module has two components:

1. An overview of the contributions of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam to the historical development of education in India.
2. An overview of the history and current status of the kindergarten. This helps the students understand the kind of background they can expect some of their students to have when they first enter primary school.

PT 116: Whole Language

This very short module is a basic introduction to whole language and a demonstration of a few simple whole language activities for speaking, listening, reading and writing appropriate for India. The emphasis is on the skills associated with storytelling and reading together with children.

TT 106: Discipline and Management

The Discipline and Management module is taught just prior to teaching practice. The students are trained in the attitudes and techniques necessary for good discipline based on Bahá'í principles and the latest research. Emphasis is laid on helping the children to become self-disciplined. A special section deals with important moral principles such as the Golden Rule that can help children maintain good self-discipline. This module is taught largely through role-playing and practice based on the theory.

PT 117: Peace Education 2

This module builds on the Peace Education 1 module. The Peace Education 2 module complements concepts of peace and skills of conflict resolution taught in the Core-Curriculum. It begins with an overview of the concept of peace and the different strategies that are being used to achieve it. Peace Education is one of these strategies.

NEDI students learn a two-pronged approach to Peace Education:

1. The student teacher learns to create a classroom atmosphere that is conducive to peace through her own behavior and that of the children; and
2. The student teacher is trained in a set of Peace Classes that have been developed by NEDI for use in kindergarten and lower primary. Student teachers teach these lessons in schools during the teaching practice period.

TT 107: Environmental Education

Once again, the environmental education module complements skills and concepts taught in NEDI's Core-Curriculum. As with the peace education module, NEDI's approach to environmental education as it applies in the classroom is two-pronged:

1. The student teacher learns about the importance of conservation of the environment and some approaches that can be used to bring her children into contact with the environment.
2. The student teacher is trained in a set of Environmental Education lessons that have been developed by NEDI for use in kindergarten and lower primary classes.

TT 108: The School and Community Development

Just prior to teaching practice, the students learn how to organize simple community development activities involving school children. These may include school service projects (which take place on the school campus) or community service projects (which take place outside of the school campus). Examples of such projects are litter pick-up, where a class together cleans all the litter from an area, school beautification projects that the whole class can engage in, and tree-planting and protection campaigns.

Another important way to link the school and the community is through "The Community as a Textbook." The teacher either takes her class out into the community to visit a resource place (such as a temple, the vegetable market, or the post office) or invites a resource person (such as a doctor, gardener, or cook) into the classroom so that the children can learn from their community.

TT 109: Child-to-Child

The Child-to-Child health program is an international program of classes designed to train children to become community developers. Child-to-Child classes as conducted by NEDI are designed to teach children in about standards 4 and 5 about basic health and hygiene. The children are also trained to help their younger brothers, sisters and friends maintain good health and hygiene.

One afternoon each week during teaching practice is devoted to practicing and preparing to teach a Child-to-Child lesson. On Saturdays during teaching practice, NEDI student teachers are organized into pairs to teach Child-to-Child classes in local schools.

Teaching Practice

In late January, February and early March, the student teachers spend their mornings teaching in local English-medium schools during a 7-week teaching practice. Instructors observe them regularly and give them guidance, advice and feedback. In the afternoons they return to NEDI for classes particularly related to teaching practice, to reflect on their experiences, and to troubleshoot. For most of this period, the students are involved in their Core-Curriculum Field Practicum.

TT 110: Preparation for Teaching Practice

Before teaching practice, the students perform mock meetings with principals and heads of schools. They practice appropriate behavior and explain the purpose of teaching practice. A few days before teaching practice the students are assigned to schools and are given special briefings on each school. Immediately before teaching practice, a session is devoted to discussing the kind of work ethics the principals and teachers in schools will expect of the NEDI student teachers: punctuality, respect for colleagues and children, a kindly tongue, proper dress, etc.

TT 111: Teaching Practice

The NEDI teaching practice is part of the Field Practicum, which all NEDI students participate in. The purpose of the Field Practicum is to allow students to experience conditions as close to real life as possible while they are still in training so that they can learn to practice the skills they have learned in their classes at NEDI. The Field Practicum is described in more detail in the document [An Overview of the First Year Core-Curriculum](#).

For several weeks before teaching practice, NEDI's Teacher-Training staff makes intensive contacts with schools in and near Panchgani for the purpose of working out the logistics of teaching practice. Certain materials are given to each school head at the beginning of teaching practice.

The students are required to teach in their assigned schools every morning for a period of seven weeks. The NEDI staff goes out to the different schools every day and observes classes taught by the student teachers. The purpose is to give the student teachers feedback so that they can improve their teaching. The staff also tries to provide an opportunity for the student teachers to evaluate their own teaching. The

observations are recorded and these records are used while assigning teaching practice marks. The emphasis is placed on the student teacher's ability to improve his/her teaching over time. Each student teacher is observed a minimum of four or five times. School heads and teaching staff may also observe NEDI student teachers if they wish.

In addition to regular teaching practice, the students are required to perform some special activities in their schools. They are required to:

- Teach Peace Classes at least once a week
- Teach Child-to-Child classes in pairs on Saturdays
- Perform school or community service activities
- Hold at least one session of *The Community as a Textbook*

In the afternoons, the students return to NEDI for classes that are directly related to their experiences in teaching practice. For example, the instructor introduces a new Child-to-Child lesson and a new Peace Class lesson each week.

TT 112: Teachers' Social Relations

As the students go through teaching practice, they discuss in class once a week about their social relationships with school heads, teachers, other staff, and children. They identify what was good and what problems and difficulties they faced. They discuss how to solve these problems and difficulties. This information is kept confidential.

TT 113: Child Development and Moral Development

This module is taught in the afternoons during teaching practice. Child Development and Moral Development are the major psychology components of the Pre-Primary Teacher-Training course. This module is largely theory, but since it is taught during teaching practice the student teachers have an opportunity to apply the theory immediately. Child development deals with the stages of physical and psychological development that normal children go through from infancy through childhood and their needs at each stage. Moral development deals with the stages of development of morality in young children.

School Administration and Specialized Subjects

Since many NEDI Teacher-Training graduates become principals of private schools or establish their own schools, the last month and a half of the second year is spent on school administration and a few other specialized classes.

A brief description of each of the modules follows.

TT 114: School Health and Special Education

The Special Education component is based on the text Training Disabled People in the Community: A Manual on Community-Based Rehabilitation for Developing Countries.⁶ This manual deals with identifying and training children and adults with disabilities in a rural community. During the course of this module, the class visits the Wai Akshar Institute, a school for disabled children near Panchgani.

⁶ Prepared by the World Health Organization in 1983.

TT 115: In-Service Teacher-Training

In this module, the students are taught about the importance of in-service teacher-training. They learn to design and teach a simple in-service course in cooperative games.

TT 116: School Administration

Many NEDI graduates become heads of schools or establish their own schools. The School Administration module covers the basics of school administration, school law, school establishment, school public relations, and the relationship of Bahá'í administrative institutions and schools.

TT 117: Preparation for Job Placement

This module is designed to assist NEDI graduates to get jobs in schools. It consists of mock interviews with principals and heads of schools, and the drafting of the students' bio-data and letters of application for teaching posts.