

# Workshop on Learner agency: Decoding experiential, Inquiry, and Play-Based Pedagogy

Participants	56 Primary Teachers
Date	08-09 October
Timings	08:30-01:30
Venue	Navyug School, Pandara Park, Pandara Road, New Delhi-110003

For the past couple of years, Modern Institute for Education has collaborated with NDMC and has organised capacity building programmes for its primary teachers. During these programmes, it was observed that the consultant teachers need specific, targeted programmes that address the critical issues they are facing in the classroom. What is specific about these teachers is that on average they have more than thirty years of experience of school education in encompassing varying roles like post-graduate teachers, trained graduate teachers or administrative positions like head teacher or principal. Given the disconnect they have with real classroom experiences, that too at the primary level, as well as policy shift in pedagogical practices at foundational and preparatory level led to designing a module with byte-sized targeted training to cater to their specific needs.



In this background Modern Institute for Education designed a training module to equip the consultant teachers with skills and competencies to decipher the policies in order to decode the experiential, inquiry, and play based learning. In the contemporary school education landscape that aims to inculcate 21st century skills viz. critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication among students, teachers need to be reflective about their attitudes and beliefs related to classroom processes. Being a reflective practitioner enables teachers to apply flexible and adaptive classroom practices to cater to the needs of a diverse group of learners.

The module incorporated a lot of reflective ideas rooted in the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), offering participants opportunities to discover their thinking process, attitudes, and beliefs from different vantage points.



Focused on Balanced Literacy Approach of language & Literacy instruction, Four Block approach of Math Instruction, the module provides teachers with simple hands-on activities that are easy to implement in classroom and school area.



The objectives of the workshop were:

- To provide an overview of policy perspectives with specific reference to the Foundational and Preparatory stages
- To provide an overview of the transformation in school culture since the Right to Education Act 2009 was implemented.
- To discuss their role in the present scenario and why they need to unlearn and relearn to stay contemporary
- To demonstrate play-based activities related to literacy, numeracy, the world around us, physical development, storytelling, creativity, collaboration, communication and many more competencies enumerated in NCF-FS & NCF-SE.



The training aimed to familiarize participants with creative strategies for making abstract concepts engaging and relatable for children, using low-cost, easily available resources. With nearly 45 participants, the day was structured around hands-on group tasks, role plays, puppet shows, and skits, encouraging teachers to see how learning can be joyful, contextual, and rooted in children's everyday environments.



The sessions were strongly aligned with the vision of NEP 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023. Both policy documents emphasize play-based and experiential pedagogy, art integration, and holistic development. The sessions went beyond theoretical vision by engaging teachers in hands-on, low-cost activities using locally available materials (e.g., kitchen utensils for transport, props for skits, play-dough for food activities). This models how teachers can creatively use their surroundings to make learning contextual and engaging.



By incorporating drama, role play, and creative tasks, the sessions reflected NEP's goal of making learning joyful, holistic, and linked to 21st-century skills (creativity, critical thinking, collaboration).



- NEP 2020, Para 4.7: Calls for experiential, discussion-based, and analysis-based learning beyond rote methods.
- NCF 2022 (Foundational Stage): Highlights play, stories, songs, and theatre as key pedagogical approaches.

Characteristic of the training:

1. **Experiential & Engaging:** The momentum of the training was well set. Activities such as food plate preparation, utensil-based vehicles, and theatre skits energised participants and fostered collaboration.
2. **Use of Low-Cost Materials:** Demonstrated equity and inclusivity, showing teachers how everyday items can be leveraged for powerful teaching moments.
3. **Variety of Arts Integration:** Exposure to skit, role play, nukkad natak, etc., gave participants a repertoire of theatre forms suitable for classroom and community engagement.
4. **Promotion of SEL:** Activities implicitly encouraged teamwork, creativity, and socio-emotional learning, resonating with NEP's holistic vision.

The sessions on food and theatre were well-conceptualised, highly participatory, and strongly aligned to NEP 2020 and NCF 2023. They demonstrated the potential of play-based and arts-integrated pedagogy to transform teaching-learning. However, their long-term impact depends on strengthening reflection, curriculum linkages, and formative assessments, alongside explicit planning for school-level dissemination. Embedding these elements will ensure that such trainings move beyond fun activities and truly empower teachers to integrate play, arts, and creativity into their daily classroom practice.