

Levels of teaching: memory, understanding and reflective

We have three levels of teaching that are 1. memory level of teaching 2. understanding level 3. reflective level.

Levels of teaching

We all know that teaching is a purposeful activity. Through teaching the teacher brings a desirable change in the learner. Both the concepts teaching and learning are interrelated to each other. Development of all-round personality of the learner is the final goal of teaching and learning. During teaching an interaction takes place between an experienced person (teacher) and an inexperienced person (student). Here the main aim is to bring change in the behaviour of the student.

Teachers teach students at three levels. They have to keep in mind about the developmental stage of the learners so that desired educational objectives can be achieved. These three levels are

1. Memory level: Thoughtless teaching 2. Understanding level: Thoughtful teaching 3. Reflective level: Upper thoughtful level

I'll be doing a separate article on these levels of teaching but for now, in this article, we will have the gist of all these three levels of teachings along with their advantages and disadvantages.

Memory level of teaching

It is the first and thoughtless level of teaching. It is concerned with memory or mental ability that exists in all living beings. Teaching at memory level is considered to be the lowest level of teaching. At this level,

- the thinking ability does not play any role.
- students only cram the facts, information, formulas and laws that are taught to them.
- the teaching is nothing but learning the subject matter by rote. [Bigge, Morris L(1967)]
- the role of the teacher is prominent and that of the student is secondary.
- The study material is organized and pre-planned. The teacher presents the study material in a sequential order.

Memory level teaching lacks insight. Psychologically, it is cognitive level teaching.

Merits of memory level teaching

1. Useful for children at lower classes. This is because of their intellect is under development and they have a rote memory.

2. The role of the teacher is important in this level of teaching and he is free to make choices of subject matter, plan it and can present it at will.
3. The knowledge acquired at memory level teaching forms a basis for the future i.e. when student's intelligence and thinking is required.
4. Memory level teaching acts as the first step for understanding and reflective levels of teaching. It is pre-requisite for understanding level teaching.

Demerits of memory level teaching

1. This does not contribute to the development of the student's capabilities.
2. Since at this level student learns by rote, the knowledge gained does not prove helpful in real life situations as it does not develop the talents of students.
3. The pupils are kept in strict discipline and cramming is insisted on this teaching.
4. Intelligence does not carry any importance in this type of teaching and it lacks motivation.

Understanding level

Understanding something is to perceive the meaning, grasp the idea and comprehend the meaning. In the field of Education and Psychology, the meaning of 'understanding' can be classified as

- seeing the total use of facts
- seeing relationship
- a generalized insight

The teaching at the understanding level is of a higher quality than the one at the memory level. It is more useful and thoughtful from the point of view of mental capabilities. At this level of teaching, the teacher explains the student about the relationship between principles and facts and teach them how these principles can be applied. Memory level teaching barrier is essential to be crossed for this level of teaching.

As compared to memory level teaching, the understanding level teaching has greater merit. This enables students to have complete command over subject material. In the understanding level role of the teacher is more active. The students at this level are second any. At this level, no cramming is encouraged. The new knowledge acquired at this level is related to the earlier knowledge

gained. A generalization is made on the basis of facts and the facts are used in the new situations.

Merits of the understanding level of teaching

1. At this level of teaching students to make use of their thinking abilities.
2. Knowledge acquired at this level forms the basis of the reflective level of teaching.
3. Here the teacher presents subject matter before the students in an organized and sequential form. The new knowledge acquired is related to the previously acquired knowledge.
4. Here the students do not learn by rote. Here they learn by understanding the facts and information and their use and purpose.

Demerits of the understanding level of teaching

1. Teaching at this level is subject centered. There is no interaction between the teacher and students at this level.
2. This type of teaching mastery emphasized.

This level is also known as introspective level. Reflecting on something means giving careful thought to something over a period of time. It also means thinking deeply about something.

Reflective level of teaching is considered to be the highest level at which teaching is carried out.

- It is highly thoughtful and useful.
- A student can attain this level only after going through memory level and understanding level.
- Teaching at the reflective level enables the students to solve the real problems of life.
- At this level, the student is made to face a real problematic situation. The student by understanding the situation and using his critical abilities succeeds in solving the problem.
- At this level emphasis is laid on identifying the problem, defining it and finding a solution to it. The student's original thinking and creative-abilities develop at this level.

- The role of the teacher in this level of teaching is democratic. He does not force knowledge on the students but develops in their talents and capabilities.
- The role of the students is quite active.
- reflective level of teaching is that which is problem-centered and the student is busy in original imagination.

Merits of reflective level teaching

1. The teaching at this level is not teacher-centered or subject-centered, it is learner-centered.
2. There is an interaction between the teacher and the taught at the reflective level teaching.
3. At this level, teaching is appropriate for the higher class.
4. At this level, teaching is highly thoughtful and useful than the teaching at the memory or understanding level.

Demerits of reflective level teaching

1. not suitable for small children at the lower level of teaching. It is suitable only for mentally matured children.
2. At this level, the study material is neither organized nor pre-planned. Therefore, students cannot acquire systematic and organized knowledge of their study courses.