# LESSON 3 TEACHING AND LEARNING PHILOSOPHIES

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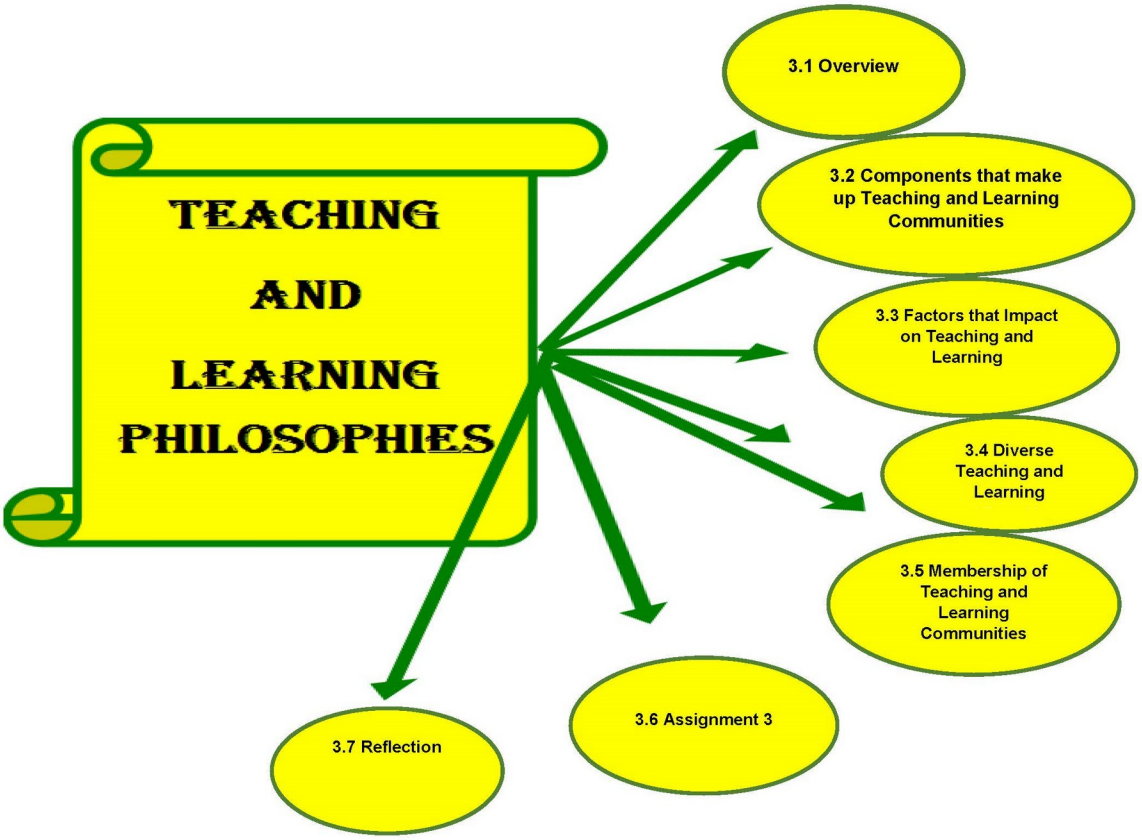

# 3.1 OVERVIEW

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In Unit 2, we explored various concepts relating to professional teachers and discussed the attributes and challenges teachers face in the classroom. In this unit, we look at the different teaching philosophies and understand how this impacts on our teaching.  In your exploration of this journey, you will then learn to understand the components that make up the learning community in which teachers work. You will also learn to understand how community life impacts on the teacher and learning of a child. This journey will help you understand the impact of membership of a learning community, developing your own teaching and learning philosophy from multiple perspectives.

- THE STRUCTURE OF LESSON 3




Open Rubric

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- Before you learn more about the philosophies of teaching and learning, it is important to understand what makes up the teaching and learning community.

# 3.2 COMPONENTS THAT MAKE UP THE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMUNITY

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- No member of the learning community should work in isolation and be separated from the larger context. You will recall the seven roles we discussed in the previous unit. Not all teachers are equally strong in each of these roles but working together, we can perform each role equally well. All members of the learning community should function and work as a collective, share and exchange knowledge and wisdom about their profession. These members of the community must always be aware of the larger context, within which the group operates. For members of the

learning community to function effectively, they need to engage with each other and discuss how the broader organisation of which they are a part really function, how they function and their composition as well.

As the members of this community have been trained, continue to develop and acquire skills and are required to perform their work, they are regarded as a professional learning community (PLC). Although there are many definitions provided, DuFour, DuFour, Eaker and Many (2006) stress that PLCs are educators committed to working together using processes of inquiry, problem-solving and reflection upon their practice. The crucial element to a teaching and learning community is to work together and continue learning.

In the teaching and learning environment called a school, the principal and the school leadership team play a crucial role. They are expected to provide leadership, manage the school efficiently, and guide and support the teaching and learning community in many areas of the work they do. They also need to promote positive working relationships between staff members and encourage them to learn and develop together for the benefit of their learners.

It is not only the responsibility of the head of the school and their team to provide leadership but also members of the teaching staff must be encouraged to work together. They need to interact with each other, share ideas about their classroom practice as well as the work they do with learners. In addition, they must plan the year schedule as a team of professional learners. They may, for example, plan to design and develop the grade and/or phase curriculum as a team, thus creating a coherent programme or a curriculum for the school. This collaboration component is necessary to build collegiality through learning from each other and contributing to the improvement of the school.

The ongoing assessment of learners, the curriculum and other initiatives in the school play a significant role in the teaching and learning understanding. Ongoing formative evaluation is important for learning and improvement. When sharing on the performance of learners, for example, the PLC should focus on the positive performance and encourage those experiencing challenges to ask for advice and learn from their colleagues. The school leadership should provide help and support those members of staff in this initiative.

- **LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.1 - NOT FOR SUBMISSION**

# LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.1 - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

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In order to understand the context and background of your learners, as teachers, you need to explore the components that make your teaching and learning effective.  In your exploration, you first need to do the following:

STAGE 1: Pre-Reading

1. Spend 5 minutes brainstorming what you think are the different components that make up the teaching and learning community.

2. Secondly, think about the different roles and responsibilities of each component. Write some notes you will need to use later.
3. On the basis of your brainstorm, formulate some questions that you hope the Readings below will help to answer.

STAGE 2: Reading Stage

1. Click on the links below and read through the documents to help you understand more about the components of the community of teaching and learning.

2. If the document does not open, go to the additional resources and find the related documents for reading. Highlight important points, make notes and keep for later use when working on your assignment

4.
5. Components of Teaching and Learning: https://www.k12blueprint.com/sites/default/files/Components-of-a-Successful-PLC.pdf
6.
7. Teacher and Teaching: http://www.cde.org.za/wpcontent/uploads/2014/10/Teachers%20teaching%20and%20learner%20performance%20in%20mathematics.pdf

STAGE 3: Post Reading

3.1 Organize what you have learned in the readings in the form of a mind map or table and write one (1) or two (2) statements about the readings. Keep your notes to help you form the basis of your discussion and/or assignment. Remember to provide complete references for any direct quotations.

The picture below is meant to help you to search for more ideas about learning communities collaborating, sharing ideas and learning from each other.

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/education-building-blocks/teacher-education/quality-teacher-training-in-africa/

# 3.3 FACTORS THAT IMPACT ON THE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

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- Many schools in South Africa, both urban and rural schools, are beset by a whole host of challenges and dilemmas. On many occasions, you will be called upon and requested to help solve societal problems. At the same time, you have to deal with

your own issues. You also need to cope with the constant changes in your professional environment. This may pose a huge challenge to you and the community of your profession. In essence, you have a responsibility to deal with the various issues that may have an impact on you, the school community and learners in particular. As you look at the pictures below, you are forced to ask yourself a number of questions. Teachers and school managers are forced to deal with a variety of challenges on a daily basis. As a teacher, you will have to learn to address the complex issues and the dilemmas you will be experiencing daily.



**LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.2 - NOT FOR SUBMISSION**

# LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.2 - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

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## Main page content

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- Before you get on with your readings, you first need to do the activity below. This activity is divided into three stages:

STAGE 1: Pre-Reading

1. Spend 5 minutes brainstorming what you think are the factors that impact on teaching and learning in your community. Secondly, think about what you might want to do to help your community of professionals to resolve the challenges they might encounter in their teaching career. Write some notes you will need to use later.
2. Based on your brainstorm, formulate some questions that you hope the video below will help to answer.

STAGE 2: Watching the Video Stage

1. Click on the links given below and watch the videos to help you understand more about the issues that impacts on teaching and learning.

Lack of sleep: http://www.bbc.com/news/business-22209818

Socio-economic status: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmkXE2CK-rM

Poverty: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UslZmqLSJwE

3. If the given link does not open, highlight the link and paste it in a search engine like Google to open. Write important points while watching the video and keep for later use when working on your assignment.

STAGE 3: Post Reading

3.1 Organize what you have learned from the pictures and the video in the form of a mind map or table and write five (5) statements about the factors that affect teaching and learning. Keep your notes to help you form the basis of your assignment. Remember to provide complete references for any direct quotations.

# 3.4 DIVERSE TEACHING AND LEARNING PHILOSOPHIES

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- A variety of educational philosophies have developed over the years. These are beliefs or point of views helping us to understand and develop best ways in which we should facilitate learning. You need to understand that our focus is on teaching and learning in order to accommodate all learners in the classroom. Some of these philosophies are teacher-centered and some are student-centered. But, they all have the same goal, which is to provide learners with the best education possible.

  It is important to understand where we come from and where we going. As you are on your way to become a professional teacher, you will be required to ensure that the learners you teach do actually learn and benefit. For example, teaching learners in their mother tongue or rather the language they understand is beneficial to the entire system. Ngug'i wa Thiongo and Eski'a Mphahlele advocate for the use of indigenous languages in the curriculum and the classroom as well. They assert that learning and understanding your African language for example, will help you understand your culture better and forms the basis of understanding other languages. You therefore have an important task of making sure that learners understand the message you will be required to deliver.

  You have to teach in such a way that learners are focused, develop their understanding and therefore guide them towards understanding. This requires you, the prospective classroom teacher, to understand the diverse philosophies of teaching and learning. The following are examples of educational philosophies that provide the basic ideas you need to understand, to help you apply them in your teaching.

  - Perennialism
  - Progressivism
  - Reconstructionism
  - Positivism

- Constructivism
- Behaviorism
- Humanism
- Essentialism.

Although all of these philosophies differ in many ways, they all focus on effective ways of teaching. These philosophies are beneficial to all learners and should be applied in your classroom. Kindly refer to your ADDITIONAL RESOURCES on the left-hand side of your MENU and retrieve THEORIES OF LEARNING AND PHILOSOPHIES DOCUMENT to learn more about philosophies.




- Teaching Processes | Imparting knowledge and values through Indian

Beliefs and Philosophies

http://www.plato-philosophy.org/teaching-elementary-school-philosophy/

Teaching Elementary School Philosophy | PLATO - Philosophy ...Philosophy Learning and Teaching

https://constructivismandexistentialism.wordpress.com/

Constructivist and Existentialist Education | Just another WordPress.com site

constructivismandexistentialism.wordpress.com526 × 356 Search by image

Peer interaction and cooperation are essential in constructivist education.

https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiYuKrz1rbUAhWDQBoKHQecDxoQjRwIBw&url=https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Madagascar&psig=AFQjCNEolDK5gyL_od0fnPcLQk4nJYAedg&ust=1497300360724557A rural public primary school classroom outside Antsiranana, Madagascar (2008)

- **ACTIVITY 3.3 - NOT FOR SUBMISSION**

# ACTIVITY 3.3 - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

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STAGE 1: Pre-Reading

1. Spend 5 to 10 minutes selecting three to four different pictures of the different members of the community you have just watched. Analyse each of their roles in the family or in the community. Looking at the pictures you have selected share your views on whether everybody shares the same philosophical beliefs about the purpose of education as you understand it. Write some notes you will need to use later.
2. Based on the notes you made formulate some questions that you hope the Readings below will help to answer.

STAGE 2: Reading Stage

1. Search for information on the internet that relates to the philosophy of teaching and learning you selected and read. Highlight important points and make notes and keep for later use.

2. In your own view, write some notes on what constitutes effective teaching and learning?

STAGE 3: Post Reading

1. Organize what you have learned in the readings in the form of a mind map or table and write five (5) statements about the readings.

2. Answer this question “How can this diversity of opinions be used to strengthen quality instead of resulting in chaos”?

3. Keep all your notes to help you form the basis of your discussion.

4. Remember to provide complete references for any direct quotations.

OER Images

OER Images

STAGE 4: REVIEWING THE PICTURES

4.1 Look at the above pictures and identify a philosophy of teaching that you think is being used in each of the above classes

4.2 Use a blog (allocated on the left side of your myUnisa screen) to share your ideas.

# 3.5 MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMUNITIES

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- As much as you belong to the community in which you live, you also need to belong to the community of your profession. Belonging to a community of your teaching and learning profession has its own merit if your focus is also based on your growth and development. The advantage is that engaging with members of your professional group and the community of your profession at large, affords you the opportunity to learn from other group members. This is another way of encouraging you to want to improve yourself and this spills down to benefit your learners. Literature supports the assumption that the performance of learners increases when teachers participate in PLCs (DuFour, 2006). In addition, belonging to a professional community reduces the isolation that teachers sometimes experience and enhances creativity and support from other members of the profession.

  The teaching profession consists of a variety of professional groups. You need to read more to understand the role they play in your profession and how this can help you develop and grow within your teaching professionally.

  https://www.edutopia.org/blog/modern-professional-learning-plc-pln-vicki-davis

  A group of educators are sitting in a room, listening to a speaker.

  http://www.schoolnet.org.za/uncategorized/ict4red-modules-78-training-in-cofimvaba-uses-two-great-teaching-strategies/

  Teachers in the Cofimvaba ICT4RED project schools have been methodically working through modules of their professional development course since July 2013

- **ACTIVITY 3.4 - NOT FOR SUBMISSION**
- **ACTIVITY 3.5 DISCUSSION FORUM - NOT FOR SUBMISSION**

# ACTIVITY 3.4 - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

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- Before you get on with your readings, you first need to do the activity below. This activity is divided into three stages:

STAGE 1: Pre-Reading

1. Spend 5 minutes brainstorming what you know about the professional teaching and learning communities in which you hope to become future member (for example The Association of Mathematics Education of South Africa http://www.amesa.org.za/). Secondly, think about how you will benefit from such communities. Write some notes you will need to use later.

2. Based on your brainstorm, formulate some questions that you will be sourcing readings from the internet to help to answer.

STAGE 2: Reading

1. Search for various information and documents on the internet that relate to the various professional teaching and learning communities. (Check to see if there is an Association that links to your subject area. You might also find an appropriate community of practice through the BRIDGE Knowledge Hub http://www.bridge.org.za/knowledge-hub/).

2. Read and compare their differences and select one or two PLCs that resonate with your philosophy.

3. Read and highlight important points and make notes and keep for later use.

STAGE 3: Post-Reading

1. Organize what you have learned in the readings in the form of a mind map or table and write one (1) or two (2) statements about the readings. Keep your notes to help you form the basis of your assignment. Remember to provide complete references for any direct quotations.

# ACTIVITY 3.5 DISCUSSION FORUM - NOT FOR SUBMISSION

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- In preparation for your next assignment, give a brief description and your understanding of Professional Learning Communities (PLC), particularly the context of the community in which you work and/or reside. This should be an ongoing discussion but not for submission. Discuss with your group members and explain how each category of the PLC may have an influence on your teaching and the learning of the learners you teach.

  OR

  As a new teacher in your class, it is important to understand the background of the learners in your class to be able to give proper support to each learner. How would you go about improving yourself in order to provide appropriate support? Elaborate on your strategies and give examples.

# 3.6 ASSIGNMENT 3

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- The assignment will be announced to you by your teaching assistants (TAs)

# 3.7 REFLECTION ON LESSON 3

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- The purpose of this section is to help us understand how well the online delivery of this lesson enabled you to learn.

  There are no "right" or wrong answers. We are only interested in your opinion. Please be assured that your contribution will make a difference.

  - Write 5 statements about your experience in this lesson and keep this information for later use in the year.
  - Suggest ways in which we can improve this lesson.

# 3.8 REFERENCES

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