Workshop Training Manual

Module 1 – Classroom Culture

Tab 1: The Christ-centred Classroom

Resources needed:

- Notepad/paper for personal notetaking
- Paper
- Markers
- Board at the front with chalk/markers (if possible but not critical)

This module is intended to be run as a workshop for a group of participants. The labels in green highlight when an active learning strategy has been used to teach the content. Leaders running this workshop are encouraged to point out how strategies have been used to demonstrate the ease of incorporating active learning into lesson planning. Leaders may choose activities to include/exclude from the workshop depending on time available for teaching.

1. Read through section 1 and then consider the initial reflective questions. Participants write down initial thoughts for each question in their notepad. Do not write in detail, just any ideas that come to mind as an initial reflection/consideration of yourself as a teacher.
    - *How would I define myself as a Christian teacher?*
    - *What values do I bring into my classroom?*
    - *Why do I teach? What am I passionate about?*
    - *What do I hope my students will become?*
    - *What vision do I have for my classroom culture and learning environment?*

    **This is an example of a prior knowledge task/entry to a lesson.*

2. Read section 2 and conduct a Think/Pair/Share on what holistic education means to you.
    Encourage participants to think for themselves about what holistic education means, tell their partner what they have thought, and then selected individuals share with the whole group. (They can write down/draw their thinking if needed – visual representation.)

    Holistic education is about catering to the needs of your students in all areas of their being- spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually.

3. Before reading section 3, reflect on the quote: '***A Christ-centred classroom should be a place where curiosity, creativity, compassion and collaboration are encouraged, and where every learner feels valued, supported and capable of growing.'***
    Turn and talk to the person next to you, answering the question: *how does this quote make you feel about your current classroom practice?*

4. Get into small groups (at least 4 groups). Allocate each group 1 of the 4 C's- ***curiosity, creativity, compassion and collaboration.*** Using paper and markers, each group can brainstorm ideas about how they think these could look when being included in the classroom. Make time for each group to share back with the whole group.

5. Read through section 3 and highlight the points:

   '***When we pause and truly listen, we show students that their thoughts, ideas, and voices are valuable' (p.126, Smith, D. 2025)***
   and
   'The goal is not simply to 'get through' the curriculum, but to help students feel known, valued, capable and loved.'

6. Ask the question: ***What does a successful day look like for you and your classroom?***
   Brainstorm ideas as a whole group (writing ideas on the board if possible)
   Steer conversation/ask prompting questions to bring ideas back to your children feeling like:

   - *they are valued*
   - *they have believed they are capable of learning,*
   - *and they have experienced the love of God within their classroom community?*

7. Pose the following question for internal pondering (participants can write in their personal notebook)…
   Are you able to be flexible in your planning and daily practice to meet the holistic needs of your children as they arise?

8. Read aloud this case scenario to the group:

You are teaching a science lesson about how plants grow. As you go through your lesson plan, one student arrives upset after an argument at home, two students begin arguing during group work, and you notice that many students are restless and struggling to concentrate. You also discover that some students already know a lot about growing plants. Then you have a student raise their hand to share with the class about how their dad is a farmer so they have watched and helped their dad grow many things. They share about how their favourite thing to grow is tomatoes and how they wish they could show the class what are the best tips for making tomatoes grow.

Ask participants - *What could be a response to this scenario?*
Allow participants to write/draw in their notebooks their thoughts in response, encouraging discussion and collaboration.

Ideas for reflection:

- Could you create an opportunity in the next lesson plan for this student to run a practical example of growing tomatoes, an opportunity to show the class their skills and knowledge in a practical way?
- How could you cater for the needs that have arisen during the lesson?
- How can you adapt your lesson to support students spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually, while still achieving your learning goal?

After discussions, encourage participants that some of the ways for creating this kind of culture in the classroom can include incorporating strategies for active learning, of which some examples can be found within the next module.

Exit question – Ask participants to consider the following question as they leave the session. ***How are your students encouraged to recognise the wonder of God and His world****?*